DECIDIM FEST 2026

Decidim and democratic participation

Diagnosis, proposals and future challenges from Decidim Barcelona

Arnau Monterde · Barcelona City Council

decidim. barcelona

Barcelona

STRUCTURE

Three moves

01

Diagnosis

- Intensive participation at key moments
- The hybrid model works
- Always mediated
- Little reappropriation of the platform

02

Proposals

- Mass participation moments
- Permanent spaces for participation and debate
- Participation in public facilities
- Fostering self-organisation

03

Future challenges

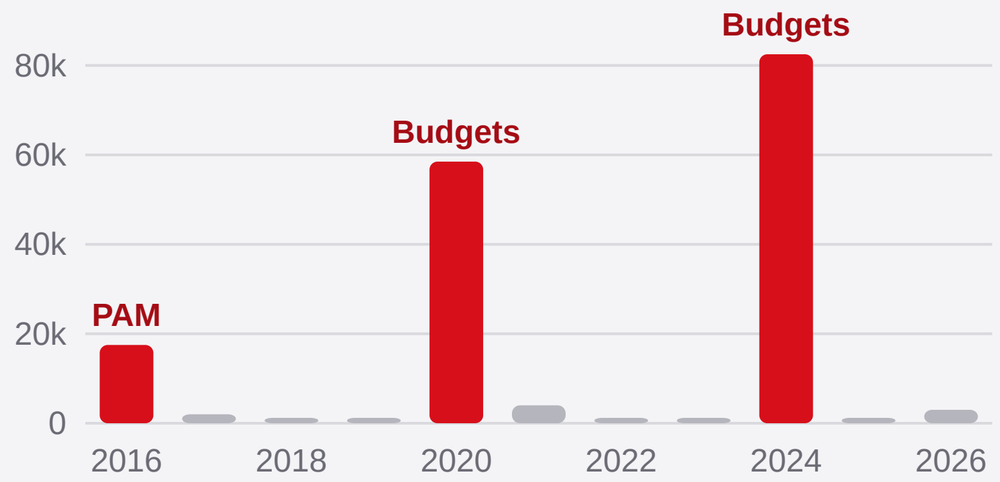
- Single window
- AI to support participation
- Participation as an integral governance model

DIAGNOSIS

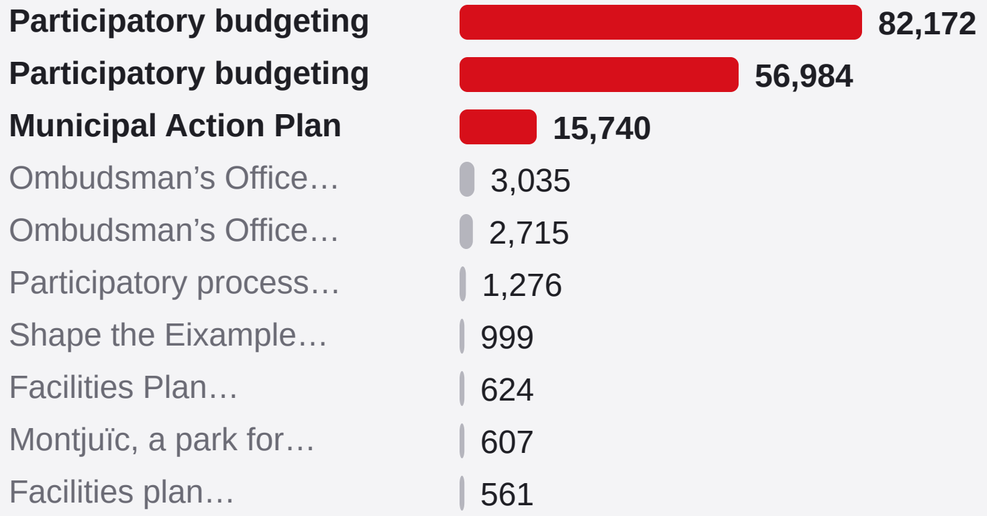
Intensive participation at key moments

The big peaks coincide with the Municipal Action Plan and participatory budgeting. In between, participation drops.

