

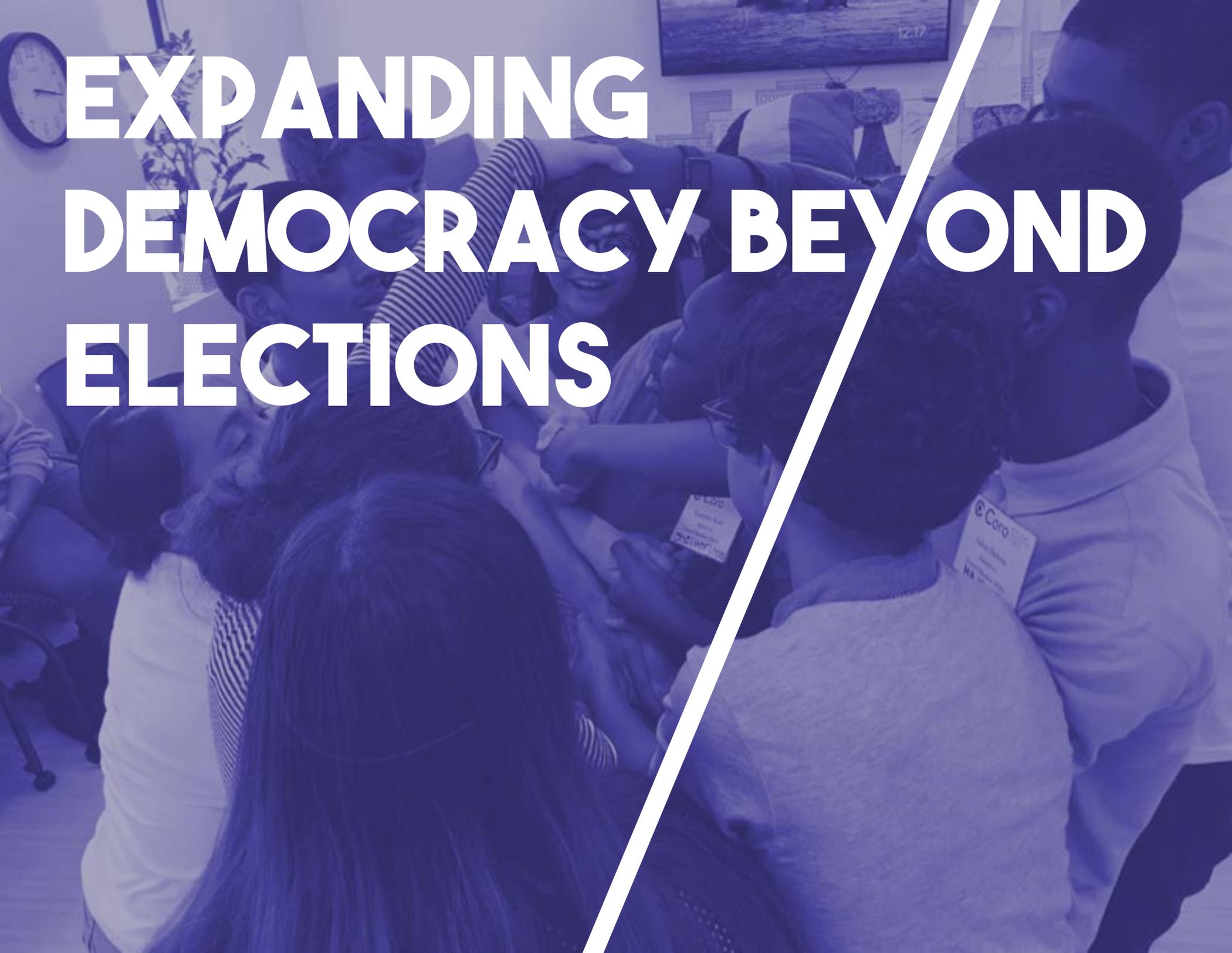


DEMOCRACY
BEYOND
ELECTIONS

**CASE STUDIES ON EXPANDING
DEMOCRACY BEYOND ELECTIONS**

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A group of diverse people in a meeting, with a blue overlay and a white diagonal line. The text is overlaid on the image.

EXPANDING DEMOCRACY BEYOND ELECTIONS

Democracy Beyond Elections is an emerging collaborative campaign to structurally reform the way we govern and deepen participatory democracy and civic engagement, beyond and between elections.

We need to invest in new models of participatory democratic governance to generate meaningful ways to engage with our neighbors, develop solutions to public problems, and decide together. We especially need more ways for historically marginalized communities to lead this decision-making.

Democracy Beyond Elections is an emerging collaborative campaign to structurally reform the way we govern and deepen participatory democracy and civic engagement, beyond and between elections.

A growing movement of political leaders and reformers around the world are already turning to participatory democracy to make government more responsive and equitable. Research shows that this engagement increases trust in government, inspires transformative learning and civic leadership, and directs resources to communities with greater needs.

To lay the groundwork for this campaign and better understand what is possible in the United States, the [Participatory Budgeting Project](#) partnered with researcher Alexa Kasdan to explore the expansion of structural democracy reforms beyond elections in four locations worldwide: Ireland, Scotland, Madrid and New York City. The case studies are based on 17 interviews with local experts and a literature review.

The four cases which follow were selected to showcase bright spots in the expansion of democracy beyond elections worldwide. While there are many other examples of successful participatory democracy initiatives, these were chosen because they provide a spread of jurisdiction level (municipal and national), are in developed countries with relatively high levels of social and economic inequality and showcase a variety of approaches to democracy beyond elections. All cases have an approximate population

range between three and nine million people.

Notably, in each case study there is evidence of emerging leadership and fundamental shifts in community relationships with government. Key take-aways conclude our landscape analysis, and prime the Democracy Beyond Elections campaign for meaningful engagement.

TYPES OF PARTICIPATION

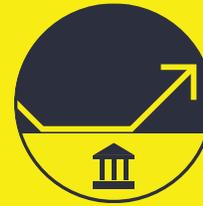
Within each type of democratic reform there are varying levels of participation.

Matt Leiginger and Tina Nabatchi provide a helpful framework in their book, *Public Participation for 21st Century Democracy*, to explain this variation.



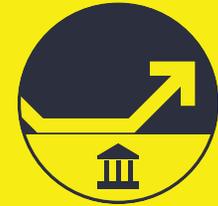
Conventional Participation

Provides checks on government power and works within existing structures. For example, testifying at a public hearing.



