



ETORKIZUNA
ERAIKIZ
think tank

NEW POLITICAL CULTURE
REPORT OF THE 9th MEETING

17/03/2021

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ETORKIZUNA ERAIKIZ think tank

SPACE FOR DELIBERATION ON THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

ZOOM, 17 March 2021, 5 pm - 7 pm

1. Programme

Theme	Person responsible
Introduction to the working session and reflection on the process	Miren Larrea, Orkestra
Presentation of the contents worked on by the group	Andoni Eizagirre, Mondragon University
Group dynamic	Andoni Eizagirre, Mondragon University
Introduction to the different narratives of collaborative governance	Itziar Eizagirre, Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa

2. Members of the group

In attendance:

1. Sebastian Zurutuza. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
2. Ander Arzelus. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
3. Xabier Barandiaran. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
4. Ion Muñoa. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
5. Goizeder Manotas. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
6. Eider Mendoza. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
7. Itziar Eizagirre. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
8. Mikel Pagola. **Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa.**
9. Miren Larrea. **Orkestra.**
10. Asier Lakidain. **Sinnergiak**
11. Naiara Goia. **Aranzazu Laboratory of Social Innovation.**

12. Andoni Eizagirre. **Mondragon Unibertsitatea.**
13. Mikel Irizar. **Eusko Ikaskuntza.**
14. Ander Errasti. **Institut d'Estudis de l'Autogovern.**
15. Fernando Tapia. **University of the Basque Country**
16. Eva Sánchez. **Orkestra.**

3. Introduction and presentation of the workshop

The Orkestra researcher opened the session by welcoming the participants. She reminded them that at the last session, they had jointly agreed on a different approach to relating to knowledge, in which the group's own knowledge would be adopted as expert knowledge.

She welcomed two new members, ECO11 and DFG8, and she invited DFG8 to introduce himself.

DFG8 greeted the other participants, explaining that he is the Director of Participation. He said that "it will not be easy to fill the gap left by DFG2. At the same time it will be interesting to participate in this process".

4. Presentation of the contents worked on by the group

ECO5 explained that today's session would be driven by the group dedicated to the Think Tank's theoretical conceptualization of the New Political Culture. *"The main objective is to continue to reinforce a new political culture between all of us. The specific objectives are to remember the rationale given by Etorkizuna Eraikiz for a new political culture, and to remind ourselves of the general and common goals of each working group. Even when we work in sub-groups, we should not forget that we have a common goal: to reinforce a new political culture".*

He explained the dynamics, which would consist of a general explanation and two exercises. *"The first exercise is based on Working Document No. 1. The general topic is the crisis in liberal democracy, a problem which has two symptoms: citizen disaffection towards politics and the growing difficulties being experienced by institutions in responding to the challenges of our times. Etorkizuna Eraikiz is one approach for tackling this crisis".*

"The implicit assumption is that democratic political culture forms the basis of a stable democratic system. However obvious it might seem, we often ignore the idea of

democratic political culture. The notion can be summed up by saying that societies require a consensus on the norms and values to be protected by political institutions, which in turn legitimize their processes". "For democratic systems to function sustainably, it is necessary to build a political culture that is in line with democratic principles".



"Several ideas arose in the diagnosis: political disaffection and the inability of public structures to meet the challenges of globalisation". There are also certain complementary dimensions that he would add: A) An increasingly individualistic society. B) A tendency among citizens to feel alienated from political life; they are not familiar with the political world and its reality. C) Competition between political agents and apparatuses for social support and legitimacy. The citizenry sees itself as being outside

that fight or not active in it. D) Lack of control over much of the economic system and the effect of globalization on this crisis. E) Major disagreements between institutions, citizens and political actors with regards to actions and mutual expectations.

He alluded to four questions that are designed to raise "grassroots" concerns: 1) Can we sustain the public policies we have created for social welfare? 2) Do public institutions have sufficient powers to guarantee the necessary conditions for citizen freedom and equality? 3) Do current political systems have the capacity to organize political representation and citizen legitimacy? 4) How does the culture of the consumer society affect the quality of democracy?

"These questions are the reasons behind the creation of the Think Tank. The purpose is to create spaces for deliberation that will enable us to change this situation; for the deliberations to influence the policies of the Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa and for the Etorikizuna Eraikiz ecosystem to influence political culture".

He reminded them that the participants had submitted their comments on this initial approach, which are included in Working Document No. 2 and went on: *"We wanted to recap this synthesis and then we will do two fairly long exercises. The first is related to political culture. We will ask you some questions designed to determine what we understand political culture to be".*

5. Group dynamic

ECO5 asked each participant to answer the questions on their own, as these will be highly important contributions for the chapter of the book to be entitled "A pluralistic approach to the need for a new political culture: perspectives and proposals of the working group". The secretary of each group will then share their answers with the full group.

He then posed the questions for the first exercise:

- 1) Define the new political culture by naming three of its characteristics. Give your reasons.
- 2) Identify the differences between collaborative governance and other types of collective work.

- 3) Why is collaborative governance a suitable choice when we say we want a new political culture?

Finally, he said that the idea is to make a compilation of the reflections we all use.

ECO5 then launched the 15 minutes of solo work. After this time, the group divided into work rooms, corresponding to the sub-working groups. After another 15 minutes everyone returned to the full session.

