



## **PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR EVALUATING PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES**

Support document  
Local Observatories of Participatory Democracy  
Indicator Application Stage  
October – November 2006

**OIDP Technical Secretariat**  
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**Document based on Workgroups coordinated by:**  
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**With the help of**  
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## Note:

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This is a public document and we hope it will serve its purpose for all cities / regions / institutions that use it.

However, in an ongoing effort to improve our work and advance in the daily practice of participation, we ask all those who make use of this document to perform a participative evaluation, to share with us their comments related to its application, utility, strong points and weakness they may have detected in its contents.

Please send us your comments and ideas by email to [oidp@bcn.cat](mailto:oidp@bcn.cat) or contact the Technical Secretariat at [www.oidp.net](http://www.oidp.net)



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## 1. Background

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This document is, on one hand, a work tool meant to help us in the last stage of the Urb-al Type B “Local Observatories of Participatory Democracy” project, and on the other, the first result of the works of almost two years of thought and shared practices.

Our commitment, as a project subsidized by the decentralized program for collaboration between Europe and Latin America, was to set up new Local Observatories of Participatory Democracy and to create new indicators to show the evaluation of the quality of the participatory experiences in our cities, with the purpose of improving these experiences in order that citizens take on a more important part in city government.

In the course of the process, we realized the need to go beyond the initial goal since we all agree that creating an OLDP as an area of interaction and evaluation of participation on a local scale is much more complex than the mere application of a set of indicators. This is because the final goal (let’s not forget) is the improvement of participation, and we see the need to evaluate our deeds in order to be able to improve them. Nevertheless, we are aware that the strategies for evaluation and the instruments we have at hand are multiple and diverse, and that the questions related to the evaluation are very complex since they move on different lines (what is evaluated, what for, how, who does the evaluation), while some are of a more political nature and others are more instrumental or methodological.

For this reason, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy held in Donostia – San Sebastian in 2005 (*V Conferencia del Observatorio Internacional de Democracia Participativa (Donostia - San Sebastián, 2005)*) we decided to create a series of workgroups, coordinated by a local observatory, but in which all the members of the OLDP could participate. We also sought to open the door to a greater number of cities and to increase and widen our knowledge in the field of evaluation. This gave birth to the following workgroups:

- Preparation of guidelines on creating an OLDP.
- Common elements for defining the purpose of the study carried out by OLDPs: scopes, indicators and index
- Create a sheet of Good Practices
- Define the experiences to be observed

The work groups are very closely related to our initial commitments: the creation of local observatories and common elements for evaluating participatory practices.

However, the idea they generated has led us study the need for more complete, wider and consequently more enhanced evaluation instruments. To achieve this, in June 2006, in the city of El Bosque (CI), at the internal meeting of the Local Observatories, we agreed on a work calendar that foresaw the creation and application of a “Tool Box” that incorporated evaluation indicators and other instruments that would help us to evaluate, propose and improve our local experiences.

Thus, during the past months, in collaboration with the project coordinator (Technical Secretariat) and together with the *Institut de Govern i Polítiques Públiques de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*, we created this *Practical Guide for Evaluating Participative Processes* which is the compendium of the thoughts of the two above-



mentioned work groups (*Tipologías de experiencias a observar y Elementos comunes para la definición del objeto de estudio de los OLDPs: ámbitos, indicadores e índice – types of experiences to be observed and common elements for defining study objects of OLDPs*), plus an extension we hope will serve to underpin the final stage of the Local Observatories project and, above all, that will serve as a useful instrument to evaluate and improve any cities that promote democratic enhancement processes on a local scale.

The document will be structured as follows:

Before presenting the tools for evaluation, we consider it important to underscore our **conceptual framework**, a few ideas that will guide us in our task of evaluation. We also share our doubts and **keep certain debates open**. These two parts are the first two sections of this document.

The **evaluation tools** are found in the section called *Tool Box*. This section is divided in *Preliminary Elements, What should we evaluate?* and *Criteria to follow when evaluating Participatory Processes*.

1.- Preliminary Elements are those elements that must be considered before performing the evaluation, and try to cover the diverse situations, contexts, goals and subjects that ought to be evaluated.

2.- What should we evaluate? contains a short description of the most common types of participatory experiences, to help us systemize and classify the experiences.

3.- Evaluation criteria are those criteria that have been approved by the project members and refer to five fields of the processes (coordination of the process, who participates, reason for participating, how to participate, and the consequences of participating). The section corresponding to each of the five fields contains a description of the criteria (its goals) and how it can be evaluated.

Lastly, the document has two annexes: Some methodological elements with a brief explanation of the proposed methods of evaluation, and a Summary Chart (that serves as a Quick Guide when it comes to planning an evaluation process).



## 2. The Shared Conceptual Framework

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**A)** Evaluation is a **process** (it is not a more or less relevant and important specific moment) that is based on the knowledge of practice by systemizing information and discussion among different players, and being there since the beginning. Thus, a diverse range and ample number of players can take part in the evaluation process, as much as the number of players participating in practice. This number can be even greater if external agents are invited to take part in the evaluation.

In other words, we are talking of **PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION PROCESSES**.

**B)** There can be different technical and political levels or moments according to who is in charge, entrusts it or even participates in it, and also according to what has to be evaluated: the methods used, the goals that have been set. All this brings forth an argument: that on one hand it is impossible that one single evaluation covers everything, in all the dimensions, moments or levels (substantive, relational, operative or intermediate, technical, political, etc.), and consequently it is difficult to think of an aprioristic and decontextualized proposal that serves for everything and at all times, of the evaluative study and the instruments to be used. Such ways of operating could at times be restrictive.

**C)** We can and must use complex and methodological and additional (multi-strategic) processes that are capable of relating methodologies of **quantitative, qualitative and participative evaluation**.

**D)** "OLDP can be considered a meeting place, a scope of interaction in which the different players are able to think, debate, consult and propose ideas about the challenges found in participation. The spirit of these areas does not mean turning into technocratic structures or passive documentation centres, rather active and inclusive". Doc. Buenos Aires, November 2004.

**E)** Should the OLDPs turn into **places of meeting and debate** for different players, if they want to be **promoters**, and not mere passive observers, and if we understand that we are at the crossroads of uncertainty and innovation regarding the subject we are dealing with, it would be advisable to consider configuring an evaluation system that would consist of different instruments and that is built on several methodological strategies based on a common conceptual and operational framework.

**F)** In other words, OLDP must be "agents that promote participatory democracy" (BA, N-2004).



### 3. Some Preliminary Thoughts

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We cannot ignore certain “tensions” that are very closely related to our task and that we think should be made clear in order to have them always present at our debates and in our thoughts:

**A) Between the need to evaluate and the lack of a clear objective (what for?) of the evaluation.** We have the need to evaluate, beyond the commitment we have taken on regarding the Urb-al project, and also considering this commitment. Even though we clearly see the need, we lack clear answers to the question “why are we doing this?” How should we focus the evaluation? Is the evaluation meant to improve our practices or are we performing the evaluation to rank the cities participating in it? Are we performing the evaluation to define “quality filters” about what is, and what is not citizen participation, or are we inclined to define guidelines that each city and each practice could use for their methodological strategies?