Participants by process start year



Top 10 processes by participants



Source: decidim.barcelona dashboard

DIAGNOSIS

The hybrid model works

Meetings held

6,493

up to 12 Oct 2026

Closed meetings

40%

2,577 closed meetings

Registered attendees

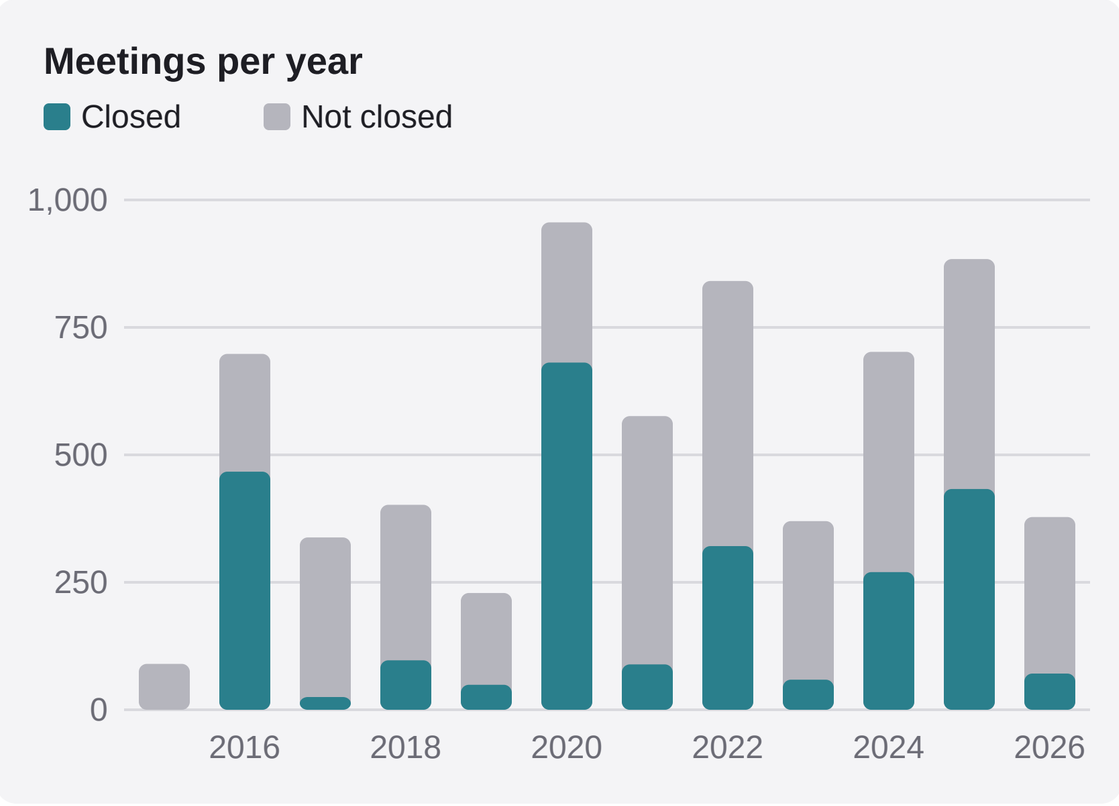
69,238

28 on average per meeting with attendees

Proposals born in meetings

27%

9,212 proposals, from 696 meetings



Source: decidim.barcelona dashboard, data up to 12 Oct 2026

DIAGNOSIS

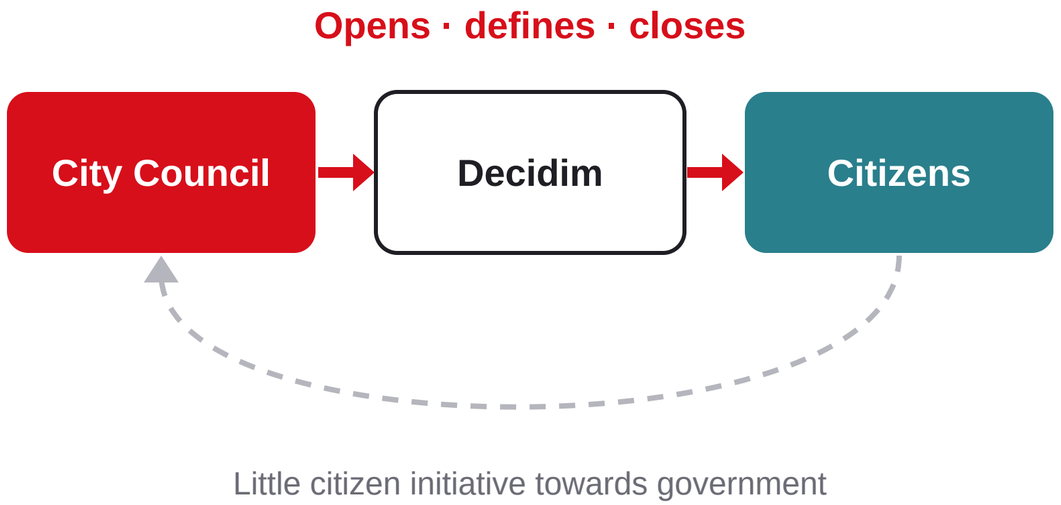
Participation that is always mediated

The City Council opens, defines and closes the processes. Citizens respond, but rarely take the initiative.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Participatory processes · Initiatives

- The institution sets the agenda.
- Few channels for citizen initiative.



DIAGNOSIS

Little reappropriation of the platform

Decidim allows much more than we use: organisations and residents hardly use it to organise themselves.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Meetings · Groups · Initiatives

- Self-organisation features underused.
- Seen as a City Council tool.



Illustrative diagram, not data

STARTING POINT

Barcelona

All these proposals come from the Citizen Participation Plan 2026–2028

Approved by Barcelona City Council: three axes and ten strategic lines to strengthen democratic participation.

