Decidim: open source digital infrastructure for participatory democracy

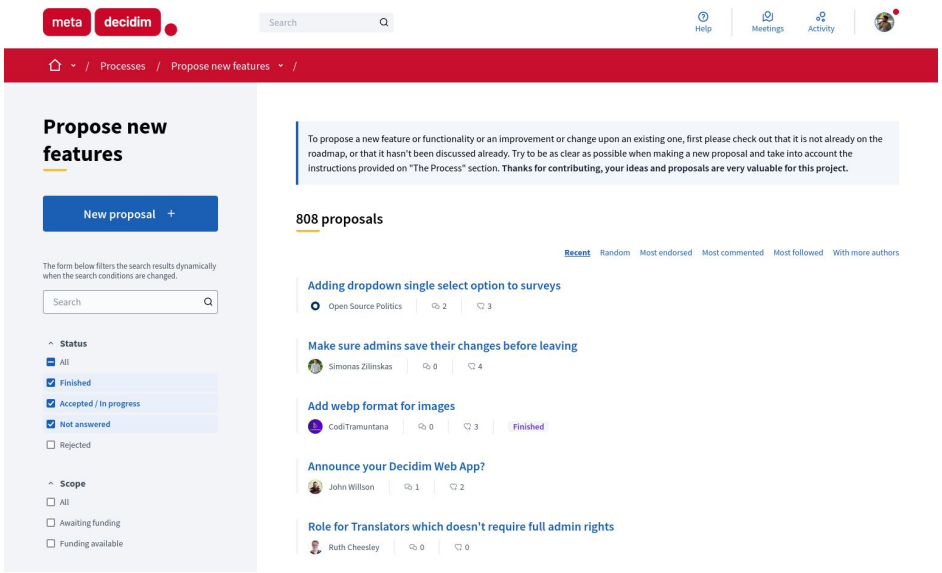
Nil Homedes
Decidim Free Software Association

decidim
free open-source democracy

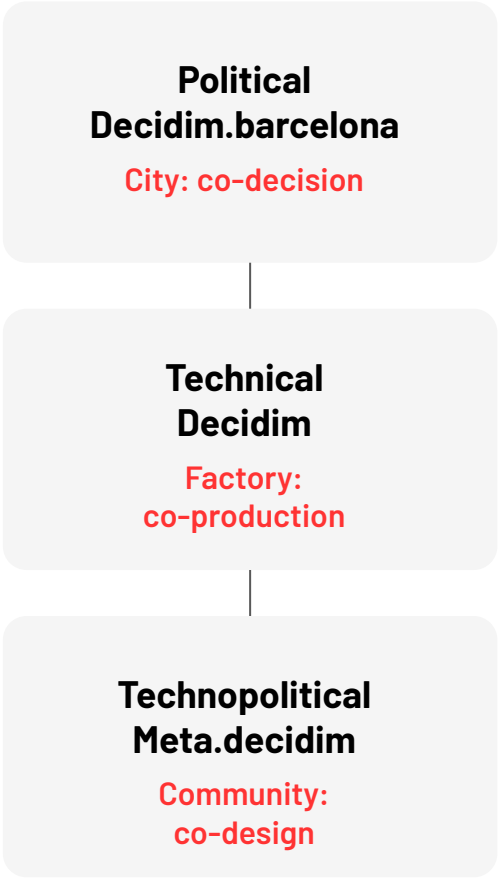
Decidim is a digital platform for citizen participation

Free/libre, open and safe technology.
With all democratic guarantees.
Reprogramming democracy is now possible with Decidim.

- Strategic planning
- Participatory processes
- Assemblies
- Initiatives and citizen consultations
- Participatory budgeting



3 layers model of Decidim



What makes Decidim unique?

What makes Decidim unique?

1. **Participation model:** Open, flexible and replicable, a model to maximise citizen participation.
2. **Public-common code:** Building a FLOSS project from public sector
3. **Democratic governance:** Public-community governance of a digital common

Participation model

The political layer: Open, flexible and replicable, a model to maximise citizen participation 🚀

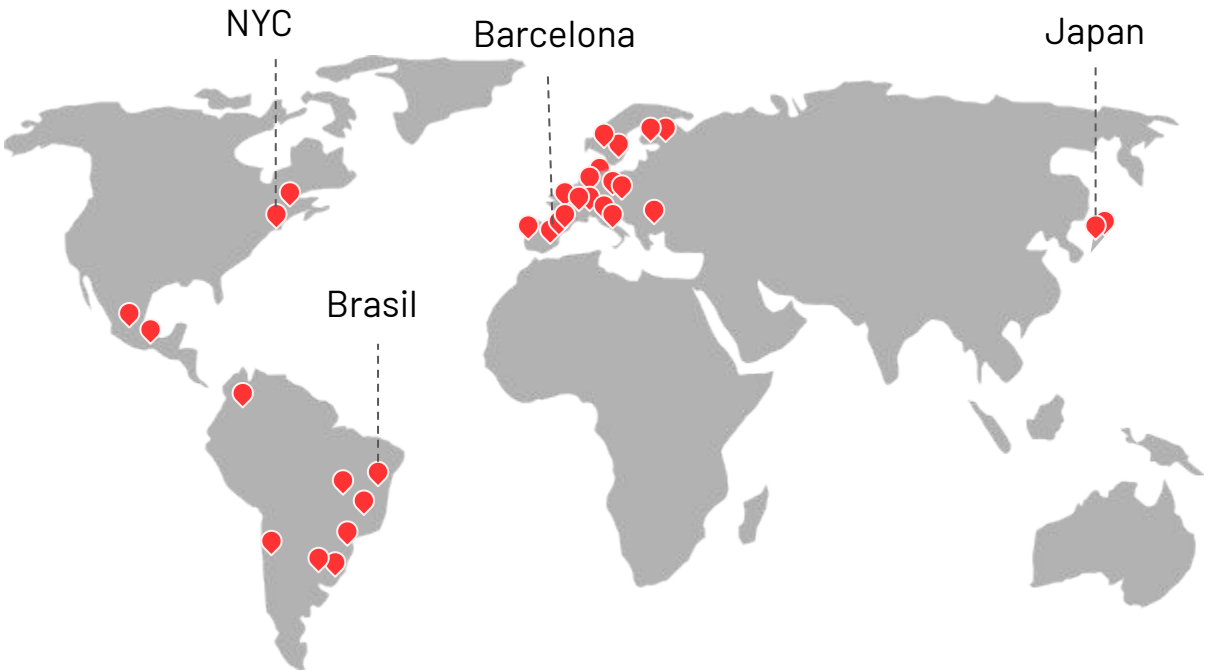
- ➔ A standard for citizen participation adaptable to different local realities
- ➔ Core values defined in the code and the Social Contract
  - Transparency
  - Traceability
  - Integrity
  - Democratic Quality
- ➔ Decidim takes participation to the next level, allowing thousands of people to interact at the same time.

+450

democratic organizations are using decidim today

30 countries
240 cities and govern organizations
180 social organizations

2023



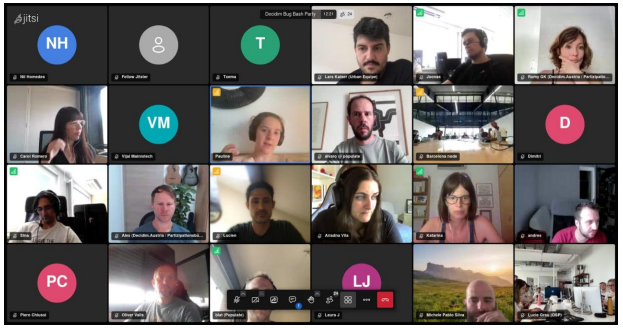
Public-common code

The technical layer: Building a FLOSS community project from public sector 🌐

- ➔ Open to contributions from the first day.
- ➔ The community can propose new features and participate in the roadmap definition.
- ➔ Building alliances with local partners to implement Decidim around the world.

