

# THINK TANK

Process of deliberation on new political culture: Working Document No. 4

## LABOUR DEFINITIONS OF THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE AND EQUALITY

(14 October 2020)

The group that is developing the debate on a new political culture within the Etorkizuna Eraikiz Think Tank, began the process with a reflection on the crisis in liberal democracies and the need for a new political culture to combat it (see Working Document No. 1). To this end, Gipuzkoa's main challenges were then addressed (Working Document No. 2) and certain themes of debate were prioritised to respond to them (Working Document No. 3).

The first challenge discussed by the group was the need for specific definitions of what political culture and equality are. This challenge was addressed on 16 September 2020, after Daniel Innerarity shared a conceptual framework for this purpose. The group established the bases for the following definitions:

### NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

**The new political culture is a new phase** that drives us from representation to participation and subsequently to collaboration **in the development of democracy**, based on independent individuals and a living civil society.

The **system** corresponding to the new political culture is collaborative governance and it has three axes: ethical values as a system of cohesion, effective systems of interaction and community knowledge. This system is developed **on three planes**: the subjective, the personal and the social.

The **goal** of the new political culture is to transform the relationship between the main administrations and agents, in order to tackle a new agenda. For this purpose, there are four **lines of work**: (1) Changing the way of understanding the problems, taking on board the complexity from a systemic perspective; (2) Organising areas of collaboration; (3) Responding to uncertainty with prototyping and co-creation; and (4) Transforming and opening the administration up from within in order to understand society's problems and come up with responses, adapting the role of technical staff for this purpose.

### EQUALITY

Equality is a **process** of looking for the same rights and opportunities for individuals and of compensating for inequalities. At the same time, it is also the **result** of this process. In other words, on the one hand, in terms of initial **rights** and **options** and also of **results**, it indicates

equality. At the same time, and in order to achieve this, it requires guaranteeing equal conditions in the process.

When it comes to analysing equality, we will use structural and perception **indicators**. In other words, as well as the indicators we can use to measure equality objectively, it will also be important to know what subjective view people have of equality. At the same time, we will strive for equality in **four axes**: language, gender, the economy and welfare.

It is important to have a good understanding of the place these definitions play within the working methodology. Indeed, the Think Tank wants to use the tension between theory and practice to promote transformation. This requires two types of work:

- a) *Critical review of experts' contributions.* The experts' theories and conceptual frameworks on the themes and challenges to be addressed will be critically debated and integrated into the experimentation processes. In other words, these theories and frameworks will only be included in the participants' experiments when they are of help.
- b) *Critical review of participants' concepts and frameworks.* Prejudices and interpretations regarding the participants' concepts will be examined, in order to analyse them critically through the contributions of experts and other participants and transform them through learning.

Given that to date, the experts have been only been able to make a very limited contribution on political culture (see Working Document No. 1 and presentation by Daniel Innerarity), the working definitions set out in this document are largely a snapshot of the participants' interpretations. Vis-à-vis the future, these definitions should be gradually transformed through two types of work:

- a) A critical review of the group's definitions, based on the experts' texts and contributions.
- b) A critical review of the experts' contributions and the group's definitions, based on what each individual has learned in their experimentation processes.

This work will sometimes be based on the concept of new political culture itself; on other occasions, it will consist of debating the more specific axes that have been defined within the new political culture. The session of 14 October will take this second route, debating with Angela Hanson how to analyse complexity in the process of constructing the new political culture and how to incorporate a systemic perspective.