**B) Between fixing our attention on policies or on the instruments these policies can use.** This dilemma is related to the “What” of the evaluation, rather than to the “What for”. We could focus our attention on substantive public policies: city/town planning, education, health, urban regeneration, etc, and define evaluations, studies, indicators, or anything else that shows us up to what point these policies include participation; or we can choose to concentrate on seeing up to what point certain experiences or instruments of participation have quality.

**C) Between indicators as instruments and indicators as an objective.** Caught between the “What” and the “How” is the tension in an objective: evaluate practices and policies with a given purpose, and something that, more than an objective, seems at times to be an “object we dream of”: the possibility of having “relevant, valid, measurable, sensitive, understandable and transferable, realistic and proven” indicators on participatory democracy. In this sense, we cannot forget that indicators are “an indication” of something that generally goes beyond the indicator itself. The evaluations –and the processes as a whole- lose their purpose when, instead of seeking to achieve objectives, they are intended to fulfil indicators (Kaleidos, 2006).

**D) Between the need for knowledge and ignorance: tension caused by uncertainty.** We are involved in an issue that neither we nor our political and technical institutions are familiar with; we are moving in fields of democratic innovation and innovation in public management. We often need to set participatory objectives and validate instruments and methodologies to be able to achieve them without always being very sure of what we are doing. We feel the lack of more baggage, more individual and collective experience. This shows us the need to take risks, test things, accept tests and mistakes, and build evaluation systems. But on the other hand, we want to have evaluation instruments that are fail-proof: quantitative instruments!



**E) Between the wide reality we are referring to (talking and writing) and what we really can cover (do and put into practice).** We create our speeches based on major concepts that include a very common conceptual and political reality (Participatory Democracy; Citizen participation; citizenship, and other such), to then find out that our reality, the context we move in, what we are able to put into operation and into practice –with its difficulties, resistances, contradictions and limitations- and which could be and mean a great change regarding traditional ways of doing things and the difficulty in changing them, does not seem to have enough social, collective or institutional power in order to be registered by a “counter” that hasn’t been modified.



## THE TOOL BOX

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## 4. Preliminary Elements

Prior to any evaluation, it is necessary to *identify a series of elements that will condition the perspective from which the evaluation will be performed*. Thus, before starting an evaluation, we need to identify at least the following characteristics of the process/experience:

The context  
Thematic scope  
Territorial scope  
The objectives  
Participating groups  
Type of evaluation

### The context

The social, economic and political context in which a participatory experience takes place in the comprehension and analysis of most of the results of the evaluation.

*The objectives of a process, and the evaluation criteria, can change greatly according to the context.*

### Thematic scope

*There are sectorial participatory experiences, and also global or integral experiences*

The criteria used for the evaluation will be different according to the subject under study, and mainly, according to the more or less integral character of the subject.

The thematic scope of the participation conditions many elements in the evaluation, e.g., in very specific thematic processes, evaluating the diversity of the participants would make no sense because the potential participants are, in the nature of the process, a homogenous group.

### Territorial scope

There are processes that take place at municipal levels, and others at more local levels such as in districts or small town areas. This element will also influence the evaluation of the process because of the change in potential participants.

*In the case of more global processes, we need to consider, for example, the territorial diversity of the participants, something that lacks sense in more localised processes.*

### Objectives



Any evaluation should have very much in consideration the objectives of the process being evaluated; in many cases there would be no sense in evaluating a process using criteria that refer to objectives that are not sought in the process being studied.

*Even though there are minimum criteria that must be evaluated in any process, there are many others that would only make sense if they are included in the objectives of the process.*

As a matter of fact, in order to achieve an ideal evaluation, the project should, at the onset, define which objectives will be evaluated. This will allow to us determine later on if these objectives have been fulfilled or not.

### Participating groups

Not all the processes address the same participants. There are processes that only address associations, others that address non-organised citizenry, some that address specific population groups (such as women, and young boys and girls, the locals, etc), others include technicians and politicians, whilst even others don't, etc.

*The evaluation criteria change according to the type of participants addressed by the process.*

### Type of evaluation

There are different types of participatory process evaluations as well as different methods to perform them. This document will make try to focus on some of them.

Before starting to evaluate a participatory process, it is important to define the type of evaluation that is to be performed. In this sense, it is important to *distinguish between internal and external evaluations*, and to decide up to which point the participants in the process will take part in its evaluation.



*Guiding the evaluation towards more qualitative and participatory methodologies can be a good way to overcome the numerous limitations we will come across, but always on condition that we try to perform the evaluation using strictly quantitative methods. Consequently, obstacles such as the lack of data, the lack of results, or the low reliability rate of certain information can be overcome with the help of these other methodologies that will allow us to evaluate citizen participation from other angles. Also, we should not forget that a participatory evaluation has the very important added value of implicating all the participants in a process, including political representatives and technical personnel. This allows us to improve participation based on the experience of the participants, while validating the evaluated process and the evaluation itself, besides the improvements that will be incorporated as a result of this evaluation.*



## 5. What we evaluate

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### Objects to be studied

When we talk of evaluating citizen participation, we could refer to different objects that need to be evaluated. Based on remarks and comments from all the members of the Local Observatories, we have reached the conclusion that the objects to be known by the OLDPs could be the following:

Public policies  
Stable participation system  
The processes / participatory experiences  
Social players

In this wide range of possible objects to be observed (evaluated), there is one factor that greatly conditions what will be evaluated: *the scale factor*.

*Evaluating a specific participation process is not the same as evaluating participation in a large public policy or the participation by a city as a group.*

In this document we will make an intent to cover scopes of the four study objects, but it will focus mainly on the analysis of participatory experiences because we understand that, based on this analysis we can get to specific elements and to others that are common to other objects, which otherwise would be difficult to cover.

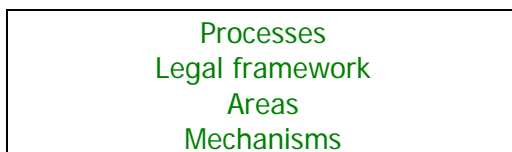
We will concentrate on presenting a series of criteria and methodologies that are to be used when evaluating processes/participatory experiences. This does not mean that the other possible study objects are not important when we talk of citizen participation in politics; they have simply been excluded from this document in order to reduce the complexity of the analysis.

*Nevertheless, we understand that the criteria presented in this document are useful when addressing, to a certain degree, the other scopes mentioned herein.*



## A. The types of objects being studied

Participation in our cities comes in different ways. We have considered it important to systemize the most common types we have come across in our experiences and to classify them, thus creating a general shared framework of understanding and dialogue. Based on these conclusions reached by the workgroup that was coordinated by the city of La Paz, we have defined the following categories:



**Processes** are all those chain or sequential chain actions that are carried out during a certain period of time, defined by organizational, institutional and social players in coordination with a local or municipal government.

**Legal Framework** is any regulation that serves to institutionalize, classify, enhance or foster citizen participation and/or its organizations in municipal management and/or community life in general.

**Areas** are all those scopes or instances in which participatory actions are created and established, allowing citizens and/or their organizations to participate in municipal management and/or in general community life.

**Mechanisms** are all means, tools and/or instruments that are used to create and develop participatory practices among institutional, organizational and social players that inter-relate with municipal or local public management.