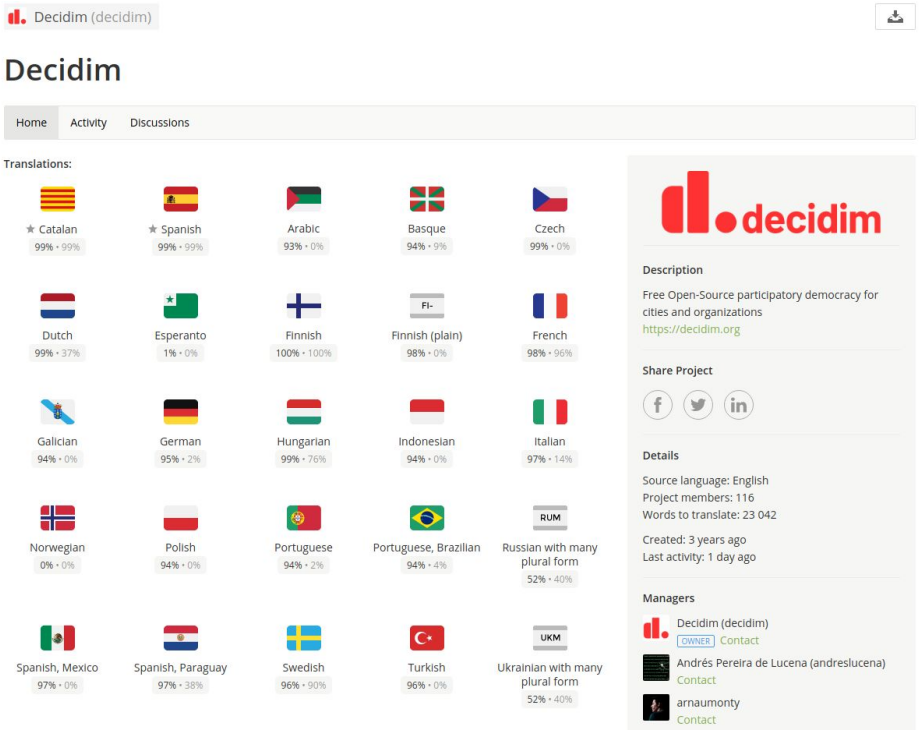
“What makes Decidim special is the community” *(Simonas Zilinskas, OSP)*

Community participation



Translate Decidim

- **33** languages
- **320** project members
- **47,000** words translated



2021

2022

2023

Decidim
Fest
23-25
October
2024
Canòdrom
Bcn
Ecology,
Technology
and
Democracy:
Disputing the future in
a world in flames
Web: meta.decidim.org
#DecidimFest24
Ajuntament de
Barcelona

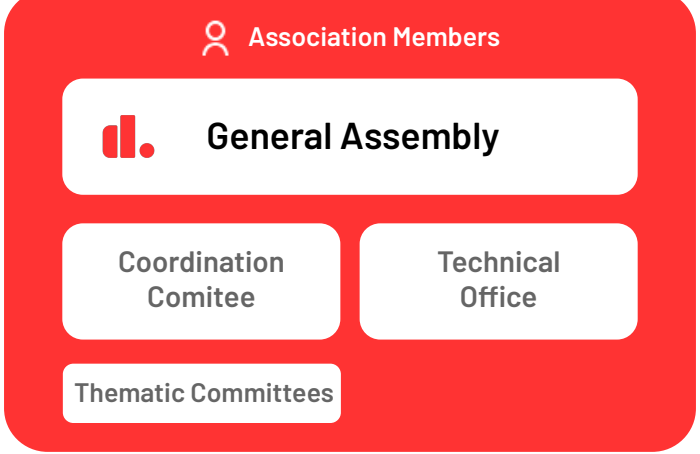
Democratic governance

The technopolitical layer: Public-community governance of a digital common ⛰️

- ➔ The Decidim Association is the central actor of the project
- ➔ Barcelona City Council has ceded to the Decidim Association the management and maintenance of the source code.
- ➔ Unique example in the world of how to implement FLOSS as a public policy with a community governance.