ECO6 reported on the reflections that had arisen in the group dealing with the involvement of citizens and organised society. *"In our group we approached the first question from different perspectives. We view the new political culture from a complex point of view and believe that it has the following characteristics: a need to generate new knowledge whose repository should be the community itself. New values adapted to the complexity, making it necessary to develop real listening skills. And finally the need to create and internalize new relationship systems. We believe that the new political culture is an efficient, collaborative tool for democratic deliberation serving the Basque Country".*

With regard to the second question she said *"if we see collaborative governance as being based on new forms of relationship between governments and civil society, then spaces are required for listening, reflecting, agreeing and deciding. We must enable continuous and open learning and horizontal relations between the agents involved. The public agenda belongs to society, and society's priorities must be established on a joint basis. In collaborative governance, deliberation must take place on equal terms. This enables all the agents involved to believe in it".*

On the third question they answered *"[collaborative governance is the most suitable option for a new political culture] because no other option can cope with the magnitude of today's challenges. Viewed as a form of relationship, it ensures the acquisition of new values and behaviours. We think it is useful for recovering the relationship and regaining lost trust".*

ECO12 then shared the results of the group on transformation of the administration:

On the first question: *“We commented on several things, among them the fact that collaborative governance allows us to get things right and enriches our policies; government and citizenry require spaces of trust, because disengagement reduces the possibilities of the system taking the right action in its approaches. A boost is thus required in collaboration. We also highlighted the need for democratic values to face the new emerging challenges. Finally, we stressed the need for citizen involvement and the provincial government's responsibility to use the available resources responsibly and efficiently”.*

On the differences between collaborative governance and other types of collaboration, *“the main differences are the opportunity not only to work collaboratively but also to define shared problems and actions and the ability to adapt decisions to each specific situation. Collaborative governance goes one level further, moving from mere coordination to a shared strategy providing responses through co-creation. Moreover, it is important that all participants are on the same level.*

Finally, on the appropriateness of collaborative governance for generating a new political culture, *“we believe it is suitable because it incorporates diversity and knowledge and generates engagement by promoting participation. It is the best way of addressing new emerging challenges and getting beyond the old political culture”.*

Finally, the Orkestra researcher took the floor to share the results of the group on methodological analysis. She said they had only answered the first two questions.

With regard to a definition of the new political culture, they had discussed the trends and the things they would like to see in their project. She mentioned the need to work in cycles, to work in networks. She also spoke about adopting a holistic point of view and reducing dependence on scientific/technical knowledge; cohesion between politicians and the citizenry and the need for the new political culture to provide new paths and tools. They also reflected on the ways in which a new political culture is generated and what spaces it is generated in. *“It is generated by new groups and in new groupings, as we gradually group together. The new political culture will emerge when we respond to the challenges”.* Previous political cultures were closely tied to certain ideologies, *“whereas the new political culture is more open”.* They had commented that

the new political culture cannot be defined in terms of a friend/foe dichotomy. *“We need to ditch ineffective idealisms, without ignoring or denying the existence of conflicts”.*

On the second question, she said that the group was not very clear what the other forms of collective work were and therefore decided to focus on reflecting on collaborative governance. They felt that: *“the spaces of power will be diverse, the agents involved must participate in all phases, a public-private network vision is required and participation must be encouraged”.*



ECO5 then explained the second exercise. The dynamic is identical and the questions posed are as follows:

- 1) In what, how and why are you going to make your group contribution to the initiative on the new political culture?
- 2) What expectations do you have of the working group on theorization about the new political culture?

Using the same arrangement as in the previous exercise, participants worked individually and then in groups. They then returned to the plenary group and the secretaries shared the results of the exercise.

Summarising her group's answers to the first question, ECO6 said that *"our contribution will be to connect with the real needs of society and translate them into action. Another contribution we have identified involves implementing new approaches; we will connect new spaces of experimentation with new knowledge"*.

With regard to the second question, she said that the main axis of the general framework is collaborative governance and the lessons they will draw from their experimentation are related to that axis. *"We hope to localize the discourse of collaborative governance in our project. We expect an understandable definition of collaborative governance, because we need to foster active citizens who can understand what we are talking about when we talk about collaborative governance"*. Finally they felt that the issue of complexity should also be addressed. This is a concept that is common to both projects being worked on in the group. *"We would like to see those two concepts [collaborative governance and complexity] worked on. I would like us to be brave; a theoretical backing is required to implement this form of governance"*.

ECO12 set out the results from the group on administration: *"what we can contribute to the new political culture is a form of crosscutting work in the Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa that contributes to a cultural change, in terms of our ways of working and values. We are going to apply the new political culture to the day-to-day running of the Provincial Government. To do this we will introduce the concept of facilitation. What we expect from them in exchange is that they continue theorizing; we wouldn't even be able to see this crisis if it weren't for that theory"*.

The Orkestra researcher set out the answers of the methodological group. On the first question, she said, *"the contribution we will make will be methodological. We will propose that all of us who are participating in the deliberation process should view ourselves as a community of practice and we will reflect on what we can be and how we go about it. We want to offer a grammar for relationships of power in order to allow ways of applying the theory in specific cases. Through methodology we have to push forward the work of those of you who are responsible for the theory"*.