The participatory processes, areas and mechanisms have been seen as potential objects of study since the beginning of the project. However we suggest the consideration of two other categories, such as the legal framework and participation models. This will allow us, for example, to determine if the participation is to be considered a mere tool that tends to improve and/or validate representative democracy, or if it is to be considered an efficient tool of representative democracy, defining the keys that are used to understand and implement participation, as well as the way this is implemented in the different scenarios of expression and materialization of inter-relation between the municipal government and the citizens.

Below is a chart summarizing the types of participatory experiences that could be included in study object by an OLDP.

CATEGORY	METHODOLOGY	DESCRIPTION
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<b>Processes</b>	<i>Participatory budgets</i>	Preparation of district, sub-municipal, or municipal budgets with direct citizen participation.
	<i>Strategic municipal plans</i>	Preparation of strategic long-term growth and development perspectives for an area, municipality or region.
	<i>Local economic development</i>	Development, implementation and follow-up of plans and actions to boost the local economy.
	<i>Agendas 21</i>	Participatory processes that seek an integral and sustainable view of the city. During this process general lines and specific actions will be prepared, that will be incorporated by all the implicated players.
	<i>Sectorial plans</i>	Planning local sectorial policies such as health, education, transport, etc.
	<i>Urban plans</i>	Preparation of local urban planning policies.
	<i>Education projects for the city</i>	They serve to design local strategies and policies in the field of education, but seen in a wide sense of the word, beyond formal education.
	<i>Other</i>	
<b>Legal frameworks</b>	<i>Current or laws or draft bills</i>	Legislation on a national scale and local application that refer to or affects citizen participation.
	<i>Current Decrees or drafts</i>	Presidential decrees referring to or affecting citizen participation.
	<i>Current or draft municipal by laws.</i>	Municipal legislations referring to or affecting citizen participation.
	<i>Current or draft Administrative resolutions</i>	Prepared by the Municipal council, referring to or affecting citizen participation.
<b>Areas</b>	<i>Citizen councils</i>	Organised by issues or by territories; it is mainly headed by associations and by representatives of professional guilds.
	<i>Work commissions</i>	Organised to address specific issues.
	<i>Follow-up committees</i>	Oversee municipal resources to ensure they are evenly distributed among the urban and rural population.
	<i>Territorial/ neighbour's organizations</i>	Citizen groups organised according to areas (neighbourhoods, counties, districts, etc.).
	<i>Citizen networks</i>	Non-institutional movements of persons and civil associations organised according to specific views and objectives.
	<i>Forums</i>	The idea of a forum is that it can act as an independent body, to represent the community's interests at different stages of the process of preparing and executing a specific policy. It fosters general debates about the process and promotes participation by the local population at all stages. As a body representing local consensus, its plays an important function as a lobby group, both on a local scale and with upper echelons.
	<i>Civic committees</i>	Participative bodies that allow us to exercise our collective ability to propose, plan, execute and evaluate the plans, programmes and projects that are needed for a relationship between society, social organizations, institutions and the municipal government.
<b>Mechanisms</b>	<i>Workshops</i>	Mechanisms of participation that bring together one or several groups of persons to discuss and evaluate possible scenarios, proposals for action, etc.



<i>Future workshops</i>	The future workshop is an exercise that allows us to prepare action plans based on participants' opinions and values. It gathers, during several sessions, representatives of different groups of interest, persons or bodies. The idea consists in reaching a vision of the future that is shared by everyone, and to take note of the steps needed to achieve this future scenario.
<i>Audiences</i>	They include experiences in which people/speakers talk about results or proposals; the public then debates these proposals based on a specific subject.
<i>Referendum</i>	A call made to the general public with the right to vote, on equal terms, directly and under secrecy.
<i>Citizen consultation</i>	Using follow-up systems and analysis based on qualitative and quantitative research.
<i>Citizen legislative initiatives</i>	Citizen Legislative Initiative is a mechanism that allows any citizen to present a draft bill to Congress or to the Municipal Legislature, for its debate and eventual approval if relevant.
<i>Direct election of office</i>	System that serves to directly elect authorities in areas lesser than municipal areas.
<i>Participation via mass communication media</i>	TV, programmes, radio programmes and other mass media that the citizen can use to transmit their opinions and proposals directly to the local or municipal authorities.
<i>Tele-participation</i>	This is a new formula that implies interaction between the authorities and the citizen, using tools such as the internet or local networks, and communication media and interaction between the administration and the public.
<i>Community participation</i>	Actions of citizen co-responsibility regarding management, work or economic resources, in municipal or local certain works, activities or projects.
<i>Citizen assemblies</i>	Citizen meetings held to debate issues that affect them and that have been carried to levels of political decision.

PS. The chart is not extensive. There are several other participatory instruments that are currently being applied in local communities. We have made an effort to reflect the most common ones in this chart.

*This chart is currently under revision. The definite publication of the document will include certain changes.*



## 6. Evaluation criteria for participatory processes

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Below are a series of evaluation criteria to be used with participatory processes. According to the depth of the evaluation sought for a process, more or less of these criteria can be used and a method can be created for each of them. Each methodology will require different resources and will provide a different level of depth of analysis.

Consequently, selecting all or some of the following criteria, and evaluating them using one of the proposed methodologies, will depend not only on the context and the characteristics of the process, but also on the resources used for that purpose. *If we evaluate many experiences simultaneously we will need to distribute the resources; this will reduce the depth of analysis used for each of them.*

*Each criterion proposed has a description of its process (its expectations) and how it should be evaluated.*

After having seen the contents of a criterion, we can decide if it can be used, or not, to evaluate our processes. Should we decide to apply it, we will need to choose one or several methodologies that have been proposed to evaluate the level of compliance of the criterion. The criteria are structured as follows:

### Criteria related to:

- A. The process coordination**
- B. The participants**
- C. Reason for participation**
- D. Way of participation**
- E. Consequences/results of the process**



## A. Criteria related to the process coordination:

- ✓ Consensus
- ✓ Transversality
- ✓ Initiative and leadership
- ✓ Integration in the municipal participatory system
- ✓ Clarity of the objectives
- ✓ Planning and resources

### 1. Consensus

**What it consists of:** A process in which there is wide consensus about its need and methodology. It has more possibilities of success than a process that can be questioned, both on a political, technical or social scale.

**How to evaluate it:**

#### a) Political acceptance

Identify if the process is accepted by all the political groups in the municipality and if there is, or not, any political group opposing it.

- ✓ It would be useful to have prepared a sociogram in order to perform this evaluation.
- ✓ This information can also be obtained through interviews with the different political groups or key informers. Another way to obtain information is through plural discussion groups.

#### b) Social acceptance

Identify if the process is accepted by all the social groups and communities that are relevant for the process, and whether there is any group or organization opposing it.

- ✓ To perform this evaluation, it would be useful to have prepared a sociogram.
- ✓ This information can also be obtained through interviews with key informants. Another way of obtaining this information is through plural discussion groups.
- ✓ Preferably, this type of evaluation would be carried out by external resources.

#### c) Technical acceptance

Identify if the process is accepted by all the municipal technicians that are relevant for the processes, and whether there is/are any technician/s opposing it.

- ✓ To perform this evaluation, it would be useful to have prepared a sociogram.



- ✓ This information can also be obtained through interviews with municipal technicians or key informants. Another way of obtaining this information is through internal discussion groups.
- ✓ Preferably, this type of evaluation would be carried out by external resources.