Association

Community

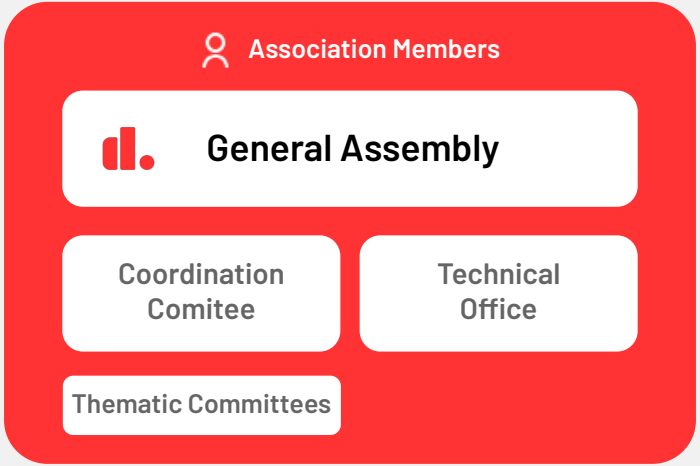


Association

Community

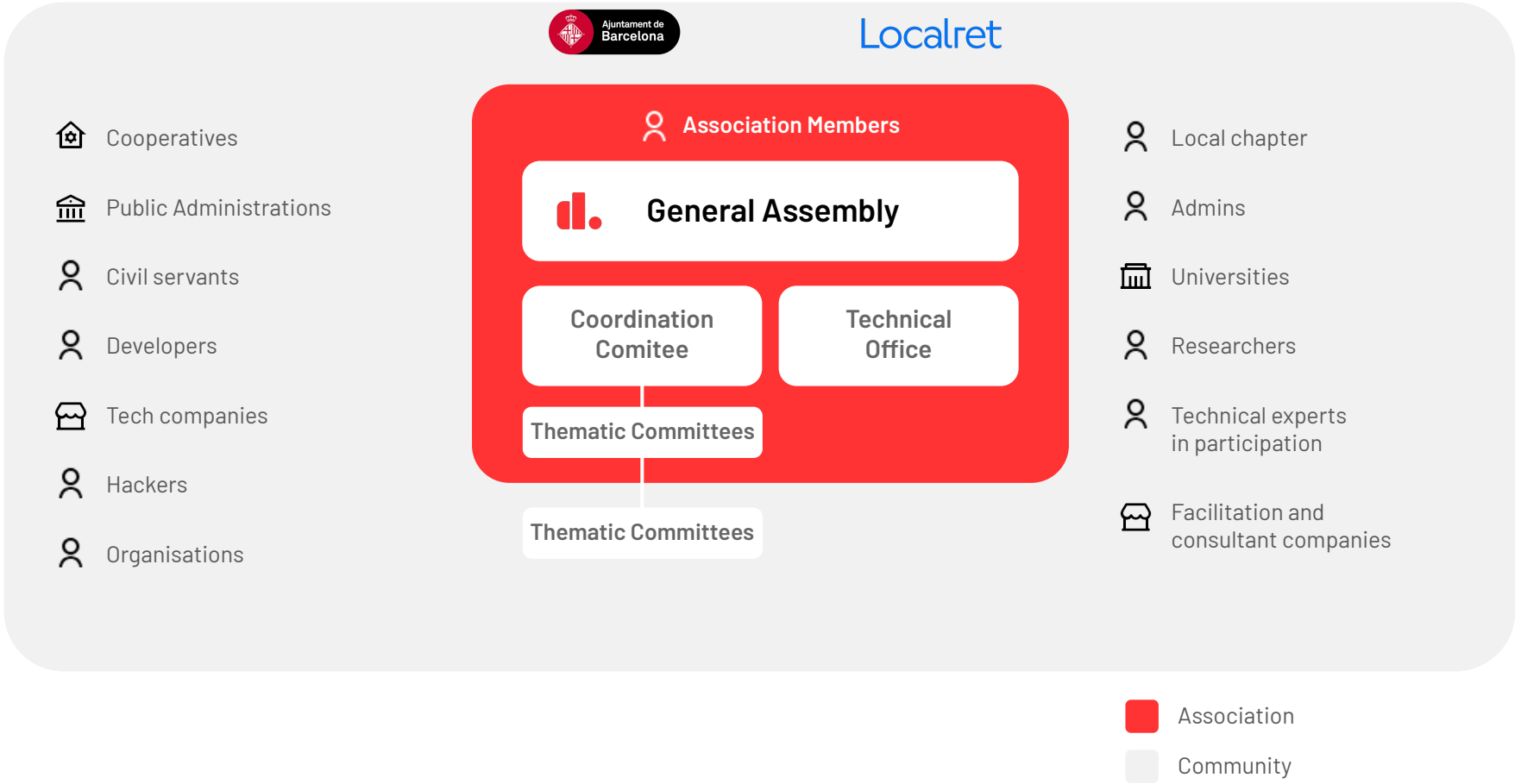
Ajuntament de Barcelona

Localret



Association

Community


Ajuntament de Barcelona
Localret
Cooperatives
Public Administrations
Civil servants
Developers
Tech companies
Hackers
Organisations
Association Members
General Assembly
Coordination Comitee
Technical Office
Thematic Committees
Thematic Committees
Local chapter
Admins
Universities
Researchers
Technical experts in participation
Facilitation and consultant companies
Association
Community

Decidim official partners

Service providers

PokeCode

octree

Colectic

PIPELINE TO POWER

CodeandoMéxico

Opensourcepolitics
l'expérience démocratique

mitgestalten
Partizipationsbüro

Code for Japan

urb an equ ipe

DIGIDEM LAB

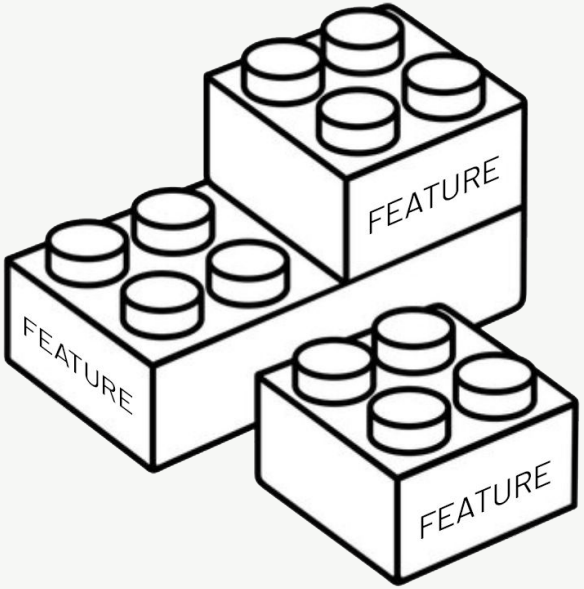
aLabs*

Decidim

How it works?

Decidim

How it works?



PARTICIPATORY SPACE

/How it works

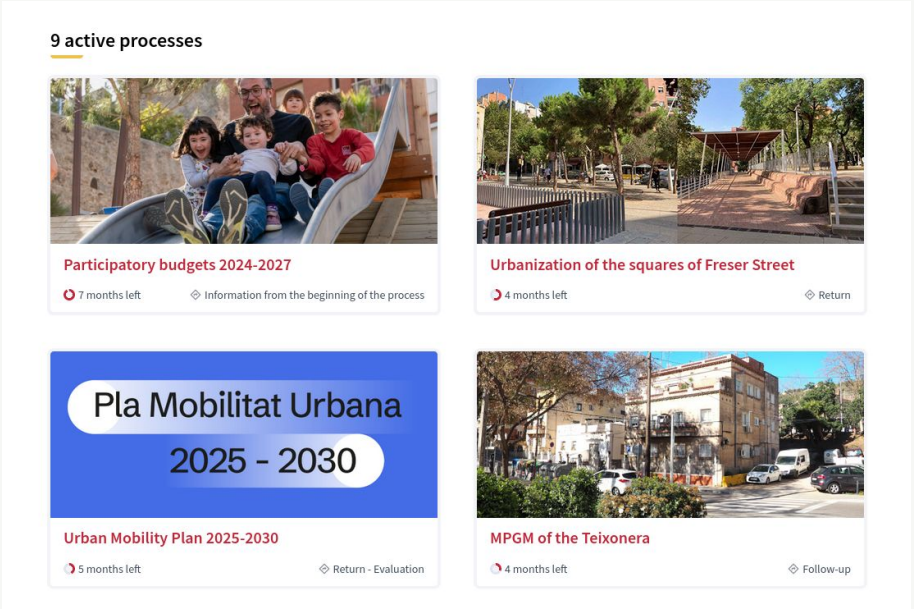
Participatory spaces

To articulate a participatory ecosystem

Processes

Assemblies

Initiatives

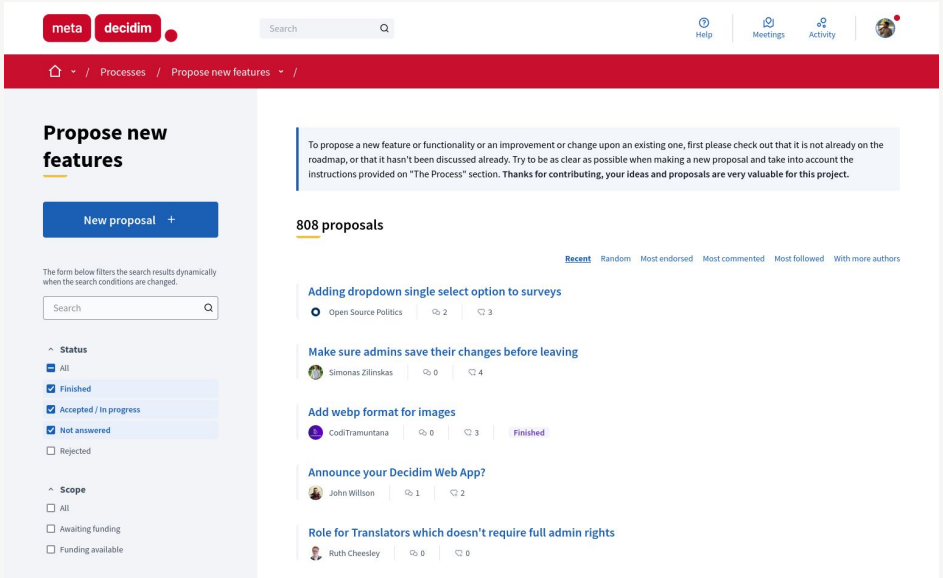


/How it works

Components

That can be combined into Spaces

- Pages
- Accountability
- Debates
- Budgets
- Surveys
- Blog
- Meetings
- Sortitions
- Proposals