01

Open participation

02

Diverse and universal participation

03

Innovative participation

PROPOSALS

Four lines to open up participation

Mass participation moments

- Citizens’ assemblies
- Strategic planning of major issues
- More participatory budgeting
- Participation in ordinary investment

Permanent spaces for participation and debate

- Hybrid city forums
- Citizen panels with surveys
- Citizen moderation with roles
- Better citizen initiatives

Participation in public facilities

- New participation space: facilities
- Democratic governance of any public facility

Fostering self-organisation

- Self-convened meetings
- Personalised feed by area and topic
- Microblogging
- Collective participation through groups

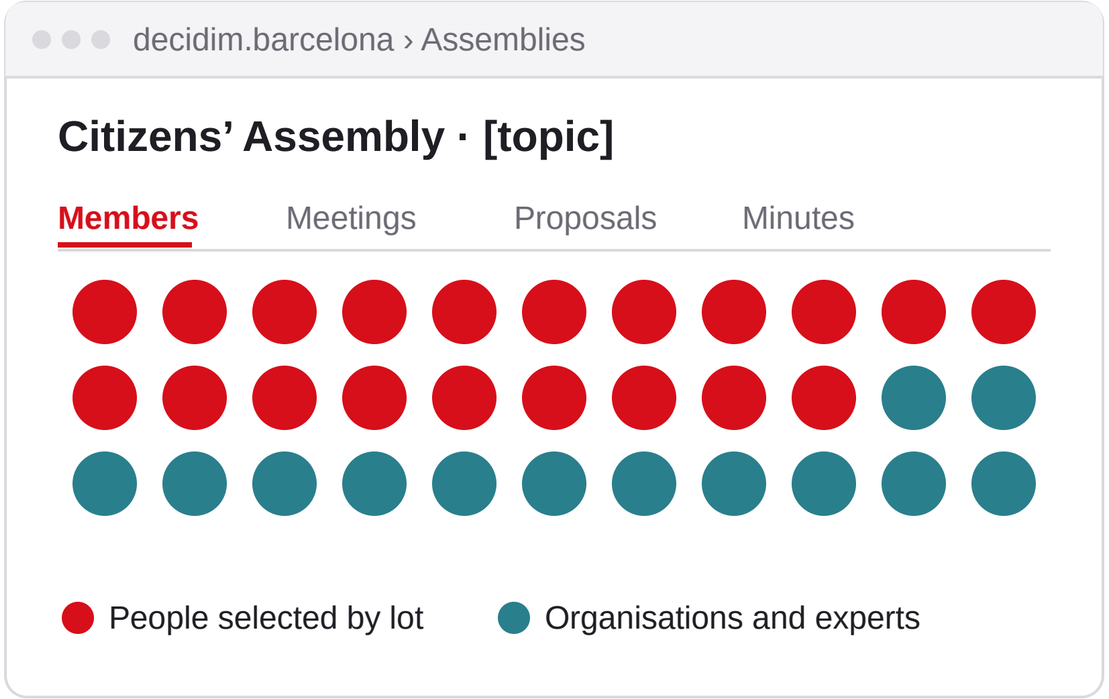
Citizens’ assemblies

People selected by lot, together with organisations and experts, deliberate on the city’s major challenges.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Assemblies · Meetings · Proposals

- Public and diverse membership.
- Open sessions, minutes and recommendations.



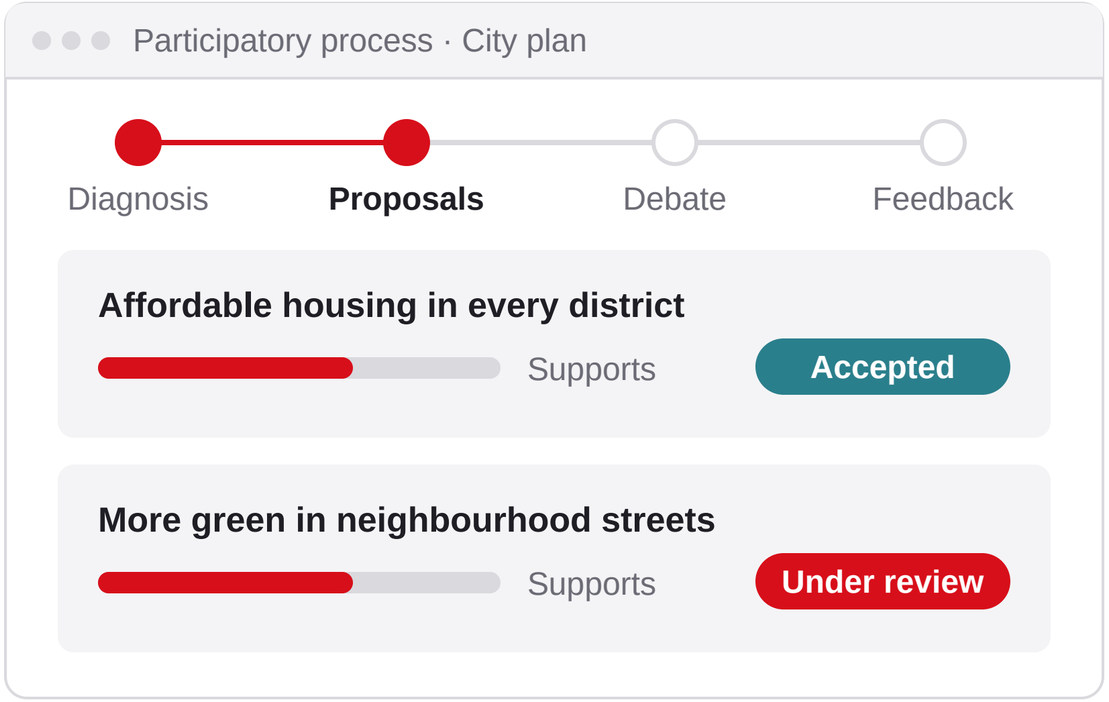
Strategic planning of the city’s major issues

Major plans are built through a phased process: diagnosis, proposals, debate and feedback.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Participatory processes | Proposals | Meetings

- Every proposal traceable to its answer.
- Phases always visible.



