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From the playground to the *demos*:
Familiarization of children with democratic
practices in Mexico and Portugal

Degree: MA in Governance, Leadership and Democracy Studies

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ABSTRACT

The participation of children and youth in democratic processes is a vital aspect of building inclusive, responsive, and accountable societies. However, children and youth are often excluded from decisions that affect their lives and communities, and their voices are often not heard in political and policy debates. This dissertation aims to examine the indissociable relationship between democratic participation and children, explore the ways in which children and young people can be effectively included in democratic processes, and identify the benefits and challenges of such participation. To do this, the research looks at two case studies: the *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil* (Consultation for Children and Youth) in Mexico and the *Tenho Voto na Matéria* (I Have a Say in the Matter) Initiative in Portugal. These case studies provide valuable insights into the frameworks, design and planning, participation, and outcomes of initiatives that aim to promote children's democratic participation. Through a review of these cases, the research aims to identify the prospects and lessons learned for the future of children's democratic participation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

IFE: Federal Electoral Institute (Instituto Federal Electoral)

INE: National Electoral Institute (Instituto Nacional Electoral)

COVID-19: infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNAM: National Autonomous University of Mexico (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

UAM-Xochimilco: Metropolitan Autonomous University- Xochimilco (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco)

CIJ: Consultation for Children and Youth (Consulta Infantil y Juvenil)

Católica-CESOP: Center for Studies and Opinion Polls of the Catholic University of Portugal (Centro de Estudos e Sondagens de Opinião da Universidade Católica Portuguesa)

ENCCÍVICA: National Civic Culture Strategy (Estrategia Nacional de Cultura Cívica)

CTA: Technical Committee of Accompaniment (Comité Técnico de Acompañamiento)

SIPINNA: National System for the Protection of Children and Adolescents (Sistema Nacional de Protección de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes)

SEP: Ministry of Public Education (Secretaría de Educación Pública)

UPN: National Pedagogical University (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional)

REDIM: Network for the Rights of Children in Mexico (Red por los Derechos de la Infancia en México)

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From the playground to the *demos*: Familiarization of children with democratic practices in Mexico and Portugal

“A child's voice, however honest and true, is meaningless to those who've forgotten how to listen.”

—Albus Dumbledore, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

I. Introduction

The participation of children and youth in democratic processes is a critical aspect of promoting citizenship and fostering the development of responsible and engaged citizens. While children and young people have traditionally been excluded from decision-making processes, there is growing recognition of their right to be heard and to have a say in matters that affect their lives. This study aims to examine the relationship between democratic participation and children and to explore the ways in which children and youth can be meaningfully included in the democratic process. To do this, the study will look at two case studies: the *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil*¹ in Mexico and the *Tenho Voto na Matéria*² Initiative in Portugal.

Both initiatives involve regulatory frameworks that aim to promote children's participation in democratic processes, and the study will examine the design and planning of these initiatives, as well as the participation of children and youth and the outcomes of their involvement. The research will also consider the importance of democratic participation for children and youth, and the ways in which it can promote citizenship and learning. Through this analysis, the study aims to provide insights into the prospects for the future of children's democratic participation and the lessons learned from the two case studies.

As aforementioned, the research presented aims to examine the relationship between democratic participation and children in two different contexts: Mexico and Portugal. The research questions and methodology for the study are presented in the introduction. The

¹ Hereinafter referred to as Consultation for Children and Youth or CIJ.

² Hereinafter referred to as I Have a Say in the Matter.

second section of the dissertation examines the indissociable relationship between democratic participation and children, exploring the importance of democratic participation, the role of children as key players, and the various ways in which children can participate in democratic processes. The third section of the work focuses on Mexico, specifically the Consultation for Children and Youth initiative, including its background, design and planning, and operation. The fourth section of the thesis examines the I Have a Say in the Matter Initiative in Portugal, including its background, design and planning, and operation. The final section offers conclusions and reflections on the prospects and lessons learned from the research.

Democratic participation and children

The area of interest of this dissertation involves the indissociable relationship of democracy, participation, and children, in particular, the national practices of civic participation for and by children to catalyze democratic participation in Mexico and Portugal. Therefore, to affirm the importance of active participation, the principles that characterize it will be considered throughout the study.

Based on the foregoing, it is important to highlight that active participation as a fundamental pillar of rights is also a condition for the complete and integrated exercise of democratic governance. To promote, respect, protect and guarantee their fundamental rights, children must have conditions in their community so that their opinions, visions, and wishes can be both heard and considered by decision-makers on a regular and permanent basis.

Children—all people under 18 years of age—are key players. Such will be the distinctive position of the dissertation. Hence, several issues will be addressed, including the presentation of the context of the target population, and the normative recognition of its participation and expression. In addition, diverse positions regarding listening to and seeing children as actors and not spectators will be presented. Moreover, the existing approaches to promote democratic participation of children will be covered, including participative initiatives, promoting self-advocacy, and consultative processes. The latter represents the object of the selected countries' case studies.

Consultative processes in Mexico and Portugal

The effort to hold consultations for children during federal elections as a tool to promote the familiarization of democratic practices for this segment of the population in Mexico began in 1997. It reached its ninth edition in 2021. If participation during this period is considered, almost 35 million children have participated. The last edition has had the greatest quantitative impact. This means that in 2021 it reached slightly more than one fifth of the Mexican population in this age group.

The Consultation for Children and Youth in 2021 followed a continuity line initiated more than two decades ago, when the then Federal Electoral Institute organized the first children's participation exercise. Since then, every year in which a federal electoral process is held, children are invited to express themselves and participate on issues that are directly related to their daily lives and the conditions in which they find themselves. With each edition, incorporating the experiences acquired, new ways of interacting with children are proposed, always seeking to stimulate their interest and skills to positively value democracy and democratic mechanisms of action as members of the community, thus strengthening a civic culture of participation.

On the other hand, the consultations organized by the Federal Electoral Institute - National Electoral Institute have made visible to society as a whole how much children have to say about the public sphere and the issues that are close to them. Hence, they have also become an important source of first-hand information on the living conditions of this group of Mexicans.

It is important to point out that in the design and organization of these participation exercises, an effort has been made to include the perspective of institutions, academic organizations, and experts on the rights of children and young people, thus ensuring that the mechanisms put in place and, above all, the topics on which they are consulted respond to the specific needs and interests of this population group.

In the last Consultation, between November 10th and 30th, 2021, children living in Mexico, and even abroad, participated through one of the two channels that were made

available. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the health protection measures established by the competent authorities, the INE determined that the CIJ 2021 would be carried out in mixed modality, favoring as much as possible participation by virtual means. Throughout the month, the address was open on INE's website to receive the participation of children. However, considering that not everyone has electronic devices or Internet access, the installation of polling places was planned for at least five days in each federal electoral district.

It should be noted that the polling places operated in very different ways, with the intention of meeting the needs of a very diverse population. The volunteers who supported the physical polling places implemented a health protection protocol according to epidemiological needs. Training also included how to support children with disabilities. As mechanisms specifically aimed at maximizing the exercise of the right to participation of children and young people in different contexts, ballots were prepared for reading in Braille. Likewise, the contents were translated into various indigenous languages and local variants from the states.

In Portugal, the most recent initiative of UNICEF Portugal I Have a Say in the Matter, which began in September 2021, aims to give a voice to children in the period of reflection and debate of ideas for the municipal elections, raising awareness of the importance of the participation of children in building active citizenship and participatory democracy. Without precedent, nearly 10,000 children participated in the inquiry. The municipal elections that took place on September 26th, 2021, represented an opportunity to call on local governments, with responsibility for driving policy for the next four years, to commit to children, realizing a vision that has their rights at the center of decisions and actions.

In this context, the public consultation, dedicated exclusively to children, has shown that younger citizens, although they don't vote, have a contribution to make to the development of their communities. With the active involvement of the *Rede de Cidades Amigas das Crianças*, NGOs and other local organizations, the initiative involved children from all over the country, between September 15th and 26th, regarding what they think about

the cities, towns, or villages where they live and how they would like to be heard at the local stage.

As mentioned, the children formally didn't vote in the elections, but they showed that they have a say in the matter, a proper *voto na matéria*. They responded to the survey, and some participated in the focus groups as well. The contributions were analyzed by UNICEF Portugal in collaboration with Católica-CESOP. The results' review is launched in November 2021 evidently expressed that children lack real and meaningful opportunities in policymaking and decision-making on issues that directly affect them in their communities. A significant number of the children who participated in the public consultation feel that adults do not ask their opinion when making decisions about their city, town, or village. On the other hand, only a very small percentage of children and young people consider that their opinion influenced what was decided regarding some decisions about their city, town, or village.

In this study, it should be noted that Chapter III and IV present a clear difference in size and dimension. Chapter III presents a detailed inquiry of the Mexican experience of almost 3 decades, while Chapter IV presents a briefer analysis of the recent initiative in Portugal. This difference in dimension is not an indication of a lack of attention or care given to the Portuguese initiative, but rather a reflection of the different nature and scope of the two cases. The Mexican experience is a comprehensive examination of a long-standing phenomenon and required a more in-depth investigation to fully understand the complexities and evolution of the situation over time. On the other hand, the Portuguese initiative is a more recent and specific examination of a particular aspect related to the phenomenon and a shorter period. Therefore, a more concise analysis was deemed sufficient.

The difference in size and dimension of the two chapters reflects the different nature and scope of the two cases and is not intended to indicate a lack of attention or care given to either case. Both cases have been examined with equal rigor and attention to detail, and the results of both cases have been considered equally in the overall study and conclusions of the study. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon by including the different perspectives and experiences of both cases.

Lessons learned and prospects

The right of children to be heard and to have their opinions considered is a fundamental right of all of them, without any discrimination. It is also a means to realize other rights and to ensure that local policy is sensitive to children's needs and priorities. In this vein, participation should be seen as a tool for ongoing dialogue. Governments play a key role in creating the conditions for children's participation to be effective, meaningful, and inclusive, promoting citizenship, the development of territories, and the making of a more democratic and cohesive society.

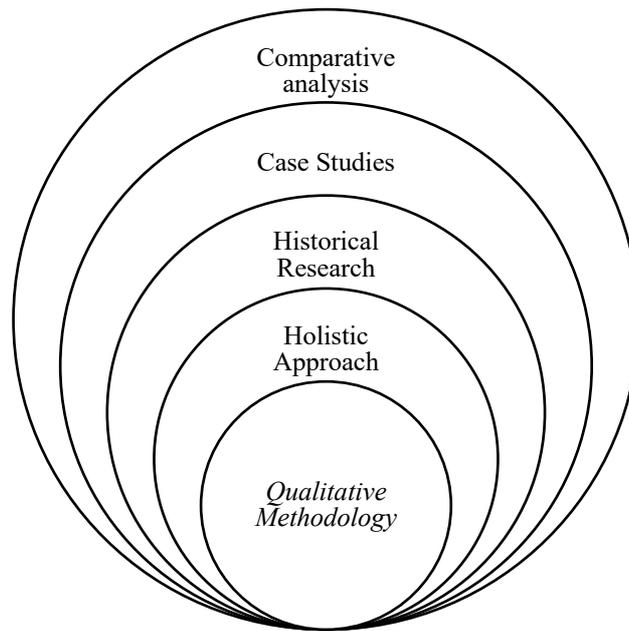
In compliance with the best interests of the child, overcoming adult centrism and its implied challenges is needed. Children need to set the agenda, not based on a unilateral discourse. In the democratic sphere, a dialogic interaction needs to be catalyzed, while including the constantly unheard voices. After describing two different consultative processes' perspectives, it will follow the attempt to show the full picture with lessons learned and prospects. This is in consideration of the Mexican consolidated experience and the first steps of the Portuguese initiative.

a. Research questions

How do Mexico and Portugal encourage democratic familiarization and civic participation of their populations before they reach voting age?

What lessons can Portugal learn from the Mexican consultation experience?

b. Methodology



Descriptive Data Collection: To collect the academic views, technical analysis and personal testimonials, mainly semi-structured interviews took place.

Because they permit some spontaneity and flexibility in the data gathering process, semi-structured interviews are a common technique for carrying out qualitative research. This method keeps a broad framework and set of questions to steer the dialogue while allowing the researcher to go further into certain issues that come up during the interview. Additionally, because they enable participants to express their own ideas and feelings in their own words, semi-structured interviews are a good choice for addressing research topics that investigate subjective experiences and viewpoints. This can produce rich, comprehensive data that can be thoroughly evaluated as well as important insight into the topic being investigated.

Overall, using semi-structured interviews to examine subjective perceptions and experiences is an appropriate and efficient method for addressing the research questions. It enables to produce rich, extensive data that can be studied in detail as well as to ask follow-up questions, go deeper into the data, and examine the same subject in a different light than

the participant. In this regard, a series of questions of predetermined themes allowing for open-ended responses were made to the following key players of the ecosystem:

Mexico's *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil*

- Executive Director of Electoral Training and Civic Education of the National Electoral Institute (INE): Roberto Heycher Cardiel Soto
- Director of Civic Education and Citizen Participation of the National Electoral Institute (INE): Francisco Javier Morales Camarena
- Subdirector of Electoral Training Strategy Development of the National Electoral Institute (INE): Lucía Morales Navarro
- President of the Technical Committee of Accompaniment of the Children and Youth Consultation 2021/Researcher of the Childhood Program of Metropolitan Autonomous University- Xochimilco: Norma del Río
- President of the Youth and Children Commission of the H. Congress of the State of Chihuahua: Marisela Terrazas Muñoz

Portugal's *Tenho Voto na Matéria*

- Director of Advocacy of UNICEF Portugal: Francisca Magano
- Director of the Center for Studies and Opinion Polls of the Catholic University of Portugal (Católica-CESOP): Ricardo Ferreira Reis

Data/Content Analysis: Induction

Similar studies are not very abundant. Being a field not sufficiently explored, the description of such practices from the Mexican and Portuguese perspectives represents a critical step towards exploring the democratic context through the lens of inclusion in the Ibero-American region. On the other hand, the discovery of the opportunity costs of these national exercises represents a niche of shared and lessons learned for systemic change.

II. The indissociable relationship of democratic participation and children

a. Democratic participation

i. Basic notions towards the construction of citizenship

In this section, some theoretical and conceptual aspects that guide the design and conception of the consultation processes as civic education experiences and exercises of democratic participation that contribute to the formation of citizens capable of living in democracy will be reviewed.

Democracy

In general terms, democracy is conceived as a political system and a form of government made up of three dimensions: political competition among leaders who compete for public power in periodic popular elections; respect for constitutional order, expressed in the legality of the Rule of Law (Brito, 2016); and participation, based on the principle of popular sovereignty, which recognizes that public power resides in the sovereign will of citizens. These three dimensions following Bobbio (1998) are expressed in:

- The way a state is structured, particularly in relation to the existence of laws, procedures and institutions that limit the power of government for the benefit of citizens; the existence of conditions, rules, and procedures for citizens to compete for political power; the recognition of the political equality of individuals as well as their fundamental rights; and the existence of conditions that ensure the broadest possible citizen participation in public affairs.

- The way in which citizens participate in decisions and in the solution of conflicts that concern them, which presupposes the existence of mechanisms and spaces for participation, as well as a citizen basis that recognizes the value of social and political participation (i.e., that wants to participate) and possesses the knowledge and skills to do so (knows how to participate).

- The way in which the daily life of a society is organized. Democratic procedures and institutions acquire meaning when they are sustained by a morally democratic³ society, that is, a social basis that acts, thinks and relates democratically in both the private and public spheres and observes a set of values that encourage them to defend democracy as the system in which they want to live. Democracy as a way of life (Camps, 1993) would imply the existence of concrete practices of exercising rights and duties in the sphere of government, in the institutions of society and in the daily life of citizens, (Pérez Tapias, 1996) as well as the deployment of values such as equality, justice, fraternity, peace, freedom, legality, tolerance, plurality, respect and responsibility, among others, (Salazar & Woldenberg, 1993).

The consultation exercises as educational and participatory experiences are aimed at the development of these three dimensions of democracy in the political culture of children and young people.

Citizenship

In the field of political education two models can be followed: citizenship as status and as practice. Citizenship is part of our classical ethical-political heritage, that is, of an accumulated historical memory or tradition. This is not opposed to reason and should not be identified with immobility; it should be understood as recreation (Bárcena, 1997). All tradition implies recognition—which is an eminently rational and cognitive act—it is a form of practical knowledge.

Citizenship is an activity, a practice inspired by a set of values that can be transmitted. It is a mode of action that is justified in its application and that is legitimized by using it in accordance with such values and with informed judgment. For Hannah Arendt, the ability to

³ Although etymologically they mean the same thing as morality and ethics, in this document one can subscribe to the following distinction made by various authors: Morality designates the sphere of responsible human behavior, it is linked to immediate action and to the norms of human action in its concrete context. Ethics, on the other hand, designates the branch of philosophy that studies moral actions and reflects on morality in search of foundations, prescriptions, and evaluations of moral actions (Cortina, 1990, p. 29), (García de Alba, 1998, p. 19) and (Latapí, 2000, p. 20). Although obvious, we must not fail to clarify that in this context morality is not understood in relation to religion, since it is assumed that this link between both spheres had a historical reason, but in the philosophical, educational, and political development this articulation has been surpassed.

judge is specifically a political skill. Politics in turn is a form of action, the activity of conducting the affairs of a community through language. To become a citizen is to fulfill civic duties from a moral ideal of service to the community, with preparation and motivation. The notion of citizen is unintelligible apart from the common good; a good man, or a citizen who wants to become one, needs a city, a community capable of promoting in him the excellences and virtues that are proper to him (Bárcena, 1997).