Thin Participation

Shorter time commitments and people can participate as individuals. Examples include signing petitions, voting online and taking surveys.

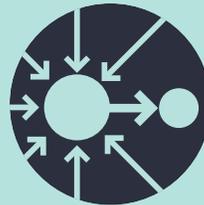


Thick Participation

Requires in depth engagement and a greater time commitment from participants. Connected to some type of action plan and people participate as a group.

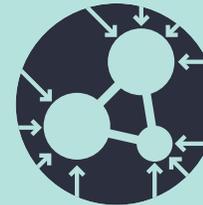
TYPES OF DEMOCRATIC REFORMS

Definitions for types of democratic reforms can vary, but our definitions are included here. "Participatory democracy" can be a catch-all term for all three.



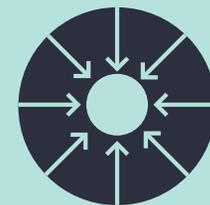
Participatory Democracy

Programs and processes that enable community members to directly participate in making political and policy decisions that affect their lives, beyond voting in elections.



Deliberative Democracy

Processes that stress dialogue and deliberation to improve the quality of political discourse and increased understanding about complex political and policy issues.



Direct Democracy

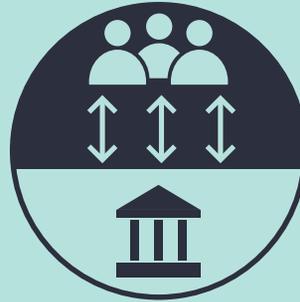
Processes where people directly decide on a policy or political decision such as referendums or ballot initiatives.

PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY



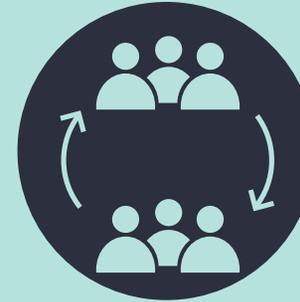
Real Decision-Making Power

Allow people to make real decisions and have real power over government.



More Responsive Government

Allow people a greater role in decisions, and inspire better decisions and increased transparency and accountability in government.



Expand Civic Engagement

Engage more people in politics and the community, especially young people, people of color, immigrants, low-income people, the formerly incarcerated, and other marginalized groups.



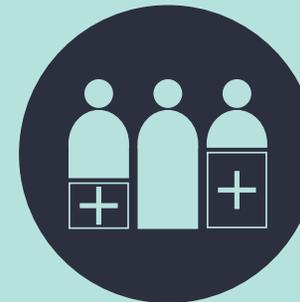
Develop New Community Leaders

Build the skills, knowledge, and capacity of community members.



Build Community

Inspire people to more deeply engage in their communities, and to create new networks and organizations.



Create Equity

Generate decisions that are fairer and reflect the entire community's needs, so resources go where they are needed most.

CASE STUDIES



IRELAND

Processes Implemented: Citizen Assembly/Jury, leading to referendum on key policy issues.

Overview

In 2016-2018 the Irish government instituted a deliberative “Citizen Assembly.” This consisted of one government appointed chairwoman and 99 randomly selected Irish citizens who were meant to represent a sample of the general public. Over the course of one year, the participants attended ten weekend-long sessions to learn from experts, deliberate together and make recommendations for a set of five issues pre-selected by the Irish Parliament.

The five topics to be deliberated were: the eighth amendment to the Constitution (abortion), how to best respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population, how the state can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change, the way referenda are held, and fixed-term parliaments.

The assembly was guided by six key

principles: openness, fairness, equality of voice, efficiency, respect, and collegiality.

The Assembly’s recommendation on abortion led to a referendum with historically high turn-out where the Irish people voted to change the constitution to legalize abortion, an issue that has divided Ireland and been caught in political gridlock for decades.

In addition, in May 2019, Ireland became only the second country in the world to declare a climate emergency.

BASICS ABOUT IRELAND

Ireland is divided between the Republic of Ireland which covers five-sixths of the island and is an independent country, and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom. This case study focuses on the Republic of Ireland.

Level and Type of Government:

Ireland has a parliamentary democracy with a Prime Minister and a President.

Population size:

4.84 million

Key Demographics:

In 2017, the median income was 20,869 Euros or \$23,393 dollars. The at risk of poverty rate was 15.7 %, . More than 78.8% of the population identify as Catholic.

TIMELINE

Push for Reforms

A group of Irish political scientists recognized the opportunity created by the financial crisis and began a campaign to push for democratic reforms.

Implementation of Partial Citizen's Assembly

Until 2014, Government implemented a Constitutional Convention, which was in-part a "citizen assembly" with 1/3 of the participants elected officials (members of Parliament) and 2/3 citizens. Deliberated eight specific issues including marriage equality and reduction of the voting age. Recommended that constitution be amended to include marriage equality.

Citizen's Assembly Gains Importance

The ruling political party (Fine Gael) committed to establishing a "Citizen's Assembly" in its 2016 general election manifesto.

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

Financial Crisis

The global financial crisis hit Ireland particularly hard. This led to reductions in public services, spurring street protests and a loss of faith in government institutions.

New Government

New government assumed power and expressed openness to democratic reforms.

Experiments in Democracy

"We the Citizens" pilot project: academic experiment in deliberative democracy funded by Atlantic Philanthropies.

High Referendum Turnout

Referendum on including marriage equality in constitution approved by voters. Highest turnout on a referendum in 20 years.

Methods and Process: Citizen Assembly

The Citizen Assembly of 2016-18 was a deliberative assembly which led to – among other outcomes – a referendum on abortion, an issue that had divided Ireland for decades. The participants were selected randomly, with a market research firm knocking on doors across the country and asking people if they wanted to participate. The sample aimed to be representative in terms of gender, age, region and socioeconomic status.

During the ten weekend-long sessions, the participants were arranged in circular tables of seven to eight with a trained facilitator and note-taker at each table. Table allocations were rotated each week.

For each topic the following process was used.