Participatory spaces

Processes | Assemblies | Initiatives

COMPONENTS

- Pages
- Debates
- Surveys
- Meetings
- Proposals
- Accountability
- Budgets
- Blog
- Sortitions

Participatory spaces

Processes

Assemblies

Initiatives

COMPONENTS

- Pages
- Accountability
- Debates
- Budgets
- Surveys
- Blog
- Meetings
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Participatory spaces

Processes

Assemblies

Initiatives

COMPONENTS

- Pages
- Accountability
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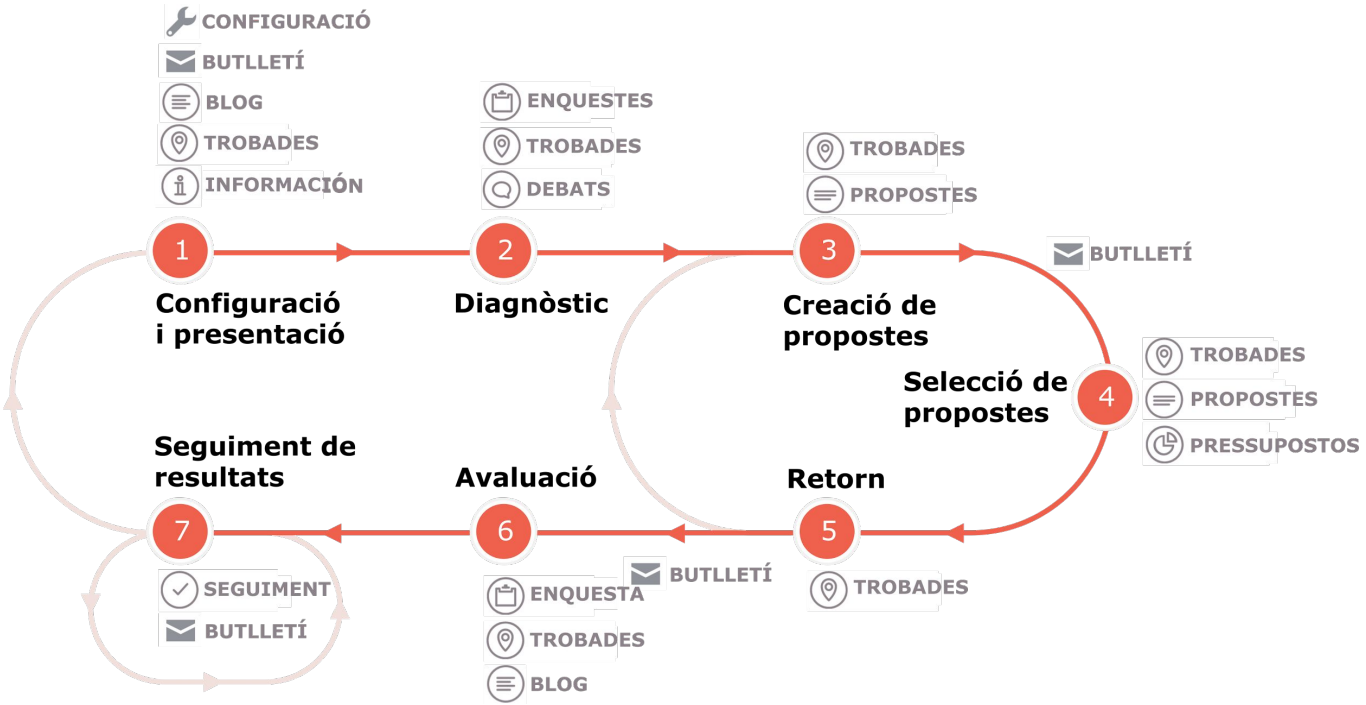
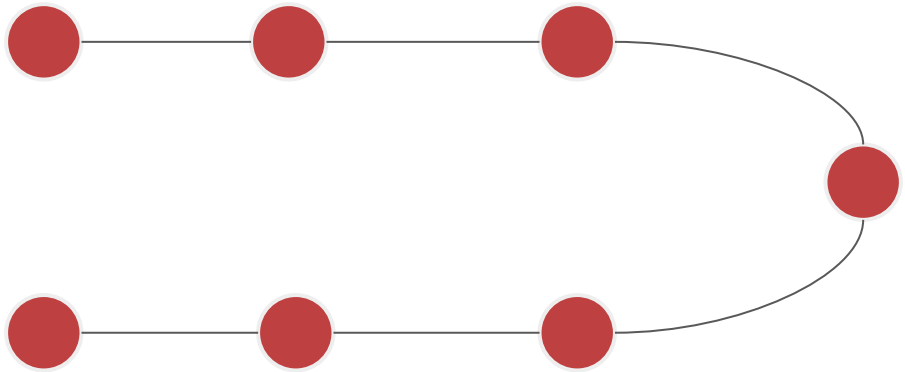
- Proposals


CONFIGURACIÓ
BUTLLETÍ
BLOG
TROBADES
INFORMACIÓN
1
Configuració i presentació
ENQUESTES
TROBADES
DEBATS
2
Diagnòstic
TROBADES
PROPOSTES
3
Creació de propostes
BUTLLETÍ
Selecció de propostes
4
TROBADES
PROPOSTES
PRESSUPOSTOS
Retorn
5
TROBADES
BUTLLETÍ
Avaluació
6
ENQUESTA
TROBADES
BLOG
Seguiment de resultats
7
SEGUIMENT
BUTLLETÍ



Decidim

In use

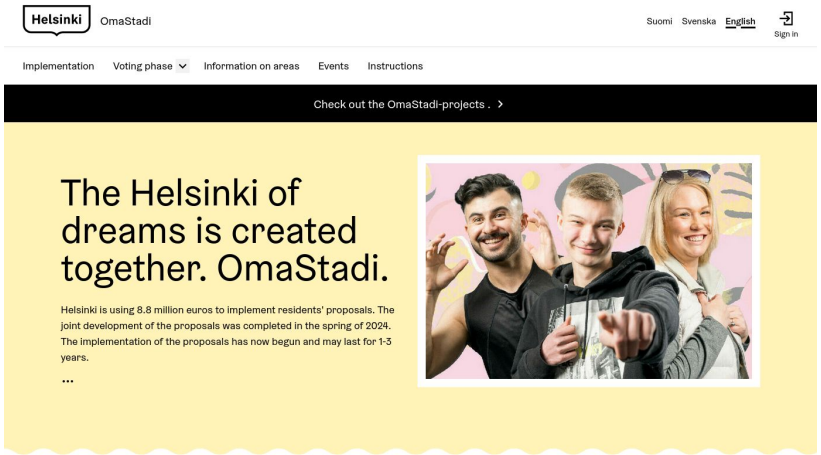
Decidim

In use

- Participatory process design
- Technology
  - Log-in strategy
  - Components in use
  - UX and UI