Human self-realization is achieved in collaboration with others and through a shared action or communicative action. Freedom is the point of departure and arrival of the finished human being—we are a specific past that is actualized in the present— thus, humanly achieved life is not exclusively a matter of individual action (Sen, 1999). Indeed, our modern pretensions to autonomy seem to be contradictory since, also in others and those of another kind, a kind of encounter with oneself can be established.

Political activity is valued not so much for its capacity to reach agreements or to discover a global conception of what is good, but to the extent that it enables citizens to exercise and develop their capacity for civic and political judgment (Sen, 1999) (Saba, 2016). It is through this and through deliberation, diversity—and therefore plurality—that authentic political activity is born (Dworkin, 2018). The teaching—process of formation of judgment— of democracy should be translated into learning freedom, the formation of critical awareness, the capacity for reflection and independent thought.

Our modern societies are characterized by a set of tensions that produce a deficient perception of the sense of difference and the erosion of the social bond (Keane, 2010). Education must take on the difficult task of transforming diversity into a positive factor of mutual understanding between individuals and human groups. One of the functions of education is to achieve consensus on norms, values, and common convictions and the deliberate formation of certain knowledge and skills to achieve anticipatory learning through the development of ethical attitudes, because perhaps only through ethics are we able to confront the unforeseen that the future always contains.

At the various levels of education, discussions and controversies have been projected within the strict framework of moral and political philosophy, the debate on this issue has been fundamentally driven by two well-defined theoretical fronts: liberalism —citizenship as status— and communitarianism —citizenship as practice—. This debate includes two kinds of fundamental theoretical references, those related to the moral dispute around the ethics of duty and the ethics of virtue, and those related to the nature of democracy and citizenship (Bobbio et al., 1982).

The list of issues they deal with ranges from the very definition of the ethical and moral point of view, the separability between what is just and what is good, the very conception of the self —of the subject—, and the liberal analysis of society and the communitarian pretension of returning to a stronger sense of community. Liberalism is an individualistic theory; it is an egalitarian, universalist, and melioristic conception. It is both a philosophical theory —of a moral or ethical order— and a political stance. Utilitarianism, kantism, and the primacy of justice as impartiality over the good, are the coordinates to reach the realism that properly orders security, right to privacy, positive autonomy, and neutrality.

In short, liberalism is the position that tries to find common moral minimums from which to facilitate peaceful coexistence in a context of diversity and to limit the power of the state, to avoid its interference in the private lives of citizens. Within this thinking, politics has a strictly instrumental character at the service of purposes and interests and conceives citizenship as a legal and formal matter, basically (Wampler, 2012).

In some ways, communitarians base their approaches on Aristotle's moral and political philosophy. A communitarian perspective recognizes both individual human dignity and the social dimension of human existence and the conception of the individual not as an individual but as a citizen. Community, traditions, customs, sense of belonging are part of the mutual interdependence that constitutes the fundamental concept of citizenship. Every individual is divided, but not fragmented (Wood, 1996).

According to communitarians, citizenship is a practice of engagement oriented towards participation in the public sphere, the formation of public virtues and the articulation

of the public good. They see in the community a source of values, duties and social virtues, an identity based on the history of collective memory. The philosophical principles of communitarianism are that the person is essentially social, the good is prior to justice, knowledge cannot be attained spontaneously, and the understanding of the organization of society depends on an integral vision of the good of the community.

In this vein, the arts of citizenship are dialogue, persuasion, public conversation, and judgment (Bárcena, 1997).

Without any doubt, democracy cannot be understood without citizenship, that is, without the group of rational, free —autonomous— and equal individuals before the law, who form the subject par excellence of public affairs and of the legitimization of power (Peschard, 1995, p. 24). A citizen is a subject who knows his or her rights, has the possibility and capacity to defend them as well as to enjoy them; he or she is the protagonist of the public sphere who participates in the design of the dictates of power and, of course, in the very foundation of the power of the state, being the holder of sovereignty (IEDF, 2001). He or she is a person with a political identity shared with other people who may have different interests and conceptions of the good, but who submits to the rules prescribed by the republic in the search for his or her satisfactions.

To sum up, it is a person with a political identity shared with other people who may have different interests and conceptions of the good, but who submits to the rules prescribed by the republic in the pursuit of their satisfactions and in their ways of acting, since they assume a set of ethical-political values that gives them a collective identity.⁴ From this integrating conception of citizenship, it is clear that its role in the construction of democracy includes the periodic election of rulers, as well as their active involvement in the full exercise

⁴ The concept of citizenship is not exempt from debates, such as the one between liberal positions versus the so-called communitarian approaches. The protagonists of this debate have been, on the one hand, the liberals led by Rawls, Dworkin, and Gauthier and, on the other, the communitarian current formed by a set of philosophical and political theories, which rather than constituting a clear position, represent the critique of the liberal tradition. Some representatives of this current are Alasdair, MacIntyre, Arendt, Walzer, Taylor and Sendel (Aguila, 1996; Fernández, 2001).

of their rights, in the fulfillment of their civic responsibilities, and in the deployment of the principles of democracy in their daily lives.

In the setting of the studied consultation exercises, these features of citizenship become concrete when children and young people understand that they have rights and exercise them—for example, by expressing their opinions— (Salazar et al., 2011); they recognize that they have responsibilities and are willing to assume them—for instance, by participating in addressing the problems that affect them—; they put into action their ability to engage in dialogue, make decisions, organize and resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner; and finally, when they are concerned about and take care of their own affairs—that affect them as individuals—, as well as those that allude to the social group to which they belong, to that collective within their social and emotional context (Cervantes, 2021).

The development of these features of citizenship are condensed in a useful notion to glimpse the impact of the consultations: political culture.

Political culture

Political culture is based on values and conceptions and as elements that configure the subjective perception that a population has of politics, power, and authority. Almond and Verba (1963) define it as the set of psychological orientations of the members of a society in relation to politics. It consists of knowledge about government and the system of beliefs, ideals, values, norms, and traditions that characterize and give meaning to political life in specific contexts. In general, this notion is used to designate the set of attitudes, norms and beliefs that are more or less widely shared by the members of a given social unit and that have political phenomena as their object (Bobbio et al., 1982). It unfolds in four dimensions:

- The cognitive: what subjects know about the political system, its functions, institutions, laws, and political forces operating in each context.
- Affective and moral: people's feelings, evaluations, perceptions and beliefs about the system and its structures.

- The evaluative: which includes judgments and opinions on political phenomena and requires the combination of information, feelings, and evaluation criteria; it is concretized in the capacity to judge political realities.
- And finally, the capacity for political action: referring to the set of skills for political participation and coexistence, such as the capacity for organization, listening, dialogue, conflict resolution, decision making, among other aspects (Sen, 1999).

The contribution of the consultation exercises to the development of a democratic political culture is mainly located in the affective and moral dimension, as well as in the capacity for political action, since it promotes the exercise of the right to participate, interest in public affairs, commitment to society and encourages the appreciation of democracy, while at the same time developing experiences for the development of capacities for political action (Espinoza et al., 2020).

Since not all political culture is democratic, consultations aim at contributing to the development in the new generations of the desirable traits of a person or community that possesses a democratic political culture, among others:

- “- Interest, information, and knowledge about their country and political system.
- The use of information to make an informed judgment, assume a position and act.
- Knowledge of rights, as well as willingness and ability to respect, apply and demand compliance with them.
- Knowledge of and respect for the law.
- Ability and willingness to organize and participate in public affairs.
- Attachment to and identification with the democratic regime.
- Acceptance of the civic duty to participate in political life.

- Conviction that it is possible to influence political decisions at both the local and national scales.
- Confidence in institutions, social mechanisms, and democratic procedures.
- Deployment of a set of values such as justice, freedom, equality, tolerance, among others.
- Ability to engage in dialogue, make decisions, organize, and resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner” (Conde, 2002, p. 13).

The consultation practices for and by children should contribute to the development of several of these traits, particularly those related to the development of political judgment, knowledge and exercise of rights, appreciation of democracy and a sense of political efficacy.

Participation

It has already been pointed out that the object and theme of the consultations is Civic and Political Participation, which is understood in two dimensions: as the exercise of the right to freedom of expression as well as the right to take part in decisions and actions that involve them, and as a formative experience. Following Caruso (2002), it is recognized that through participation citizenship is forged and expressed in the practice of their freedom of thought and expression, in the exercise of their political rights and, in general, in the demand for their human rights (De Sousa Santos, 2003). This presupposes a subject with a certain degree of awareness of his or her rights, with autonomy to become involved in matters of public interest, with the capacity to do so and with the critical vision necessary to take a stance on controversial issues and to distance himself or herself from situations of manipulation.

ii. Is democratic participation important?

When it comes to answering the question of: why should one participate? the reasons that lead a person to participate in public affairs are diverse. Following Conde (2002), in the

framework of the liberal-communitarian debate, some of these reasons are put forward, which of course embody different points of view.

As aforementioned, from the liberal perspective, citizens make use of their rights to promote their interests, finding as a limit the rights of others. In this approach, it is considered that the incentives that move the individual to participate are more linked to the selfishness of seeking one's own interest than to the achievement of the general interest and that, moved by his personal interests, the citizen will try to promote his desires, coordinate them with those of others and make them present in the decision-making process. Therefore, the pursuit of self-interest ensures the incentive for the minimum participation required in a democracy (Águila, 1996, p. 3) (Fernández, 2001).

On the other hand, the communitarian thesis is based on a republican political perspective that emphasizes the notion of the public good as an element transcendent to individual desires and interests that puts in tension the notions of good and right. In this tradition, participation is a key value of democracy. According to Águila (1996) and Fernández (2001)

“It creates interactive habits and spheres of public deliberation that are key to the achievement of autonomous individuals; it makes people democratically and collectively take charge of decisions and activities over which it is important to exercise control aimed at achieving self-government and governability; participation also tends to create a civil society with strong and deep-rooted community ties that create a collective identity, that is, that generate a specific way of life built around categories such as common good and plurality”.

Considering these arguments, as well as the elements of socio-emotional, cognitive, and moral development, it is proposed to develop the consultation around significant and relevant issues for children and young people. It is well known that the construction of the social perspective is reached towards adolescence and that from 6 to 9 years of age an egocentric and heteronomous vision prevails. Therefore, the situations or problems that provide content for participation in the different age groups should respond to:

- The individual interests of the girls and boys, particularly in the case of the younger ones.
- Situations that are meaningful and relevant, i.e., that do not constitute an abstract sphere of participation, but represent for children and young people an experience that has meaning and value in concrete terms (Lugo, 2021).
- The gradual incorporation of public affairs in which both individual and group interests are addressed, and which constitute a concrete content for the construction of a social perspective, collective identity, and social responsibility.

iii. Learning how to participate

With respect to public affairs, as discussed above, adults regularly participate very little in public affairs, and underage people practically do not participate at all. The scarce civic and political participation can be explained in relation to the negative perception that the general population has about politics, as well as by the distrust in institutions formally linked to participation such as unions, political parties, or non-governmental organizations.

These perceptions may be the result of other variables such as the lack of a systematic practice of citizen participation; the lack of knowledge and skills to participate, and the scarce or inefficient response of authorities to citizens' claims and proposals (Medrano et al., nd.). The consultation idea aims to make progress in addressing these situations because:

- It is configured as a systematic space for participation, in such a way that children and young people will potentially have more participation experiences than young people and adults who currently make up the electoral roll.
- Participation is learned by participating. The civic exercise will provide concrete tools for participation to children and young people, as well as to the adults involved (Mitchell, 2018).
- In its conception, the consultation implies the development of listening and response actions on the part of the authorities linked to children and youth. Although it is not

possible to ensure that the opinions and proposals gathered in the consultation will be used for the design of public policies, it is proposed to address this variable that discourages participation with the development of very specific actions that send the population the message that the authorities do listen to those who express their opinion through legal and legitimate channels (Rivera, 2021).

Based on Conde (2002a), and considering these basic conditions for participation, the following are the features of participation as a skill for democratic life and its linkage with other dimensions.

Democratic participation

As it was pointed out previously, participation is a central aspect of democracy. It is condensed and developed in three processes: decision making, conflict resolution and organized action to improve the social environment. It can be individual, organized, or collective (Percy-Smith et al., 2019).

As civic competence, it includes the development of attitudes, knowledge and skills that allow the subject to become involved in decisions that concern him or her and in actions aimed at improving his or her environment. In the attitudinal component, learning democratic participation implies that people are aware that they have the right to intervene and get involved in matters that affect them directly as well as in those that have a social impact. This awareness is the prelude to social consciousness, commitment to the pursuit of the common good as well as realization of citizens' power in the construction of their society (Rajani, 2000). It is based on values such as responsibility, respect, tolerance, and the exercise of freedom.

Learning to participate includes the development of a set of skills among which are those of dialogue, those related to decision making, those necessary to become involved in elective processes and democratic consultation, as well as those required to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner. This civic competence involves a set of notions and information, such as understanding the formal mechanisms for participation, the nature of citizen

participation in the legislative process, as well as the characteristics of social, citizen and political participation.

The participation carried out within the framework of the consultations is focused on the following civic competence.

Participation in elective processes and democratic consultation

Universal voting to elect representatives and authorities as well as the expression of opinions in citizen consultations are fundamental procedures of democracy. As a civic competence, it implies knowledge of political rights, understanding of electoral processes, as well as the development of skills to choose, make decisions and express their opinion through mechanisms based on broad consultation. In schools, children and young people are trained as voters through educational exercises that allow them to replicate and understand electoral procedures in preparation for future voters. These activities include participation in electoral exercises in the classroom, at school and even in connection with political elections (Salazar et al., 2021). The electoral exercise can be developed at different levels, which include monitoring political campaigns, simulating electoral processes, forming political parties, or organizing elections at school in which the entire process is reproduced—voting at the ballot box, campaigns to promote voting, vote counting, scrutiny, and so on.

Progress can be made in the development of this skill based on the recognition of the formal aspects of a vote, as well as the understanding of the principle of majorities. It is necessary to carry out electoral and consultation exercises based on issues of interest to them, so that it becomes a meaningful experience and children feel listened to and considered. It is important to apply the agreements reached by children and young people, to recover the suggestions made by them in democratic consultation processes and to meet their demands in concrete actions, which they can clearly identify as a response to their electoral or consultation exercise. Likewise, it is essential to take care of the procedure, since the participants will learn from the experience, this implies taking care of the cleanliness and transparency of the elective and consultation exercises; establishing clearly what was the agreement reached or what were the suggestions made by them; following up on the

agreements and respecting the majority principle, when it is the time to vote (Wampler, 2012).

b. Children are key players

i. Who are on the playground and under what rules?

Based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as any human being from birth to 18 years of age, unless he or she has reached before reaching the age of majority. In this respect, this dissertation analyses consultation related to children and young people under 18 years of age. Children aged from 0 to 11 are referred to as “children”, and those aged from 12 to 17 are referred to as “young people”. According to UNICEF (2022a), the population under age 18 reaches up to 2,375,649,484 worldwide. In this vein, 678,215,031 of them are part of the population under age 5.

As of today, there are more than 2.2 billion children in the world, most of whom live in developing countries. Depending on the country in which he or she lives, a child does not enjoy the same rights and living conditions as a child in a so-called Western country, as many regions and countries in the global south face great inequalities. The factors in question, whether political, economic, social, cultural, ethnic, or religious, can have different impacts on each child. Despite the progress made in recent years, the situation facing the world's children is still desperate. To mention, as the new school year begins in many parts of the world, new UNESCO (2022) data shows that 244 million children and youth between the ages of 6 and 18 worldwide are still out of school.

Violence against children includes all forms of violence against children under 18 years of age, inflicted by their parents or other caregivers, peers, partners, or others. It is estimated that up to 1 billion children aged 2-17 years worldwide were victims of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect in the past year, according to the World Health Organization (2022). Violence experienced in childhood affects lifelong health and well-being. Target 16.2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to "end child abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children." Moreover, child exploitation is a term that includes both forced labor and sexual exploitation, the

recruitment of child soldiers and domestic slavery. Worldwide, 85 million children are victims of some form of child exploitation, based on findings of Save the Children (2023). It is one of the most serious human rights violations that adults can inflict on children today.

In addition, the most recent estimates of UNICEF (2022) show that a new record 36.5 million children were displaced from their homes by the end of 2021 due to conflict, violence, and other crises. This is the highest number registered since World War II and includes 13.7 million refugee and asylum-seeking children and nearly 22.8 million children internally displaced by conflict and violence. These figures do not include children displaced by disasters or climate and environmental disruptions or those displaced in 2022, such as those affected by the war in Ukraine.