On the second question, she said, *"we want you to help us question the concepts and frameworks we take for granted; to work on them beyond linearity, jointly, combining knowledge and action. In short, we want you to help us to consolidate the concepts that we use a lot in the process"*.

6. Introduction to the different narratives of collaborative governance

ECO5 thanked the participants and introduced the talk by DF7 who *"will explain the different models of governance"*.

DFG7 then spoke: *"As for the context, I think it is important to understand that the conflicts that arose out of the inequalities of the mid-nineteenth and twentieth centuries shaped social conflicts and problems and political agendas over a very long period of time"*.

"In the second half of the twentieth century the philosophy of the New Deal with its idea of welfare was sustained. There was a system of weights and balances between the free market economy and the welfare system. In the 1970s, two pressures arising from financial capitalism and the energy crisis converged".

"Pressure was brought to bear on government to reduce its capacity to intervene in markets and this led to the current crisis, which hinges on two axes: 1) The government's ability to influence prices was called into question. This idea struck at the heart of the state's democratic legitimacy. 2) The legitimacy of markets was championed. And thus began a still unresolved crisis that requires other formulae of government".

"When we talk about change and complexity, what are we talking about and why? Globalism has reduced the importance of distance and transformed labour. Where previously there were stable social structures, now the scenario has shifted towards a Baumanian liquidity. The current situation has brought many axes of inequality, conflicts, fears, uncertainties. There are many such situations in the life of a single person. Against this backdrop, public policies, accustomed as they are to dealing with homogeneous needs, are incapable of solving these problems. We need to advance beyond the homogenizing perspective. In Spain we have the added issue of having come on board these movements just at a time when they were beginning to be diluted".

“The question is how we should orient public policies to face these new challenges. In the 1980s, a number of World Bank reports raised the idea of “governance” as opposed to traditional government. For the last 30 years we find constant references to governance”.

She then gave different definitions of governance and went on *“The success, to some extent, of these multiple definitions and interpretations has hindered an understanding of the idea of governance. There is a problem of systematization. All these elements —work, economy, family, technology, the complexity of social problems— have led to the canonical model of governance. The problem with the term is that it is polysemic, diffuse and constantly evolving. This led Joan Prats to describe the phenomenon as conceptual overflow. The confusion lies in the fact that different approaches and traditions have used it to the benefit of their discourses”.* She introduced the concept of Babylonian multiplicity: depending on what is being consulted, governance is understood to mean one thing or another.

“What is helpful is to create an operational definition. I find it more interesting to start from the same criteria and then adjectivize rather than define from the outset. Because governance is not consolidated as a theory, it is necessary to refine concepts, to delimit it. It is important to clarify the process. Exercising deliberative democracy, integrating each person's different knowledge, widening our collective intelligence. We need to be able to say something we all understand. Generating a definition that is useful, that understands our context and integrates it and generates a new political culture”.

ECO 5 introduced the three narratives that can be found in concepts of collaborative governance: [neoliberal](#), [institutional](#) and [interpretative](#). And she concluded by saying that the narrative of the deliberation group could be classed under the heading of interpretative governance.

7. End of the session

The Orkestra researcher said that the three perspectives that have been worked on today will make up one of the chapters in the book. Another will consist of the three narratives presented by DFG7.

She handed the floor to DFG8, a new member of the group, who introduced himself.

She then reminded them that each group's homework is managed within the groups and adjourned the session until the following month.

8. Appendices

a. Presentation used during the session

New political culture

17-03-2021



Objectives of the session

- Principal objective: understanding the need to strengthen the new political culture.
- Specific objectives:
 - To recall Etorkizuna Eraikiz's rationale for reinforcing a new political culture;
 - To recall the general and common objectives of each working group.



Structure of the session

1. General description. 15 minutes.
2. First exercise. 50 minutes.
3. Second exercise. 50 minutes.
4. Close.

Source for our presentation

“THE CRISIS OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES AND THE NEED FOR A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE: THINK TANK ON BASES FOR REFLECTION AND ACTION IN GIPUZKOA”

Process of deliberation on new political culture: Working Document No. 1

General starting idea

- The crisis in liberal democracy.
- Two clear phenomena:
 - citizen disaffection towards agents, institutions and the political system;
 - the weakness of political structures to represent and manage public policies.
- Etorikizuna Eraikiz proposes to reinforce a new political culture as part of a strategy for tackling this crisis.

Implicit assumption

- Democratic political culture is the fundamental basis of a stable democratic system:
- “Societies need consensus on the values and norms that underpin their political institutions and legitimize their processes”.
- “For a democratic system to function sustainably, it is necessary to build a cultural model in accordance with democratic principles”.

Diagnosis of the political culture

1. Political detachment.
2. Incapacity of public structures to respond to the economic, social and political challenges that arise in a globalised context.

Complementary elements for diagnosis (I)

1. “We live in an increasingly individualistic society, in which aspects of community life and public life are becoming less important”.
2. “There is a growing tendency among citizens to feel alienated from political actors and political life and there is little knowledge of the political reality, the political community, the space of public opinion and the elements that make up the political and institutional system”.
3. “Political actors and political apparatuses compete for societal engagement and legitimacy, and their relationship is reflected in the competition for consumable headlines”.