Helsinki

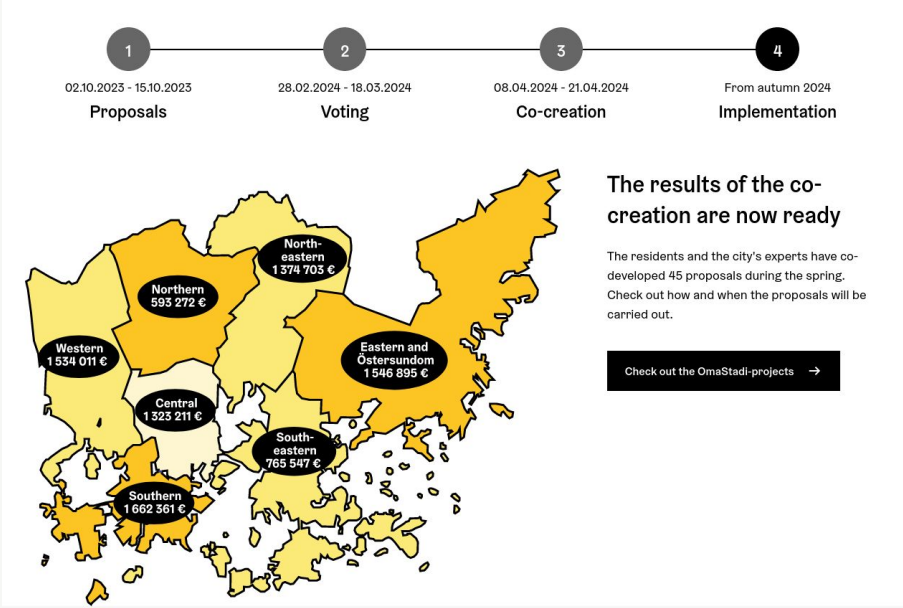
Participatory Budgeting



/Helsinki

Participatory process design

- 4 phases
- 8.8M to implement residents' proposals
- Money divided by districts according number of residents
- Proposals creation:
    - Not exceed 50% of the total funds allocated to a district.
    - Minimum: €35,000.
- Voting: 5 proposals in only one district.
- Co-creation workshops after selecting the proposals.

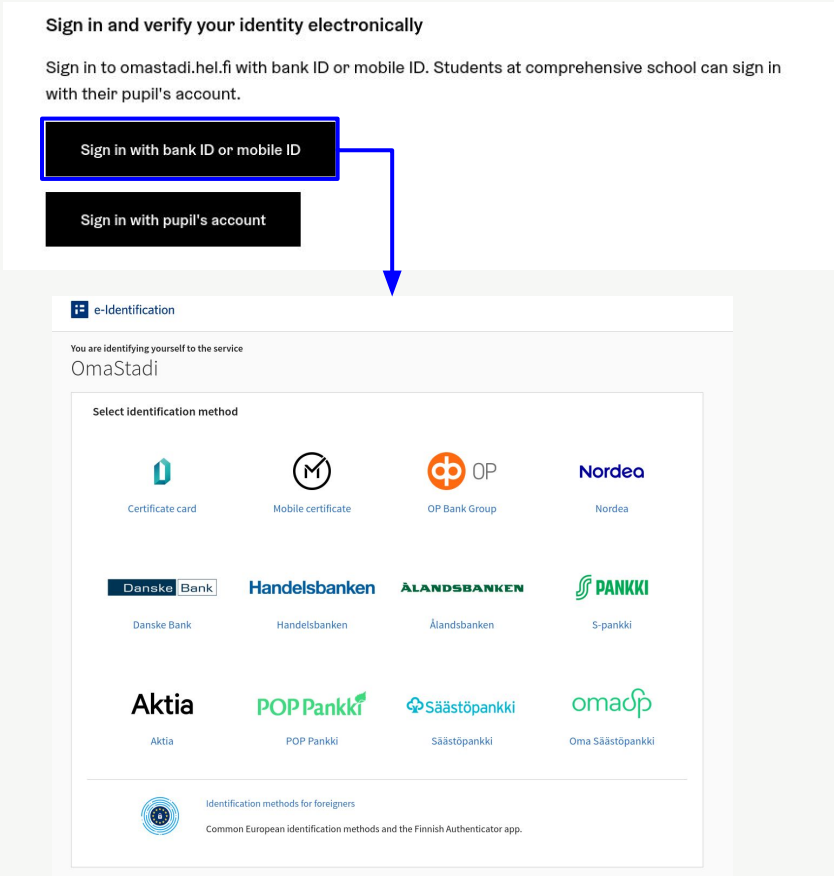


/Helsinki

Technology

Log-in strategy

- Strong authentication to ensure that only those entitled to vote can do it.
- Online bank accounts or pupil accounts.