- Presentations by legal, ethical, and scientific experts with briefing papers circulated days in advance. These presentations were designed to be as objective as possible.
- Presentations by advocates and personal testimonials. Presentations with Question and answer sessions.
- Facilitated deliberative conversations in small groups. These conversations were not recorded, however summaries of key points from these deliberations were presented back to the larger group of participants.
- Private reflective time followed group deliberations. This provided individual time for participants to write responses to a series of questions.
- The group would then reconvene and develop proposed recommendations Parliament. These proposals are discussed and voted on by participants, and recommendations go back to parliament for debate.
- The Irish government then considered the recommendations of the Citizen Assemblies in order to determine what will get put back to the people for a vote in a referendum as well as language of referendum or other follow-up such as creation of parliamentary committee to further study the issue.



INTERVIEWEES

David Farrell *Professor, University College Dublin*

Louise Caldwell *Participant in the 2016-18 Citizen Assembly*

Art O'Leary *Secretary General to the President of Ireland, Secretariat for Constitutional Convention*

Tom Arnold *Chair of the Constitutional Convention (former), Concern Worldwide (former)*

Outcome and Results

The Citizen Assembly process, like the Constitutional Convention before it, demonstrates how deliberation can be an important foundation for the referendum (direct democracy) process.

In both cases, a complex moral issue (marriage equality and abortion) that was deeply divisive and caught in political gridlock for many years was carefully deliberated by everyday people, who then recommended a course of action.

This recommendation was amplified by the media and government and led to historically high voter turnout and a more engaged and educated electorate for each referendum. In addition, following-up on another Citizen Assembly topic, in May 2019, Ireland became only the second country in the world to declare a climate emergency.



LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

Louise Caldwell, Citizen Assembly Participant

- Event planner
- Mother of three children
- Lives in the countryside, 40 minutes outside Dublin

Louise was sitting at home in the summer of 2016 when she heard a knock on the door. When she opened the door she found a representative from a market research firm who told her she had been randomly selected to participate in a Citizen Assembly.

She had never heard of a deliberative assembly and at the time had little interest in politics or community activism. In fact, she generally shied away from getting involved in politics, particularly in her rural community.

However, she kept up with the news and was interested in current affairs. She was also intrigued by the idea of meeting people from all over the country and being able to spend time talking with and learning from them. Louise found the Citizen Assembly to be deeply informative and highly organized. She was surprised by how open-minded and curious all the participants were, particularly around controversial issues such as abortion. She was particularly moved when women who had been personally impacted by abortion came

to the Assembly and gave testimony to the participants.

Following the Assembly, Louise got involved in the “Yes” campaign for the abortion referendum, volunteering to sit at an information booth outside her local grocery store, which was not something she would have done before. She used the tools and methods she learned during the assemblies to ask questions and engage her neighbors and friends, rather than just trying to persuade them one way or the other.

Louise has also started to spread her knowledge and experience to others: she talked about ways she thought deliberation could help address some of the issues in her daughter’s school, visited with officials in Madrid, and has been invited to speak with environmental activists in the U.K who were interested in setting up a citizens assembly focused on climate change.

ACTORS

Researchers/Academics (Political Scientists)

A group of political scientists were the major drivers in getting the deliberative assemblies started in Ireland and in helping to design, document and evaluate the processes.

Civil Servants

High level government staff oversaw the Constitutional Convention and the Citizen Assembly. These staff were instrumental in creating the framework and managing the day to day tasks to make these processes to succeed as well as maintaining a significant level of institutional support and political buy-in for the process.

Philanthropic Institution (Atlantic Philanthropies)

Atlantic philanthropies funded a group of academics to run a pilot project in deliberative democracy called “We the Citizens,” to evaluate the pilot, document the results, to write a report and disseminate their findings.

Civil Society

Representatives from NGOs sat on the advisory board for the *We the Citizens* pilot process.

Leaders of Political Parties

The leaders of each political party included the promotion of democratic reforms in their platforms prior to the deliberative assemblies.

STRATEGIES

Strategic Communications and Advocacy

During the 2009 Financial crisis Academics initiated a media campaign to promote increasing trust in government and create better policies without spending money. “Political reform doesn’t cost a lot of money and it shows you are trying to be innovative problem solvers during this crisis.” Op-eds, blog posts, and TV appearances promoted the concept of the deliberative citizen assembly. A “reform scorecard” scored the platforms/manifestos of all the political parties on their positions on democratic reform.

Pilot Process with Research & Evaluation

Following the *We the Citizens* pilot, the academics advocated for the Irish political institutions to adopt their methodology. They highlighted the benefits of deliberative democracy to increase trust in government and knowledge of voters, and to advance political gridlock on divisive issues. The pilot and the resulting research and evaluation provided the proof of concept that could be used to make the case for why a deliberative assembly should be adopted and expanded within Ireland.

Setting up an Advisory Board and Independent Chair of Process

Each deliberative process (constitutional convention and citizen assembly) was chaired by an independent person who was considered impartial and was well known to the public. The impartial yet well-known figure helped to build public trust for the process and to keep politics out of the process as much as possible.

Careful and Inclusive Design of Process

The selection of participants was drawn through random sampling, the design team also made sure that the participants were representative of Irish population.

Building Political Support Across the Political Spectrum

In response to advocacy from the group of academics, each political party explicitly mentioned democratic reforms as part of their party manifesto in the lead up to the election. This ensured political support for the reform was not confined to one political party or ideology.

Building on International Examples and refining based on local context

The *We the Citizens* pilot was based on examples of deliberative assemblies in British Columbia and Ontario, Canada. Visits from academics and government officials from Canada helped to make the case for the Irish reforms.

SCOTLAND

Processes Implemented: Package of legislation to promote community empowerment and national commitment to mainstream participatory budgeting within local budgets.

Overview

As part of a strategy to improve governance and strengthen local democracy over the past decade, Scottish Parliament passed the Community Empowerment Act in 2016.

This 11 part national legislation aims to give communities more say in the decisions that affect them, provide new rights for communities, and place new duties on public bodies. Some examples include granting community groups a legal right to make a request to public bodies (i.e. the police, health services, etc.) to participate in improving the outcome of a public service, and allowing community groups to make a request to buy, lease, manage, occupy or use land or buildings owned or leased by the public sector.

While not directly included in the legislation, participatory budgeting has been at the heart of Scotland's community empowerment

agenda and an important mechanism to deliver the objectives of the Community Empowerment Act. Participatory budgeting has spread to over 200 processes across Scotland in the past five years. As a result, the national and local governments entered into an agreement to "mainstream PB" or allocate 1% of each local budget for participatory budgeting. This approach to PB also explicitly aims to address inequality by improving services, opportunities and conditions in underserved areas.

