



Generalitat de Catalunya  
Departament d'Acció Exterior,  
Relacions Institucionals i Transparència  
**Direcció General de Participació Ciutadana**

# Towards an ecosystem of citizen participation

Ismael Peña-López

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ACCOMPLISSH Co-creACTION Summit.

31 January 2019.

Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona Conference.

# A theory of change

- Efficiency, efficacy and legitimacy of public decisions improves
- Populism has decreased in institutions and the public sphere
- Citizens understand the complexity of public decision-making
- Citizen participation and political engagement clearly shifts towards a technopolitical paradigm

- Elections
- Direct democracy
- Deliberative participation
  
- Internal participation
- Collaboration
  
- New intermediaries
- Infrastructures
- Open Government

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**LOCALRET**







**meta**

**decidim**



# Software Governance



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# Methodology



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Secretaris, Interventors i  
Tresorers d'Administració Local

# Methodology



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+ID



+support

+spaces



Accountability  
Consultations  
Participatory budgeting  
Deliberative processes

Crowdlaw  
Citizen initiatives  
Citizen councils  
Co-management

+citizenlab

**RIS 3 CAT**  
Research and Innovation Strategies  
for Smart Specialisation  
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# Technology



Consorci  
**Administració Oberta  
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# Training



Generalitat de Catalunya  
**Escola d'Administració Pública  
de Catalunya**

# Ecosystem of citizen participation

## Software Governance



## Methodology



+ID



+support  
+spaces



## Technology



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+civil society  
organizations

+hackers  
+facilitators

+artists  
+legal

+media  
+politics

# Shifts in meaning (i)

- Legitimization of (1) participation (2) at any level/commitment.
- Participation means not direct democracy (substitution), but dialogue (complementation).



# Shifts in meaning (ii)

- “Horizontalization” of government-citizen in decision-making.
- Sovereignty over (1) agenda setting (2) institutions (3) the system.
- ICTs not as substitutes, but as enablers and boosters and to increase efficacy and efficiency.

# Shifts in norms (i)

- Institutions as neutral enablers, as rich nodes, as hubs.
- All contributions matter: the power of granularity in participation.
- Dire change of culture within the Administration.
- (Digital) infrastructures are public, including its governance.

# Shifts in norms (ii)

- Participation is binding and has an impact.
- Transparency as a PRE-requisite for policy-making.
- Against disenchantment and disaffection: no “listening” but “engaging”.

# Shifts in power (i)

- Small in size, significant in qualitative terms.
- Agenda setting is now public/open/participated.
- Decrease of the layers of intermediation (openness of the rest).
- Total disclosure of the full process and outputs.

# Shifts in power (ii)

- Real devolution of sovereignty:
  - From institutions to citizens.
  - From civil organizations to individual citizens.
  - From media to participants.
- A network of open participatory governments and citizenries?

# Conclusions (i)

- Deliberation becomes the new democracy standard.
- Openness as the pre-requisite for deliberation.
- Accountability and legislative footprint to achieve legitimacy.
- Participation for more pluralism and stronger social capital (& GOTO 1)

# Outcomes (ii)

- Lesser role of intermediation and traditional institutions.
- Major role of informed deliberation.
- Balance between institutions, experts/leaders and individual citizens in a new ecosystem of actors, roles and relationships: networks and communities with liquid and reconfiguring affiliation.

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