## **2. Transversality**

**What it consists of:** *Processes that achieve an internal transversal task, with the participation of the different areas that are both technically and politically relevant for the process, are more efficient processes;* at the same time they reduce resistance to the implementation of the results. Transversality is very important when the process is handled by the Participation Dept. and has substantial implications in other areas. It is also important when the substantive scope is integral and requires the implication of different areas.

### **How to evaluate it:**

#### **a) Level of implication by the different political and technical areas**

Analyze the level of implication by the different political and technical areas that are relevant for the process

- ✓ In the first place, it is important to identify the areas that are relevant for the process, according to the substantive scope and its objectives.
- ✓ This information can be obtained by identifying the presence or absence of these areas in the different bodies and participation areas, and/or by analysing the information they provide during the process.
- ✓ This information can also be obtained through interviews with the different technicians and politicians, or through internal discussion groups.
- ✓ Preferably, this type of evaluation would be carried out by external resources.

#### **b) Transversality areas**

Analyze whether transversal work areas have been considered when planning the process. Their objective is to relate the different areas that are implicated in the process.

- ✓ Analyze the transversality of these areas; if they are merely informative (the leading area informs the others) or whether they are co-decision and co-management areas of the process, based on the different areas that are implicated. The latter situation guarantees more transversality and efficiency.
- ✓ The evaluation can be performed through internal discussion groups or workshops, or through an analysis of the project.



### 3. Initiative and leadership

**What it consists of:** A participatory process *can be the initiative of different players; it can be the initiative of the government, of a specific area of the government, a technician, the opposition, an association, un-organised citizenry, etc.*

*The initiative conditions the development of the process but it should not affect its democratic nature.*

In general, processes that arise from citizen initiatives generate more confidence and have more possibilities of succeeding and can have greater levels of participation.

In all cases, *an initiative must have a political leadership*. It is only through a solid political leadership can a participatory process turn into an institutionally valid process. This condition is mandatory in order to be able to implement the results of the process, and consequently for the process to be efficient.

However, even though a solid political leadership is necessary, the existence of a pluralized driving group that co-leads or coordinates the process, can give it better efficiency and coherency, while approaching it to the dynamic realities of the municipality. Sharing process leadership guarantees its pluralism and transparency, while ensuring the neutrality of its coordination.

#### **How to evaluate it:**

##### **a) Initiative**

Identify which player or players have fostered the development of the participatory process

- ✓ This information can be obtained through interviews with key process informers. It is important that this information be obtained from several sources, since some players could tend to take control of the initiative of the process.
- ✓ Preferably this type of evaluation would be performed by external resources.

##### **b) Leadership**

Identify the presence of specific political leaders who will take care of the process

- ✓ This information can be obtained through interviews with project leaders.

##### **c) Pluralized driving group**



Identify the presence of a driving group and analyse its plurality

- ✓ A pluralized driving group is a small group that has different players (politicians, technicians and citizens), whose function is to drive the process, seeking its maximum diffusion.
- ✓ Should there be such a group, the part it plays in the process should be analyzed. Also it should be ensured the group has been attributed relevant functions.
- ✓ A sociogram can be a useful tool to analyze the plurality of this group.
- ✓ Preferably, the analysis of the functions and plurality of this driving group would be performed by external resources.
- ✓ Should this driving group exist, it would be advisable that it holds a self-evaluation meeting about its functions during the process.

#### **4. Integration in the municipal participatory system**

**What it consists of:** Some municipalities have a more or less stable participatory system. In such cases it would be convenient to study up to what point the evaluated process integrates (or not) in this participatory system.

The participatory processes of a specific municipality do not always have to derive from its stable participatory system. However, *it would be advisable that they be consistent as much as possible with the system, that they are integrated, and are coordinated to avoid duplicating efforts and prevent the saturation of potential citizen participation.* In this sense, it would be useful to take advantage of the bodies and participation structures that already exist in the municipality.

**How to evaluate it:**

##### **a) Relationship with other municipal processes**

Perform a qualitative analysis of how the evaluated process relates to other processes in the same municipality.

- ✓ Specifically determine if there is any type of coordination among the different processes.
- ✓ Preferably this evaluation would be performed by an external resource.

##### **b) Use of existing bodies or structures**

Identify whether the evaluated process taps into the bodies or participatory structures that already exist in the municipality.

Perform a qualitative analysis of this tapping into structures and identify the obstacles (if any) that may have arisen while tapping in to these structures.

- ✓ To perform this evaluation, it would be convenient to create a discussion group with the participants of these bodies and structures.
- ✓ Preferably, this evaluation would be performed by an external resource.



## 5. Clarity of the objectives

**What it consists of:** The objectives of a participatory process must be clear in order to make the task of the process managers and participants easier.

*Clarity of the objectives makes the process coherent and transparent.*

It is important that the process objectives establish its limits. This will avoid generating false expectations.

Going beyond the analysis of the objectives, it is also important to evaluate up to which point the initial objectives have been used as process guidelines, and up to which point the process results fulfil the initial objectives.

**How to evaluate it:**

### **a) Analysis of the objectives**

Identify the process objectives (if any) and analyze their clarity.

- ✓ A good way to obtain this information could be through the process participants (using questionnaires or evaluation workshops).

### **b) Fulfilment of the objectives**

Analyze up to what degree the objectives have been fulfilled. In case of non-fulfilment, analyze the causes.

- ✓ A good way to obtain this information would be through the process participants (using questionnaires or evaluation workshops).
- ✓ Also, self-evaluation by internal discussion groups could be a good method.

## 6. Planning and resources

**What it consists of:** Participation cannot be improvised. Thus, the entire participatory process must be planned, identifying its stages and schedule.

*Planning helps to foresee obstacles, organize participation, provide a better process quality, and ensures more transparency.*

Also, when planning a project, we need to foresee the necessary economic and technical resources. The quality of a process can be better when its economic and technical resources correspond to the set objectives.

**How to evaluate it:**

### **a) Analyze the planning and its compliance**



Identify whether the process has been planned.

- ✓ Perform a qualitative analysis of the planning. A good plan should detail the following elements:
  - The objectives of the process
  - Its stages
  - Its schedule
  - The tasks foreseen for each stage
  - Elements used for diffusion
  - The resources needed for each stage and for the overall process

Perform a qualitative analysis of the degree of compliance with the planning document. In case of non-fulfilment of the objectives, analyze the causes.

- ✓ Internal discussion groups can help with this type of evaluation.
- ✓ Preferably, this evaluation would be performed by an external resource.

#### **b) Economic resources**

Define the budget foreseen for the process  
Analyze the adaptation of the budget to the project's objectives.

- ✓ This information can be obtained from the process or from the person in charge of the process.

#### **c) Personnel**

Determine the existence and volume of own and external technical resources dedicated to the project.

- ✓ Qualifications and specialization of the personnel.
- ✓ Analyze the suitability of the technical resources for the project's objectives.
- ✓ This information can be obtained from the project or from the person in charge of the process.



## B. Participant-related criteria:

- ✓ Number
- ✓ Diversity
- ✓ Representativity
- ✓ Openness of the process

### 7. Number of participants

**What it consists of:** The more participants there are in a process, the better, considering that the appraisal of the number of participants will always depend on the objectives of the process and the reference population it addresses. At the same time, one cannot forget that the diversity of the participants is just as important as the number.

**How to evaluate it:** The evaluation of this criterion will depend on the type of process and the population it addresses. However, in order to be able to evaluate it, we propose three indicators that will allow us to calculate the real participants versus potential participants. Each indicator responds to different possibilities of processes and participants.