The unprecedented number of displaced children is the direct consequence of a chain of crises: protracted and large-scale conflicts, such as the one in Afghanistan; the fragile situation in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo or Yemen; and other related crises, aggravated by the effects of climate change. As with the fragility of some countries, child displacement is spreading rapidly. Over the past year, the global number of displaced children increased by 2.2 million (UNICEF, 2022). As the total number of displaced and refugee children reaches a peak, access to essential services such as health care, education and protection is limited. Around two-thirds of all refugee children are enrolled in elementary school, while only one-third of adolescent refugees are enrolled in secondary school.

Children in transit—whether they are refugees, asylum seekers or internally displaced persons—can face serious dangers to their well-being and safety. This is especially true for the hundreds of thousands of unaccompanied or separated children who are at increased risk of trafficking, exploitation, violence, and abuse. Approximately 34% of identified trafficking victims worldwide are children.

1. The unseen and unheard?

The most fundamental rights of children are violated in many parts of the world; even in the most economically developed countries, not all children benefit from the same rights.

Poverty remains the main cause of child rights violations because lack of funds seriously hampers access to basic human needs: health care, water, food, and education. In countries less affected by poverty, in general, children have the opportunity to enjoy these rights although many are still victims of violence, abuse or discrimination (Humanium, n.d.). Regarding this point, Nishiyama states the following:

However, the serious issue today is that children are “seen but not heard” rather than “neither seen nor heard.” Despite empirical evidence of children’s crucial democratic role in society, there still exists skepticism about their capacities, such as communication skills, which prevents scholars from taking children’s voices seriously. Furthermore, some scholars fail to take into consideration earnestly children’s various and unique ways of democratic involvement (Nishiyama, 2017, p.1).

Furthermore, it must be noted that yet, the recognition of these voices should not obscure children’s unequal opportunities to access the socio-economic conditions required to produce such voices (Bourdieu, 2001, 81–87).

2. The normative recognition of participation and expression

a. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

On November 20th, 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a commitment to guarantee every child the right to be a child. The Convention, adopted at a historic moment of consensus around children's policies, was the first legally binding document in international law. It became the most ratified human rights agreement in history and has since then been life-changing for children around the world. The implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as a binding normative reference and instrument for the adoption of policies that promote children's rights, implies the involvement of municipalities, which represent the level that has the greatest impact on the lives of children.

Municipalities are called upon to give priority to children, creating spaces where children can give their opinions and express themselves, where they can act on the reality around them, get involved in municipal planning, and influence decisions that affect them. This attitude, which values active citizenship, allows children to gain autonomy, exercise their rights and, at the same time, get involved and feel a connection with others and with the municipality where they live, creating a greater sense of belonging to the community.

This is the philosophy of the Universal Children's Rights Day, which is celebrated on November 20th: a day of action and global awareness for the rights of children, involving them in issues that directly affect their lives.

b. General Comments by the Committee on the Rights of the Children

The challenges that children and adolescents face are changing with the times. Decades ago, it was unthinkable to pay attention to issues such as cyber-violence or climate change; today, they are major sources of concern for children's rights.

This is reflected in the Convention on the Rights of the Child: the international human rights treaty that focuses on the rights of children and adolescents is a living document. This means that it adapts to the times and to the need to address new aspects of growing concern, being constantly monitored. And it does so through general observations. These are documents of varying length that the Committee on the Rights of the Children periodically prepares to assist in the proper interpretation and implementation of children's rights under the Convention. Based on the studied subject on the present dissertation, the most relevant are the following:

- General Comment 12: The right of the child to be heard

In this document, the Committee sets out the guidelines for an in-depth understanding of the right to participation of children, and how States parties should guarantee it (General Comment No. 12, 2009).

- General Comment 14: The best interests principle.

Aims to ensure that States parties give effect to and respect the best interests of the child, defining the requirements for its consideration (General Comment No. 14, 2013)

- General Comment 25: Children's rights in relation to the digital environment.

It starts from the fact that the rights of all children should be respected, protected, and realized in the digital environment (General Comment No. 25, 2021).

ii. How should children and young people be listened to?

Subjective conditions such as those mentioned above become relevant when it is understood that not all participation is democratic and autonomous, a particularly delicate situation when it comes to children and young people. Hart (1992) points out that there are eight levels of child participation. The three lowest rungs do not strictly speaking imply true participation, but only an appearance of it.

- First level. Manipulation: children are not very aware of what the issue is and therefore do not understand their own actions.

- Second level. Decoration: children are used as a vehicle for propaganda or as a decorative element for some cause, without them understanding it either. The positive difference of this step with respect to the previous one is that in manipulation it is intended to make it seem like the cause was inspired by the children, but in fact they have not.

- Third level. Symbolic participation: children are given the apparent opportunity to express themselves, but without their opinions having any real impact on the issues at hand.

According to Hart, the following two levels can be considered genuine participation, if children understand the intentions of the project; are aware of who made the decisions

about their participation and the reasons for them; have a meaningful role, i.e., not just a decorative one; and being aware of all the above, intervene voluntarily.

- Fourth level. Assigned but informed: the children have not been involved in the planning of the project or in the assignment of the role they are expected to perform, but they act voluntarily and are aware of the meaning of the action proposed to them.

- Fifth level. Consulted and informed: the project is designed and directed by adults, but they request and consider the proposals or opinions of the children. The children play the role of advisors or consultants to the adults.

The last three rungs of Hart's ladder constitute meaningful participation experiences.

- Sixth level. Projects initiated by adults but whose decisions are shared with children.

- Seventh level. Projects initiated and directed by children in which adults intervene only by facilitating the process.

- Eighth level. Projects initiated by children sharing decisions with adults. The children themselves decide to involve adults in the development of their own genuine projects.

c. Democratic participation of children

iii. Promotion approaches

Participative initiatives

Based on the work of Lansdown (2001) the chances for children to actively participate in projects, research, or services are typically larger when participation-based initiatives are used. Adults frequently start participatory projects, which have the following characteristics: they entail working with kids; they involve building frameworks that let kids challenge or influence decisions; and once the project is underway, kids typically take self-directed action.

Promoting self-advocacy

Self-advocacy is the process of empowering kids to act on the topics that they perceive as significant. It has the following traits: children identify the problems that need to be addressed; adults play a facilitative rather than a leading role; and kids oversee the process.

Consultative processes

In order to better understand children's experiences, opinions, and problems, adults often consult with them. This approach helps adults learn more about children's perspectives and issues. Processes of consultation typically exhibit the following traits: children may be given opportunities for organizing together, developing skills and confidence, and helping to influence outcomes. However, these activities are adult-initiated, adult-led, and adult-managed. Children have no control over the outcomes.

The latter three promotion approaches are clearly studied and explained by Lansdown as mentioned below:

Meaningful approaches to involving children can be broadly grouped into three categories, although these are far from being mutually exclusive and the boundaries are rarely clear cut. They are introduced here primarily to help conceptualize the type of work being described:

- “Consultative processes – in which adults initiate processes to obtain information from children through which they can improve legislation, policies or services;
- Participative initiatives – where the aim is to strengthen processes of democracy, create opportunities for children to understand and apply democratic principles or involve children in the development of services and policies that impact on them;
- Promoting self advocacy – where the aim is to empower children to identify and fulfil their own goals and initiatives.

Projects or initiatives can also move through from one category to another as they evolve and as children, and indeed adults, grow in confidence (Lansdown, 2001, p. 16)”.

iv. Why should children and young people be consulted?

Within the broad scope of the construction of citizenship and education for democratic coexistence, the consultation process has been chosen as the mechanism that best serves the purposes of the educational and participatory exercise, by offering conditions for children and young people to experience a process that includes awareness and information, deliberation and expression of their opinion, as well as the elaboration of proposals for the solution of their problems; at the same time, it gives adults and institutions the opportunity to exercise active listening, to assume a commitment to support the development of their proposals and to gradually consider the voice of children and youth in institutional programs and eventually in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies.

The commitment towards civic education

Faced with multiple challenges, which range from growing citizen apathy to an increasing social conflict whose protagonists frequently reject institutional forms and channels, contemporary democracies are attaching ever greater importance to civic education (INE, 2016). This is not a phenomenon unique to emerging democracies (Diamond, 1990), which are concerned with overcoming the authoritarian past and consolidating the new institutional framework: there is also a growing concern in long-established democracies, where the resurgence of xenophobia and racism, among other phenomena, has highlighted the necessity, if not the urgency, of working on the cultural front (Levitsky et al., 2019).

It is no coincidence that in the last decades there has been a proliferation of measures aimed at strengthening civic education: summits of heads of state and government, official declarations, public policies, curricular reforms, and a long series of other initiatives bear witness to this process.

With the conviction that, in order to be sustainable, democracy requires not only institutions and norms, but also a cultural basis widely shared by society, the question to be answered becomes: what kind of civic education, that is, under what modalities may civic education promote the development of politically competent citizens and thus contribute to the existence of a democracy with greater levels of stability and legitimacy? There are no

unequivocal answers to this question. On the contrary, there are as many answers as there are conceptions of democracy and citizenship. But it is possible, and moreover essential, to have a point of reference from which a clear position can be taken.

This point of reference must refer to the very foundation of democracy and to what is undoubtedly its specificity: democracy, understood as the government of the people, is based on the conviction that all people have the capacity for political judgment and, therefore, all are competent to express an opinion on politics, to deliberate and to intervene in it. It is under this principle that democracy universalizes access to politics, radically distancing itself from other political orders that start from precisely the opposite idea, namely, that this capacity for political judgment is concentrated only in certain persons, strata, or sectors of society (Bobbio, 1998).

The democratic principle referred to is a philosophical assumption, a presumption that justifies the inclusion of all in the construction and functioning of the political community (MacEwen et al., 2021). But if it is assumed that this assumption is just that and has no possibility of being realized in practice, real democracy would inevitably result in the order of the few. Consequently, to be made operational, this assumption must be qualified to indicate that all people have the potential capacity for political judgment, which must be developed and cultivated. In its norms, institutions, spaces and type of interactions, democracy must be designed to cultivate this capacity and put it into action.

One of the fundamental tools that democratic societies must encourage to develop this capacity, which is one of the basic citizenship competencies, is civic education. The fundamental purpose of civic education is to enable people to take an interest in the public sphere, express informed opinions on politics, make informed judgments about it, and act politically in accordance with democratic principles and norms, with all that this implies in terms of learning dialogue, public deliberation, the construction of agreements, participation, citizen organization, and so on (INE, 2016).

By its nature and purposes, this education is unrelated to pure rhetoric and indoctrination. As the basis of citizenship, it seeks to develop:

- The moral autonomy of the person, that is, his or her capacity to choose and decide freely based on reason.
- Awareness of fundamental rights that must be respected.
- Responsible participation in the public sphere.
- The feeling of civic bond with fellow citizens, with whom one has differences or coincidences, but with whom one shares responsibility for the fate of the political community.
- The feeling of identity and co-responsibility with any human being.

Although there are many different perspectives on the matter, it is presumed in the current analysis and in this brief enumeration that civic education and moral education are inextricably linked. As the Spanish philosopher Adela Cortina has rightly pointed out that both things cannot be done separately, because people, to become such through the process of socialization, need some signs of identity, which emerge from different forms of belonging. In this sense, citizenship offers two specific advantages: 1) the exercise of citizenship is crucial for the development of the moral maturity of the individual, because participation in the community destroys inertia, and the consideration of the common good nourishes altruism; 2) citizenship underlies other identities and allows us to soften the conflicts that can arise between those who profess different ideologies, because it helps to cultivate the political virtue of responsible conciliation of conflicting interests. To form persons, it is also necessary to form citizens (Cortina, 1996).

The following sections briefly explain the theoretical-conceptual bases and the political reasons of the consultation exercise, as well as the institutional framework in which it is embedded.

Theoretical and conceptual reasons

The first reason underlying all civic education aimed at children and young people, and which is behind the initiative of the Consultation, has to do with the need for society to

send an unequivocal signal to these groups in the sense that, with their specificity, they are part of the political community and, therefore, that their voice is of interest and wants to be taken into consideration.

Adela Cortina (1996, p. 78) has put it very clearly: "If the political community does not take responsibility for the civic education of potential citizens, making them feel that they are its members, part of it, and that this belonging is gratifying, it makes no sense to ask later on how to interest them in the republic".

A second reason has to do with the conviction that citizenship is not only a legal status, but a sense of both political identity and co-responsibility for the broader community in which one lives. This sense is the result of a formative process, for which society must explicitly take responsibility. In this sense, García and Micco (1997) state that if society wants to have citizens capable of participating, then it must be concerned about its children, at the stage in which these future citizens are being formed. These authors state that "it is necessary to think of a true pre-citizenship that makes children the subject of democracy and the object of the community's concerns" (García & Micco, 1997, p. 261).

The notion of pre-citizenship, while recognizing as justified the exclusion of children in relation to the exercise of political rights given their degree of psychological and moral development, sustains the need to progressively incorporate them into the logic and practices of democracy. In this way, children and young people learn for their future exercise of citizenship. The consultation seeks to offer them tools for this future exercise.

It should also be noted that the notion of pre-citizenship implies recognition of the equal human dignity of children and their right to participate in democracy, albeit according to their level of development. And this leads to a third motivation: the need to promote in children and young people their self-recognition as subjects of rights, here and now, and not only in the remote future.

The purpose of civic education for children and young people, and in particular an exercise such as the consultation, is to highlight, in the eyes of the participants and society as a whole, that there are specific rights for children and young people that must be known,

defended, and exercised. To the extent that children and young people know that they have rights from birth, it will be more natural and desirable for them to exercise their rights as citizens when that time comes.

A fourth motivation has to do with the need to promote in all members of society, not only in the citizens themselves, adherence to the values inherent and proper to democracy.⁵ The consultation is conceived as a long-term participatory experience which, in its various stages, brings into play a wide range of values such as freedom, tolerance, respect and respect for legality, which are reflected upon in the process itself.⁶

A fifth motivation is linked to political socialization. This includes basic ties regarding the political system are die-cut at early ages, early political learning tends to persist over time, and this learning acts as a filter for later political learning.

The consultation should be a memorable experience and a trigger for other processes that lay the foundations for a productive and enriching relationship between people and politics and democracy.

There is still an additional motivation, and it is related to the fact that, in democracy, public policies need to include in various ways the participation and voice of those who are the object of these policies. From its design, through its implementation, to the impact evaluation phase, public policy, to be such, must be constructed in the public sphere, facing the stakeholders, and genuinely taking them into account.

Children and young people should not be disregarded in this consideration. They could have a greater understanding of their own needs, wants, and expectations (Lansdown, 1995). Therefore, their opinion should systematically be a fundamental component in the

⁵ Although democracy should be understood, essentially, as a set of organs, norms and procedures aimed at guaranteeing the government of the people, it is a fact that they condense, express, and require certain values, without which they are meaningless. Norberto Bobbio (1998) develops, as is well known, a minimal concept of democracy based on rules of the game and procedures, but at the same time bases these rules and procedures on values and principles, among which stand out tolerance, non-violence, the gradual renewal of society through the free debate of ideas, the ideals of fraternity and political equality, as well as freedom.

⁶ In this regard, UNICEF (2003, pp. 9-10) has pointed out that “the values of democracy, such as respect for the rights and dignity of all people, for their diversity and their right to participate in decisions that affect them, are first and most effectively learned in childhood.”

definition of public policies, leaving behind those of a welfare nature, whose assumptions generate apathy, submission and irresponsibility, and whose application does not solve the problems because it ignores the people who suffer from them.⁷

The consultation is a mechanism that makes it possible to gather first-hand feedback from children and young people, turning it into an input for the design and evaluation of public policies. The exercise also foresees the creation of spaces for deliberation on the results and the building of bridges with institutions involved in working with children and youth, so that the voice of the participants reaches these institutions in a fluid manner and effectively influences public policy decision-making processes.

A seventh motivation is related to the fact that children are in a process of transition from heteronomy to personal autonomy. Developmental psychology has profusely described how this process occurs and the various stages that comprise it. But certainly, the process is subject to multiple vicissitudes and autonomy is not an inexorable outcome that is obtained just by waiting long enough. A deliberate and continuous effort is required to strengthen the capacities for discernment and autonomous judgment.⁸

The activities, exercises and educational processes that bring into the game the abilities to reflect, analyze, argue, and decide freely to contribute, undoubtedly, to the construction of autonomous individuals. To the extent that it requires reflecting on real problems of their immediate environment and giving their opinion about them, the Consultation is offered as an instrument that strengthens the development of these capabilities.

⁷ UNICEF (2003) maintains that “children have demonstrated that, when engaged, they can have a significant influence on the world around them. They possess the ideas, experience and insights that enrich adult understanding...”. When this impulse to participate is not respected and encouraged, when adults exclude or overlook children, their potential to contribute to their communities is jeopardized.

