



## Participatory democracy quality index (PDI)

### Framework note on the principles for the application and preparation of the report on participatory democracy

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#### 1. Context

The International Observatory of Participatory Democracy (IOPD), created in 2001, is a space open to cities, organizations, agencies and research centers that wish to learn about, exchange or apply experiences of participatory democracy at the local level to deepen democracy in local governance. Today, it represents a powerful network united around a common will to discover, exchange and apply experiences of participatory democracy at the local level to create safe, inclusive, peaceful and sustainable cities and territories by 2030.

After the approval in 2018 of the Agenda for Local Democracy, the IOPD, during its last General Assembly held in December 2021, adopted the idea of working on the establishment of an index to measure the quality of participatory democracy in cities and territories.

The Participatory Democracy Quality Index (PDI) contributes to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda. Its application is closely aligned with the principles of **participatory governance** and its internationally agreed definition. It will measure the quality of participatory democracy in each country based on defined indicators.

The PDI will collect lessons learned and provide an action-oriented methodology to improve the quality of participatory democracy by calculating an index and publishing an annual report on the state of participatory democracy.

This exercise will also allow a classification between countries and cities according to whether they have a full, imperfect, hybrid or authoritarian participatory democracy. The index will allow a comparative evaluation between countries or cities.

#### 2. Basic principles for start-up

1. The actions must be directly or indirectly linked to the principles of participatory governance;
2. The PDI requires the full participation of citizens;
3. The actions of the PDI that will lead to the preparation of the annual report on the state of participatory democracy must be linked to the development of the decentralization policy, as well as the good governance policies of the countries;
4. The PDI uses an approach based on human rights, access to basic social services and the right to participation and development;
5. The PDI promotes the use of local potential (community efforts, if possible) for data collection activities, discussion forums, and tool approval;
6. PDI implies transparency in the plan of execution activities for the target audience;
7. The PDI is based on results-based management and sets goals for the integration of gender and disability throughout the process;
8. The PDI is based on the results of the Human Development Index (HDI) prepared by the UNDP, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) prepared by Transparency International, as well as the Freedom of the Press Index prepared and published by Reporters Without Borders. (RSF) and the Urban Prosperity Index (UN-Habitat).

### **3. The principles of participatory democracy will be used as indicators to measure the PDI**

1. **Participation and civic commitment:** this principle will analyze the level of promotion of the direct participation of the populations, or indirectly through their community organizations, in all stages of the decision-making process related to public management.
2. **Transparency and accountability:** this principle will make it possible to analyze the level of fluidity in the circulation of budget information and the responsibility of elected officials on local affairs and the use of public resources.
3. **Inclusion, equality and equity:** this principle will make it possible to analyze the level of relations between citizens and territories in the expression and consideration of the needs of the populations. This provision is based on the universal principles of economic, social, cultural and political rights. It also makes it possible to assess the level of inclusion of vulnerable groups, such as young people, people with disabilities, women and economic agents who are often left out, but also populations in peripheral and precarious neighborhoods.
4. **Effectiveness and efficiency:** this principle implies analyzing the level of allocation of local resources (investment budget) towards the essential needs defined by the communities. This principle also implies the analysis of the level

of execution of the budget, in order to help reduce the gap that is often observed between the budget voted and its execution (administrative account).

5. **Solidarity:** this principle allows analyzing the level of community and citizen participation in the formulation of individual interests and needs, in relation to the identification and negotiation of collective priorities. It is also about measuring the mobilization of the community to take charge of these priorities for the benefit of the greatest number of disadvantaged people in the municipality and to evaluate their level of satisfaction.
6. **Transversality:** in this case, it will try to analyze the level of articulation between the different territorial levels (especially between neighborhoods, cities, municipalities, departments, provinces, regions, countries), and the promotion of coherence between local initiatives and policies. sector based on the 17 SDGs.

#### **4. Goals**

**In the long term**, the goal of the PDI reports is to create a solid foundation for the creation of a system of cities and settlements that maximizes the comparative advantages of each city and municipality. The work will evaluate the transformation capacities of large and small cities and will also create sustainable synergies and institutional and community solidarity, which will allow development from a harmonized, balanced and equitable approach.

**In the short term**, the reports are a strategic tool for decision-making that will allow, from an operational perspective, the creation of conditions for monitoring the state of participatory democracy and its progress and challenges. These advances will be the result of the policies and actions and recommendations of the reports. The PDI will be calculated by the national teams or by a local consultant who knows the reality of each country. The latter will facilitate the creation of a database for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the important SDGs, international agendas and national policies. Therefore, it is strategic to establish a link with the SDG monitoring bodies at the national level or with international organizations for the mobilization of resources.