#### a) Percentage of participants in relation to the reference population:

Number of participants versus reference population (en percentages)

- ✓ Useful for processes in which the participants are non-organised citizens. It can also be used in processes that combine or mix organized citizen participation with non-organized citizen participation. In the case of the latter, the indicator could refer to the participants as a whole or only to the non-organized group.
- ✓ It makes more sense in processes that are open to the entire reference population. In the case of closed processes (the number of participants is restricted, and in this case the participants are selected), see section C.
- ✓ In all cases, a lot of attention must be given to determine the reference population (population addressed by the process).
- ✓ It can be used in the different sessions or participation mechanisms for a process or set of processes. In the case of the latter, the number of participants must be counted, without repetitions (a participant who takes part in two sessions of the same process must be accounted for as one and not two participants).
- ✓ Also, the average number of participants per session can be calculated. This information can be useful in the case of stable participation bodies, and loses its meaning when the different sessions of a process have different audiences or objectives.
- ✓ To be able to use this indicator, foresee counting the participants at the beginning of the process in order to avoid duplications when performing the final count.



## b) Percentage of organized players versus the reference total

Number of organized players versus the total number of reference players (in percentage).

- ✓ Useful for processes in which the participants are organised players. It can also be used in processes that combine or mix organized citizen participation with non-organized citizen participation. In the case of the latter, the indicator should refer only to the organized participants.
- ✓ In all cases, a lot of attention must be given to determine the reference organised player (players addressed by the process).
- ✓ It can be used for the different sessions or participation mechanisms in a process or for the group of processes. In the case of the latter, the number of participants must be counted, without repetitions (a participant who takes part in two sessions of the same process must be accounted for as one and not two participants).
- ✓ Also, the average number of participants per session can be calculated. This information can be useful in the case of stable participation bodies, and loses its meaning when the different sessions of a process have different audiences or objectives.
- ✓ In order to be able to use this indicator, foresee counting the participants at the beginning of the process in order to avoid duplications when performing the final count.

## c) Percentage of participants present versus selected participants:

Number of participants present versus selected participants (in percentage)

- ✓ Useful for closed processes (the number of participants is restricted and they are selected). In these processes, the participants could be organized, non-organized or a combination of both types. The indicator shows us up to which level the selected participants take part in the process.
- ✓ Can be used for the different sessions or participation mechanisms of a process or for the entire process. In the case of the latter, the number of participants must be counted without repetitions (a participant who takes part in two sessions must be accounted for as one and not two participants).
- ✓ Also, the average number of participants per session can be calculated. This information can be useful in the case of stable participation bodies, and loses its meaning when the different sessions of a process have different audiences or objectives.
- ✓ To be able to use this indicator, foresee counting the participants at the beginning of the process in order to avoid duplications when performing the final count.

## 8. Diversity

**What it consists of:** A process will be more democratic if it is able to incorporate the diversity of the society it is in, i.e.: the different social groups and the different



interests are represented in the process. In this sense, we should have in consideration the social groups that are usually under-represented in the participatory processes, such as women, youth or immigrants (under-represented groups can be different according to the social context in which the process takes place).

Similarly, to guarantee the diversity of a project, we need to study the participation of the organized players, evaluating the diversity of the participant associations versus those found in the area, focusing attention on the participation of players who are especially relevant for the subject of the participation.

The same as other criteria, this criterion will have more or less meaning according to the audience of the process. The more selective the audience is, lesser meaning will the criterion have. In other words, if the participatory process addresses a very specific group, such as immigrant women, this criterion will have less meaning; in such cases, the process does not seek to address the great diversity of the population, rather a specific group.

### How to evaluate it:

#### a) Percentage of a specific association or social group

The evaluation will compare the percentage of players from these groups participating in the process, with the percentage of these groups in the reference society.

Some of the associations or social groups could be the following:

- i. Women
- ii. Different age groups (children, under 30s, over 60s, etc.)
- iii. Immigrants
- iv. Different levels of training (basic, superior, etc.)
- v. Different social classes
- vi. Black population, local population, etc.
- vii. Different territories (districts, town areas, specific zones, etc.)
- viii. Others according to the characteristics of the process and its context.

- ✓ Can be used for the different sessions or participation mechanisms of a process, or for the entire process.
- ✓ To be able to use these indicators, we must foresee, at the onset of the process, counting the participants while gathering this information. In some cases, we can come across obstacles to obtain some of this information (training, social class).

#### b) Diversity index

The indicators stated in the above point can be added as an index in order to evaluate the level of diversity among the participants in a process.

- ✓ For example, let's take three groups (women, youth and immigrants). We then add their presence or absence to the process in the following way:



- i. If the percentage of women is equal or above the percentage of women in the reference society, add 5 points; if not, don't add anything.
- ii. If the percentage of youth is equal or above the percentage of women in the reference society, add 5 points; if not don't add anything.
- iii. If the percentage of immigrants is equal or superior to the percentage of women in the reference society, add 5 points; if not don't add anything.
- iv. The index is obtained by adding the three indicators. Finally, we could say that the diversity is high if the index is 15; medium if it is 10; and low if it is 5 or 0.

### c) Profile of the participating organizations

Percentage of the different types of organizations participating in the process (neighbourhood, corporate, union, cultural, sports, political, etc) and the evaluation of their representation.

Their representation in the process is evaluated according to:

- i. The theme of the process
  - ii. The objectives of the process
  - iii. The presence and representation of the different organizations in the social context where the process is being held.
- ✓ Identification of the types of organizations not participating in the process and the appraisal of the need for their participation in it.
  - ✓ Useful for processes in which the participants are organized players. They can also be used in processes that combine participation of organized citizens with non-organized citizens. In this case, the indicator must refer only to organized participants.
  - ✓ It is preferable that this type of evaluation be performed by external resources.

### d) Identification of relevant players and social groups

Determine whether among the participants, there is a key or relevant player missing for the theme to be proposed for participation.

- ✓ To be able to identify the absence of key players, a sociogram must be prepared beforehand.
- ✓ Preferably this type of evaluation will be performed by external resources.

## 9. Representativity of the participants

**What it consists of:** In some processes, all or some participants play the part of organized players. In such cases, a criterion of democratic quality consists in guaranteeing that these representatives really share a common point of view.

This criterion can only be applied to those processes that have in account, partially or fully, the participation of organized players.



The guarantees that the representatives share a common point of view can be determined via three types of elements: those related to the process; those related to the organization; and those related to persons who serve as representatives. The process must allow the representatives to transfer the information to their organizations and that these hold internal debates; the organizations must choose their representatives and must participate in the internal debates, and the representatives must participate in the process being faithful to the input from their organizations, without providing any personal input.

#### How to evaluate it:

##### a) Capacity for information flow between the representatives and the represented

Analysis of the process planning (sessions and chronogram), to determine if the process foresees that the representatives of the organizations are able to transfer information to the organization, generate an internal debate, and return to the process with the input obtained from the organization.

- ✓ Preferably this type of evaluation will be performed by external resources.

##### b) Election of the representatives

Percentage of organizations that have chosen their representative for the process at an assembly.

- ✓ This information can be gathered through a questionnaire sent to the participants who represent organizations.