BASICS ABOUT SCOTLAND

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom.

Level and Type of Government:

A devolved Scottish Parliament, which has authority over some domestic policy, was established in 1999. Scotland also has representation in UK and EU Parliament. Scotland is divided into 32 local authorities.

Population size:

5.4 million

Key Demographics:

The median income in Scotland is 22,918, or \$25,697, and one in five people in live in relative poverty.

TIMELINE

Financial Crisis

Financial crisis resulting in austerity measures. Public service budgets were slashed generating suspicion about government among the public.

Changing Demographics

Up until the present changing demographics and rise in ageing population along with a reduced tax-base led to questions about new ways for citizens to take on roles that government had historically played.

Reported Need for Bottom-Up Approaches to Public Services

Christie Commission on the Future of Delivery of Public Services released a seminal report finding that public services were unsustainable and highlighting the need to develop services with and for communities rather than from a top-down approach. Report also emphasized community empowerment, providing an impetus for new mechanisms for public participation.

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

Participatory Budgeting Seminars

Participatory Budgeting seminar held in Glasgow, Scotland, organized by the Church of Scotland, Church Action on Poverty and other anti-poverty organizers.

Pilots for Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting pilot process established in Glasgow, Scotland.

Government Sponsors PB Awareness

Scottish Government sponsors PB awareness raising events across Scotland and supports more PB pilots.

COSLA Connects Participation and Equality

COSLA Commission on the Strengthening of Local Democracy emphasized the devolution of power to communities. Commission also highlighted the connection between social inequality and the lack of local democratic participation.

Community Empowerment Act

Community Empowerment Act introduced by the Scottish Government.

Open Government Partnership Joined

Scotland joined the Open Government Partnership and PB became one of top five commitments in the National Action Plan.

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

Reduced Voting Age

Voting age reduced to 16 for the upcoming referendum on Scottish Independence from the UK

PBP Meets with Officials

Chicago Alderman Joe Moore and PBP's Josh Lerner meet Scottish Government Minister for Local Government and Planning.

High Referendum Turnout

Referendum held on Scottish independence from the UK. While the measure was narrowly defeated, the turnout was historically high at 85%, particularly amongst young people. Sparked new interest amongst the general public about how Scotland should be governed.

Portion of Budgets to be Subject to PB

Landmark agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA (who represents local government) to have at least 1% of all local authority budgets subject to PB by 2021.

Methods and Process: National Legislature

The Community Empowerment Act is a national law covering 11 topics that were phased in over time, including:

- National Outcomes - The Scottish Government sets itself a set of broad outcomes such as making Scotland healthier, safer and fairer. The Act requires Scottish Ministers to consult the people of Scotland on these outcomes and report on how it is meeting these outcomes.
- Community Planning - Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) bring different public bodies and other local agencies together to better plan services. The Act makes Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) a legal requirement and requires them to involve community organizations at all stages of community planning. Tackling inequalities will be a specific focus, and CPPs will have to produce “locality plans” at a more local level for areas experiencing particular disadvantages.
- Asset Transfer - Communities can petition for transfer of public assets to them. introduces a right for community bodies to make requests to all local authorities, Scottish Ministers and a wide-ranging list

PB CHAMPIONS AND PB NETWORKS

In 2017-18 the Scottish Government invested in training a group of ‘PB Champions’ across the country. The aim was to create a cohort of people in each community that can answer questions and give advice and support about PB.

The PB champions receive training to help to support the process and develop new skills and expertise within local communities. Scotland has various PB networks: PB Scotland has 889 members across sectors, and COSLA has a network of local government officers. These networks run learning events, provide

information and offer opportunities to get involved in how PB is progressing in Scotland. They also help to build expertise and leadership in communities across Scotland.

of public bodies, for any land or buildings they feel they could make better use of. They can request ownership, lease or other rights, as they wish.

- Participation Requests - This gives communities a legislative right to ask to participate. By making a participation request, a community body can start a formal discussion with public bodies about how to improve local outcomes. Public bodies must agree to the request or give good reason why not.
- Community Rights to Buy Land - Rural communities have already had the right to buy privately owned land and buildings

that the owner is willing to sell. Now, the Act enables urban communities to do this and owners can now be forced to sell land and buildings which are abandoned, neglected or detrimental to the environmental wellbeing of the community.

- Public role in decision making/PB (Section 10) - A new regulation-making power enabling Ministers to require Scottish public authorities to promote and facilitate the participation of members of the public in the decisions and activities of the authority, including in the allocation of its resources (otherwise known as participatory budgeting).

Outcomes and Results

Over 200 participatory budgeting processes have been implemented in Scotland. With the 1% of all local authority budgets subject to PB by 2021, at least 100 million Euros in funding will be decided through PB. The passage of the Community Empowerment Act has been another building block to achieve the goals of public service reform and improved local democracy. However, the key will be in the implementation and the various provisions of the Act need to be monitored and evaluated over time in order to ensure progress.



INTERVIEWEES

Jez Hall PB Partners/Shared Future CIC

Oliver Escobar Professor, University of Edinburgh

Simon Cameron Development Manager, Participatory Budgeting, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)

Fiona Garven Director, Scottish Community Development Center

ACTORS

Researchers/Academics

Glasgow Center for Population Health conducted an evaluation of a PB pilot in Glasgow; What Works Scotland is an initiative to improve the way local areas in Scotland use evidence to make decisions about public service development and reform. They've written numerous reports evaluating various aspects of community empowerment and PB in Scotland.

Civil Society/Capacity Building Organizations

Groups like PB Partners, Church Action Partners, Electoral Reform Society and The Scottish Community Development Centre helped to push for PB and sat on advisory boards to help design and develop the Community Empowerment Act.

Leaders of Political Parties

The leaders of each political party included the promotion of democratic reforms such as PB in their platforms (manifestos).

Civil Servants/Government Staff

This includes representatives from COSLA: The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities — the voice of local government in Scotland and Community Planning Officials (CPOs) who carry out the everyday work of enabling local governance.

STRATEGIES

Pilot Process with Research & Evaluation

The pilot process of participatory budgeting in 2010-2012 in Glasgow, Scotland was evaluated and documented by researchers. The research made important links between PB and strategic policy challenges within Scotland. The report made clear the role PB could have in mobilizing people, promoting collaboration and community empowerment. The report also recommended that 1% of public sector budgets be allocated to PB.