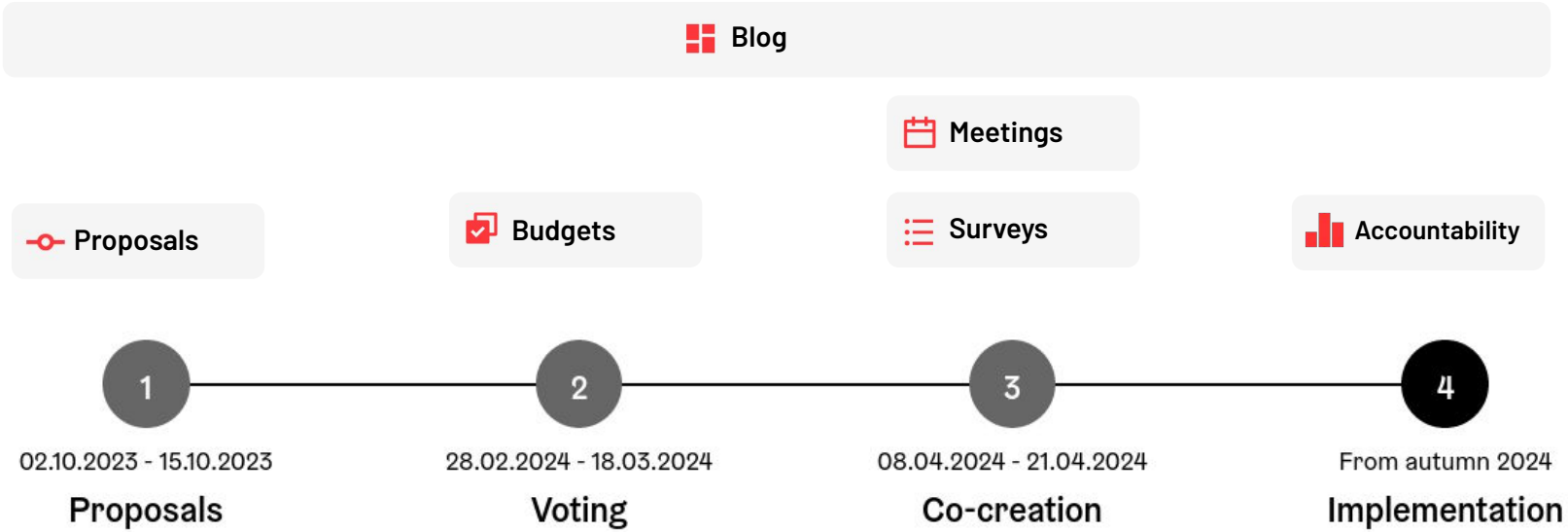


/Helsinki

Technology

Components in use

- Surveys
- Accountability
- Proposals
- Budgets
- Blog

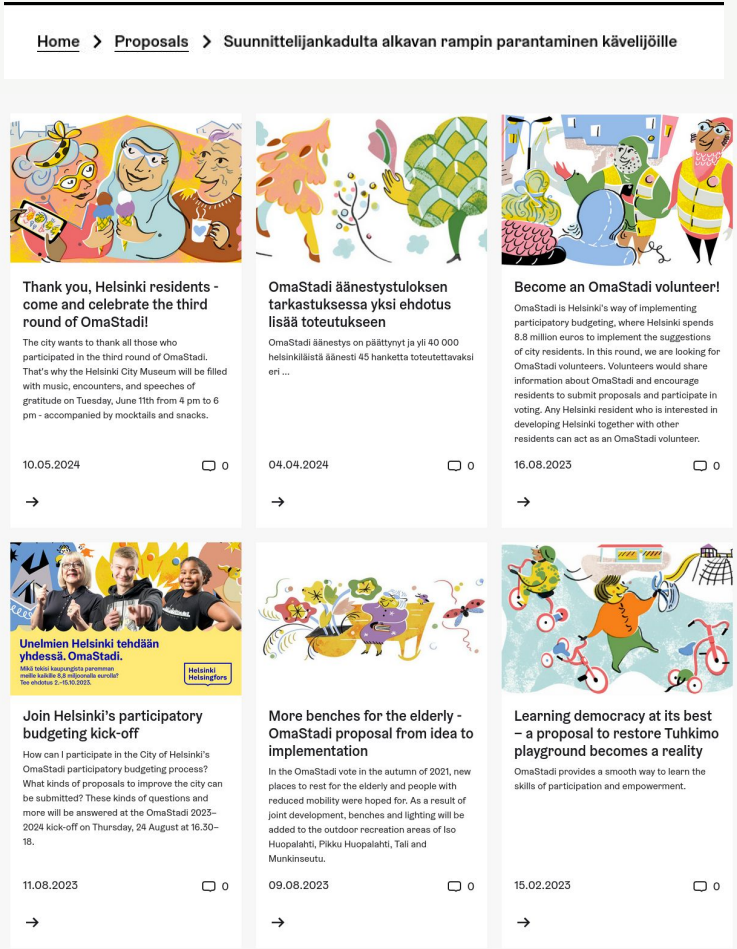

Blog
Meetings
Proposals
Budgets
Surveys
Accountability
1
2
3
4
02.10.2023 - 15.10.2023
Proposals
28.02.2024 - 18.03.2024
Voting
08.04.2024 - 21.04.2024
Co-creation
From autumn 2024
Implementation

/Helsinki

Technology

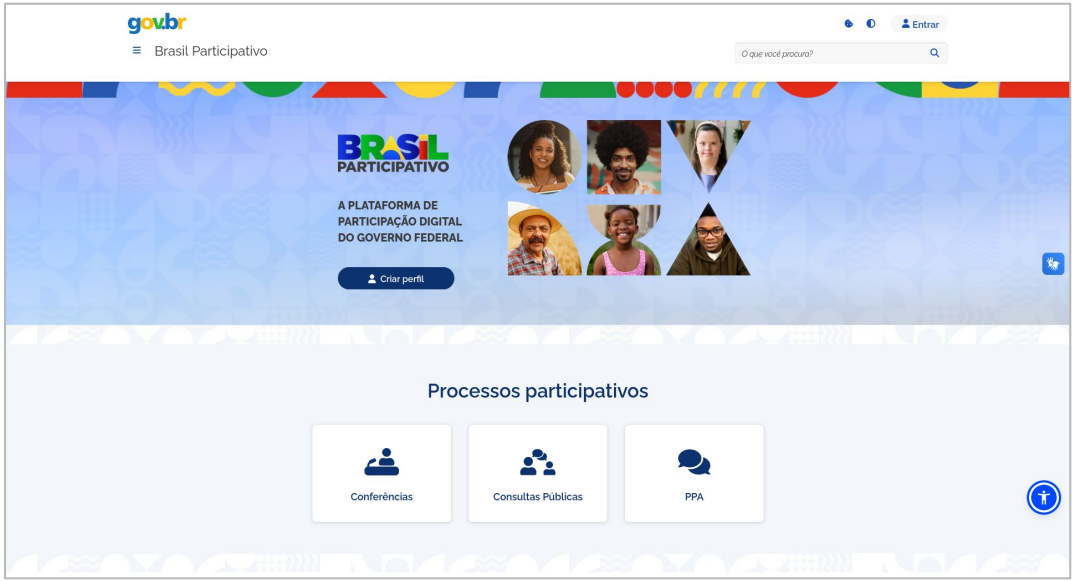
UX and UI

- Customised menus and refined browsing
- Customization of the UI
- Careful design with illustrations
- Creation of a unified graphic style
- Communication campaign



Brasil

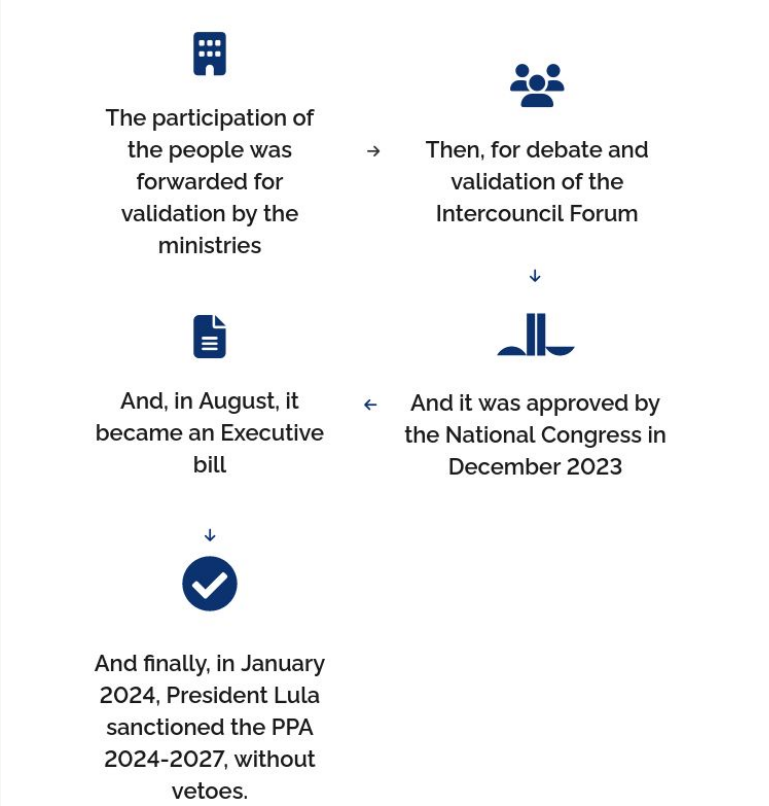
Plan Plurianual Participativo

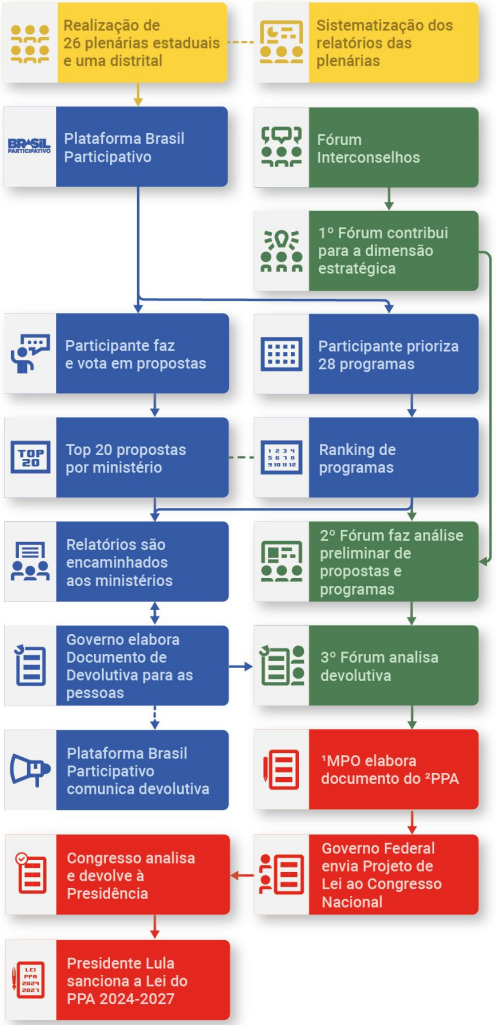


/Brasil

Participatory process design

- Four years government plan
- Participatory strategic planning
- Collect of proposals
- Voting and prioritization
- PPA approval by President Lula