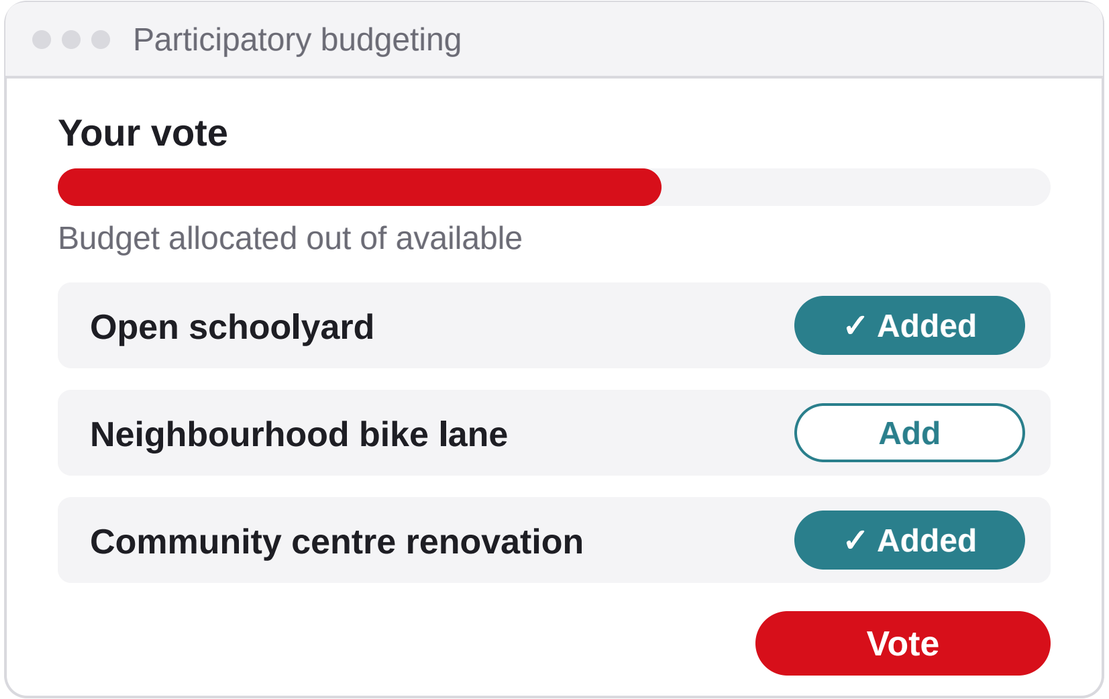
More participatory budgeting

More resources decided directly by citizens, with the whole cycle on the platform: propose, assess, vote and implement.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Budgets | Proposals | Accountability

- More budget and more projects.
- Simple voting, also in person.



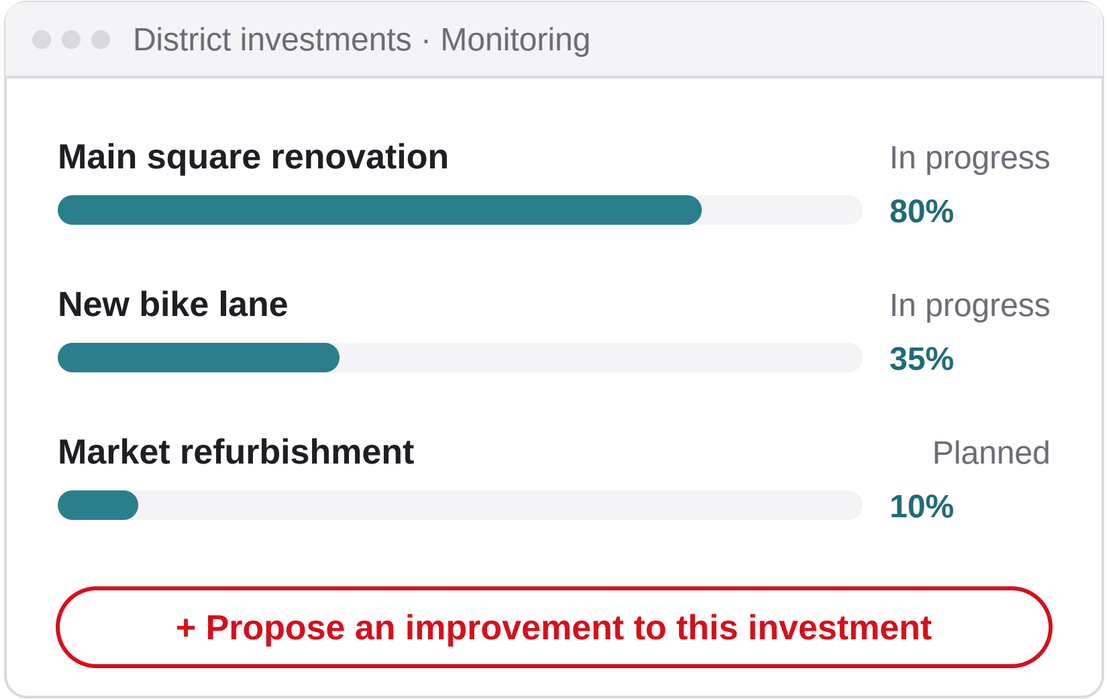
Participation in ordinary investment

Open up ordinary investment too: know it, prioritise it and propose improvements.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Accountability · Proposals

- Public status of every investment.
- Proposals linked to each project.