Setting up an Advisory Board

An advisory board comprised of various actors from civil society was commissioned by government to co-produce guidance on two elements on the Community Empowerment Act: participation requests and duties of Community Planning Partnerships. Representatives on this board also served as a bridge to the larger public to solicit input on the legislation and channel the feedback back to government.

Inclusive Design of Legislation/ Public Testimony

Scottish government has to go through a formal consultation process for any national legislation. During the consultation process for the Community Empowerment Act, civil society organizations mobilized people to give evidence to Scottish parliament and submitted about 100 amendments to make improvements to the legislation.

Develop Communities of Practice

In 2013, Joe Moore, an Alderman from Chicago, IL and Josh Lerner from the Participatory Budgeting Project visited Scotland and the UK to share best practices in PB. The tour was coordinated by Church Action on Poverty (CAP) and facilitated by the emerging PB Network. The PB Network has worked to connect PB work across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and has been instrumental in its growth and expansion.

MADRID

Processes Implemented: Decide Madrid: Citiwide program with range of Participatory Democracy initiatives including an online platform and a department established within City Council overseeing Participation.

Overview

Decide Madrid is a comprehensive civic participation program, implemented by Madrid's Mayor and City Council, and overseen by the City's Department for Citizen Participation, Transparency, and Open Government, a City department created in 2015. It includes an online platform, Consul, which uses free software and includes a variety of tools and processes for people in Madrid to participate in government decisions. More than 100 institutions from around the world in more than 40 countries have joined the Consul project making it the most widely used citizen participation platform in the world.

Several major infrastructure projects have been designed using Decide Madrid and two proposals, initiated by citizens, have been voted on by the public and transformed into public policy by the City Council. Madrid has

also allocated 100 million Euros per year for participatory budgeting, including 70 million for local projects and 30 million for citywide projects. Allocation of PB funds is determined, in part, by need and average income of each district.

BASICS ABOUT MADRID

Level and Type of Government:

Spain is a parliamentary democracy and the City of Madrid has a city council with 52 representatives and Mayor, all of which are popularly elected.

Population size:

Madrid is the third largest city in Europe with a population of over 3 million residents

Key Demographics:

Nearly 84% of the city's population are Spaniards, while those of other origins account for more than 16% of the population. The average annual income in Spain is 23,000, or \$25,933 Euros and 18.2% of the population of Madrid is at risk of poverty.

TIMELINE

Financial Crisis

Financial crisis and subsequent austerity measures. By 2011 there is 20% unemployment in Madrid.

M15 Movement and Occupation

May 15 (M15)/Indignados movement with the slogan "Real Democracy Now," saw street protests in cities across Spain and 28 day occupation of Madrid's Puerta del Sol by activists; creation of free technology platform for everyone to make proposals during the occupation.

National and Local Elections

National and local elections held across Spain. The new left wing party (Podemos), born out of the M15 movement, won elections in cities across Spain.

New Political Party Takes Power

New political party, Ahora Madrid, takes control of Mayoralty and City Council in Madrid and the Department for Citizen Participation, Transparency, and Open Government is created. Activists from the M15 movement become civil servants and elected officials.

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

Anti-Eviction Movement

M15 movement spawns the growth anti-eviction movement, which stops thousands of evictions across Madrid.

Widespread Mobilizations

M15 movement grows and develops a platform focused on democratic reforms called Democracia Real Ya (Real Democracy, right now)! This generates widespread mobilization and organizing on the streets and online through 2015.

Activist Led Transformations of Public Space

Municipality Platform was launched by the Foundation of the Commons, a collective of urban activists focusing on transforming public space from the bottom-up.

Methods and Process

Decide Madrid is an online platform that houses a variety of processes for people in Madrid to participate in government decisions. A virtual space created using a free software called Consul, Decide Madrid has four main functions:

1. Proposals and votes for new local laws
2. Debates
3. Participatory budgeting
4. Consultations.

Some of these processes are bottom-up – starting with non-governmental individuals or organizations – and others are generated by government and then circulated for input or decision making by the people.

Anyone can make a proposal and collect signatures via Decide Madrid. Once the proposal gets signatures from 1% of the voting population then the proposals goes to a vote. If voters approve the proposal and it fulfills technical requirements, it gets implemented by city council as public policy. Two proposals have reached the needed threshold of votes since 2015.

Government Generated Proposals: City council can open voting on Decide Madrid



LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

Pablo Soto

- Software Developer
- Digital Activist

Pablo became involved in the M15 movement and a regular at the Puerta del Sol square during the occupation.

“The most political moment of my life was the night of 15 May 2011, when I decided to take my rucksack to Puerta del Sol in Madrid, even though there was a threat of the police clearing the square as the protest had been declared illegal.”

Following the occupation, Soto emerged as a leader of the Indignados

movement and ran for City Council in the local elections in 2015. When he became a City Council member, he focused on implementing the programs and technology necessary to realize the demands of the 15M movement. He became the councilor for Citizen Participation, Transparency, and Open Government and continues to oversee the implementation and expansion of Decide Madrid.

on anything they think would be interesting for the public to participate. Mostly urban redevelopment projects such as the renovation of major thoroughfares or squares. 11 squares have been renovated through this process and the Gran Via, a major thoroughfare was opened up to more pedestrians. Anytime there is

a new regulation in the City, there is an open debate, via Decide Madrid about the regulation. Users can make proposals or edits. This process is started by City Council.

Moving forward there is a plan to institute a Citizen Observatory, Madrid’s attempt at a Citizen Assembly where a random sample

CITIZEN PROPOSALS THAT WON

100% Sustainable Madrid and Bus Ticket

Through the Decide Madrid platform, anyone that lives in Madrid and is over 16 years old can make a proposal and collect signatures.

Proposals that receive signatures from 1% of the voting population go to a vote. If voters approve the proposal and it fulfills technical requirements, it gets implemented by city council as public policy. Two proposals have reached the needed threshold of votes since 2015. One proposal, by a coalition of environmental organizations, is called 100% sustainable Madrid. The other, by an individual, proposed one universal ticket for all public transport.

The organizers of the 100% sustainable Madrid proposal utilized traditional campaigning strategies such as social media, rallies and

press conferences and mobilizing volunteers in public places working to get out the vote. The proposal includes 14 points, including implementing energy efficiency programs in schools; designing and executing all new municipal works projects with almost zero energy consumption; and designing a plan to transfer all municipal vehicles to electric.