Complementary elements for diagnosis (II)

4. "The citizen is largely depicted as an agent who is alien to this bear fight".
5. "The lack of democratic control over much of the economic system and the lack of institutionalization to address new emerging realities in the context of globalization, affect the representative crisis of our institutional system".
6. "There is great disagreement amongst political actors, institutions and citizens in terms of actions and mutual expectations".

The concerns of the new political agenda

1. "Can we afford to maintain the public social welfare policies we have created?"
2. "Do public institutions have sufficient capacity for intervention to guarantee conditions of citizen freedom and equality?"
3. "Do current political systems have the capacity to organize the legitimacy and political representation of the citizenry?"
4. "How does the culture of consumer societies affect the quality of democracy?"

Think Tank Objectives

1. “To create spaces for deliberation that allow us to transform this situation”.
2. “To influence the transformation of the Provincial Government's policies through this deliberation group”.
3. “To have an impact, through this deliberation group on, the transformation of the political culture of the ecosystems on which Etorkizuna Eraikiz is based”.

Viewpoints of the working group

“A PLURALIST APPROACH TO THE NEED FOR A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE: PERSPECTIVES AND PROPOSALS OF THE WORKING GROUP”

Process of debate on new political culture: Working Document No. 2

Complex nature of the crisis

1. "Need to get beyond the search for linear, partial or limited solutions to issues".
2. Challenges:
 - "To design new tools for understanding social and cultural changes in real time".
 - "To prepare new capacities and spaces to interpret changes jointly among different actors".
 - "To enable public administrations to manage their initiatives as a single portfolio, rather than as isolated projects".
 - "To establish new instruments for financing public-private partnerships".
 - "To improve our tools for preventing future crises, to develop more strategic thinking".

Formal and intangible assets

1. The individual and his/her values, and responsibility;
2. Reinforcing the community nature;
3. Trying to have a common long-term horizon;
4. "Providing public-social collaboration with a tried and tested modern formulation, and consolidating the legal and economic instruments that will enable this collaboration to be ever broader and more solid";
5. Systematically building and promoting collaborative governance.

Good government and citizen participation (I)

- “Capacity for active citizen participation in decision-making on the Provincial Government's governance and management functions”.
- Challenges:
 - “Enabling a new concept of the administration, through the creation of an interactive and integrating space that will facilitate the development of this process of collective construction”.
 - “Creating the conditions that allow new processes of co-creation, relationship and work with citizens, advancing beyond a model in which citizens are viewed as mere clients of the administration”.

Good governance and citizen participation (II)

- “Good government as the centre of the debate process”.
- Challenges:
 - “Engaging citizens to join in collaborative governance”;
 - “Gaining the trust of the citizenry”;
 - “Practising values of transparency, approachability, austerity and honesty”;
 - “Promoting e-government, and transforming the administration's internal relations”.

Clarifying democratic culture

- “The main challenge should be to strengthen democratic culture”.
- “Establish what we are talking about when we talk about democratic culture”;
- “When we talk about democratic culture, we are talking in abstract or concrete terms about values, behaviours and attitudes”;
- “Taking all these questions into account, we need to define specific strategies, paths and actions”.

Objectives of the session

- Principal objective: understanding the need to strengthen the new political culture.
- Specific objectives:
 - To recall Etorkizuna Eraikiz's rationale for reinforcing a new political culture;
 - To recall the general and common objectives of each working group.

Structure of the session

1. General description.
2. First exercise.
3. Second exercise.
4. Close.

First exercise

- Exercise on the new political culture.
- In this case, the working group that will work on the theoretical and conceptual framework will pose a series of questions.
- The main objective is to understand and clarify the different points of view we may have with regard to the new political culture.

Procedure for the first exercise

1. Answer the questionnaire individually. **15** minutes.
2. Discuss the questionnaire as a group. **15** minutes.
3. Plenary **15** minutes.

Questions from the first exercise

1. New political culture. Three Characteristics + Reasons
2. Collaborative governance and other forms of collaboration. What differences are there?
3. If we want a new political culture, why is collaborative governance an appropriate option?

Second exercise

- Exercise to enrich the new political culture.
- In this case, each working group will be responsible for reflecting, from its area of work, on what it contributes to the new political culture, how and why.
- The operational objective is that each working group should be aware that with its work –with the writing of the chapter– it must also contribute to a common objective.

Procedure for the second exercise

1. Answer the questionnaire individually. **10** minutes.
2. Discuss the questionnaire as a group. **15** minutes.
3. Plenary **20** minutes.

Questions in the second exercise

- In what way, how and why do I contribute from my work group to the new political culture?

New political culture

17-03-2021

b. Introductory slides on narratives of collaborative governance



NEOLIBERAL NARRATIVE



- First narrative on governance. 1980s-UK/USA.
- Slogan: "less government, more governance". Stable institutions and public sector efficiency to make the market work better. The **minimum state**.
- **Administrative and management** approach: deregulation, privatisation, outsourcing of services, new management techniques, staff cuts, budget reduction.
- **Loss** of state authority and capacity.
- Based on **Rational Choice theory**. Maximization of benefit and utility of decisions.
- All this prioritised over the values, beliefs and desires of the subjects.
- Maximization of **utility as a universal category**, over and above cultures and people.