⁸ On this point, in the report *The State of the World's Children*, UNICEF (2003, p. 9) states that “fostering meaningful and quality participation of children and adolescents is essential to ensure their growth and development”. It adds: “A child whose active integration into the world has been encouraged from the outset will be a child who is able to develop (...), to respond to educational opportunities and to move into adolescence with confidence, assertiveness and the skills to contribute to dialogue and democratic practices at home, at school, in the community and in the country”.

Political reasons

The first reason for designing a comprehensive civic education strategy and, within it, an exercise of this nature has to do with the need to strengthen the emerging democratic institutionalism (INE, 2016). The first condition for this is to vindicate the value of politics in the eyes of society, including its youngest members.

Politics is perceived negatively by broad sectors of the population and given the weak processes of political socialization, these perceptions tend to be transmitted to children and youth, generating an early animosity towards politics that devalues democracy and leaves it without support. The consultation seeks to bring children and young people closer to politics and democratic formulas, vindicating their practical usefulness in the resolution of problems that affect them.

The second reason for betting on an exercise such as the consultation is related to the need and relevance of taking advantage of the enormous potential of imagination, ideas and commitments represented by the millions of children and young people in the country to solve the problems that concern them (Petren et al., 2000). Little known, there are, however, numerous experiences of active involvement of the children and youth population in problem solving. The consultation is one more instrument, placed at the service of these sectors, to unleash a dynamic of responsible and committed mobilization.

The third rationale for utilizing a consultation modality is that it facilitates a genuine form of participation that extends beyond mere simulation. This approach enables the expression and concretion of legally protected rights and leads to the attainment of concrete outcomes and tangible responses to the opinions and concerns expressed during the consultation period. As such, the consultation process serves as an effective means to establish a cyclical pattern of action-reflection-action (Dworkin, 2018), grounded in significant events impacting the children and youth population.

III. Mexico: *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil*

a. *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil*

i. Background

To understand the context, it is necessary to consider two variables that came together to make the Consultation a reality:

- The international discussion on the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, the approval of this convention, which tried to improve the conditions of children, especially from the recognition of their rights by imposing obligations on the states to respect these rights.

In 1990, when Mexico ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations a year earlier, its contents became a state commitment and a legal norm, as stipulated in article 133 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, which establishes that "this Constitution, the laws of the Congress of the Union that emanate from it and all treaties that are in accordance with it, concluded and to be concluded by the President of the Republic, with the approval of the Senate, shall be the Supreme Law of the entire Union".

Thus, the provisions of the Convention become, as of that year, the force of law in Mexico. This is of fundamental importance, given that Article 12 of the Convention provides that "States Parties shall ensure to the child the capacity to form his or her own views and the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with his or her age and maturity".

The best interests of the child were placed in the center. This was summed to the evident activism of civil society at the national level, which constituted the second variable.

- A straightforward democratization movement at the national level, Mexico came from a hegemonic party regime where it was very difficult to maintain structures built for the monochrome in a plural society such as the Mexican one, this forced the

opening of spaces to create institutions to ensure that the construction of representation and the political system had this plural key of democracy. To this end, in 1989-90 the Federal Electoral Institute —the National Electoral Institute's antecedent— emerged with two important reforms, bringing with it a whole new spectrum of political competition in conditions that were already different. A new set of rules was proposed, and the life of the parties thus became plural and competitive, with the right to influence the political-electoral contest and the citizens who would have to learn to live in that plurality and cohabit with those values of a new way of doing things called democracy — electoral and substantial (Dahl, 1989)— had a correlation to this.

The Federal Electoral Institute started with a series of promotional campaigns, and an editorial seal with the objective of promoting the values of democracy. In this logic, the Federal Electoral Institute's initiative arose, not because of international pressure, not much less, an institutional initiative inscribed in the new model of democratization, children's elections 1997, an exercise that intended to contribute to the civic education of children and adolescents, intended that the voting day would become a family day, where Mexican families would vote together and for the design of this exercise. It is a very different exercise from the current one, that one placed on the ballot a set of values for children and adolescents to express their preference, that is to say, they chose their rights. Choosing and not a bidirectional process of expression. The 3.7 million participants model was very successful. It was carried out on the day of Election Day in the same spaces where it was possible to vote for the Chamber of Deputies.

In 1997, when the former Federal Electoral Institute carried out the first consultation, there was no similar activity in the Latin American region. In that sense, this activity was pioneer and constituted the first activity at national level in which children and adolescents were asked about their knowledge of the rights of children and adolescents. It should also be noted that since 1997 it has been implemented every three years without interruption.

In compliance with the commitments derived from the ratification of the Convention and the World Summit for Children, Mexico elevated the protection of children and adolescents

to constitutional rank. Thus, on December 13th, 1999, the Senate ratified the reforms to Article 4 of the Constitution, which establishes in its last paragraphs that "Children have the right to the satisfaction of their needs for food, health, education and healthy recreation for their integral development. Ascendants, guardians, and custodians have the duty to preserve these rights. The State shall provide what is necessary to promote respect for the dignity of children and the full exercise of their rights. The State will grant facilities to private individuals so that they contribute to the fulfillment of children's rights".

As a result of this reform, the Congress of the Union began to draft the regulatory law and thus the Law for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents was passed on April 27th, 2000, and published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on May 29th of the same year. This law was particularly important because it provided a more categorical and specific legal base, since it establishes a series of rights that are intimately linked to the meaning and logic of the Consultation. In more than one sense, the exercise appears as a possibility to put these rights into action.

Nowadays, the Consultation for Children and Youth 2021 is based on Article 1 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, which establishes that all persons shall enjoy the human rights recognized therein, and on the international treaties to which the Mexican State is a party, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12, paragraph 1 of which establishes the right of children who are capable of forming their own opinion to express their opinion on matters that affect them. Likewise, it is based on the current General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents, particularly in articles 2, sections I, II and III; 64; 71; 71; 72, and 74, from whose contents federal, state, and municipal authorities clearly must guarantee, arrange, and implement the mechanisms that favor the right of expression and permanent and active participation of children and adolescents.

The CIJ 2021 is framed within the National Civic Culture Strategy 2017-2023 (ENCCÍVICA), promoted by the National Electoral Institute as a public policy that seeks the appropriation of the public space by the citizenry, by stating that "Civic education is a deliberate process for the construction of democratic values and practices in a society" (INE, 2016, p. 89), which includes the development of competencies for participation in the public

sphere, to which the Consultation 2021 contributes among the population under 18 years of age.

On this basis, on October 28, 2020, the General Council of the National Electoral Institute issued Agreement INE/CG545/2020, which approved the implementation of the CIJ 2021, its Operational Plan and the integration of the Technical Committee of Accompaniment. The Consultation 2021 is the result of a process of learning and institutional strengthening that has been carried out since the 1990s and, as we will see below, has had a process of constant enrichment, and has generated a tendency to extend the participation of Mexican children and adolescents.

The formation of deliberators

Citizenship is in principle a legal status. In Mexico it is a formal condition that is attained upon reaching the age of majority and having an honest way of living; however, to consolidate a democratic political system, we require a citizen base with a set of civic competencies⁹, that is, we need to build citizenship. Since citizenship is understood as a political practice rather than a mere matter of law (Camps, 1993), an educational process aimed at the so-called pre-citizens or deliberators is required to contribute to the configuration of the citizen that Mexico needs.

Three elements help define this educational process: data on the incipient political culture of Mexicans pose challenges in terms of citizenship education; the psychopedagogical framework points to the identification of the possibilities and limits of the moral, cognitive, and social development of children and young people; and the definition of some civic competencies that should be strengthened among pre-citizens and citizens.

The negative evaluation of politics, associated with corruption, deceit, cynicism, impunity, and violence, constitutes a first obstacle to overcome, since this idea affects interest

⁹ A competence implies knowing how to know, knowing how to do, knowing how to decide, and knowing how to communicate. Competencies include conceptual, attitudinal, and procedural aspects. They are capabilities of the person that have multiple applications and provide possibilities for work and social performance, expand the ability to adapt to different life, social and work situations and allow the acquisition of new learning. (Revista Novedades Educativas, 1998, pp. 9-10).

in politics, mainly in the adult population. Although it is not possible to establish a parallelism between the opinions of adults and those of children and young people, they influence each other, since children and young people construct their social representations based on their socialization experiences, in which the evaluations of adults have a certain weight.

The lack of credibility in institutions, in the state and in politics, as well as the distance perceived by children and young people from political parties, which they say do not take their interests into account, pose a clear challenge for the Consultation. It is expected that children and young people will express their opinion, but it is known that a large part of them think and feel that they will not be heard. Building confidence in democratic institutions is one of the pending tasks in the consolidation of democratic life in Mexico. The experience of participating in the Consultation and feeling listened to can contribute to this effort.

In this process of strengthening the political culture, the conception of public power and particularly the role of citizens in the legislative process and in decision making is also relevant. Citizenship instruction implies the development of competences for democratic life such as self-regulation, the capacity for autonomous decision making or the social perspective and the search for common interest, and others. The constructivist, interactionist and evolutionary perspective of development proposed by Jean Piaget (1977), as well as Vigotsky's conception of social learning, allow the design of educational strategies that contribute to the development of these competencies within the framework of consultation, which coincide with the cognitive and socio-affective levels of the subjects at different stages of their lives.

From Piaget's point of view, children and young people construct their own understanding of the world through direct action on the environment and in interaction with those around them. The interpretation of reality changes during the development process. The construction of the individual's moral autonomy and therefore the capacity to make judgments based on personal elaborations, to build their own scale of values or to establish rules for their behavior is one of the purposes of citizenship education. In the discussion with others, children must defend their point of view, investing their affective energy in it. This

action gradually makes them aware of their own perspective. Otherwise, on their own, they would remain egocentric, that is, focused on their own thinking.

In exercises of debate, participation and discussion, children can exchange ideas and points of view with their peers, discuss, reflect, collaborate in work, articulate their intuitions, and discriminate their affections. From this perspective, the different experiences of social participation have a fundamental educational effect: to decenter children's thinking and affections, to make them aware of their perspective and of the possibility of the existence of others.

Cooperative work helps to correct the systematic error of egocentrism, which is to erect the individual position as absolute. When discussing and participating with others, children and adolescents doubt that theirs is the only point of view; they doubt that their emotions are the same as those of others. This leads them to reflection and awareness of their thoughts. It is the discussion that allows them to oppose ideas among themselves and confront feelings, as they are internalized and related to the rest of other thoughts and affections.

The aforementioned considerations about moral construction allow us to analyze the educational value of participatory exercises, such as the Consultation for Children and Youth. If we understand heteronomy as the intellectual and moral pressure of a superior over an inferior through logical and moral rules that exert a rigid and insurmountable control over the subjects, this control mechanism is one of those responsible for the lack of a civic culture of participation, collaboration, and coexistence.

In a heteronomous society, the subjects do not criticize or discuss, because the verbalism of the family, the school and the authorities develop in them a moral realism that leads them to conceive the rules as external and absolute, which consolidates egocentrism. The Consultation for Children and Youth, as well as other experiences of citizen participation in which the uncritical acceptance of the values, ideas, beliefs, or dispositions of adults is broken with, will make it possible to advance in the understanding that in the process of construction of socio-political reality there are no unquestionable laws or unchangeable

structures. This avoids sociomorphism¹⁰, which generates uncritical, passive, and apathetic individuals who do not assume the capacity to participate in the transformation of their social environment.

The formation of citizens is effective when it proposes the gradual acquisition and learning of competencies for democratic life in accordance with the characteristics of the stage of moral, socioemotional, and cognitive development in which the subjects in formation find themselves. From this perspective, the following are established as objectives of the Children and Youth Consultation:

- “- To give continuity and strengthen a formative process of civic participation, through which children and young people assume themselves as subjects of rights and are recognized as such.
- To encourage children and young people to exercise their right to express their opinions on issues that interest and concern them.
- To encourage society in general—especially parents, professors, and government authorities—to value, listen to, attend to and act in response to the opinions, concerns and proposals of children and young people (INE, 2003).”

The consultation exercise is conceived as a formative process that takes into consideration the developmental stage of the subject and creates the necessary conditions for the acquisition and strengthening of competencies related to the exercise of rights and democratic coexistence. The pedagogical approach of the Consultation is based on the following principles:

- “- It starts from the recognition that a training for citizenship involves mobilizing cognitive, socio-affective, and procedural dimensions.

¹⁰ Just as the child conferred on the adult the powers that he or she initially conferred on himself, he or she does the same with the social, endowing it with unreasonable properties of power, in which he or she cannot participate.

- It emphasizes the development of competencies.
- It is centered on problem-solving methodology.
- It proposes a didactic approach that starts from the individual experience, and from there builds bridges towards the recognition of what is shared and identified at a collective level.
- It allows the articulation of the Consultation with the teaching and learning processes of specific curricular contents and with the socialization process that takes place in the educational institution.
- It creates conditions for children and young people to become involved and committed in the construction of alternatives for the solution of problems they feel (INE, 2003)”.

Conceiving the Consultation as a formative process makes it necessary to develop a set of sequenced activities aimed at children and young people according to their level of development and logically organized throughout the three stages of the process: before, during and after the Consultation, with the school as the axis of action, an aspect requiring the organic involvement of the educational authorities at the federal and state levels, as well as the educational system's management and teaching staff.

The coordination of actions with different social actors for the implementation of the Children and Youth Consultation responds to a multiple purpose:

- “- To generate awareness that civic education and the construction of citizenship constitute a shared social responsibility.
- To stimulate interest and social participation in general in a matter of public interest.
- To ensure the greatest possible participation of children and young people in the Consultation process.

- To generate a broad social process of reflection and response to the opinions expressed by the participants in the Consultation.
- Obtain diverse support to cover the technical and logistical requirements of a project of this size and, eventually, expand its coverage and impact (INE, 2003)”.

Due to its nature and magnitude, the exercise needs the collaboration and support of other public, private, and social institutions in different areas, scales, and moments. With some of these instances, specific and quick resolution commitments will be established, while with others the commitment will be long term, with the expectation of giving way to a permanent inter-institutional work in civic education.

It is well known that nowadays the media play a crucial role in the construction of social perceptions on almost all issues: politics, economy, culture, sports, etc. The representation of reality by millions of people in the media has a crucial role. The representation that millions of people have of reality on these and other topics has been forged having as a fundamental referent the information, judgments and images transmitted by the media, particularly radio and television. It is also well known that media messages sometimes carry more weight than those coming from other sources, including the family and the educational system. It is therefore necessary to take advantage of these enormous potentialities and place them at the service of the exercise of consulting.

The perspective of the electoral body that oversees the consultation was greatly aided by the interviews with Roberto Cardiel, Francisco Morales, and Lucía Morales. Their level of expertise and abundance of professional experience provided a priceless grasp of the inner workings and procedures involved in setting up such consultation. Their responses were helpful in further refining and solidifying the research questions, and their experience and knowledge supplied important data to support the study's conclusions. Additionally, their suggestions for resolving the concerns raised and for potential future research topics provided valuable feedback. Overall, because it offered a unique insight from the electoral authority, the interview was an essential part of the research process and significantly enhanced the quality and scope of the dissertation.

ii. Exercises of children participation convened from 1997 to 2021¹¹

Participation exercise	Purposes/objectives	Themes and realization date	Strategic allies	Population and collection tools
Children's Elections 1997	To promote the learning of civic rights and obligations, so that, in due time, children and adolescents exercise their rights as citizens and fulfill their obligations in a responsible, free, conscious, and informed manner.	Children's rights July 6th, 1997	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Children from 6 to 12 years old Adolescents from 13 to 17 years of age as "poll guides".
Consultation for Children and Youth 2000	To favor the learning of civic rights and obligations. To promote the recognition of children and adolescents as subjects of rights.	Democratic values and practices and public issues. July 2nd, 2000	Ministry of Public Education (SEP) National Pedagogical University (UPN) National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) (information processing)	Three age groups: 6 to 9 years old 10 to 13 years old 14 to 17 years old Teenagers from 13 to 17 years old as "poll guides"
Consultation for Children and Youth 2003	To continue and strengthen an educational process of civic participation through which children and young people assume themselves as subjects of rights and are recognized as such.	The civic-political participation of children and young people July 6th, 2003	Ministry of Public Education (SEP)	Three age groups: 6 to 9 years old 10 to 13 years old 14 to 17 years old
Children and Youth Exercise 2006	Express preferences in relation to practices and values that would contribute to improve the environment and democratic coexistence within school spaces.	School environment and democratic coexistence June 19th to 23rd, 2006	Ministry of Public Education (SEP)	Three ranks per school grade: 1st to 3rd grade of Elementary School 4 th to 6 th grade of Elementary School

¹¹ Own translation of the chart included at the CIJ 2021's report by the *Instituto Nacional Electoral*. (2022, April 27).