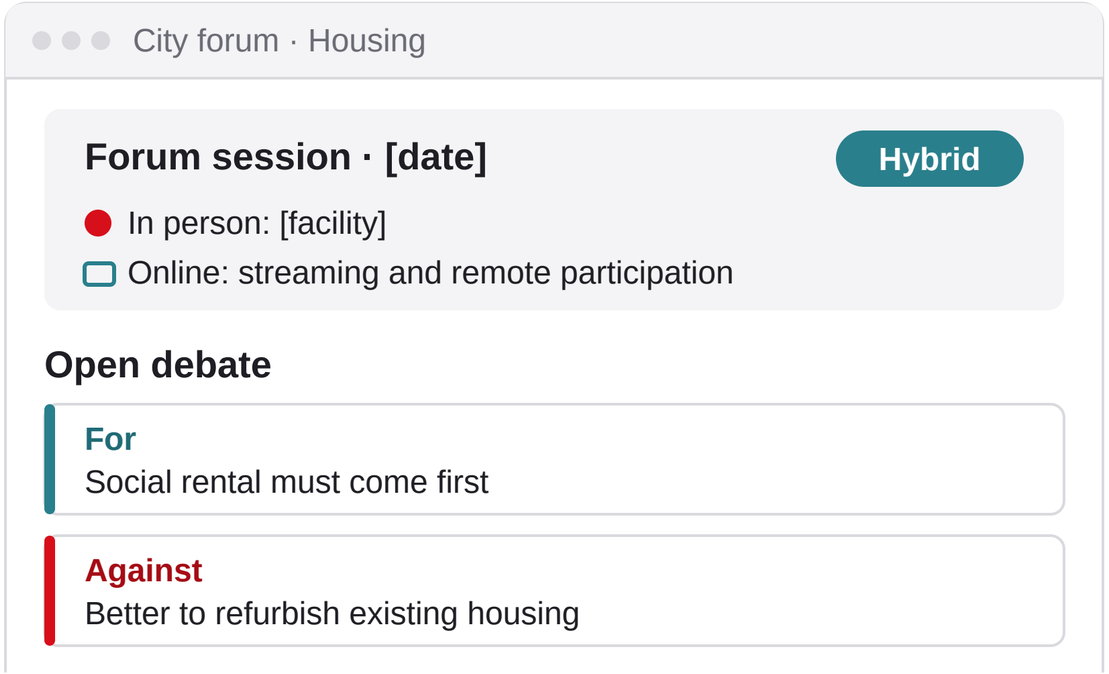
Hybrid city forums

Stable thematic spaces, in person and online at once, combining debates, proposals and meetings.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Debates | Proposals | Hybrid meetings

- One conversation, in the room and online.
- Arguments for and against, visible.



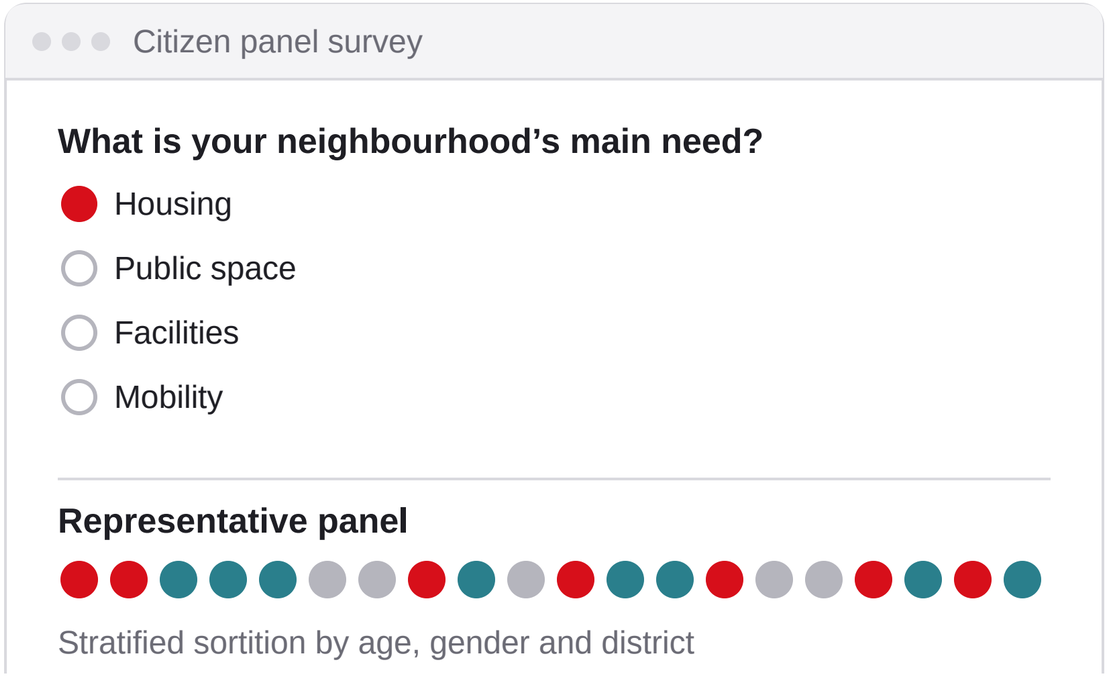
Citizen panels with surveys for situated diagnoses

Representative panels selected by lot answer surveys and provide a diagnosis from every area and profile.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Surveys Assemblies

- Stratified sortition.
- Results as open data.