##### c) Adherence of the representatives' speeches to the speeches by the organizations

Analyze up to which point the speeches by the representatives adhere to the speeches by their respective organizations.

- ✓ The analysis can be made through interviews with organization members who have not served as representatives of that organization. The intervention in the process by the representatives of the organization (minutes) will be needed for this.
- ✓ Also, a comparative analysis of the minutes, in the case of organizations having minutes of the sessions and that these can be accessed, can be performed.
- ✓ This evaluation only makes sense when the organizations have held an internal debate related to the process.
- ✓ This type of evaluation requires an enormous effort.



## 10. Openness of the process

**What it consists of:** Participatory processes can be open to all citizens, or they can be restricted to certain participants. Initially, *opening the processes to a large number of groups and citizens serves to improve their democratic quality, having always as an example the population the process addresses.*

Many processes have restricted areas whilst others are more open and with different functions. In the majority of the cases, they seek better operation of the process. Consequently, the fact that a process has a few restricted bodies does not mean it is restricted, if it also includes participation areas that are open to the public.

It could also happen that in some cases, the restriction on participation in the process is fully justified: due to issue being dealt with, the target public, the participation mechanism being used, etc.

### **How to evaluate it:**

#### **a) Openness of the process**

Identify whether the process is:

1. Open: all the participatory sessions are open to the public (addressed by the process)
2. Mixed: it has open sessions and closed sessions
3. Closed: all the participatory sessions are restricted to a selection of participants.

- ✓ This can also be applied to different participatory areas of a process or to the participatory bodies in a municipality.
- ✓ Preferably, this type of evaluation will be performed by external resources.

#### **b) Openness of the decision areas**

Identify whether the decision areas in a process are restricted to specific participants, or whether they are open to all citizens addressed by the process.

- ✓ This type of evaluation only makes sense when the process has decision-taking areas.
- ✓ Preferably, this type of evaluation will be performed by external resources.



### C. Criteria related to the reason for participation:

- ✓ **Relevance**
- ✓ **Capacity of intervention by the local administration**

#### 11. Relevance

**What it consists of:** Participation should be applied to aspects that are relevant to a community. Participatory processes can contribute to the efficiency of public policies when they deal with issues that are relevant to the citizens.

#### **How to evaluate it:**

##### **a) Political agenda**

Identify whether the issue put to participation is included in the political agenda of the municipal government.

- ✓ This can be identified by analysing the government's lines of strategy (Municipal Action Programme) or by interviewing the politicians in charge of the issue.

##### **b) Subjective appraisal by the citizens**

Analyze the perception the citizen has about the relevance of the subject put to participation.

- ✓ This information can be obtained through a self-evaluation questionnaire sent to the participants in the process. The inconvenience of this method is that it only gathers the perception of the participants, who would most probably be the ones who are interested in the issue.
- ✓ The information can also be obtained by carrying out a participatory diagnosis prior to the process, to identify the main problems in the municipality.

##### **c) Percentage of the budget affected by the results of the process**

Number of resources affected by the results in relation to the municipal budget or to the budget corresponding to the specific issue.

- ✓ The more resources affected by the results of the process, the higher will the importance of the issue put to participation be.
- ✓ In some processes, the result does not have any specific economic effect. As an example, this is the case of those processes that culminate in the definition of strategies or in pluri-annual plans without specifying the effects on the annual budget.
- ✓ This information can be obtained from the project itself or through an interview with the politician in charge of the process.



## 12. Capacity of intervention by the local administration

**What it consists of:** A participatory process on a local scale would be more efficient if it dealt with issues in which the local administration has a high degree of intervention. On the contrary, the municipal government would require the participation of supralocal administrations to be able to implement the results of the process.

**How to evaluate it:**

### a) Scope of intervention in the matter

Determine whether the matter put to participation is within the scope of the municipality

- ✓ If this is not the case, determine if there is, or not, complicity with supralocal administrations in order to implement the results of the process.
- ✓ The information can be obtained by interviewing the person in charge of the project and, if relevant, validate it with the persons in charge in the supralocal administration implicated in the process.



## D. Criteria related to the type of participation:

- ✓ Participatory diagnosis
- ✓ Capacity to make proposals
- ✓ Level of participation
- ✓ Quality of the information
- ✓ Deliberation methods and techniques

### 13. Participatory diagnosis

**What it consists of:** *In order to be able to participate in any process, it would be useful to know the status of the matter the participation is about.* Thus, ideally it would start with a diagnosis that defines the main problems and matter for debate. The democratic quality of the process would be greater if the diagnosis is participatory.

#### How to evaluate it:

Determine whether a diagnosis was used in the process and analyze the level of participation when preparing it.

- ✓ To analyze the level of participation in the diagnosis, see section 15 in this document.

### 14. Capacity to make proposals

**What it consists of:** A participatory process will widen citizens' rights if it allows them to make proposals. Some participatory processes do not foresee this possibility because it was decided like that; others do not consider it because the objective of the process focuses on other stages of preparing a public policy, e.g., the diagnosis.

#### How to evaluate it:

Determine whether the process considers, or not, the possibility of making proposals

- ✓ To do so, an analysis of the process could be performed.
- ✓ Another good way to evaluate this element would be to know the perception the participants have of the process, either through a questionnaire or through an evaluation workshop.
- ✓ The evaluation can be performed either for the entire process or for a specific mechanism or stage.

### 15. Level of participation

**What it consists of:** Citizen participation in a participatory process can have different levels. Arnstein (1.969) proposed the following classification:

- ✓ Information



- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Query
- ✓ Deliberation
- ✓ Decision

In some instances, it is not easy to classify a participatory process of this type. Grouping processes according to types, as below, could make it easier:

- ✓ Information – Communication
- ✓ Query – Deliberation
- ✓ Decision – Management

There is a general idea that processes with only information and communication elements are not really participatory processes.

This definition is seen as an ascending scale, going from lesser to greater citizen participation in decision taking. However, *we should avoid making a direct association between a greater citizen participation and a better democratic quality of a process. Certainly, the more participation there is, wider will the citizens' rights and responsibilities be; however, there are many other elements on which the democratic quality of a participatory process depends.*

Deliberative processes can have high pedagogic quality and potential, whilst decision-only processes can be of very low quality according to who the participants are and what restrictions there are about decision-taking.

#### How to evaluate it:

- ✓ Perform a qualitative analysis of the participation throughout the entire process.
  - ✓ Perform a qualitative analysis to determine the levels of participation there have been throughout the process (whether there has been information, deliberation, etc).
- ✓ To be able to perform this analysis, it would be useful to incorporate the views of the participants through a questionnaire or workshop.
  - ✓ Preferably, this type of evaluation would be performed by external resources.

## 16. Quality of the information

**What it consists of:** *A good participatory process must provide the participants all the information they need to opine and decide. To achieve this, the information must be plural and have quality as well as being clear and useful. Also it must clarify the objectives of the process.*

Also, the adequate channels must be used to reach all potential participants. *Potential participants must be aware of the participatory process and have access to all the*



information.

*A good diffusion of the process ensures that all potential participants can take part in better conditions of equality.*

#### How to evaluate it:

##### a) Information channels – diffusion

- ✓ Identify the channels that will be used: posters, letters, phone calls, emails, web, etc.
- ✓ Identify the weaknesses in the information channels and determine whether the information is reaching, or not, all potential participants.
- ✓ Perform a qualitative analysis to determine the level of efficiency of the information channels in transmitting information to all potential participants.