INSTITUTIONAL NARRATIVE



- To understand the origins of the modern theory of institutional governance, it needs to be viewed in the post-World War II context. **Prescriptive theories of socio-political planning.** But they proved to be of limited effectiveness.
- Theory structured around a basic paradigm of preparation and implementation of public policies to which new and now essential elements were progressively added, for greater understanding: **bottom-up** perspective, importance of **networks** and **combination of hierarchical control, market principles and social self-regulation.**
- Although the state is an important actor, **the focus of analysis is no longer on the state** but on the **institutional framework** as a set of rules and norms that regulates the relationship with other actors. It is assumed that **the state per se is not capable** of directing society as a whole but must negotiate with other actors and build partnerships in order to be effective.
- Institutionalism is based on the diagnosis that the reality of globalisation and the rise of neoliberal policies have not perfected the market but have weakened the state and generated complex decision-making systems that have undermined its authority. In this regard, networks arise as emerging organizational forms in direct response to the most recent political and economic processes.
- Mayntz, 2001: Governance as "new styles of government, different to the model of hierarchical control, characterized by a greater degree of cooperation and interaction between the state and non-state actors within mixed public-private decision-making networks."

INTERPRETIVE NARRATIVE



- Both of the above narratives present some problems in bringing governance into the debate on democracy. Because of their positivism, they present the socio-political reality as something that is **closed and predetermined**; whether in terms of rational decisions or networked organizations. A number of restrictions are placed on a society's ability to govern itself in accordance with democratic principles.
- The system of governance that allows a society to organize the way it makes its transcendent decisions is dialectically constructed by the actors of that system themselves.
- The interpretative paradigm of governance is based on the idea that governance processes are dependent on the **specific historical, socio-cultural, political and economic features of the contexts** in which it is applied.
- It assumes that the socio-political reality is **constructed intersubjectively** through **dialogue**, and it is precisely the **characteristics of that dialogue** that determine the characteristics of a given system of governance.
- Therefore, speaking of governance does not require us to assume the weakness of the state, but rather, to address how **the public sphere can be strengthened** through new **formulas of participation.**
- This open and exploratory perspective –which rejects generalizations– allows us to recognize the potential of the term in its relation with the debate on democracy. It does not exclude pre-established institutional and democratic patterns, opening **new perspectives in the face of the challenges** we face.

c. Working Document No. 9

THINK TANK

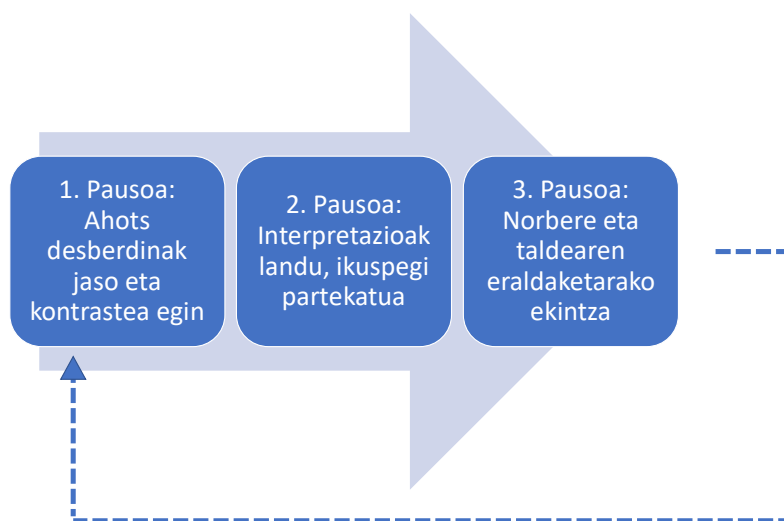
Process of deliberation on New Political Culture: Working Document No. 9

EXERCISE of LISTENING TO THE DELIBERATION GROUP

(17 February 2021)

This working document contains two types of content. On the one hand, it corresponds to the agenda set out by the deliberation group on the development of a New Political Culture, working on this occasion on the challenge of developing effective systems for listening to society. The approach to this challenge was not conceptual, but involved a listening exercise by the group. The framework used for this exercise is shown in Figure 1.

Figure No. 1. Steps in the listening exercise



Through this listening process, the deliberation group reviewed a series of methodological bases that had been drawn up throughout its trajectory, marking a series of criteria for the future. The following lines set out the group's reflections and decisions, which together make up the knowledge of the process co-created by the group or the methodological knowledge.

The listening exercise was based on what the group members said about the process on the evaluation sheets or in the post-session interviews. The following axes were collected:

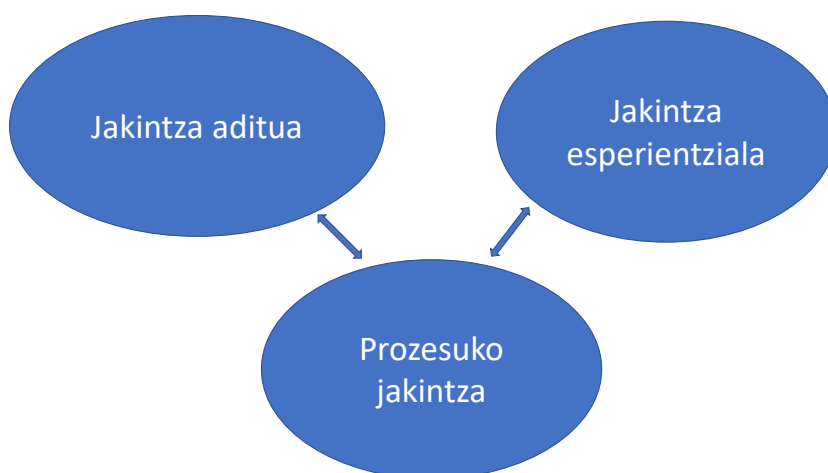
- Difficulties of the group in leading their process
 - “the point is given to us by the experts; we should try to establish it ourselves”
- Lack of time to work on the issues among group members
 - “There is not enough time left for the dynamic”
 - “I felt good, but in the second half we were rushed due to the lack of time”
- Difficulties in learning from other members of the group
 - “From what we discussed today, it would be good to have a chance to share in the next sessions what we are doing in the different working groups”
 - “It would be helpful to work better on communication and mutual knowledge between the different projects or to think of mechanisms/channels for this purpose”
- Difficulties in situating reflection in the process of transformation
 - “we felt out of place/disengaged with the dynamic”
 - “some of you are very involved in the process, but others amongst us do not follow the process to the same extent from one meeting to the next”
 - “the questions were too complex, they shouldn't require so much effort from us”
 - “what I really wanted was to continue debating what the experts had said”

To aid reflection, one of the participants shared the narrative of the process she herself went through in the Think Tank group, setting out the doubts and discomfort that arose during the process. Among other areas, she mentioned the feeling of chaos, the discomfort, the need to learn, and the fact that the process takes longer than expected. As a contribution to the process, she explained how the theory is being constructed; the way in which collective transformation and personal transformation are incorporated; and, in addition to reflection, emotions and subjectivity are placed at the service of the processes. Finally, she also mentioned that there are different positions when it comes to understanding the link with action.

As a complement to this narrative of the process, a working hypothesis on what was happening was shared with the group. In this hypothesis, the action/research methodology that has been developed combines three types of knowledge: expert

knowledge in the field; knowledge based on the participants' experience; and process knowledge or methodological knowledge. According to this hypothesis, the necessary balance that this type of knowledge should have in the group process has been lost: more space has been dedicated to expert knowledge, leaving less time for experiential knowledge and therefore process knowledge has practically disappeared from the space of deliberation (see Figure 2). Without explicitly discussing methodological knowledge, it is difficult to properly understand the link between expert and experiential knowledge.

Figure No. 1. Balance between different types of knowledge in the action research process



With this working hypothesis on the table, another idea was discussed; that behind this evolution of the process there is a hierarchy between the different types of knowledge. The one most highly-valued in society is expert knowledge, followed by experience-based knowledge and process knowledge. To summarise this idea, the contribution of a foreign researcher who has analysed the process was used. That person remarked that if Aristotle were alive today he would not be a university professor (expert knowledge), but a dual vocational teacher (who works on theoretical knowledge by integrating it into action). This remark was intended to highlight value of experiential knowledge and process-based knowledge.

Within these frameworks, a group listening exercise was again conducted, in which any participants wishing to do so could share their point of view. Below are some of the contributions on the group's activity:

- “We have to try to find a theoretical validation of practice”
- “I’m glad to value not only the experts but also the specialists”
- “We’re working on a progressive approach in order to move away from chaos”
- “I am surprised by those who are downplaying the importance of theory”
- “The knowledge we need at any given moment may vary; we have to see what knowledge we need at any particular point in time”
- “It’s a time of regeneration for the group”
- “It will be important to work on subjectivity and emotions”

As a result of this reflection, the group decided to work on the knowledge with their fellow group members for a time, instead of bringing in external expert knowledge, combining theoretical knowledge and experience. It was also decided to devote more time to sharing knowledge of the process. This will help to experiment with combining different types of knowledge.

d. Working document No. 10

THINK TANK

Process of deliberation on new political culture: Working Document No. 10

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

(31 March 2021)

Introduction

On 17 February 2021, following a debate on the working methodology, it was agreed to conduct a process of reflection until May on the input from the group members. The first of these sessions was held on 17 March and was facilitated by members working on the conceptualization of these sessions.

With regard to the dynamic, the group proposed going back to the reflection on the new political culture that was presented in the first working document, in order to build the conceptualization from the bases of the process. For this purpose, four themes were addressed:

- a) Characteristics of the new political culture
- b) Collaborative governance and other types of cooperation
- c) Why collaborative governance?
- d) Relationships between the working groups involved in the deliberative process

The contributions of the groups on these issues are set out in the sections below.

Characteristics of the new political culture

Before listing the characteristics, a member of the group explained that there are two dimensions to the new political culture. On the one hand, there is a political culture that is changing and taking root in our SOCIETY, which has different characteristics to the previous political culture. It is primarily based on the logic of individualism and consumption. On the other hand, there is an ASPIRATIONAL political culture which, faced with what it sees as a changing world and society, proposes an adapted means of doing politics to respond to this "new" society.

According to the group, the characteristics of the new political culture are:

- a) New political content.
- b) New ways of relating.
- c) New power relations.