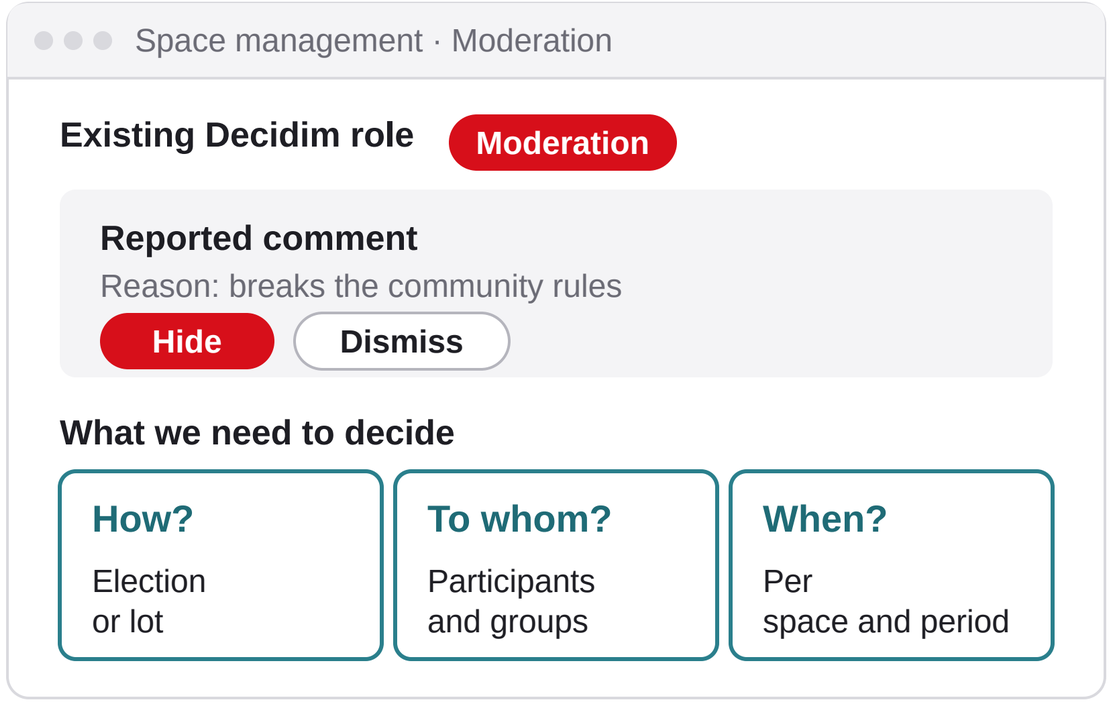
Citizen moderation with specific roles

The moderator role already exists in Decidim. We need to decide how, to whom and when it is given to citizens.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Moderations · Moderator role

- Public assignment criteria.
- Roles per space and period.



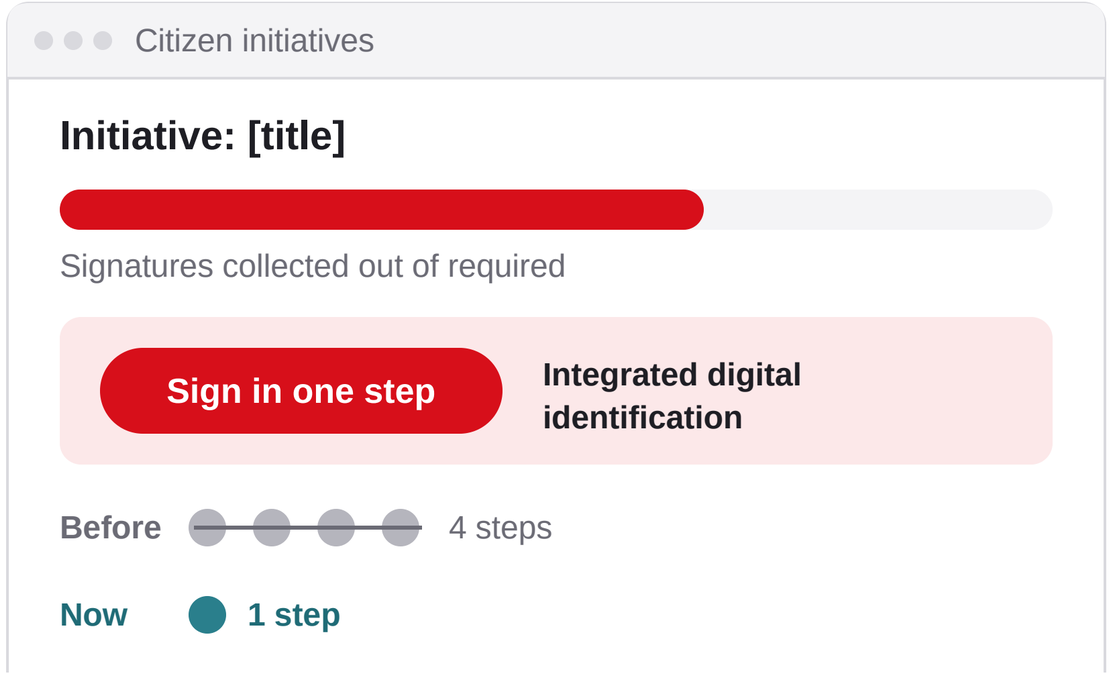
Better citizen initiatives

Make it easier for citizens to put issues on the agenda: one-step digital signature and better usability.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Initiatives

- One-step digital signature.
- Clearer forms and phases.