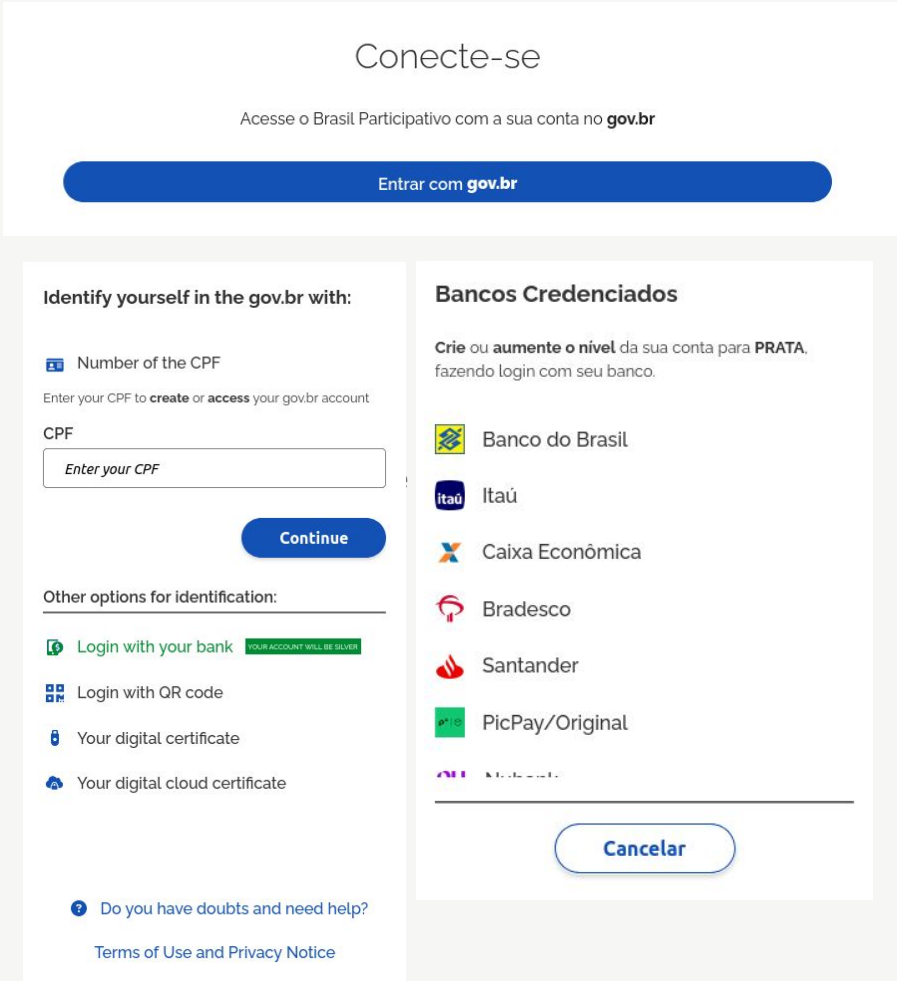

Realização de 26 plenárias estaduais e uma distrital
Sistematização dos relatórios das plenárias
Plataforma Brasil Participativo
Fórum Interconselhos
1º Fórum contribui para a dimensão estratégica
Participante faz e vota em propostas
Participante prioriza 28 programas
Top 20 propostas por ministério
Ranking de programas
Relatórios são encaminhados aos ministérios
2º Fórum faz análise preliminar de propostas e programas
Governo elabora Documento de Devolutiva para as pessoas
3º Fórum analisa devolutiva
Plataforma Brasil Participativo comunica devolutiva
¹MPO elabora documento do ²PPA
Congresso analisa e devolve à Presidência
Governo Federal envia Projeto de Lei ao Congresso Nacional
Presidente Lula sanciona a Lei do PPA 2024-2027

/Brasil

Technology

Log-in strategy

- Strong authentication
- Online bank account
- Digital Certificate
- Not allowing sign-up only with e-mail



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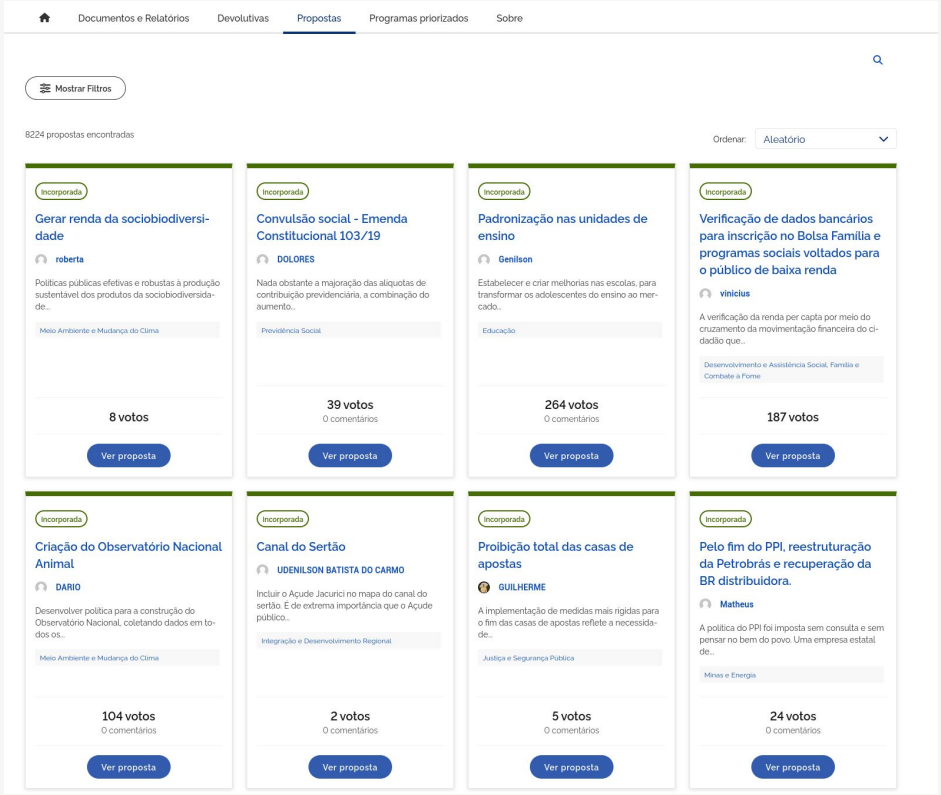
Technology