After the proposal got approved, Madrid's City government had to transform each of the measures into specific policies. An example of one of those measures was having greener transportation, which translated into the acquisition of two hundred electric buses.



of citizens will come together each year to deliberate pressing issues and make recommendations to the City. The plan is to have this body deliberate some of the many citizen-generated proposals that are added to Decide Madrid but do not see the light of day because they don't get enough votes.

Outcomes and Results

Following the municipal elections in 2015, a new Department for Citizen Participation, Transparency, and Open Government was created. This department oversaw the implementation of Decide Madrid, using the online platform Consul, which has seen 400,000 registered users and 20,000 citizen generated proposals.

Two of those citizen proposals have garnered the necessary public support and subsequent votes to be transformed into public policy by the City Council. This includes the 100% sustainable Madrid plan and a proposal to create a new ticket for public transport. In addition, 11 city squares and a major thoroughfare have been renovated using Decide Madrid as a tool for consultation and decision-making; the Human Rights Plan for the City of Madrid was created incorporating input from citizens via Decide Madrid and thousands of PB projects and hundreds of millions in Euros have been spent on projects decided through PB—with a focus on allocated funds to districts with the highest need.

More than 100 institutions from around the world in more than 40 countries have joined the Consul project making it the most widely used citizen participation platform in the world. In the recent elections in May 2019, the sitting Mayor Manuela Carmena, one of the champions of Decide Madrid, was defeated by a right-wing bloc. It remains to be seen if or how the new governing coalition in Madrid will carry out Decide Madrid.

INTERVIEWEES

Miguel Arana, *Madrid City Council, Director of Citizen Participation (former), Madrid City Council*

Rosa Fraga Escudero and Carmen Merino, *Coordinators of 100% Sustainable Madrid, Alliance for Climate*

Rosa Maria de la Fuente Fernandez
Professors, Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Rosa Borge Bravo *Professor, University of Oberta de Catalunya*

ACTORS

Researchers/Cultural Institutions

There have been various spaces where researchers and technologists work collaboratively to design and experiment with democratic innovations in Madrid. Medialab Prado, a citizens' laboratory, has a project called Democracy Lab, which connects Medialab-Prado with the City's Department for Citizen Participation, Transparency, and Open Government. Here, researchers focus on making improvements to Decide Madrid.

Civil Servants/Government Staff

Former M15 activists who went on to work in the Department of Civic Participation and implement the demands of the social movement platforms.

New Urban Activists/ Hacktivists

Activists from the M15 movement, many of whom did not have previous experience in social movements, created "Decide Madrid." Proponents of transparency in government and addressing economic, social and political problems. Activists created a free technology platform for everyone to make proposals during the occupation of Puerta del Sol. This was later refined and expanded to create "Decide Madrid."

Neighborhood Associations and Local Forums

Madrid's long standing network of neighborhood associations pushed for increased citizen participation in city government for years. Initially resistant to the new initiatives, they have been working with the City government to integrate the new reforms.

Political Party/Elected Officials

The Ahora Madrid party, born out of the M15 movement, institutionalized participatory democratic reforms such as "Decide Madrid" and expanding participatory budgeting. Activists such as Pablo Soto, went on to be elected and serve in the City Council.

STRATEGIES

Leveraging Momentum from a Social Movement into Electoral Victories

Activists from the M15 movement translated their protest movement into electoral politics in order to implement their demands and reforms. Several activists ran for elected office or went to work for the new City Council following the 2015 elections.

Creating Institutional and Political Support

The political party Ahora Madrid included participation and open government as one of the key points in their platform/manifesto. Once they took control of Madrid City Council they put the plan into action by creating and funding a new department in the City: the Department of Citizen Participation, Transparency and Open Government with over 60 staff to implement and oversee the various programs and initiatives, including Decide Madrid, to increase citizen participation.

Innovation and Experimentation

The “Decide Madrid” platform includes many different mechanisms in order to try out a variety of approaches to civic participation and see what works. Various “labs” exist to examine the approaches, to innovate and iterate based on what is working and what is not. The fact that the technology is open source also allows for constant innovation and improvement.

Strategic Communications and Advocacy

Traditional campaign tactics were used to educate the public about the citizen proposals. The organizations that proposed 100% sustainable Madrid, held rallies and mobilized volunteers to win enough votes to turn the proposal into public policy.

Building on International Examples and Refining Based on Local Context

Officials in Madrid have been intentional about creating communities of practice with other cities and countries so that implementers of participatory democracy can learn from each other and share best practices. For example, officials in Madrid met with academics and Citizen Assembly participants from Ireland to help design a Citizen Assembly in Madrid. growth and expansion.

NEW YORK CITY

Processes Implemented: Participatory budgeting, Civic Engagement Commission established within Mayor's office.

Overview

Participatory Budgeting in New York City (PBNYC) started in 2011 in four City Council districts. It is now in its 9th cycle with over half (31) of the City Council running a PB process in their district and with a centralized office within the City Council Speaker's office overseeing the process. PB processes are also held in public schools across New York City.

In 2018, the Mayor called for and appointed an NYC Charter Review Commission to review the entire City Charter with the broad mandate of making democracy reforms. The Commission held hearings and consultations with the public to get input on proposals and presented proposals based on input from the public. As a result, three questions were put on the ballot for voters in NYC during the 2018 elections focused on campaign finance, civic engagement, and community boards. All three measures were passed by voters. Following the passage of the ballot measures, a nine-person Civic Engagement Commission (CEC) was formed in 2019 to be embedded within the Mayor's office, with

appointees from the Mayor, Borough Presidents, and City Council Speaker.

The CEC is charged with developing and implementing initiatives, and partnering with public and private entities, to support and encourage all New Yorkers to meaningfully participate in civic life. Setting up a citywide participatory budgeting process by 2020 is one of the core initiatives of the CEC.

BASICS ABOUT NEW YORK CITY

Level and Type of Government:

The Mayor heads the Executive branch and is responsible for all city services, enforcement of city and state laws. The City Council is the legislative branch and is responsible for proposing and revising bills. The Council is comprised of 51 elected officials, representing different districts within the five boroughs of NYC.