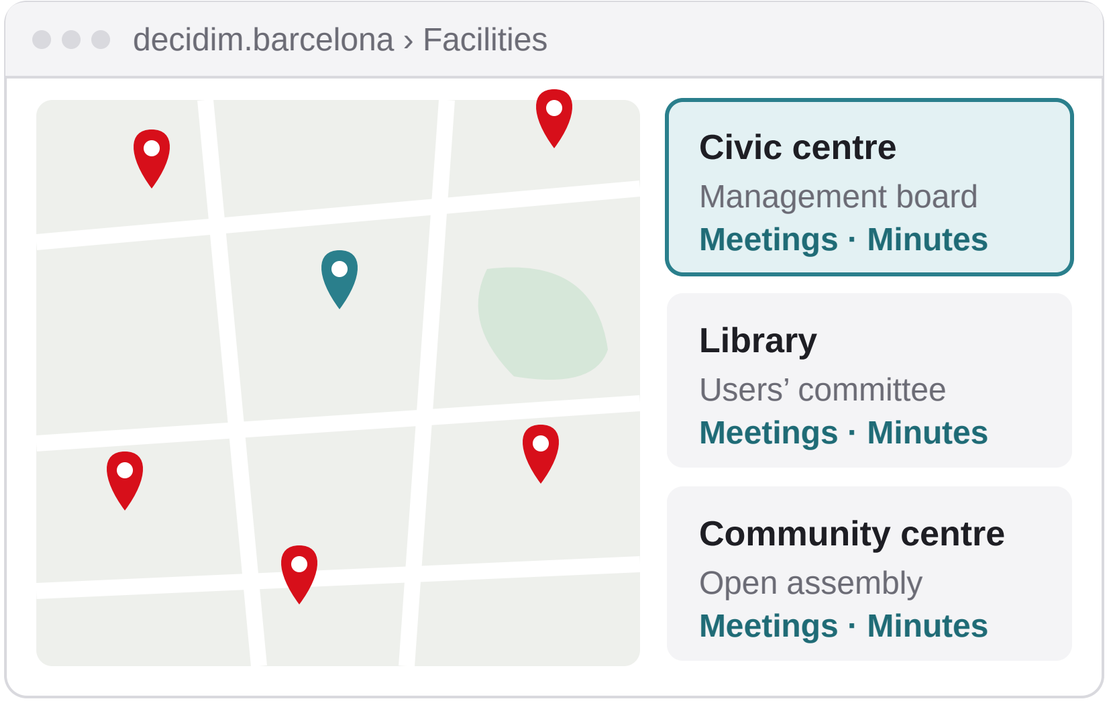
Public facilities, a new participation space

A new space like assemblies, with a map: every public facility with its own democratic governance.

DECIDIM FEATURE

New space: Facilities · Map · Meetings

- Works like the Assemblies space.
- Adds location on a map.



A platform for self-organisation

Self-convened meetings

Meetings

Meeting title

Place

Date

Convene

Personalised feed by area/topic

Taxonomies

Area: my neighbourhood

Topic: housing

- New meeting at the community centre
- New proposal in the housing forum

Microblogging

Blog

Residents' association

Saturday: open assembly in the square!

♥ Like · Reply · Share

Collective participation

User groups

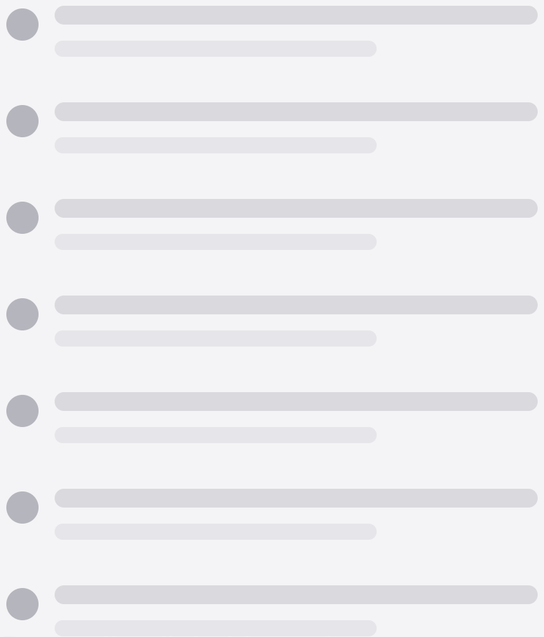
RA

Group: [organisation]

Proposal signed as a group

Personalised activity wall with taxonomies

Now: last activity



Dense list, little hierarchy

Proposal: wall filterable by taxonomies

Area: Gràcia ▾ | Topic: Housing ▾ | Type: all ▾

Proposal Housing forum · Proposals — ♥ Support + Follow

Expand social rental housing in the area

Gràcia · Housing

2 h ago

Meeting Community centre · Meetings — ✓ I'll go + Follow

Open assembly on uses of the square

Gràcia · Public space

2 h ago

Debate Neighbourhood council · Debates — Comment + Follow

How do we improve coexistence in squares?