				Jr. High School and High School
Children and Youth Exercise 2009	Identify the expressions of students in each school to address them promptly and thus improve coexistence in these spaces.	School environment and democratic coexistence March 23rd to 27th, 2009	Ministry of Public Education (SEP) National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) (information processing)	Three ranks per school grade: 1st to 3rd grade of Elementary School 4 th to 6 th grade of Elementary School Jr. High School
Consultation for Children and Youth 2012	To provide a space open to participation so that children and adolescents between 6 and 15 years of age can exercise their right to express their opinions on the issues that interest them, process their results, and favor their inclusion in the national public agenda.	Democracy and dignified life April the 29th, 2012	Acude, A. C. Colectivo para el Desarrollo Educativo Albanta	Three age groups: 6 to 9 years old 10 to 12 years old 13 to 15 years old
Consultation for Children and Youth 2015	Promote that children and adolescents between 6 and 17 years of age exercise their right to participate and express their opinion on the issues and problems that affect them, making it easier for their opinions and proposals to be heard and considered.	Justice and peace specific topics: Security Trust and confidence Participation and opportunities for democratic life and development. June 7th, 2015	Colectivo para el Desarrollo Educativo Albanta	Three age groups: 6 to 9 years old 10 to 13 years old 14 to 17 years old Graphic expression sheets for those who do not read or write (under 18 years of age) Braille ballots for the visually impaired
Consultation for Children and Youth 2018	To generate a space for participation and reflection on aspects related to the gender perspective in daily life, the results of which serve as input to trigger actions promoted by the Mexican State, civil society, and other institutions that contribute to gender equality in Mexico from the perspective of the rights of girls, boys, and adolescents.	Gender perspective in everyday life and perspective of the rights of children and adolescents. November 17th to 25th, 2018	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) National System for the Integral Protection of Children and Adolescents (SIPINNA).	Three age ranges: 6 to 9 years old 10 to 13 years old 14 to 17 years old Graphic expression sheets for those who do not read or write (under 18 years of age) Braille ballots for the visually impaired

				Electronic ballots Ballots in indigenous languages
Consultation for Children and Youth 2021	To generate a space for participation and reflection in which children and adolescents exercise their right to express themselves and have their opinions considered on issues that directly concern them in their daily lives, whose results serve as input to trigger actions promoted by the Mexican State, civil society and other institutions that contribute to guaranteeing the rights of children and adolescents in Mexico.	Care for the planet, wellbeing, and rights November 2021	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Undersecretary of Basic Education of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP). University Program for Human Rights of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (PUDH) Pact for Early Childhood Independent researcher, Professor Norma Alicia del Río Lugo Save the Children Mexico Network for the Rights of Children in Mexico (REDIM) National System for the Integral Protection of Children and Adolescents (SIPINNA) Interdisciplinary Program on Educational Policy and Practices of the Center for Research and Teaching in Economics (PIPE-CIDE) Virtual Educa National Institute of Indigenous Peoples	Age ranges: 3 to 5 years old 6 to 9 years old 10 to 13 years old 14 to 17 years old Braille ballots for the visually impaired Ballots in indigenous languages

iii. Design and planning

It is important to note that previous consultations have been very different from the one conducted today, particularly in regard to the age ranges covered. For example, in 1997, the age range was 6-12 years, whereas in 2021, it was 3-17 years, representing a significant progress. In 2021, for the first time, children as young as 3 years old were included, based on the proposals and insistence of members of the Technical Committee of Accompaniment, as the approach of this exercise is focused on joint efforts to move away from an adult-centric view. Early childhood should be heard, and for the first time, as a preliminary approach, a survey was conducted to allow children and adolescents to express which topics they wanted to be asked about in the consultation.

In 1997 the exercise was organized in 2 months. Currently, the National Electoral Institute needs more than a year to organize the consultation. Preparations began in the first months of the year, and so much effort was put into it because the most recent edition was also very *sui generis*—for the first time a computer system was created to capture the participation of children and adolescents— because it involved the development of the system itself through the Technical Unit of Computer Services of the National Electoral Institute. It began one year and two months before the celebration of the Children and Youth Consultation, it was intended to coincide with the election day of the federal processes.

Given the complexity of such processes, it was realized that it was necessary to move dates to give it the required attention.¹² In 2018 it was determined that it would be in the month of November, that is to say, the preparation began in September of the previous year, and the work to develop the documents that would be used began in March of the previous year. Likewise, regarding the structure of the decentralized bodies, in this last exercise for the first time, all 300 were involved and participated. In this period, the necessary approval sessions of the electoral organization and training commission, the General Council, and the approval of the Technical Committee of Accompaniment were also carried out. To sum up,

¹² As mentioned in the interview with Roberto Heycher Cardiel Soto, Francisco Javier Morales Camarena, and Lucía Morales Navarro.

a year and a half were necessary to organize the 2021 exercise. It is a complex project that seeks to be so, that does not seek to simplify because that would mean losing depth in the project.

iv. Technical Committee for the Accompaniment of the *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil*

The Institute's General Council approved the creation of a Technical Committee for Accompaniment, whose function, among others, is to contribute to the organization of the participatory exercise from a broad perspective, providing an expert opinion on children's rights, gender equality, and public policies for children and adolescents, so that the general orientation of the CIJ 2021 would have the best interests of children and adolescents as a guiding criterion. Public and academic institutions, an independent expert, and civil society organizations collaborated in this effort on an honorary basis.

Strategic allies for the CIJ 2021 notoriously increased in number, with concerted effort to accomplish more thanks to the institutional credibility and success of previous exercises. The latter has to do a lot with citizen confidence in the National Electoral Institute, although disqualified by certain political actors in an unjustified manner and due to political and not institutional interests, since the Institute has the recognition of Mexicans. Many tens of thousands of people volunteer at the polling places and as disseminators. To form the CTA, allies were selected to be invited based on their experience with children's issues. The quantity of partners is key, but their quality is even more important.

As previously mentioned, there was an evident change from the first consultation's 2 or 3 allies to a much larger list, involving international organizations, academia, the public sector, and civil society organizations (SIPINNA). The fact that the number of members was increased was beneficial, with an eagerness to contribute and collaborate so that everything would go well out of conviction in the value of the consultation. There were synergies, particularly in the area of early childhood, which contributed to the success of the most recent edition. This means, against the idea that the adult should intervene, the adult supports but does not direct. Hence, a viable format was made, equivalent, but with all the themes that came out of the survey.

Therefore, beyond economic or logistical support, the key lies in the commitment to become involved in the long-range project. It was an invitation scheme that was used to form the Technical Accompaniment Committee, in this case, the governance mechanism for decision-making has always been horizontal and the allies are really considered in a sustained and constant way in each stage or process.¹³ For this reason, even more partners asked to be part of the Committee directly, as is the case of the request from the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples. Additionally, the relevance of working with partners was highlighted with the possibility of entering schools, which was only viable thanks to the trust and collaboration of the Ministry of Public Education.

Even when there is no formal and specific exchange of experiences at the international level regarding the consultation practices—beyond the dissemination that is done by INE—the exchanges made have been, better said, in the conceptual area with different countries and academic networks in Ibero-America. In this vein, in the work between the Committee and the National Electoral Institute, there were no limitations in the committee sessions and respect was constant. It is not only a supervisory committee but a support and accompaniment one.

A key part of the research process was the interview with Norma del Río. Her distinctive viewpoint and professional expertise as the president of the CTA that worked with INE gave excellent insights into the subject being investigated. Her well-known academic background and expertise in this field gave the study more substance and credibility. Her comments helped to further define and reinforce the study topics, and her in-depth understanding of the issue added to the general comprehension of the subject. Additionally, her suggestions for resolving the concerns raised and for prospective future study topics provided helpful advice. Overall, by giving both practical and intellectual viewpoints, the interview significantly improved the quality and depth of the dissertation.

¹³ As mentioned in the interview with Norma del Río.

v. Identification of themes and construction of the ballot contents

In 1997, following the presentation of the results, an evaluation was conducted to inquire whether children and adolescents desired for the consultation to be conducted again. To date, the National Electoral Institute, through its decentralized bodies and central offices, ensures that the results are presented to all the actors and locations where participation took place in the process of raising awareness of the results. A feedback loop is an ideal way to ensure that the valuable information obtained from the voices of children is not wasted.

The model of prior consultation —survey— for the definition of issues is a mechanism that has come to stay to avoid the adult-centric vision. This feedback model closes the important cycle of participation: it is asked about what issues the children want to be questioned about, the consultation is carried out and the results are returned. It represents the fulfilled promise of the mechanisms of citizen participation, it is no longer only of civic education, but of participation where the voices of children and adolescents count for the definition of the topics.

The Operational Plan of the Consultation 2021 considers the involvement of the Technical Committee in the whole process of organization and development of the CIJ, from the definition of the contents to the most relevant mechanisms for the socialization of the results. In this sense, the Committee provided methodological soundness and a vision focused on the diversity of contexts and conditions in which children and adolescents live in the country. It is also part of the institutional efforts to generate work synergies with diverse actors of Mexican society interested in strengthening the democratic culture of the country.

It is necessary to mention that, recovering past experiences, the gender perspective, the diversity of living conditions of children and adolescents, as well as their quality as subjects of rights, were maintained as cross-cutting themes. Therefore, the ballots included variables that permit to know the conditions of vulnerability in which children and adolescents in the country live their daily lives. To this end, with the expert opinion of the Committee, as well as with the support of the Children's Program of the UAM-Xochimilco and the Executive Secretariat of SIPINNA, a methodologically sound and statistically representative virtual survey instrument was designed, through which 8,396 children and

adolescents from all over the country and from different contexts identified the subject matter of the Consultation.

The results of the survey also clearly showed that children in early childhood (3 to 5 years old), although accompanied by an adult and using an instrument appropriate for their stage of cognitive development, expressed their opinions and expressed themselves in the same way as the other participants in the various age groups. Consequently, for the first time, people from 3 to 5 years of age were able to express their opinion by answering an accessible questionnaire and not, as in previous editions, by means of a drawing. It should be mentioned that other people between 6 and 17 years of age who, for whatever reason, had not developed literacy skills were also able to use these ballots.¹⁴

Within the Technical Committee, some specific criteria for the elaboration of the ballots for the Consultation 2021 were discussed. One of these criteria was that not only the topics but also the wording should reflect the expressions of children and adolescents in the survey. Another issue that was discussed in the Committee was the support of adults (fathers, mothers, teachers, caregivers, etc.) so that participants aged 6 years or younger (or those who have not developed literacy skills) could answer the questions on the ballots. For this purpose, it was decided to include a brief text with suggestions for adults to provide the best help and not to induce the answers.

Along the same lines, it was decided within the Committee that no question would be mandatory. This was because the participants might not have the same interest as adults in each of the topics, which should not prevent them from expressing themselves on other issues. In other words, priority was given to the freedom to choose the questions on which they wished to express their opinion. Therefore, each question may have different percentages of non-response, depending on the personal interest of the participants, which undoubtedly has an impact on the data presented in this document, which should be kept in mind.

¹⁴ The complete contents used at the CIJ 2021 can be found in the Annexes.

Once each of the stages of the design and planning process of the CIJ 2021 was developed, in cooperation with the strategic allies, it was possible to carry out the consultation process with children and adolescents.

The exercise is permanently evaluated by the vision of the experts, it is specific about the impacts, usefulness, and problems the data show. It is also evaluated by the technical staff that worked on the logistics, and prior to the date of the consultation, an evaluation is made with practices carried out directly with the participation of children and adolescents. To mention, UAM-Xochimilco, through an agreement with the National Electoral Institute, has with a group of experts that form the specialized group, carried out the content of the ballots with the technical committee, and made the analysis of the testing of these ballots.

Among the intrinsic challenges derived from the organization of the consultation in Mexico is the territorial extension of the country, its organization as a federation, and its population diversity. It must be acknowledged that Mexico is a pioneer in the context of consultation, having come a long way from the learning and awareness exercise in which children were asked to select their favorite right to the present, where the interests of children and teenagers, not adults, are the main emphasis.

Furthermore, in the country's complicated context of violence and a complex presidential election that was seen to be competitive with a high degree of political polarization, in 2018 for the first time, the National Electoral Institute decided to do the Consultation on a different day from the Election. The Institute raised the responsibility with the children so that they had the best conditions to participate in a safe environment, so it was needed to separate from the electoral process—not just the day—the consultation to have its own space for November to coincide with the International Children's Day.

It is not about playing at elections; it is about children having a space for participation and listening to their voices. It is the only exercise that fulfills the mandate that the state has by the convention to generate spaces for expression, as well as to listen to the voices of children and that they are considered. Not only in one day, but in 9 days to expand the rights

based on the scope of participation, incorporating ballots in different languages, the incorporation of an electronic system, among others. To sum up, a single space, not shared.

vi. Operation of the *Consulta Infantil y Juvenil*

The Consultation for Children and Youth is a valuable exercise and not a mere simulation for electoral practice. It is the National Electoral Institute's most important strategic project, and it is committed to building a context of political and practical evolution of the country based on fostering a citizenry that has the necessary competencies and skills to live in a democracy. Democracy is not a simplistic system, it is a pluralistic system where different opinions must be recognized and respected, and spaces must be created for trust and the idea of consultation.

It must be highlighted that there were international electoral observation missions that came specifically to Mexico for the 1997 children's elections. Currently, due to the change of focus and the date that does not coincide with the elections, missions are no longer presented specifically for the consultation, since there is no support fund. If one would like to follow it synchronously, it can be done through the work of the corresponding commission of the National Electoral Institute and other means, since the results are presented in a transparent manner.

Regarding the exchange between countries who implement similar consultation practices, there is an agreement signed between Mexico and Peru for collaboration and dissemination of strategies related to the consultation exercise, as well as with the organization Virtual Educa. At the regional level, in Latin America, the National Electoral Institute has held events for the exchange of lessons among electoral bodies and this has made it possible to socialize the civic education strategy.

As mechanisms specifically aimed at maximizing the exercise of the right to participation of children and adolescents in different contexts, Braille reading ballots were developed. Likewise, the contents were translated into the six indigenous languages with the largest number of monolingual speakers between the ages of 3 and 17: Ch'ol, Mixteco, Náhuatl, Tlapaneco, Tseltal, and Tsotsil. In addition, and in accordance with the detection of

specific needs carried out by INE's decentralized bodies, translations were also made into 13 indigenous languages and local variants in the states of Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, San Luis Potosí, Sonora, Tabasco, and Veracruz: Amuzgo, Hñãñú, Huasteca Náhuatl, Otomí, Otomí of the Mezquital Valley, Otomí of San Bartolo, Purépecha, Ralámuli, Tepehua, Tének, Wixárika, Yaki and Yokot'án.

Thanks to the work described above, the Consultation 2021 registered the highest level of participation since these democratic exercises began in the country.

b. Participation in the Consulta Infantil y Juvenil

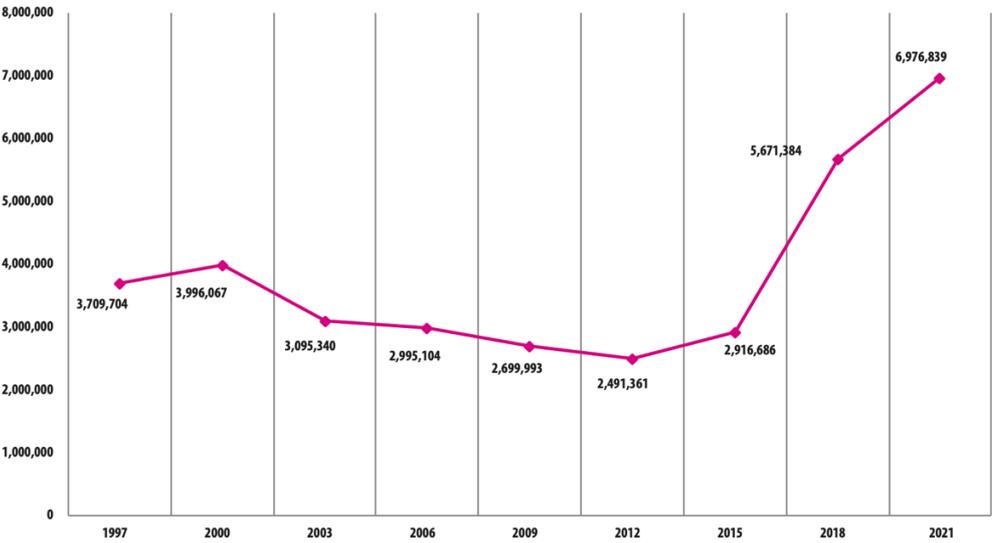
i. Demographic coverage

Based on both modalities, 6,976,839 children and adolescents in and from all over Mexico, between the ages of 3 and 17, expressed their opinion in the CIJ 2021. This means a reach of a little more than one fifth of the Mexican population in that age segment (21.48%).¹⁵ Of the total number of participants in the CIJ 2021, 2,981,059 (42.73%) are girls and female adolescents; 2,714,682 (38.91%) are boys and male adolescents; 65,892 (0.94%) expressed that they do not identify with either gender; and 1,215,206 (17.42%) did not specify this data. It is worth noting that this is not due to an error in the design of the ballots or errors in the registration of participants, but rather is the result of the methodology used to construct the ballots, thanks to which it was decided not to previously categorize the participants in dichotomous categories, to allow them to freely express their sex-gender identity.