Population size:

8.4 million

Key Demographics:

Median income is \$50,825 and 19.5% of New Yorkers live in poverty. New York City is very diverse. 42.2% are White, 24.3% are Black or African American and 14.5% are Asian. Hispanics or Latinos of any race represent about 29.2%.

TIMELINE

Change in Term Limit Law for Mayors

Mayor Michael Bloomberg won a third term after campaigning to change term limit law (previously Mayors could only serve 2 terms). Community organizations and advocates protested this as an affront to democratic participation and empowerment.

Newly Elected Progressive Cohort

A quarter of the New York City Council was newly elected with an incoming cohort of new progressive councilmembers.

New Mayor and Speaker

Bill de Blasio, a Democrat and NYC's public advocate, became Mayor; Melissa Mark Viverito, one of the original 4 council members to do PB, became Speaker of the City Council.

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

Pressure on NYC to Create a PB Program

Two organizations (Community Voices Heard and the Participatory Budgeting Project), alongside a network of local community organizers and activists, pressed local officials in New York City to create a participatory budgeting program based on models in Chicago, Toronto, and around the world.

PBNYC Started

PBNYC launched by 4 City Council members including 3 progressive Democrats and 1 Republican. Each subsequent year, PBNYC expanded to new City Council districts.

PBNYC Institutionalized

PBNYC becomes institutionalized within the City Council Speaker's office creating central staff and a budget to implement and grow the process.

City Charter Amended

City Charter was amended to include the Civic Engagement Commission and 15 members appointed to the commission.

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

Citywide Participatory Budgeting Process Introduced in Amendment

Mayor Bill de Blasio announces the creation of a Charter Revision Commission with a focus on how to improve democracy in New York City.

New Yorkers approve 3 charter amendments in citywide referendum, including to establish a Civic Engagement Commission and a citywide participatory budgeting process.

Methods and Process

Participatory Budgeting in NYC started locally in City Council districts with discretionary pots of money where local residents could propose, deliberate and vote on capital projects. Local and citywide organizations and activists partnered with councilmembers to implement and grow the process. New digital tools for voting and other innovations were utilized and community organizations and activists pushed each year for new councilmembers to join the PB process, for the City to allocate more money for PB and resources for implementation and to expand PB to larger citywide processes.

The Mayor also called for and appointed a commission to review the entire city charter and gave the broad mandate of making campaign finance and democracy reforms. The Charter Revision Commission held hearings and consultations with the public to get input on changes to the city charter. These proposals were honed by the Commission and presented to voters as ballot measures.

PB NYC was seen a proof of concept in this process. The success of PBNYC was a major reason why the NYC Charter Revision Commission advocated for participatory democracy reforms such as citywide participatory budgeting.

Following the passage of the ballot measures, a Civic Engagement Commission was formed in 2019 with appointees from the Mayor, Borough Presidents, and City Council Speaker.

COMMUNITY LEADER TO CIVIL SERVANT

Kenny, a remarkable community leader and PB advocate, embodies the potential of Democracy Beyond Elections.

After leaving high school to work several jobs in order to help support his family, Kenny became involved in youth empowerment programs in his neighborhood, working at the Boys and Girls Club and later starting a new organization when the Boys and Girls club closed.

In 2014, Kenny became involved in participatory budgeting as a volunteer when his local City Council member launched a participatory

budgeting process. Kenny's experience with PB and his background in youth empowerment work led him to get a job as a community liaison for the councilmember.

Three years in, he is now the Director of Participatory Budgeting, Finance, and Community Organizing in the district, and serves on the PB Citywide steering committee.

Kenny has also gotten involved in national politics and has aspirations to use his experience on a national stage.

The Civic Engagement Commission is charged with developing and implementing initiatives, and partnering with public and private entities, to support and encourage all New Yorkers to meaningfully participate in civic life. Specifically, the Civic Engagement Commission has the following powers and duties:

- Implement a Citywide participatory budgeting program to be established by the Mayor
- Provide training and assistance to community boards
- Support and partner with community-based organizations, institutions, and civic leaders in the public and private sectors

in their civic engagement efforts

- Consider the language access needs of New Yorkers with limited English proficiency
- Establish a program for providing language interpreters at poll sites in the City in order to facilitate voting by New Yorkers with limited English proficiency
- Partner with City agencies to increase awareness of and access to City services as well as public engagement processes, initiatives, and opportunities.

Outcomes and Results

In 2018, over 100,000 New Yorkers across all five boroughs and 31 Council districts voted to recommend how to spend more than \$40 million of the City's capital budget.

The NYC Department of Education is continuing to expand its participatory budgeting program in public high schools as part of their Civics for All initiative. Within a few years, all public high schools -- over 400! -- will run participatory budgeting, and students will allocate \$2,000 for school improvements.

The new Civic Engagement Commission (CEC), which was approved voters in 2018, has been established. The 15-member body will convene a PB Advisory Committee and then launch citywide PB in 2020. Money will be secured in the City budget for CEC staffing and for the PB process.



INTERVIEWEES

Anonymous NYC Mayor's Office

Jorge Montalvo Deputy Executive Director (former), Charter Revision Commission Staff

Stephan Edel Director, NYS Working Families Project, Working Families Party

Wennie Chin Senior Manager of Civic Engagement, NY Immigration Coalition

ACTORS

Capacity Building Organizations

Organizations such as PBP helped provide the technical expertise to implement and expand participatory budgeting.

Community Organizations

To win the civic engagement commission several community organizations conducted outreach to their members seeking participation of those traditionally excluded from political processes; they sat on the Citywide Steering Committee for PBNYC to ensure some level of community-control. They mobilized their constituencies to vote in favor of the civic engagement commission and citywide PB.

Elected Officials

Council speaker Melissa Mark Viverito established a central office within the City Council to oversee PBNYC. Council member Brad Lander proposed city council legislation to create an office of civic engagement, which later transformed into the Civic Engagement Commission through external organizing and the charter revision process.

Researchers/Academics

A group of academics and researchers formed a research advisory board and conducted research and evaluation of the first five cycles of PB in NYC. This research was used to advocate for expansion of participatory budgeting and other participatory democratic reforms.

Political Parties and Labor Unions

The Working Families Party, a progressive third party, and progressive labor unions including 32BJ and SEIU 1199, contributed resources and mobilized to educate voters and to get out the vote in favor of the three charter revision ballot initiatives including the civic engagement commission and citywide PB.