- ✓ To be able to perform this evaluation, it would be useful to gather the participants in internal discussion groups and/or workshops.

##### b) Plurality of the information obtained

Analyse the plurality of the information sources used in the process by identifying the different resources, views and opinions about the subject of the participation.

- ✓ Subjective appraisal by the participants. This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire distributed at the end of the process, or by using a participation mechanism. It can also be obtained through a qualitative participatory evaluation.

##### c) Clarity and utility of the information obtained

- ✓ Subjective appraisal by the participants. This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire distributed at the end of the process, or by using a participation mechanism. It can also be obtained through a qualitative participatory evaluation.

## 17. Deliberation methods and techniques

**What it consists of:** *In deliberation areas it is usual to generate deliberative and communicative inequalities among the different participants.* In order to avoid such inequalities, it is advisable to use specific methods and techniques that help to reduce them.

One of the most usual techniques is the presence of a moderator at the debates. There are other specific group work techniques that allow intervention by all the participants.



## How to evaluate it:

### a) Use of deliberation techniques

Determine whether participation techniques or mechanisms have been used in the process to avoid inequalities at the deliberations.

### b) Possibility to voice one's own opinion

Subjective appraisal by the participants.

- ✓ This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire distributed at the end of the process, or by using a participation mechanism.
- ✓ It can also be obtained through a qualitative participatory evaluation.



## E. Criteria related to the consequences of the process:

- ✓ Substantive results
- ✓ Implementing the results
- ✓ Result feedback
- ✓ Improvement of relationships among the players
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Building a political participatory culture

### 18. Substantive results

**What it consists of:** To be able to legitimize a participatory process, it is fundamental that the process shows *results that respond to the needs foreseen when it was being designed*.

**How to evaluate it:**

#### a) Type of result

Identify the existence of a document showing the substantive results of the process.

- ✓ Type of results obtained: minutes, diagnosis, plans, specific actions, reports, etc.
- ✓ Analyze the impact the results have on public policies. Not all the results have the same impact. As such, the specific actions, if they are implemented, will probably have a greater impact than a consultative process.
- ✓ To perform this evaluation, it would be useful to work with internal discussion groups.

#### b) Subjective appraisal of the results by participants

Participatory analysis on the utility of the results of the process, its impact and adaptation to the needs generated by the process.

- ✓ Subjective appraisal by the participants. This appraisal can be obtained through a questionnaire at the end of the process, or at the end of a participation mechanism. It can also be obtained through a qualitative participation.

### 19. Implementing the results

**What it consists of:** The substantive results of a participatory process must be implemented.

In order to foster the implementation of the results of a process, in a coherent way



and faithfully following the lines of the debate, it is quite usual to create a body whose task is to follow up the implementation. It could be a body newly created at the end of the process, or we could take advantage of a body that already exists in the process (e.g., the plural foster group, if there is one). Normally they are plural bodies that represent all the participants in the process.

### How to evaluate it:

#### a) Implementing the results

Verify the implementation of tangible results

- ✓ It could turn out that the implementation of the results is not tangible or is foreseen for a later date. In such cases, the verification that the results of the process have been ratified at the municipal council meeting or by any other institutional body, can be used as an evaluation instrument.
- ✓ This information can be obtained through the analysis of the process or by interviewing the politician in charge of the process.

#### b) Bodies used for the follow-up

Determine the existence, or the study to create a body of this nature and analyze its plurality.

- ✓ Should such a body already exist, analyze the part it plays in the process and ensure that it really has been attributed important functions. It would be interesting to see the steps the body takes if the results are not implemented and to analyze the real lobbying capacity it has with the municipal government.
- ✓ Preferably, the analysis of the functions and the plurality of the body in charge of the follow-up, if it exists, should be performed by external resources.
- ✓ It would be useful that the body performing the follow-up, if it exists, holds sessions to self-evaluate its operation throughout the process.

## 20. Result feedback

**What it consists of:** A good participatory process should foresee a result feedback at the end of the process, *for the participants to know the results, validate them and consider the process as ended. This practice is a fundamental element of transparency to guarantee the legitimacy of the participatory processes and to increase citizen confidence in the institutions.*

### How to evaluate it:



Determine whether the process foresees a feedback

- ✓ Analyze the result feedback format (if there is one): act or presence, feedback workshop, document sent to the participants, letter, etc.
- ✓ The feedback must be transparent and will have a greater democratic nature if it has participants and they are not only informed but can also validate these results.
- ✓ Preferably this evaluation will be performed by external resources.

## **21. Improvement of relationships among the players**

**What it consists of:** In order to foster citizen participation, a participatory process not only must look for substantive results, but also strengthen relationships among the participants.

*If the process is well managed, this strengthening of social relationships will allow us to overcome conflicts with more ease.*

**How to evaluate it:**

### **a) Improve citizen relationships**

Analyse the impact the process has on social relationships: among citizens, associations, citizens and associations, etc.

- ✓ Subjective appraisal by the participants. This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire distributed at the end of the process, or by using a participation mechanism. It can also be obtained through a qualitative participatory evaluation.

### **b) Improvement of citizen-administration relationships**

Analyse the impact the process has on citizen-administration relationships

- ✓ Subjective appraisal by the participants. This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire distributed at the end of the process, or by using a participation mechanism. It can also be obtained through a qualitative participatory evaluation.

### **c) Improvement of internal relationships**

Analyze the impact the process has on internal relationships: relationships among political representatives from different areas or different groups, relationships among technical personnel from different areas, relationships among politicians and technicians, etc.

- ✓ To perform this evaluation, it would be useful to work with internal



discussion groups.

## **22. Training**

**What it consists of:** A participatory process will be much better if it manages to train its participants in the field of citizen participation. The training can be specific to the subject of the participation, of general nature to achieve better overall operation of the participatory processes (capacity to talk, understand the way participatory processes work, know how the administration works, etc.) or more abstract about democracy and its values.

**How to evaluate it:**

### **a) Training sessions**

- ✓ Determine if the process has foreseen specific training sessions.
  - ✓ Analyze the objectives and the formats of the sessions, if any.
- ✓ To perform this evaluation, it would be useful to work with internal discussion groups.

### **b) Subjective appraisal by the participants**

- Subjective appraisal by the participants, of the training received.
- ✓ This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire distributed at the end of the process, or at the end of the training sessions.
  - ✓ It can also be obtained through a qualitative participatory evaluation.

## **23. Building a political participatory culture**

**What it consists of:** A participatory process, to strengthen the citizens, must help to generate a political participatory culture among the participants.

**How to evaluate it:**

- Subjective appraisal by the participants at the end of the process.
- ✓ This appraisal can refer to issues such as general satisfaction with the process, the use of citizen participation, or the willingness to participate once again.
  - ✓ This appraisal can be obtained either through a questionnaire or by using a participatory quality evaluation mechanism.