Gràcia · Coexistence

2 h ago

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Single window: a prompt model?



FUTURE CHALLENGES

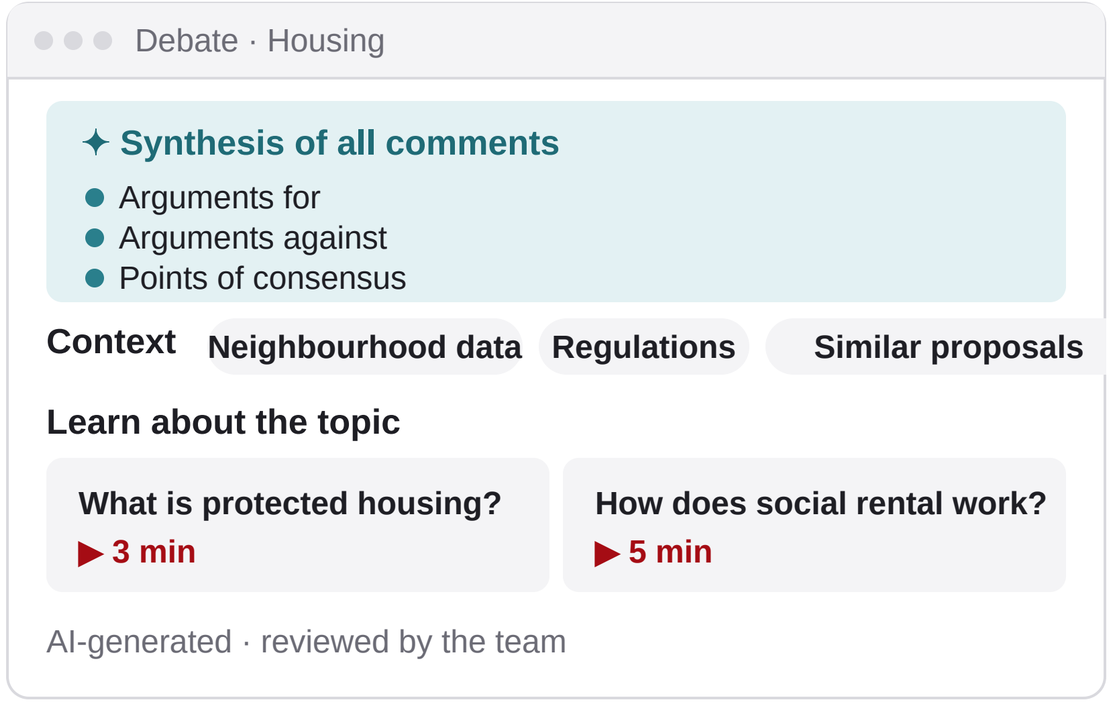
AI to support participation

Provide context, synthesise large volumes of content, and offer extra learning on the topic being discussed.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Debates **Proposals** **AI (to be imagined)**

- Synthesis of thousands of contributions.
- Short learning before taking part.



FUTURE CHALLENGES

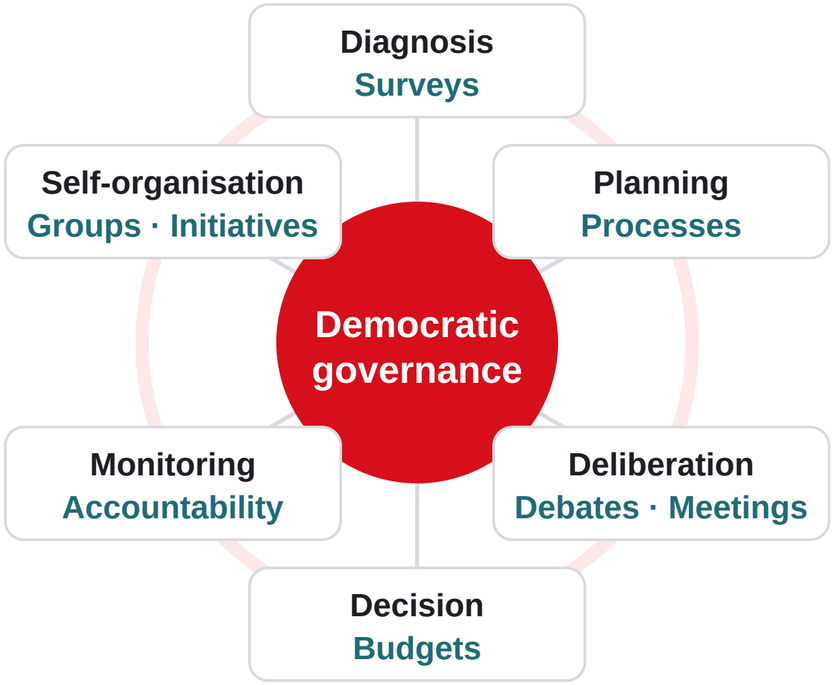
Participation as an integral governance model

Connect all the pieces so that participation becomes the usual way of governing the city.

DECIDIM FEATURE

Processes **Assemblies** **Accountability**

- Every phase of public policy open.
- A system, not isolated processes.



Thank you!

decidim.barcelona · meta.decidim.org

Arnau Monterde · Barcelona City Council

decidim.barcelona

Barcelona