Components in use

Proposals

Blog



Blog

Proposals

Proposals

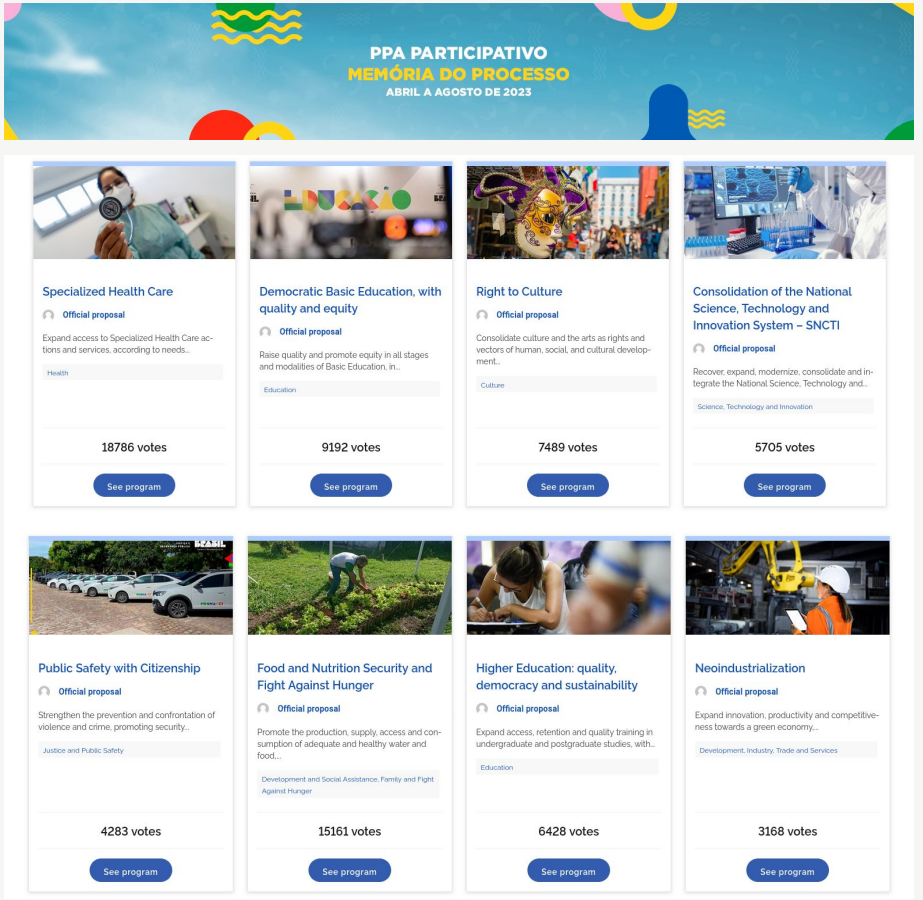
1. Proposal collection
2. Prioritization
3. Intercouncilum forum and ministries
4. Approved by National Congress
5. PPA bill approval

/Brasil

Technology

UX and UI

- Customization of the UI
- Accessibility features
- Mobile first approach
- Changes in the UI cards proposals
- Communication campaign involving influencers in social media

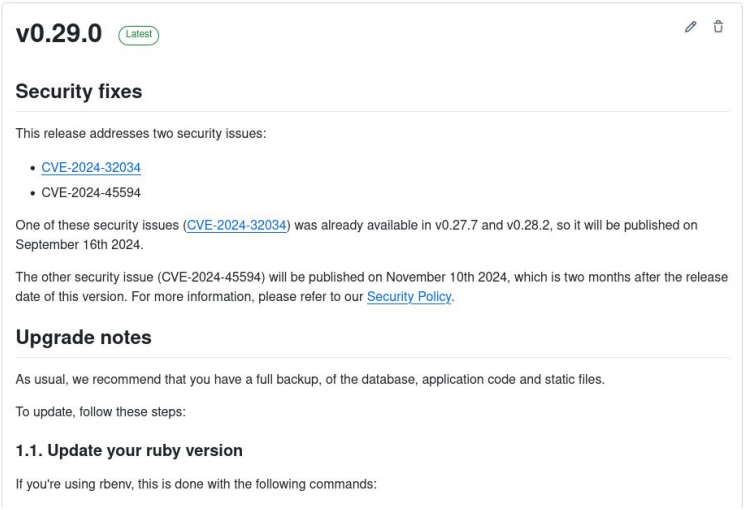


Decidim

Open Source Technology

/Open Source Technology

- 2-3 new releases per year
- Security and accessibility audits
- New Re-Design of the UI
- Continuous improving



v0.29.0 Latest

Security fixes

This release addresses two security issues:

- CVE-2024-32034
- CVE-2024-45594

One of these security issues (CVE-2024-32034) was already available in v0.27.7 and v0.28.2, so it will be published on September 16th 2024.

The other security issue (CVE-2024-45594) will be published on November 10th 2024, which is two months after the release date of this version. For more information, please refer to our Security Policy.

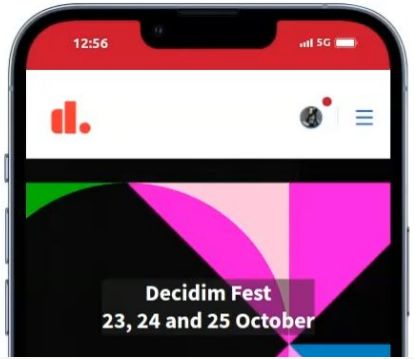
Upgrade notes

As usual, we recommend that you have a full backup, of the database, application code and static files.

To update, follow these steps:

1.1. Update your ruby version

If you're using rbenv, this is done with the following commands:



/Open Source Technology

- Easy to customize thanks to modular architecture.
- You can create your own module.
- Everybody can participate in the definition of the roadmap.

Community

Analytics

Enables tracking through Matomo and adds a tab in the admin panel showing one Matomo dashboard (or more) of your choice.

More information

Budgets Enhanced

Enhanced Budget component . Allow assigining a color for each budgets category.

More information

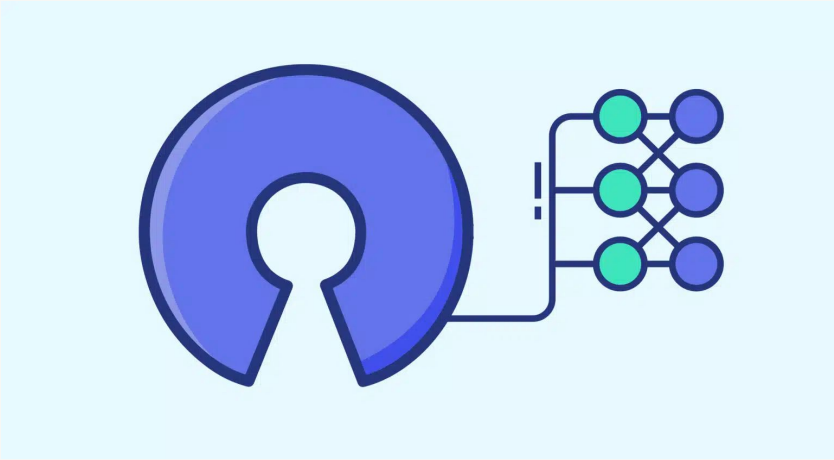
BudgetsPaperBallots

This module allows an admin to import paper ballots in a participatory budgeting vote. The import process can be repeated as many times as desired, or done at once. It isn't possible to edit a value that was wrongly imported, but it is possible to import a negative number of votes to apply a correction. The number of paper votes for each project can then be seen in the admin panel and the aggregated number of votes for each project (both paper and online) can be seen on the frontend. These values are also made available in the various data exports (from the admin panel, the open data and the API).

More information

The magic of Open Source

1. Helsinki needs a customisation and decides to develop a module
2. Helsinki pays for the development of the module and publishes it.
3. The module is released under the same licence as Decidim and can therefore be reused by anyone.
4. Then, Barcelona sees the module and installs it because it meets a need.



Decidim in the future

Challenges and objectives

- Becoming a Digital Public Infrastructure for participation of worldwide reference.
- Improve installation process.
- Expanding use cases beyond governments.
- Road to version 1.0. (LTS version)

Thanks!

More info at: decidim.org
Contact: hola@decidim.org

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Nil Homedes Busquets
President
Decidim Free Software Association

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