- d) **Conditions for developing new knowledge.** We must extend our understanding of the challenges and changes in order to interpret the public agenda appropriately. The current context has given us new contents. A people/nation needs knowledge. We need a society that shares the level of knowledge and we need the repository of basic knowledge to lie in the community.
- e) **Possibility of assimilating changes and adjusting values.** It is necessary to build a common system of cohesion; we need a society that will acquire new values and adapt to complexity.
- f) **Social listening needs – possibility of authentic listening.**
- g) **New links between citizens and politics.**
- h) **New channels and tools to facilitate citizen participation.**
- i) **New ways of acting, creating effective systems of relationship** (institution/citizens, inter-institutional, etc.). Opportunities must be created to strengthen the relationship between policy makers and citizens and to incorporate changes within public institutions.
- j) **It must be based on networks**, going from hierarchical structures to concepts such as "cycles".
- k) **It must be an instrument at the service of the Basque Country** - Our society is especially important in collaborative governance. We need collaborative governance for popular survival, so that our identity, the Basque language, our own identity, is maintained through community building.
- l) **It must be effective** - Uniting the strengths we have.
- m) **It must be collaborative** - Placing social and institutional forces at the service of common objectives.
- n) **Democracy** - It must provide new ways of extending democracy. A process of democratic deliberation is needed to bring different actors into the process and overcome confrontation.
- o) **Systemic approach.** Because the new political culture must be developed within the wider framework of the responses required to the great challenges we face today.
- p) What is thought **about the legitimation** of politics at any time.
- q) **Less dependence on scientific-technical knowledge.**
- r) Contributing **innovation and cohesion** in terms of citizen and political involvement.
- s) To be developed within the framework of **economic, political, social challenges.**
- t) The culture that emerges within **new human groups**, which are those that generate new political cultures.
- u) More open than the previous ones.
- v) No "maximalism".
- w) No friend/foe dichotomy.
- x) It must steer clear of ineffective idealism.
- y) Critical citizenry.
- z) Link to the **new political agenda**, and new emerging challenges

- aa) Willingness to **satisfy citizens' needs** using resources responsibly and enabling results-oriented management.
- bb) **Good management** of citizenry, empathising with the problems of society and getting involved in the answers.

Collaborative governance and other types of cooperation

Asked about the differences between collaborative governance and other types of cooperation, the group answered as follows:

- a) Differences between collaborative and other forms of governance:
 - a. **Collaborative governance** requires an open and active dynamic of permanent learning (which enables knowledge generation); development of horizontal, non-hierarchical relationships between agents; the public-political agenda belongs to society and the priorities of the agenda are established through collaboration between the government and the network of stakeholders; shared governance. Deliberation should be equitable for all stakeholders (parity that ensures that people really believe in it).
 - b. **Other forms of collaboration** may exist with an agreed hierarchy, or collaboration can be facilitated while the agenda remains exclusive to the government and it is the government that sets the priorities. Or there may be another type of collaboration whose objectives do not necessarily include generating knowledge.
- b) Cooperative governance gives private and civil actors responsibility for political decisions, integrating them into public policy processes. It is not merely an improvement in democratic representation, like other forms of collaboration.
- c) The two words within the concept of "collaborative governance" may be something of a "trap". Although governance exists *de facto* in any cooperative process, it does not necessarily have to be collaborative governance. And so, when different actors come together, I would say that the concept of "collaborative governance" is often used instead of "collaboration" or "cooperation".
- d) In "collaborative governance", as well as collaboration, other elements are shared. In the first place, we are referring to the ways of doing things in a process logic, in which objectives, responsibilities, decisions, financing, etc. are shared through the bond of trust that is developed. However, collaborative governance can in no case be based on not sharing all these elements (which are need to build together), but only some of them.
- e) Collaborative governance is not only about working together, but also about jointly defining problems and projects, sharing them, adapting decisions to each reality and speeding them up. It requires sharing strategy, not coordination. It is not collaboration, it is co-creation.

Why collaborative governance?

Asked why, if a new political culture is to be developed, collaborative governance is relevant, the group answered as follows:

- a) Because other solutions fall short of the goals we have set.
- b) Because this new way of relating will allow us to internalize new knowledge, values and attitudes, and assume new forms of behaviour.
- c) Because it should be a way of rebuilding the relationship (regaining that lost trust).
- d) In the short term, because it is a solid way of addressing the complexity of different societies and achieving shared political results. It is not perfect and there are doubts surrounding its evolution in the medium term, but it can serve to build adequate foundations to strengthen the cohesion of today's societies.
- e) Because, at the same time, it can ensure that the link between the new aspirational political culture and the new political culture prevailing in society is made by strengthening the democratic foundations effectively and legitimately. That is to say, because the approach itself (if it is sincere) has solid democratic bases and it is also the best way of responding to a complex reality in the process and to reinforce the political/public nature of society.
- f) Because the characteristics we have defined are found collaborative governance and no other option.
- g) Because diversity brings new knowledge and promotes adherence to the projects by encouraging participation.
- h) New vs. old political culture, because we are clear about where the walls and confrontation stand historically and we want to overcome them.

Risk in relation to former models, concern, contradiction: it is necessary to dedicate the necessary time to this collaboration; this time is prized in the model to which we are currently accustomed, even if the final result (more democratic guarantees) is worth it.

Relationships between the working groups involved in the deliberative process

Finally, each working group was asked in **what area, how and why** they were going to **contribute** to the project of a new political culture. In their answers, each working group made reference to their input and what they expect from the theory group.