In terms of age group, 597,420 people between 3 and 5 years old (8.57%); 2,034,389 between 6 and 9 years old (29.16%), 2,582,101 between 10 and 13 years old (37.01%); 1,762,929 between 14 and 17 years old (25.27%) participated in the CIJ 2021. In the four age groups, more girls and female adolescents participated than boys and male adolescents, with an overall advantage of 3.85 percentage points. The group in which the difference is highest

¹⁵ According to the Population and Housing Census of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2020), the total Mexican population between the ages of 3 and 17 is 32,483,904.

is 14 to 17 years of age. The 10 to 13 age range shows the highest proportion of people who do not identify with either sex.



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ii. Participation and diversity of living conditions of children

As a demonstration of the commitment the Institute has to the fundamental rights of Mexican children and young people, the electronic system was made available to those living abroad or in a different migratory condition, as well as children outside urban areas, even those without internet access. This represented a significant expansion of rights. The electronic system was developed in-house by the Institute, rather than being outsourced to an external provider, as the Technical Unit of Computer Services of the National Electoral Institute was trusted to ensure the security and integrity of the data, and to avoid any risk of leakage or misuse of data.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that a significant budget was allocated for the translation of the ballots into different indigenous languages so that all children could read them in their native language. All children should be included in the consultation, including those in early childhood. Children in general are often not considered in terms of public policy, and early childhood is not defined as a beneficiary in public programs. In this regard,

¹⁶ Graph included at the CIJ 2021's report by the Instituto Nacional Electoral. (2022, April 27).

the focus is often on the mother as the beneficiary, perpetuating outdated maternal-infant ideas that view mother and child as a unit. It is important to shift the focus to the child and not make them invisible. Children are capable of thinking, expressing their opinions, and have concerns that may differ from those commonly assumed.

As mentioned above, the design of the topics to be addressed in the consultation, as well as the definition of the quantitative and qualitative information to be collected, had as cross-cutting themes the gender perspective, the diversity of living conditions of children and adolescents, as well as their status as rights holders. Likewise, with the support of the Committee, the criterion of inclusion of the diversity of contexts and conditions of children and adolescents in Mexico was highlighted as a general guideline. Therefore, within the sociodemographic profile information of the participants, elements were included to describe these diversities.

iii. Participation modalities

Between November 10 and 30, 2021, children and adolescents from Mexico, and even from other countries, participated through one of the two channels that were chosen. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the health protection measures established by the competent authorities, the INE determined that the CIJ 2021 would be carried out in mixed modality, favoring as much as possible the participation by virtual means. Throughout the month, the address <https://consultainfantilyjuvenil.ine.mx> was open on the INE's web page, to allow for the participation of children and adolescents. However, considering that not everyone has electronic devices or access to the Internet, the installation of polling places was planned for at least five days in each Federal Electoral District.

It should be highlighted that the polling places operated in very different ways, with the intention of meeting the needs of a very diverse population. Thus, polling places were operated in schools, from preschool to high school, some virtually—so that students could participate using their own electronic equipment—and others in person, using school computer equipment—if any—, or taking to such spaces the mobile devices that INE uses to carry out training and electoral assistance during federal electoral processes, and which

were used by children and adolescents to answer the questions on their ballots. In other cases, the ballot boxes had printed ballots, the answers to which were entered into the CIJ 2021 computer system by the INE's decentralized bodies.

Likewise, itinerant ballot boxes were operated to take the Consultation 2021 to those who were in conditions that prevented them from going to school or who did not have devices with internet connection. Among others, for example, those who were in care or custody, in rehabilitation centers, centers for adolescents in conflict with the law, children, and adolescents who work, who live with a disability, or who live in remote or inaccessible locations. Regarding the operation of the physical polling places, it is worth mentioning that they were attended by 8,883 citizens who volunteered their support, for which they received training from the National Electoral Institute's Training and Civic Education offices and implemented a health protection protocol. The training included how to support children and adolescents with disabilities.

Participation through the open access link totaled 3,094,988 people (44.36% of the total), and 3,881,851 (55.64%) cast their opinion using computer equipment, INE's mobile devices, or the printed ballots made available to them.

iv. The results are ready. What's next?

1. Systematization of information

The systematization of the results is directly carried out by the National Electoral Institute and the National Autonomous University of Mexico to ensure the objective capture of what children and adolescents are saying and the integrity of the exercise. The processing and consolidation of the database, including the description by age group, region, gender, and other factors, is carried out by the INE with the support of the Committee. Additionally, an analytical exercise, rather than only a descriptive one, is carried out with the support of external experts in public opinion and children's issues, such as the Metropolitan Autonomous University (UAM-Xochimilco) which is the only university in the country with a center for children's studies. The platform for the presentation of the consultation is also designed by UNAM.

The Consultation aims to "give a human face to the data." This represents the vision of equal representation, where populations previously overlooked, such as migrant children and working children, are acknowledged, and integrated as part of the population, rather than being considered a separate segment. The paradigm of abstract and dichotomous forms corresponding to children and adolescents is broken. In 2021 a new question was added to ask participants if they consider themselves to be of African descent or if they are migrants, from the interior or international. In addition, the questions were tried to be as open-ended as possible so as not to limit children so that they cease to be a population that simply requires guardianship and is not diverse. This most recent edition of the consultation is clear proof of the inclusion of the intersectionality present in children.

2. Socialization of findings

It is important to note that the process of the consultation does not end on the day of the consultation itself, but rather, it marks the beginning of the stage of disseminating the results, as well as raising awareness among different authorities and actors in the public and private spheres about the importance of the issues expressed by the children and adolescents. While the day of the consultation is a significant milestone, follow-up events and activities will continue to take place. In terms of timing, the consultation process differs greatly from traditional elections. In the latter, the presentation of results defines the elected officials, while in the consultation, the presentation of results marks the start of discussions and actions.

The results of the Consultation are offered to the citizenry and to the institutions of the Mexican State so that each one, from their own sphere of action, can make the corresponding scanning with respect to the expressions of children and adolescents. In addition, the results are returned by federal entity, by municipality and even at the district level, so that in each space where participation was collected, the corresponding analysis is made, and actions are implemented to address what was expressed by the participants.

The results of the CIJ 2021 by the INE are presented to citizens and state institutions through two means: through presentation events in the various orders of political and administrative organization, and through the publication of these results in different formats

so that they are accessible to citizens: infographics, announcements in traditional media, use of social networks, printed reports, and the publication of databases with the responses collected in this participatory exercise. The Consultation 2021 has innovated with the development of a dashboard on a website through which interested people can analyze the results and generate cross-references between variables according to their interests.

The mass communication media played a role as allies in the consultation process primarily by inviting and encouraging children and adolescents to participate. However, it is concerning that the data derived from the consultation reflects the reality in which children and adolescents live in Mexico, including issues such as violence, discrimination, sexual abuse, child labor, among others. The pages of the reports of the Consultation for Children and Youth illustrate the hardships endured by Mexican children both within and outside of their country.

3. Articulation of agendas derived from the results

In 2012, the Consultation's report included a final section entitled "The pending agenda from the perspective of children and young people" and was delivered to more than 2,000 candidates for the Presidency of the Republic and other elected positions, representatives of political parties and government authorities in the states of the Mexican Republic. In the same year, state forums and a national seminar were held, to which public servants from the different branches and levels of government, the academic community, and civil society organizations were invited, with the aim of defining an agenda for attention.

Along with the study and findings' distribution, INE, UNICEF, and SIPINNA jointly issued two materials in 2015 to promote the exercise of the Mexican children's right to continuous participation:

- Participation Guide for Girls and Boys.
- Participation Guide for Adolescents.

Both materials are for use with or without the mediation or guidance of adults. They have been distributed in schools, in addition to being published on the INE and SIPINNA

websites. Also, reeditions have been made updating information derived from the 2018 and 2021 consultations.

In 2018, an intense campaign was launched to disseminate the results throughout the country, highlighting the component of returning directly to children and adolescents the information generated by themselves. On the other hand, by the end of 2019, 594 results deliberation tables had been held for the formulation of agendas at the national, local and district levels. From these tables, according to the information received from the deconcentrated bodies, 2,069 commitments for action were derived, mainly oriented to carry out child participation exercises (such as elections of school representatives), workshops aimed at the target population, conference cycles with themes in line with those of the Consultation 2018, as well as talks with children and adolescents, parents, and public officials. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, it was not possible to meet all the commitments.

In 2022, the National Electoral Institute is intensifying its efforts to disseminate the results of the consultation and formally deliver them to Mexican state institutions at various levels. Approximately 3,000 actions are being undertaken to return the results, and 1,200 workshops are being organized with children and adolescents to analyze the results and formulate agenda proposals. These proposals will be presented as part of the 333 roundtables for the deliberation of results and formulation of agendas—one national, one for each entity, and one for each district—to be held in the last three months of 2022. These efforts are expected to result in commitments to address the needs identified in the results of the consultation.

Regarding concrete public policy action specifically derived from the results of the consultations one can say the following to exemplify: in 2012, in the consultation, the children mentioned that one of the big problems was bullying, so in the state of Oaxaca, a law was enacted precisely to prevent bullying because of what was exposed in the Consultation for Children and Youth. In 2018, a Senator took up the results to make a point of agreement in the Senate of the Republic. In 2022, for the first time, INE involved all

political parties to sign an agreement to promote legislative actions considering the results of the consultation. The aim is not only to raise awareness but also to push for action to be taken.

In particular, the political agendas from the States in Mexico are also influenced by the Consultation's results discussion. An example of the latter can be seen in the local Congress of the State of Chihuahua, in such the collaborative work has been efficient and has derived into actions. To mention, the issue of turning the sexual abuse of children into a local crime according to the criminal law is about to become a reality thanks to the input given by the CIJ in terms of data and partnerships.¹⁷

The dissertation benefited greatly from the interview with Marisela Terrazas. Her broad range of competence and vision as the president of the Child and Youth Commission at the Congress of Chihuahua provided valuable insights into the viewpoint of the public sector on the subject under study. Her comments were helpful in clarifying the study issues, and the general comprehension of the subject benefited greatly from her knowledge and experience in the area. Her remarks also supplied direction for prospective future study topics and useful advice for how to approach the challenges presented from a legislative standpoint. Overall, the research process benefited immensely from the interview since it offered a distinct and informative viewpoint from the public sector and legislative branch.

Likewise, the proactive attitude on the part of INE served to catalyze political parties' commitment so that children's concerns really become part of political agendas. The report of the results of the 2021 Consultation for Children and Youth can be used also for sociology and anthropology studies to study how children lived in the context of the pandemic.

¹⁷ As mentioned in the interview with Marisela Terrazas Muñoz.

IV. Portugal: *Tenho Voto na Matéria*

a. *The Tenho Voto na Matéria Initiative*

i. Background

Tenho Voto na Matéria (I Have a Say in the Matter), an initiative of UNICEF Portugal, was conceived as an idea that came from an international organism and Portugal adopted it. This represented a momentum that was used by the advocates of the children-related message. The UNICEF representation in Portugal constantly attempts to carry out something, whether it be to share a manifesto or, as it did at the beginning of last year, to hold a participatory exercise. As a result, the international fund believed that it could take a different approach. Instead of expressing or creating a statement, UNICEF offered the possibility of creating a space for the demands and voices of children.

It was better to listen directly to them. Hence, UNICEF Portugal decided to make the consultation, so that children could be the ones saying during the elections what are the pressing needs of their generation, what could be done, what could the political leaders and the majors—or future majors—should do in their communities.

In this vein, an exchange of experiences with other countries that carry out similar exercises is starting to be made. It must be said, UNICEF Portugal works along with other country offices or national committees, be it independent or representing UNICEF. This has been made mainly with Europe, USA, Australia, and New Zealand. Portugal has been looking at what other have been doing to try to build from that. One can say that Portugal strengthens its implementation bases with lessons from foreign experiences.

ii. Design and planning

The main objectives of I Have a Say in the Matter are to listen to children and know what is happening around their communities, and to show that children want to be effectively heard and want to participate. These represent the unvaluable chance of knowing what is going on, but while continuing to involve children in a genuine way.

To achieve the latter, the involvement of partners is fundamental, with special attention given to policy makers and leaders of organizations with responsibility in defining strategy, policies, and local measures; children and youth; professionals who intervene in the fields of childhood and youth; parents and educators; local and regional journalists and opinion leaders who may disseminate the results. UNICEF Portugal and its allies need almost one year to organize the national consultation.¹⁸ The organism hired a consultant to support them with the ideas, she joined the team. Internally, the Advocacy Direction was involved in the whole process and two more team members on the project.

Perhaps in 2023 another consultation will take place. Not necessarily during elections, but with a periodicity of at least every two years. This to use in the right way the data, not just to gather more and more information, but to advocate for effective measures to be taken.¹⁹

iii. *Grupo Consultivo de Crianças e Jovens* UNICEF Portugal

To build the I Have a Say in the Matter Initiative, UNICEF Portugal intended to do a consultation by children, and since the beginning the international agency knew it needed to include a group of children and young people to build the exercise. They made such consultation group composed by members from 13-18 years old, from different parts of the country, and different realities. The members of the group were selected by proposals of local partners. These local organizations—from a constantly updated database— support UNICEF Portugal to get to the children from different contexts. UNICEF Portugal asked first if they wanted to participate, and then the organizations suggested children.

The consultation group was composed of 18 members. Initially, UNICEF Portugal had planned to have 10 children and young people, however, the agency prioritized diversity in the selection process. This included the inclusion of 2 refugees, 1 young person with a disability, children from slums, and those in residential care. Some members participated in certain meetings, while a core group was established for specific activities.

¹⁸ Explained in more detail in the section Operation of the initiative.

¹⁹ As mentioned in the interview with Francisca Magano.

Since the I Have a Say in the Matter consultation organization was held also virtually—because of the pandemic scenario—in all the activities an adult always accompanied each child. The reason this work technique was chosen was for the protection of children and the follow-up. This occurred also since it was considered that children share sensitive information, or ask for support, so an adult is needed.

UNICEF Portugal conducted several sessions with the group of children, where the national consultation was developed. All aspects of the consultation were created in collaboration with this group, including activities for schools, focus groups, and political dictionaries with key concepts. Furthermore, the online questionnaire was developed with the consultation group. The work with the children and young people was carried out during the summer holidays, which allowed for the official launch of the consultation to occur in September.

Indeed, including and co-constructing with children requires more time, but it is a crucial aspect of the project. The co-creation process was the primary element of this exercise. It should be noted that the name of the national consultation was chosen based on a statement made by a member of the children and young people's group, specifically, "having a say in the matter." Additionally, the consultation group played a vital role in evaluating the key visuals of the campaign. In this regard, the group was involved in briefing the designers, approving, or disapproving designs, and overall, they were an integral part of the entire process.

iv. Operation of the Initiative

As stated in previous lines, the I Have a Say in the Matter Initiative required more than a year to become a reality, the following is an overview of the consultation phases:

- Gathering input from children and young people from all over the country about their city, town, or village, through the online survey and discussion sessions discussion sessions (from September 15th to 26th, 2021).
- Analysis of the contributions and drafting of the Final Report by UNICEF Portugal (starting from September 27th).

- Public dissemination of the results (October 2021).
- Follow-up of the proposals and ideas of children and young people with policy makers (starting from October 2021).

On the other hand, when evaluating the role of the media in supporting and disseminating the consultation, it can be stated that the media played a role of an ally in the Portuguese consultation process. Additionally, the children and young people involved in the consultation group received training on how to interact with the media, specifically during interviews.

b. Participation

i. Demographic coverage

The public consultation initiative, which was undertaken between September 15th and 26th, involved the active participation of the Network of Child Friendly Cities, schools, NGOs, and other local organizations. It engaged children and young people from all over the country in providing their thoughts on the cities, towns, or villages in which they live and how they would like to be heard at the local level. The initial goal of the campaign was to achieve 5000 participants, and it ultimately surpassed this target by achieving 9,306 children and young people who shared their opinions through the online survey launched by UNICEF Portugal.