Civil Servants/Government Staff

City Council members office staff run the PB process, in partnership with Speaker's office central staff and the Citywide Steering Committee. They organize neighborhood assemblies, budget delegate committees and the vote in each district. They maintain consistency and quality across the various processes.

STRATEGIES

Pilot Process with Research & Evaluation

For several years after the PBNYC pilot, advocates, organizers and PB participants used research, evaluation, media and advocated for growth of the PB process to new council districts, new pots of money, and a citywide process with greater impact and equity.

Creating Partnerships between Civil Servants and Civil Society

The Steering Committee worked together with staff from each City Council office and the central staff in the Speaker's office to make sure the process was implemented in a consistent and transparent manner and that each cycle made improvements based on feedback and evaluation of the previous cycle.

Creating Institutional and Political Support

Melissa Mark Viverito—one of the original 4 council members to do PB—became Speaker of the City Council in 2014. The City Council also had a newly empowered Progressive Caucus, led by Brad Lander, another one of PB's original champions. As speaker, Mark-Viverito institutionalized PBNYC within the City Council Speaker's office creating central staff and a budget to implement and grow the process. This office still exists today even though she is no longer the Speaker.

Building Political Support Across the Diverse Constituencies

From the very first cycle, PBNYC was launched in city council districts with diverse constituencies in terms of race, language, socioeconomic, and political affiliation. The 4 council members included one Republican. This allowed for buy in across different populations in the City and to show that the process can benefit a wide range of New Yorkers.

Public Education

A coalition of groups, supported with public funds, launched the "Flip your Ballot" campaign, a public education campaign so voters knew that there were ballot measures as part of the ballot for the 2018 elections. This included a public forum, TV ads, flyers, social media posting and rallies.

Get out the Vote

A parallel campaign: "Yes, Yes, Yes" pushed for people to vote "yes" for the three ballot measures that were proposed by the Charter Revision Commission about campaign finance, civic engagement, and community boards. This was run by community/labor groups and used basic campaigning methods including robocalls, print ads, facebook, twitter and instagram. The group also did GOTV work at the polls on the day of the election to talk with voters about the ballot measures.

LESSONS LEARNED



The following are key takeaways from the case studies and should be considered by those that are pushing for expansion of participatory democracy.

1 ENSURE FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THE DESIGN OF A PARTICIPATORY PROCESS IS ITSELF PARTICIPATORY

Multiple stakeholders from diverse backgrounds should be involved in the design and resources and technical expertise to implement the initiative should in place.

The careful design and selection of participants for the Irish Citizen Assembly as well as the collaborative design process of PBNYC helped legitimize the processes.

2 LEVERAGE MOMENTS OF POLITICAL CHANGE TO PUSH FOR PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

In several of the case studies, we saw that political change or crisis presents an opportunity to advocate for democratic reform within government institutions. This is apparent in Scotland with the Independence Referendum, in Ireland and Madrid with the economic crisis and in New York with the election of a new progressive Mayor and the aftermath of the election of Trump.

In these cases, an interest from government in expanding democracy was transformed into participatory democracy initiatives through organizing, advocacy and communications work by non-governmental actors.

3 SECURE BUY-IN FROM A DIVERSE SET OF CHAMPIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Secure buy-in from a diverse set of champions and stakeholders within and outside government: It is important to find champions within government that represent a diverse set of constituencies and political ideologies to prevent the process from becoming pigeonholed as belonging to one party or population.

This was seen in PBNYC with the four council members (3 democrats and 1 republican) who initiated PB and who represented four very different constituencies. The Irish case also saw intentional advocacy for the deliberative assemblies targeted across the political spectrum.

4 MAKE RESEARCH, DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION A CORE COMPONENT

Make research, documentation and evaluation a core component of any process and ensure that researchers center the values of community participation: This requires identifying a research partner that understands the goals of the process, is respected by government officials, can conduct a rigorous evaluation and present data in a clear and accessible way.

5 USE PILOT PROCESS AND RESEARCH TO ESTABLISH A "PROOF OF CONCEPT"

that can be used to educate and build upon to expand participatory democracy. This was seen in Scotland with the evaluation of various aspects of the Community Empowerment Act and in New York City with regular evaluations of PB which were then used as a tool to advocate for expansion. In Ireland, a pilot process of a deliberative mini-public and the resulting research created the foundation for the process to be institutionalized within government.

6 CAST A WIDE NET TO TEST OUT A VARIETY OF APPROACHES TO PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

Several of the case studies showcased a variety of types of participatory democracy that were run simultaneously. In Madrid, Decide Madrid offers a range of approaches to participation while Scotland also offered a menu of reforms through the Community Empowerment Act. Over time, these approaches can be evaluated and tweaked based on what is working and what is not.

7 CREATE A MIX OF FACE TO FACE AND DIGITAL APPROACHES

While innovations in technology present new and exciting opportunities to expand participatory democracy, face to face interaction is still critical. Digital tools can be inaccessible to some populations and do not always allow for quality deliberation or the ability to build relationships and power. Face to face approaches can also be helpful to identify and develop new leaders.

8 BUILD NETWORKS AND SHARE BEST PRACTICES

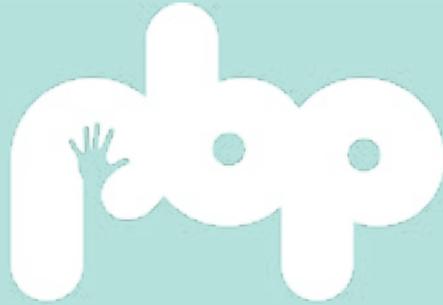
For each case study, those pushing for participatory processes built networks of practitioners, academics, community members and government officials to provide technical expertise, capacity and share ideas towards expansion. These actors were also intentional about building relationships with people from other cities and countries to learn from their experience.

9 FOCUS RESOURCES ON OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT OF COMMUNITIES THAT ARE TRADITIONALLY EXCLUDED FROM DECISION-MAKING.

This will help to ensure participation beyond the usual suspects and will promote equity.

10 IMPLEMENTATION IS KEY

Once the expansion in participatory democracy is won, there must be the resources to implement and evaluate the plan. Space must be made to improve the process based on feedback.



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT

For more information about the Democracy
Beyond Elections Campaign please go to
participatorybudgeting.org/dbe

Booklet designed by Hester Tittmann of Rabbit
Rabbit Studio.

Research and text prepared by Alexa Kasdan.