Conceptualization group

- Contribution to the other teams: to establish a conceptual theoretical framework with which to lay the foundations to provide coherence and solidity to the work of the team as a whole.
- They ask the other teams to set out the different ways of working theoretically, of understanding the concept and of using it, and, acting in dialogue with them, to form a project which will be "ours" (and thus that of the whole team).

Group working on the involvement of citizenry and organised civic society

- Contribution to other groups:
 - Two different experiments or projects:
 - i. Directly related to citizen involvement.
 - ii. New models of social actor and inter-agency governance: for the creation of the Badalab laboratory.
 - We are going to specify the experiential knowledge and develop the framework that follows it; in a way it is about discovering the logics within which things can be done. The projects we are going to discuss here should be learning experiences.

Contribution through:

We want to promote a process of deliberative democracy to bring citizens into the public agenda, to design and implement new approaches to participatory processes that encourage and increase citizen involvement and participation in the public agenda. And this will be achieved using new tools and new paths/approaches. On the other hand, we want to explore and experiment with new models of governance between public institutions and social agents, promoting participation and consensus. We also promote spaces for listening, reflection and experimentation and we want to connect with new knowledge, incorporating new tools and approaches to community development. Finally, we will connect with the real needs of society, with specific actions and with the projects of our society (so that this does not remain confined to a report or theoretical frameworks).

- What does this group expect from the conceptualization group?
 - General framework in which the important concept is collaborative governance.
 - To compile the studies we put into practice and which we draw from experimentation.
 - To localise the discourse on governance to our specific circumstances - because there are experiences in our public-social partnership.
 - A comprehensive definition of collaborative governance - if we are to reach out to citizens and promote active citizenship.
 - To address complexity. We start from the idea of complex challenges, in their meanings and implications, and how this highlights the need to rethink models of governance. We will therefore need some conceptualizations or theoretical bases of complexity. This basis will also help us to consider the elements and questions to be taken into account in the process.

- We want to be brave (up to the limit) in order to put governance into practice in a shared way - and to this end, theoretical support is important.

Methodology development group

- Contribution to other groups:
 - It will work on the methodological dimension when working on the new political culture, including, *inter alia*, ways in which this deliberative group can develop as a community of practise. This can affect the stability and effectiveness of the group when it comes to working on transformation.
 - Methodological contribution. Attention to the relationship between knowledge creation and power. This raises the idea that this new way of exercising power, collaborative governance, involves generating knowledge and sharing it as a social process.
 - We can provide a grammar for this purpose. How do we do this? It would be helpful to analyse cases in which the theory is reflected, elsewhere in Spain and, especially, elsewhere in Europe.
 - The structure is quite well consolidated: both groups are action-oriented and from the theory they will give us key words; we MUST SET IT IN MOTION.
 - Bringing historical international success stories, creating a database and garnering learning opportunities from them.
- What does this group expect from the conceptualization group?
 - For it to help us interrogate the concepts and frameworks that we have provided in the theory and conceptualization, in order to go beyond the current approaches and advance further as a team.
 - The group should use the theory and the conceptualization should be effective; in other words, it should generate knowledge in the transformation process itself, without previously linear thinking followed by an attempt to implement it.
 - Generate shared knowledge from experience. This allows for collaborative learning. Under what conditions is this possible?
 - To help consolidate the concepts we frequently use and, as they do so, to clarify what the project we share is. If we are a community, to understand the common enterprise that unites us and help establish the goals towards which our reflection is geared.

Group working on transformation of the administration

- Contribution to other groups:
 - Instead of imposing a tool, we will make it known, adapt and implement it gradually, which will help us to further explore new ways of working. In a crosscutting way, we will learn to work better.

- Insofar as we contribute to changing the in-house culture, ways of doing things, values, we will help to articulate and strengthen collaborative governance on a day-to-day basis.
- We will try to escape the inertia and take another look at a space where there is mistrust. How do we do this? Beyond the pride of hierarchy, we are turning this into an active dialogue. Why? In order to make these processes more efficient, we want to make them attractive so that the Provincial Government's clients come to us.
- What does this group expect from the conceptualization group?
 - To reflect and argue about the need for transformation. They realize that this is necessary so that we can move on to practice.
 - To collaborate in applying the theory. Without the theory we would also not be aware of the need for transformation.
 - The key to collaborative governance is the role of legitimation. To help understand how to apply this in the process.

e. Session programme

THINK TANK

SPACE FOR DELIBERATION ON THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

VIRTUAL MEETING, 17 March 2021

CHALLENGE TO BE WORKED ON IN THE SESSION

On 17 February 2021 the group discussed the working methodology and agreed that, until May, the reflection would be on the contents provided by the members of the group, with the participants acting as "internal experts".

Consequently, at the March session this role will be carried out by the group dedicated to theorisation (Xabier Barandiaran, Andoni Eizagirre, Itziar Eizagirre and Ion Muñoa). The group will share what they are working on with regard to collaborative governance, taking input from other members. There are two objectives. On the one hand, to support the conceptualisations they are working on in the action-oriented working groups. On the other hand, to enrich the conceptualization based on the action of the other members of the group.

AGENDA FOR THE SESSION

- Introduction
- Presentation of the contents worked on by the group
- Group dynamic