One of the most important components of the dissertation's study was the interview with Francisca Magano. Her broad range of expertise and viewpoint as a representative of UNICEF Portugal, the consultation's organizer, gave insightful explanations of the inner workings and procedures associated with consultation organization from the standpoint of a global organization. Her comments were very helpful in further refining and developing the research questions. Additionally, her suggestions for resolving the concerns raised and for prospective future study topics provided helpful advice. The interview, which offered a distinct and insightful viewpoint from an international organization, was, all things considered, a crucial part of the research process and significantly enhanced the depth and accuracy of the dissertation.

ii. Participation modalities

Children and young people from all districts of the country and aged between 6 and 18 years old responded, with a higher expression in the age group between 10 and 17 years old. In addition to the online survey, 903 children and young people participated in about 60 discussion sessions in schools and local organizations, during which they debated day-to-day issues and expressed their opinion about the community they live in.

iii. Overview of the results

1. Analysis and dissemination

The results of the public consultation were obtained in the winter of 2021 and officially presented on November 20th. The Center for Studies and Opinion Polls of the Catholic University of Portugal was responsible for processing and analyzing all responses, as well as municipal level information, in order to provide it to the government for follow-up. Católica-CESOP and UNICEF Portugal had a preexisting working relationship, having collaborated on multiple projects in the past. In fact, a protocol was established between the two organizations to ensure smooth and efficient collaboration on this project.²⁰

The children and young people who responded to the consultation and those who participated in the focus groups, showed, once again, that children and young people want to have more say in the matter, manifesting that they lack real and meaningful opportunities in policy-making and in decision-making on issues that directly affect them in their communities:

The results of the public consultation indicate that a significant number of children and youth who participated feel that adults do not seek their input when making decisions about their city, town, or village. A very small percentage of children and young people reported that their opinion influenced decisions made about their community. The most pressing concerns identified by the children and youth were related to mental health and discrimination. These findings demonstrate that children desire to participate and express

²⁰ As mentioned in the interview with Ricardo Ferreira Reis.

their views about their community. UNICEF Portugal recognizes that there is a need for action to be taken in the coming years to address this issue and provide opportunities for children to have their voices heard.

The main target audience for the aforementioned results were local authorities. This means that the presentation of these results was initially conducted before municipalities, deputy mayors, and councilors in the form of a question-and-answer session. In this vein, UNICEF Portugal is ensuring that the group of children and young people continue to actively participate, sharing their views and perspectives. For example, this group visited the Portuguese Parliament, where they shared the results of the national consultation with the Members of Parliament. It is worth noting that five representatives from this group participated, although there were more, as they organized themselves.

Furthermore, the official launch of the results in November 2021, as well as the local presentations, provided a platform for additional opportunities, such as the visit to the Parliament on December 15th of 2022. This event was significant in terms of contextualizing the data and examining it from a national perspective, to ensure that it is used for the best interests of children. UNICEF Portugal created this opportunity and ensured that adults continue to listen to children. In this regard, a very interesting debate was held, as children shared their ideas on topics such as mental health, concerns about discrimination, and more. The Parliament members were highly receptive and appeared to take the children and young people's ideas into consideration. As time progresses, new audiences continue to engage with the consultation results.

Ricardo Reis' interview was pertinent to the study. His skills and position as the center representative in charge of processing and evaluating the consultation's results offered insights into the technical facets of data handling and analysis. His advice offered helpful suggestions for resolving the problems raised. Overall, the interview significantly increased the level of detail of the dissertation by offering a distinctive viewpoint on the handling and interpretation of data.

2. Next steps within the cities network

The municipal elections that took place on September 26th, 2021, represented an opportunity to call on local governments, with responsibility for conducting policies for the next four years, to commit to children, concretizing a vision that has their rights at the center of decisions and actions. In this context, the public consultation I Have a Say in the Matter, was exclusively dedicated to children and youth and has shown that younger citizens while not voting, have something to contribute to the development of their communities.

The Universal Children's Rights Day marks the right of children to participate, recognizing that their involvement contributes to personal development and the strengthening of a democratic and cohesive society. To mark this date is to make alive the commitment that governments make to children by defending and promoting their rights, every day, everywhere in the world.

The scale and urgency of the challenges that children and young people face means that it must be continued to promote the implementation of the Convention at the highest level in Portugal's municipalities, in an integrated and consistent manner over time. It is intended that the Universal Day of the Rights of the Child in 2021 should mark the beginning of a cycle or a recurring practice for leaders and key actors in municipalities, including children and youth themselves, to come together, make and inspire meaningful commitments.

Indeed, on the Universal Day of the Rights of the Child in 2021, and as part of the I Have a Say in the Matter initiative, which the Network of Child-Friendly Cities has joined, UNICEF Portugal is challenging Portuguese municipalities to mark this date around the right of the children to participate in society. With the objective of knowing, disseminating, and promoting the initiatives carried out in Portugal in the Week of the Rights of the Child, UNICEF Portugal will compile local experiences in a document. The sharing of experiences will contribute to joint reflection and exploration of future opportunities as well as inspire other actors and territories and increase the visibility and notoriety of the Child-Friendly Cities Program in the country and internationally.

Furthermore, it must be said that the national effort of I Have a Say in the Matter has led to a gain of a major space to discuss participation mechanisms with municipalities. Based on the results of the consultation, they need to create their own mechanisms for participation within the framework of the network of cities. The dissemination of the consultation's results is still ongoing, the work with the municipalities clearly does not stop. Knowing the work developed in the municipalities will also enable to understand the opinions and perceptions of children in relation to the issues they consider most urgent and give them a voice at national and international level.

The moment of constitution of the new municipal executives is an opportunity, on the Universal Day of the Rights of the Child, to mark and strengthen the commitment to the rights of the child. This roadmap aims to inspire and contribute to the creation of opportunities for debate and sharing, suggesting a set of initiatives that can be adapted according to local contexts, needs and aspirations.

The commitment to the child advocated by the Convention does not end with the Universal Children's Rights Day. Based on the proposal of this roadmap, municipalities are and will be able to base a vision and a strategy of Children's Rights for the entire community, improving the lives of children in the present moment by recognizing and realizing their rights and thereby promoting a higher quality of life for all citizens, both in the present and in the future.

V. Conclusions: Prospects and lessons learned

According to the typology used by Hart (1992), the consultation processes seek to avoid the first three levels, in which children's expression can be used for partisan or other interests in a context of manipulation; they are used as objects of decoration of democracy or else they are made to believe that their opinion will be heard, but no decision is made based on children's and youth voices. Therefore, as it was explained in the operational description of the consultations, one of their purposes are related to strengthening society's capacity to listen and respond, particularly among public institutions linked to the development and well-being of children and youth.

The progress achieved from the children's participation exercises analyzed makes it possible to place the consultations between the fourth and the sixth levels. In the case of voluntary participation, the design assumes that children and young people will come to express their opinion motivated by the interest of having their voice heard, without any type of pressure or conditioning. Following Hart's typology, it could be suggested that in future exercises, children and young people should be more clearly involved in the design of the Consultation.

Another typology that ranges from simple participation to meta-participation is put out in the wake of Hart (1992) and Trilla and Novella (2001). This typology allows placing the Consultation for Children and Youth and I Have a Say in the Matter in the plane of the so-called consultative participation, because there is a commitment to listen to the voice of children and young people as well as to transcend simple participation—it is not enough to report a greater number of children and young people attending to give their opinion—, since the exercise would not be complete without listening and response from adults. This last element somehow implies a binding participation, that is, assuming the (moral) commitment to respond in some way to the opinions expressed, either through government actions, actions in some institutions or through public policies, to cite a few examples.

It is a reality that children are susceptible and vulnerable to all the factors that intervene in their social, educational, ideological and values context, which influence and limit the way they exercise their rights, including the right to participate. Given this vulnerability, it is up to us, as adults, to eliminate invisible barriers, by reversing habits, generating changes in the way we relate to children, and changing the paradigm in the construction of participation processes.

We must tend towards a participation in social co-responsibility, which generates mechanisms and spaces that guarantee equity with solid structures of dialogue, trust, and participation, to counteract vulnerability. The importance of child participation should be recognized, but also the fact that this participation is built permanently, in co-responsibility between children and adolescents and the adult as mediator. This relationship should encourage and provide opportunities from an early age, both individually and collectively.

When adults deny, restrict, or limit children from exercising their rights related to participation it represents a transgression. Children need to generate new experiences as active social actors and as articulating members of society, as an actor with a voice, for the benefits of including the vision of childhood in society.

The path has already been traced, more and more countries have been joining initiatives that include local governments, which have scaled up to the neighborhood and street level with their strategies. Acting locally, to act globally, or better said, in a glocal way. Even institutions have favored the right to the best interests of children and adolescents; national consultation exercises are good practices for the construction of their citizenship and the inclusion of child participation in democratic processes. Furthermore, by listening to the voices of children and young people, governments can create policies and programs that are more effective in meeting the needs of their populations.

In this vein, the Consultation for Children and Youth in Mexico and the I Have a Say in the Matter Initiative in Portugal have provided valuable lessons as how to effectively engage children and young people in the democratic process. The programs have demonstrated the importance of providing youth with the necessary support and resources to participate in decision-making and have highlighted the need to ensure that the participation of children and youth is meaningful and inclusive. In addition, the programs have highlighted the importance of recognizing the unique perspectives, skills, and experiences of young people. By learning from the lessons of these programs, one can say that the general definitions about the meaning, usefulness and validity of civic education are the framework for the civic education programs and activities promoted within the strategy of the consultation exercises in Mexico and Portugal.

In conclusion, this dissertation aimed to answer the research questions of how Mexico and Portugal encourage democratic familiarization and civic participation of their populations before they reach voting age, and what lessons Portugal can learn from the Mexican consultation experience. Through a detailed examination of the Mexican experience of almost 3 decades and the recent initiative in Portugal, the study found that both countries

have implemented various strategies to promote democratic familiarization and civic participation among their young populations.

In Mexico, the study found that the electoral authority has implemented a range of measures including civic education programs in schools, and children and youth federal consultative processes. These measures have been successful in promoting democratic familiarization and civic participation among the children and have been praised for their inclusive and participatory nature. In Portugal, the study found that the national representation of the international fund for children has also implemented various measures to promote democratic familiarization and civic participation among the young population, including children participation in local government through national consultation and strategic alliances with the municipalities. However, the study also identified some areas where the Portuguese initiative could be strengthened, particularly in terms of the children consultation processes.

The study highlights the importance of involving young people in the democratic process and encouraging their active participation in civic life. The Mexican experience provides valuable lessons for Portugal and other countries looking to promote democratic familiarization and civic participation among their youth populations. These lessons include the importance of inclusive and participatory processes, the use of multiple strategies to promote democratic familiarization and civic participation, and the need to continue to adapt and evolve these strategies to meet the changing needs of children and young people.

The Mexican consultation experience offers valuable insights for Portugal to consider in their own consultation process. By developing a user-friendly dashboard on the consultation's website through which interested people can analyze the results and generate cross-references between variables according to their interests, and translating ballots into different languages, including Mirandese, Portugal could increase accessibility and participation among all children. Additionally, including early childhood and providing accessible questionnaires can ensure that the voices of all children are heard.

Utilizing the current electronic systems while including children living abroad, in different migratory conditions, in juvenile detention centers, as well as those living with their

mothers detained in prison could further increase inclusivity. Children outside urban areas, and the ones not currently enrolled at school, even without internet access could also benefit from this. Finally, implementing Braille ballots for the visually impaired ensures that children with disabilities are not left out of the consultation process.

Moreover, enhancing political parties to sign an agreement to promote actions considering the results of the consultation reinforces the participation cycle. By incorporating these measures, Portugal could ensure a more representative and inclusive consultation for all children. Overall, the study demonstrates that both Mexico and Portugal have implemented various strategies to encourage democratic familiarization and civic participation among their populations before they reach voting age, and that there are valuable lessons to be learned from the Mexican experience that can be applied in other contexts.

To sum up, the research has demonstrated as well that the relationship between democratic participation and children is indissociable, as children are key players in the construction of their own citizenship and the promotion of their own rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comments by the Committee on the Rights of the Child recognize the importance of children's participation and expression, and it is essential that children and young people be listened to and consulted on matters that affect them. It is important to continue to prioritize and promote the democratic participation of children and young people to ensure their full and meaningful involvement in the decisions that affect their lives.

The participation of children and youth in democratic processes is essential for building inclusive, responsive, and accountable societies. Young people have the potential to become powerful agents of change, but they need to be provided with educational opportunities, the right to participate in decision-making, and the resources to make their voices heard. By fostering the meaningful participation of children and youth in democratic processes, governments can ensure that their societies are more diverse, equitable, and sustainable.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Entrevista 1

México: Consulta Infantil y Juvenil

Mtro. Roberto Heycher Cardiel Soto

Dirección Ejecutiva de Capacitación Electoral y Educación Cívica

Instituto Nacional Electoral

Francisco Javier Morales Camarena

Director of Educación Cívica y Participación Ciudadana

Instituto Nacional Electoral

Lucía Morales Navarro

Subdirectora de Desarrollo de Estrategia de Capacitación Electoral

Instituto Nacional Electoral

Preguntas generales de la investigación:

¿Cómo fomentan **México** y Portugal la familiarización democrática y la participación cívica de sus poblaciones antes de que alcancen la edad para votar?

¿Qué lecciones puede aprender Portugal de la **experiencia mexicana sobre consultas**?

Temas predeterminados y preguntas específicas sobre la Consulta Infantil y Juvenil²¹:

²¹ Durante la reunión se busca generar un espacio de diálogo. Por lo tanto, se llevará a cabo la entrevista de forma semiestructurada, lo cual dará paso a una serie de preguntas de temas predeterminados que permitirán obtener respuestas abiertas.

1. Antecedentes de la CIJ²²

Análisis retrospectivo – Primer ejercicio: Elecciones infantiles 1997

“La iniciativa tuvo como marco legal la firma, el 24 de abril de 1997, de un Convenio de Colaboración entre el Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) y el Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF), cuyo fin fue establecer los mecanismos de cooperación entre ambas instituciones con objeto de promover la participación cívica infantil, la cultura democrática y la difusión de los derechos de los niños.”

¿Cómo se originó el vínculo entre el IFE y UNICEF?

¿Existía la iniciativa desde la mirada internacional inicialmente y México la adoptó, o fue una propuesta del país hacia el organismo?

“(…) la temática elegida, los derechos de la niñez, se decidió instrumentar el ejercicio con el formato de elecciones y dejar el formato de consulta para un ejercicio posterior en el que se convocara a adolescentes mayores de 12 años.”

“Aun estando conscientes de que la Convención sobre los Derechos de la Infancia considera niño a toda persona menor de 18 años, motivos logísticos y presupuestales hicieron tomar la decisión de convocar a este primer ejercicio electoral infantil en México a las niñas y los niños de entre 6 y 12 años.”

El primer ejercicio de este tipo fue organizado en tan solo dos meses, ¿actualmente cuánto tiempo necesita el INE y sus aliados para poder organizarlo dando cobertura a todo el rango etario de NNA?

²² El objetivo de la sección inicial de la entrevista es obtener una perspectiva más amplia sobre el camino recorrido en la materia. Para esto, se plantea realizar una serie de cuestionamientos sobre los ejercicios efectuados por la institución desde 1997, con el fin de incluir tanto un intercambio de datos, como de testimonios sobre desafíos que no hayan sido plasmados en texto. Lo anterior, con base en extractos de los [Reportes de Resultados de ejercicios anteriores](#).

***CIJ 2021 3-17 años**

***2000-2009 SEP rol fundamental, rangos por grado escolar**

“(…) la Coordinación de Asuntos Internacionales del IFE convocó a 17 organizaciones de observación electoral con el mismo objeto.”

¿Cuál ha sido la evolución de las misiones de observación electoral destinadas a la CIJ?

¿Se le ha dado continuidad, no se realizan actualmente, o se realiza el esfuerzo de forma distinta?

“Votaron en total 3.709,704 niños. Ésta es la cifra más alta que se ha dado con respecto a votación de niños a nivel mundial. Sirvan de comparación los siguientes datos. En Colombia, en 1996, votaron 2.500,000 niños y niñas de entre 7 y 18 años; en Chile se realizó una consulta en 1995 a 360 niños y niñas de entre 9 y 13 años; en Ecuador, otra consulta alcanzó la cifra de 442,436 infantes.”

¿Podríamos decir que México es pionero en la implementación de estos ejercicios?

¿Cuál es el rol actual que tiene el país sobre la materia en el escenario internacional?

“Para evaluar el ejercicio y conocer el impacto de las Elecciones Infantiles en la población infantil, se contrató a la empresa GEO, a fin de que realizara la Primera Encuesta Ciudadana sobre los Derechos de los Niños, que se aplicó a 800 niños y a 800 adultos.” “96% de los entrevistados opinaron que debe haber más elecciones infantiles.”

¿Se implementan en la actualidad mecanismos de evaluación del ejercicio para conocer su impacto?

“(…) la base de datos denominada “Seguimiento de Prensa sobre las Elecciones Infantiles de 1997” da constancia a nivel nacional de 479 notas de prensa, de las cuales únicamente cinco expresaron crítica a la iniciativa. Asimismo, se encontró amplio apoyo de distintas radiodifusoras para convocar al público infantil a acudir a las urnas y dar cuenta de los resultados.”

¿Ha sido ininterrumpido el apoyo brindado por los medios de comunicación a la CIJ?

2. Experiencias compartidas con otros países

¿Existe alguna forma de intercambio de información y experiencias entre los países que implementan consultas de infancias y juventudes?

3. Aliados estratégicos

Relación interinstitucional con UNICEF

Comité de Acompañamiento

4. Análisis de resultados

¿Quién es responsable de analizar los resultados de la CIJ?

*** Procesamiento de info (UNAM antes 2009)**

5. Percepción pública

¿A quién, cómo y cuándo se presentan los resultados de la CIJ?