## 7. Evaluation criteria summary chart

### A. Criteria related to the coordination of the process:

- ✓ Consensus
- ✓ Transversality
- ✓ Initiative and leadership
- ✓ Integration in the municipal participatory system
- ✓ Clarity of the objectives
- ✓ Planning and resources

### B. Participant-related criteria:

- ✓ Number
- ✓ Diversity
- ✓ Representativity
- ✓ Openness of the process

### C. Criteria related to participation:

- ✓ Relevance
- ✓ Capacity of intervention by the local administration

### D. Criteria related to the type of participation:

- ✓ Participatory diagnosis
- ✓ Capacity to make proposals
- ✓ Level of participation
- ✓ Quality of the information
- ✓ Deliberation methods and techniques

### E. Criteria related to the consequences of the process:

- ✓ Substantive results
- ✓ Implementing the results
- ✓ Result feedback
- ✓ Improvement of relationships among the players
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Building a political participatory culture



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## ANNEX I

### Some methodological elements

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Below is a brief description of some of the evaluation methods that have arisen throughout the document. In no way does this document intend to be a guide.

There are many other evaluation tools, but this document only reflect the most common ones

The methods have been divided in three types:

- **Technical analysis:** methods that require neither group study areas nor participative areas
- **Internal self-evaluation:** group reflection methods with internal players (process developers, organizers and coordinators)
- **Participative self-evaluation:** evaluation methods based on the opinions and views of the participants in the process

#### Technical analysis methodologies

##### Registers

To achieve a good evaluation of a process, it is very important to register the participants and to identify some of their social characteristics: *gender, age, training, nationality...*, and for the organized participants: *body they represent, type of association, etc.*

Also, it would be advisable to have other registers related to the reference population addressed by the process: *social and demographic data related to the reference population, register of bodies, etc.*

##### Analysing the project and the process

Certain quality criteria in participatory processes can be technically evaluated by an expert merely by analyzing the project and the process.

In such cases, the evaluation does not require collective study mechanisms since it consists in the *mere identification of certain elements in the project or in its implementation.*

The analysis of the project and the process consists of reviewing the project and its implementation throughout the process. Preferably this analysis will be performed by *an expert in participatory processes.*



## Interviews with key informers

In every process we can identify certain key persons who can provide a wealth of information about the social and political reality of the participating area. *A group of 5 to 10 key informers can provide, through in-depth interviews, a lot of information about the process that can be very useful when evaluating it.*

Amongst the key informers of a process, there will be persons who will provide more information than others about the evaluation of the process. In this sense, the most relevant informer will be the politicians and technician in charge of the process.

## The sociogram

The sociogram is a tool that serves to identify the *layout of the players who are implicated (and/or affected) in the issue being treated, and defines the relationships and influences among them.*

A sociogram is none other than a graphical representation of the group of nodes, players, (on a national, market and civil society scale), and the relationships between them.

It is a descriptive tool that can be created individually or by a group. It would be interesting to build it using key players who can provide us with all the information about the social and political reality of the participating area.

## Methods for internal self-evaluation

### Internal discussion groups

Before addressing specific aspects of a participatory process, it would be interesting to perform a collective study with the persons who are most implicated in the management and coordination of the process.

These areas can be created specifically for the evaluation, at the end of the process, or at the end of certain stages of the process, and should include the politicians and technicians who are implicated in the process.

If there are specific bodies with process coordination or follow-up functions which include citizens, besides technicians and politicians, it would be useful to take advantage of these areas for the internal evaluation.

## Methods of participatory self-evaluation



## The questionnaire for the participants

The questionnaire is a tool that is used to obtain *views and subjective appraisals by the participants in relation to the participatory process*.

It is an instrument that the participants can use to provide an individual evaluation of the process. It provides each participant with an individual stance but prevents the evaluation from being the result of a deliberation and a collective study. Nevertheless, there is also the possibility of sending the questionnaire at the end of a group session held to evaluate the process.

Even though it is basically a quantitative tool, the questionnaire allows the introduction of open qualitative questions.

The questionnaire allows us to obtain quantitative data related to different elements. In the case of closed questions, we can use a range of questions with an opinion scale (very much / quite / none, or a point-based evaluation from 0 to 10, etc.).

The questionnaire can be handed to the participants at the end of the process or on site at the end of all or some of the different participatory mechanisms that were developed during the process.

## Qualitative participatory evaluation

Seen from a qualitative point of view, an evaluation has different participatory methodologies that allow the participants in the process to evaluate different aspects of the process.

A qualitative evaluation allows a collective study process to be developed among the participants regarding the participatory process, and endows the evaluation with an important added value.

Besides, a qualitative evaluation brings out more detailed elements, elements that are more specific to the process itself, generates debates and explanations of why some things work well and others do not, etc. The qualitative method provides a better incorporation in the evaluation, of more subjective elements and those that are difficult to measure. A lot of these elements are lost in a quantitative evaluation and can only be obtained using qualitative methods.

A qualitative participatory evaluation can be carried out using workshops or specific meetings held for that purpose, or even on site once the specific participatory group mechanisms have ended. Also specific discussion groups can be created, or certain process bodies (if any) can be taken advantage of to hold evaluation sessions.



## SUMMARY CHART

	Criterion	Evaluation system	Evaluation methods						
			Registers	Project analysis	Interviews with informants	Sociogram	Internal groups	Participant questionnaire	Qualit. part. evaluation
Coordination	Consensus	Political acceptance			X	X			X
		Social acceptance				X			X
		Technical acceptance				X	X		
	Transversality	Level of implication different areas			X		X		
		Transversality areas		X			X		
	Initiative and leadership	Initiative			X				
		Leadership			X				
		Plural promoter group		X		X	X		
	System integration	Relationship with other processes		X			X		X
		Use of existing bodies		X			X		X
	Clarity of objectives	Analysis of objectives		X				X	X
		Fulfilment of objectives					X	X	X
Planning and resources	Planning and its fulfilment		X			X			
	Economic resources		X	X					
	Personnel		X	X					
Who participates	Number of participants	Percentage of participants	X						
		Percentage of organized players	X						
		Participants among the selection	X						
	Diversity of participants	Percentage of different groups	X						
		Diversity index	X						
		Organization profile	X						
		Relevant players	X			X			
	Representativity	Facility for communication		X					
		Election of the representatives						X	
		Speeches by the representatives		X	X				
	Openness	Openness of the process		X					
		Openness of the decisive areas		X					
E	Relevance	Political agenda			X				



		Relevance of citizen appraisal		x				x		
		Percentage of budget affected		x	x					
	Capacity of intervention	Capacity		x	x					
<b>How to participate</b>	Participatory diagnosis	Participatory diagnosis		x						
	Capacity to make proposals	Capacity to make proposals		x				x	x	
	Level of participation	Level of participation		x				x	x	
	Quality of the information	Information – diffusion channels	Information – diffusion channels		x			x		x
		Plurality of the information	Plurality of the information		x				x	x
		Clarity and utility of the information	Clarity and utility of the information		x				x	x
	Deliberation methods	Use of deliberation techniques	Use of deliberation techniques		x					
Possibility to voice one's own opinion		Possibility to voice one's own opinion						x	x	
<b>Consequences</b>	Results	Type of results		x			x			
		Citizen appraisal of the results						x	x	
	Implementation of the results	Implementation		x	x					
		Bodies for follow-up		x						x
	Feedback	Result feedback		x						
	Improvement of relationships	Relationships among citizens	Relationships among citizens						x	x
		Relationship admin.- citizen	Relationship admin.- citizen						x	x
		Internal relationships	Internal relationships					x		
	Training	Training sessions	Training sessions		x			x		
Citizen training appraisal		Citizen training appraisal						x	x	
Participatory culture	Participatory culture						x	x		

