

How citizens can stay the heart of politics

Direct Democracy

as the polity of and for citizens does not allow anybody to ignore them

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Second contribution for *Agenda Ciudadana's* 2da Annual Convencion,
In Puerto Rico, April 25 2014,

„Participatory Democracy: Implications for Puerto Rico's sustainability“

Modern DD was not made in Switzerland - it was only most practiced there

- Assembly self-ruling traditions in New England US- States / 17. century
- Modern Referendum is a innovation of the French Revolution 1793
- Citizens Initiative: An innovation of French and German Radical Democrats 1830ff

The core idea/project of Direct Democracy:
The people as the only source of
legitimate power should not delegate
all it's power to the
Parlament&Government for 4 years

- By agreeing to it's constitution it sets the polity how the power is shared and organised
- With referendums it's keeps the right to question any law decided by the Parliament and to bring it to the people's vote
- By popular initiatives (CAL: "propositions") it keeps it's rights to propose any moment any change to the laws or to the constitution

**Modern DD was in Switz. and CAL&Oregon
a product of the oppositional “peoples
movements”:** By the people for the people !

*More or a better Democracy you never get for
free: YOU have to do something for it !*

- Liberal founders of modern CH from 1848 were elitists - as many in many countries today again
- Many people (farmers, artisans, working class) saw themselves not represented by their parliament
 - They created broad peoples movements who asked for the “last word”

The design of Direct Democracy determines it's quality

- Not more than 1 and 2 % of the electorate should be necessary for a referendum and a initiative
- Those, who collect signatures should have enough time (100 days/18 months)
 - No majority-qualifications (“Quorums”)
- Administration, Government&Parlament should have enough time too to deliberate and propose counter-proposals
- Every citizens has to be informed by a controversial and informative voter's pamphlet
- Fairness rules and money-transparency in public adds and advertising

Direct Democracy is there for

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- **No Quick fix**
- **No instant democracy**
- **No tele/internet/click/like-D.**
 - **No fast food**
 - **No daily poll**
 - **No plebiscite**

Direct Democracy is :

- A deliberative process
- Collective, interactive decision making and learning process
- Open to all who are ready to engage
 - A opportunity for change
- A possibility to be heard and listened to
- A way to impose to the society questions and views they would prefer to ignore

Direct Democracy changes the political culture

- Communication and deliberations become the soul of politics
- Nobody can command, everybody may convince
- Without the consent of a majority of the citizens nothing is possible
- Power is shared, everybody must be open to consider new ideas and be ready to learn
- Politics are less divisive ,integrate diversity and become much more open

For a strong Direct Democracy a social infrastructure is helpfull

- Media should be a public service and less a profit center
 - Public dialogues have to be supported
 - Civic education for all is essential
- In every village/district there should be a “House of Democracy” a kind of service center open to everybody
- Private money has to be transparent and any private investment in a campaign should support partly (25% ?) the other side