



A M P L I A N D O DEMOCRACIA

February 2024

MANIFESTO FOR BROADENING DEMOCRACY

The individuals and organizations endorsing this Manifesto are committed to promoting a society at peace with the planet, where democratic coexistence is nurtured, and where all people can live with dignity, fully exercising our rights and freedoms.

We believe that in order to achieve this goal it is essential to have a strong democratic system that guarantees the openness and transparency of its institutions and promotes the meaningful participation of all people and stakeholders in our society in the design of public policies and in decision-making on the matters that impact them.

We observe that, as part of a broader global trend, our democratic system is experiencing a moment of weakness. In addition to the difficulties faced by our public authorities in providing a satisfactory response to the main challenges – social, environmental, and coexistence-related – that we collectively face, there is an increasingly widespread and extended perception among the citizenry that these public authorities do not adequately represent their interests, nor do they listen to or address their concerns and opinions.

This climate of disaffection, especially prevalent among the younger population and the most vulnerable groups, leads to a questioning of the democratic system itself and of the representativeness of democratically established public authorities and institutions.

We believe that the only strategy in response to this insufficient response and this crisis of trust and representativeness is to opt for more and better democracy. This entails institutions that are more committed to transparency, inclusion, participation, and accountability.

We are certain that, with these elements, they will be better equipped to tackle the collective challenges we face and will be able to regain the trust and affection of those who may have felt abandoned and disappointed.

There are new and improved ways through which citizens, and other relevant stakeholders, can effectively engage in the decision-making and public policy-making processes, thereby strengthening the functioning of the institutions and procedures of our parliamentary democracy. We have seen how a better and more significant public involvement makes a more efficient use of collective knowledge and intelligence throughout the entire policy cycle; grants public authorities greater social legitimacy to adopt measures and decisions, even in the most apparently complex, controversial and politically entrenched issues; guarantees greater



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inclusivity and representativeness in the interests and perspectives that are taken into account when designing public policies; and fosters civic values and attitudes - such as the ability to listen, dialogue, and share ideas while respecting dissent or building consensus - which are an effective antidote to the existing crisis of representation.

We are aware that it will be necessary to adopt specific measures and actions so that all individuals and groups can defend their rights and interests on an equal basis and participate meaningfully in public matters, regardless of their social and economic situation, age, ethnicity, disability, or location in the territory. **We understand** that there is a cultural and socioeconomic diversity, far from the predominant social reality, to which public discourse will have to be adapted and brought closer. **We also realize** that living in a democracy and participating in public affairs is a learned process so it will be necessary to ensure that everyone has access to the necessary skills and knowledge needed to do so throughout their lives.

Consequently, **we urge all political parties and relevant public administrations** to promptly commit and implement specific, effective and ambitious measures aimed at:

- 1- Promoting a more transparent parliamentarianism, with the capacity and willingness to be accountable and open to citizen participation.
- 2- Reforming the functioning of the Popular Legislative Initiative to turn it into a real and effective tool for legislative participation by civil society, capable of complementing and enhancing the representative and decision-making capacities of the Legislative body.
- 3- Promoting, supporting, and organizing citizen panels and other deliberative processes to assist the public authorities and administrations in addressing complex political dilemmas with better information and greater social legitimacy.
- 4- Improving the functioning and effectiveness of citizen participation in the consultative bodies of the Administration, so that they become spaces of relevant and active participation, with proactive capacity and with inclusive and diverse representation.
- 5- Improving the design and functioning of public consultation procedures in regulatory projects to ensure that they become a regular channel of participation for a diverse, inclusive, and representative set of interested parties and to guarantee the quality and accessibility of the process and the adequate accountability from the responsible Administration.
- 6- Regulating the activity of interest groups to reduce the risks of fraud, corruption, and conflicts of interest, improve the quality of the decision-making processes, and promote a higher level of integrity and transparency in public institutions.



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7- Promoting a politically active, socially involved and committed citizenry throughout all stages of life, starting by ensuring the inclusion of children and youth in forms of participation from which they are currently excluded.

We are aware that the measures proposed in this Manifesto will only be fully effective if they are accompanied by the firm commitment and action of the public authorities in defense of public integrity, the protection of a safe civic space, the extension of active entitlement to civil society, and the resilience of our societies against misinformation and manipulation of information.

We provide, as [annexes](#) to this Manifesto (*only available in Spanish*), a series of documents with detailed proposals on how the suggested measures could be implemented, which have the legitimacy of being based on the main consensus and best international practices and which are based on the recommendations of leading institutions and our individual and collective experiences.

Finally, the individuals and organizations endorsing this Manifesto will monitor the adoption of the proposed measures, will be demanding in their implementation, and will inform the public opinion and citizenry accordingly.

[Check the Manifesto endorsements](#)

For more information, please contact us:

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