6. Acciones de continuidad

¿Existen acciones concretas que se hayan derivado de las propuestas de los NNA en la CIJ?

7. Retos y desafíos en el camino

¿Cómo logra el INE compatibilizar o innovar mediante las perspectivas de infancias, de juventudes y de género (diversidad e inclusión), presentes en la CIJ, frente a la realidad en el país? *Inclusión de NNA fuera de México

***Hallazgos: identidad sexogenérica**

Un logro y una lección que representen los retos que conlleva organizar la CIJ en una federación tan extensa (enfoque: horizontalidad con OPL).

“La *coconstrucción* de las temáticas de la consulta, así como de las boletas de registro para la población objetivo desde un enfoque no *adultocéntrico*”

Cuestionar el adultocentrismo

***Sondeo preliminar para tema CTA 2021**

ANNEX 2

Entrevista 2

México: Consulta Infantil y Juvenil

Norma Alicia del Río

Presidencia del Comité Técnico de Acompañamiento / Coordinación del Programa Infancia
2019

CIJ 2021-Instituto Nacional Electoral / Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco

Preguntas generales de la investigación:

¿Cómo fomentan **México** y Portugal la familiarización democrática y la participación cívica de sus poblaciones antes de que alcancen la edad para votar?

¿Qué lecciones puede aprender Portugal de la **experiencia mexicana sobre consultas**?

Temas predeterminados y preguntas específicas sobre la Consulta Infantil y Juvenil²³:

1. Experiencias compartidas con otros países

¿Existe alguna forma de intercambio de información y experiencias con otros países que implementan consultas de infancias y juventudes?

¿Podríamos decir que México es pionero en la implementación de estos ejercicios?

2. Aliados estratégicos

²³ Durante la reunión se busca generar un espacio de diálogo. Por lo tanto, se llevará a cabo la entrevista de forma semiestructurada, lo cual dará paso a una serie de preguntas de temas predeterminados que permitirán obtener respuestas abiertas.

¿Cómo y por qué se originó el vínculo con el INE respecto del ejercicio de consulta?

¿Cómo se compone el Comité Técnico de Acompañamiento de la Consulta Infantil y Juvenil (CIJ)?

¿Cuál es el proceso de identificación de temas y construcción de los contenidos de la boleta?

¿Todos los niños deben participar? ¿Por qué incluir a las primeras infancias?

¿Cómo es el apoyo brindado por los medios de comunicación a la consulta?

3. Análisis de resultados

¿Quién es responsable de analizar los resultados de la CIJ? ¿Cómo lo realiza?

¿Se implementan en la actualidad mecanismos de evaluación de la consulta para conocer su impacto?

¿Qué significa “darle un rostro humano” a los datos?

4. Percepción pública

¿A quién, cómo y cuándo se presentan los resultados de la consulta?

5. Acciones de continuidad

¿Existen acciones concretas que se hayan derivado de las propuestas de los NNA en la CIJ?

6. Retos y desafíos en el camino

¿Cómo se consigue coconstruir al cuestionar el adultocentrismo y facilitar una consulta no sólo para las infancias, sino por las infancias?

¿Cómo logra el ejercicio compatibilizar o innovar mediante las perspectivas de infancias, de juventudes y de género (diversidad e inclusión), presentes en la CIJ, frente a las múltiples realidades en el país?

*Inclusión de NNA fuera de México

*Hallazgos: identidad sexogenérica

Adicional:

Un logro y una lección que representen los retos que conlleva la Consulta Infantil y Juvenil.

ANNEX 3

Entrevista 3

México: Consulta Infantil y Juvenil

Mtra. Marisela Terrazas Muñoz

Presidencia de la Comisión de Juventud y Niñez

H. Congreso del Estado de Chihuahua

Preguntas generales de la investigación:

¿Cómo fomentan **México** y Portugal la familiarización democrática y la participación cívica de sus poblaciones antes de que alcancen la edad para votar?

¿Qué lecciones puede aprender Portugal de la **experiencia mexicana sobre consultas?**

Temas predeterminados y preguntas específicas sobre la Consulta Infantil y Juvenil²⁴:

1. Importancia de la participación democrática

- ¿Por qué es importante la participación ciudadana en democracia?
- ¿Debemos escuchar a los niños, niñas y adolescentes aunque no sean considerados ciudadanos?

2. Presentación y entrega de resultados²⁵

²⁴ Durante la reunión se busca generar un espacio de diálogo. Por lo tanto, se llevará a cabo la entrevista de forma semiestructurada, lo cual dará paso a una serie de preguntas de temas predeterminados que permitirán obtener respuestas abiertas.

²⁵ Vid. <https://centralector.ine.mx/2022/06/16/entrega-ine-chihuahua-resultados-de-la-consulta-infantil-y-juvenil-2021/>

- ¿La consulta dio a conocer datos en concreto que considere alarmantes o de atención prioritaria?

- De ser afirmativa la respuesta, ¿puede mencionar el dato que más llamó su atención respecto de las infancias de Chihuahua?

3. Dinámicas de socialización, difusión y diálogo en torno a los resultados²⁶

- ¿El intercambio sobre la Consulta realizado entre la autoridad electoral y el Congreso es un acto o un proceso?

- ¿Cómo se lleva a cabo lo anterior?

4. Materialización de las voces de niños, niñas y adolescentes

- ¿Quiénes son las personas responsables, dentro del Congreso, de brindar soluciones a las problemáticas expresadas en la Consulta?

- ¿Cómo se articulan las agendas con base en los resultados de la Consulta?

- ¿Existen líneas de acción que hayan sido producto específico de los datos de la Consulta? (Iniciativas de ley, modificación de regulación, políticas públicas, promoción de campañas en materia de maltrato infantil, trabajo infantil, protección de niñez migrante, violencia sexual infantil, entre otras).

→ **Discusión adicional**



²⁶ Vid. <https://centralectoral.ine.mx/2022/11/24/delibera-ine-sobre-los-resultados-de-la-consulta-infantil-y-juvenil-en-chihuahua/>

ANNEX 4

Interview 1

Portugal: Tenho Voto na Matéria

Francisca Magano

Direction of Advocacy

UNICEF Portugal

General research questions:

How do Mexico and **Portugal** encourage **democratic familiarization and civic participation** of their populations before they reach voting age?

What lessons can **Portugal** learn from the Mexican consultation experience?

Predetermined themes and specific questions on Tenho voto na matéria²⁷:

7. Antecedents of Tenho Voto na Matéria

How was Tenho Voto na Matéria conceived? Did the initiative initially come from an international perspective and Portugal adopted it, or was it a proposal made by the country to the organism?

How is the process to determine the date on which the consultation will take place?

How much time do UNICEF Portugal and its allies need to organize the consultation?

²⁷ During the interview, the aim is to generate a space for dialogue. Therefore, the interview will be conducted in a semi-structured manner, which will give way to a series of questions on predetermined topics that will allow for open-ended answers.

Are there evaluation mechanisms in place to evaluate the exercise to know its impact?

8. Shared experiences with other nations

Is there any exchange of experiences with other countries that carry out similar exercises?

If the answer is affirmative: could we say that Portugal strengthens its implementation bases with lessons from foreign experiences?

3. Strategic allies

How were the strategic partners selected to work on Tenho Voto na Matéria?

How are these parties involved in the process of design, implementation, and evaluation of the exercise?

Has the consultation been supported by the media for dissemination and other purposes?

4. Analysis of the results

Who is responsible for analyzing the results of Tenho Voto na Matéria?

5. Public perception

To whom, how and when are the results of the Tenho Voto na Matéria initiative presented?

4. Follow-up actions

Are there any specific actions that have resulted from children's voices or proposals from the consultation?

5. Challenges on the way

How does UNICEF Portugal manage to question adultcentrism and facilitate a consultation not only for children, but by children?

How does UNICEF Portugal manage to reconcile or innovate the perspectives of children, youth, and gender (diversity and inclusion), present in the consultation, with the reality in the country?

Additional:

An achievement and a lesson depicting the challenges involved in organizing the consultation *Tenho Voto na Matéria*.

ANNEX 5

Interview 2

Portugal: Tenho Voto na Matéria

Ricardo Ferreira Reis

Direction of the Center for Studies and Opinion Polls (Católica-CESOP)
Catholic University of Portugal

General research questions:

How do Mexico and **Portugal** encourage **democratic familiarization and civic participation** of their populations before they reach voting age?

What lessons can **Portugal** learn from the Mexican consultation experience?

Predetermined themes and specific questions on Tenho voto na matéria²⁸:

8. Antecedents of Tenho Voto na Matéria

How was Tenho Voto na Matéria conceived? Did the initiative come from an international perspective and Portugal adopted it, or was it a proposal made by the country to UNICEF Portugal?

9. Shared experiences with other nations

Is there any exchange of experiences with other countries that carry out similar exercises?

²⁸ During the interview, the aim is to generate a space for dialogue. Therefore, the interview will be conducted in a semi-structured manner, which will give way to a series of questions on predetermined topics that will allow for open-ended answers.

If the answer is affirmative: could we say that Portugal strengthens its implementation bases with lessons from foreign experiences?

4. Strategic allies

Since when and how was created the bond between Católica-CESOP and UNICEF Portugal?

How is Católica-CESOP involved in the process of design, implementation and evaluation of the consultation?

4. Analysis of the results

Who takes care of the design and management of the platform for the online consultation?

Who is responsible at Católica-CESOP for analyzing the results of Tenho Voto na Matéria?

5. Public perception

To whom, how and when are the results of the Tenho voto na matéria initiative presented?

Has the consultation been supported by the media for dissemination and other purposes?

4. Follow-up actions

Are there any specific actions from the municipalities that have resulted from children's voices or proposals from the consultation?

5. Challenges on the way

How does CESOP-Católica manage to question adultcentrism and facilitate a consultation not only for children, but by children.

ANNEX 6

Ballot 3 to 5 years old



CONSULTA INFANTIL Y JUVENIL 2021

¡Hola!

Es la primera vez que niñas y niños de 3 a 5 años participan en la Consulta Infantil y Juvenil del INE a nivel nacional, a través de una boleta accesible. El diseño de esta boleta se construyó con imágenes para apoyar a niñas y niños que no cuentan con lectoescritura o que tienen alguna condición de discapacidad.

Promover la expresión en niñas y niños de esta edad es un ejercicio valioso para reconocer su potencial e impulsar su desarrollo.

Instrucciones:

- Mamá, papá, cuidadora, cuidador, profesora, profesor: por favor, ayuda a llenar la ficha de datos personales.
- Mamá, papá, cuidadora, cuidador, profesora, profesor: te solicitamos acompañar a niñas y niños con la lectura de los temas para que puedan elegir sus respuestas con mayor facilidad. Si tienen una duda, te invitamos a que platicques con ella o con él para que disfruten este ejercicio.
- Mamá, papá, cuidadora, cuidador, profesora, profesor: te solicitamos leer cada una de las preguntas a la niña o niño y esperar la respuesta espontánea, para después buscar y marcar la respuesta del listado. Si la respuesta espontánea no se encuentra en el listado, por favor, escríbela en la opción "Otro".
- Mamá, papá, cuidadora, cuidador, profesora, profesor: te solicitamos que no influyas en las respuestas mientras brindas el apoyo.



CONTAMOS TODOS



Acerca de ti...

En las siguientes preguntas, señala tus respuestas.

¿Cuántos años tienes?



3



4



5

Más de 5

¿Cuántos? _____

Tú eres...



Niña



Niño

Ninguno de los dos

Soy... _____

¿Tienes alguna condición de discapacidad?

(Tienes alguna dificultad permanente para caminar, subir o bajar escaleras, ver, mover o usar los brazos o tus manos, aprender o recordar cosas, oír, hablar con personas, entre otras)






¿Cuál? _____

No

¿Dónde vives?



En una casa o departamento



En una institución o albergue



En la calle

En otro lugar

¿Cuál? _____

2

¿Cómo se llama el lugar donde vives?

(Escribe estado, municipio o alcaldía)

¿Recibes clases de alguna maestra, maestro o escuela?

Sí

¿En qué grado?

¿Cómo recibes las clases?
Puedes seleccionar más de una opción.



Teléfono de casa



Radio



Televisión



Celular o computadora



Presencial



Cuadernillo

Otro

¿Cuál? _____

No

¿Cuál fue el último grado que cursaste?

¿Por qué no recibes clases o no vas a la escuela?



3

¿Trabajas?

Sí  ¿En qué trabajas? _____ **No**

¿Recibes un pago por tu trabajo? Sí No

¿Te obligan a trabajar? Sí No

¿Realizas actividades domésticas en el lugar donde vives?

Sí  ¿Qué haces? _____ **No**

¿Eres parte de alguno de estos grupos?

Indígena Sí No

¿A qué grupo indígena perteneces? _____

¿Hablas su lengua? Sí No

Afrodescendiente Sí No

Migrante Sí No

¿De dónde eres?

De México Sí No

¿En dónde naciste? (Anota la entidad) _____

De otro país Sí No

¿De qué país eres? _____

Otro grupo ¿Cuál? _____

4

Cuidado del planeta

1. ¿Qué haces para cuidar el planeta Tierra?
Señala tus respuestas.


Tiro la basura en su lugar


Riego las plantas y los árboles


Cuido a mis mascotas


Separo la basura


Cierro las llaves del agua

Otro

¿Qué? _____

2. ¿Qué propones para cuidar la naturaleza en México?
Comparte aquí tu propuesta.

3. ¿Cómo te has sentido durante la pandemia del coronavirus?
Señala tus respuestas.


Sola o solo


Triste


Feliz


Cansado o cansada


Enojado o enojada


Con miedo


Aburrida o aburrido

Otro

¿Cómo? _____

5

4. Señala lo que has vivido durante la pandemia del coronavirus.


Estuve más tiempo con mi familia o con las personas con las que vivo


Extrañé mi escuela


No pude visitar a las personas que quiero


Me gustó estar en mi casa


No pude salir a jugar o de paseo


No pude jugar con mis amigas y amigos

¿Por qué? _____


Tuve mucha tarea


No me gustó estar en casa


Se enfermó alguien que yo quiero

Otro

Comparte aquí tu propuesta.



6

Cuidado y bienestar

5. A ti, ¿quién te cuida?
Señala tus respuestas.


Mamá


Papá


Abuela


Abuelo


Hermano


Hermana

Me cuida otra persona

¿Quién? _____

6. Tú, ¿cuidas a alguien?
Señala tus respuestas.


Hermanitas o hermanitos


Abuelita o abuelito


Familiar enfermo


Mascotas

Otra persona ¿A quién? _____

¿Y qué haces para cuidarla o cuidarlo? _____

A nadie



7

7. ¿Has escuchado o visto que a las niñas y a los niños los tratan mal? ¿Cómo?
Señala tus respuestas.


Pegarles


Gritarles


Castigarlos


No respetar su cuerpo


Asustarse cuando pelean las personas adultas

Otro

¿Cómo? _____

Ninguno



8

8. ¿Alguna vez te han rechazado o tratado diferente?

Señala tus respuestas.

Por el color de piel

Por mi peso o mi estatura

Por ser indígena

Por ser afrodescendiente

Por mi edad

Por tener alguna discapacidad

Por vivir en la calle

Por ser migrante

Por mi religión

Por ser pobre

Por vivir en un albergue o institución

Otro
¿Cómo?

No me ha pasado

9

Derechos humanos

9. ¿Qué haces para cuidar tu salud?

Señala tus respuestas.

Como frutas y verduras

Juego o hago ejercicio

Voy al doctor cuando me enfermo

Me lavo las manos y uso cubrebocas para no contagiarme de coronavirus

Otro
¿Qué haces?

10. Cuando regrese o esté en la escuela me gustaría que

Comparte aquí tu respuesta.

10

11. ¿Dónde y cuánto tiempo has jugado durante el coronavirus?

Señala tus respuestas.

	Mucho	Poco	Nada
<p>En casa</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>En el parque</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Con el celular, la tableta o videojuegos</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>En la calle</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>En otro lugar</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

¿Cuál?

¿Con quién jugaste?

Comparte aquí tu respuesta.

11

¡Gracias por participar!
Comparte esta experiencia con tus amigas y amigos

/INEMexico

CONTAMOS TODAS TODOS |

ANNEX 7

Ballot 6 to 9 years old



¡Hola!

Felicidades por participar en un ejercicio nacional para promover la expresión de niñas y niños de 6 a 9 años. Tus respuestas son muy valiosas.

Instrucciones:

1. Mamá, papá, cuidadora, cuidador, profesora, profesor: por favor, si es necesario, apoya a la niña o el niño con el bloque "Acerca de ti" y con la lectura de las preguntas para que pueda elegir sus respuestas.
2. Siempre respeta sus respuestas, aun si tú no estás de acuerdo.
3. Es importante procurar un ambiente de confianza. No existen respuestas correctas o incorrectas, por lo que te pedimos favorecer que sea una experiencia disfrutable.
4. Mamá, papá, cuidadora, cuidador, profesora, profesor: te solicitamos que no influyas en las respuestas mientras brindas el apoyo.



CONTAMOS TODOS 

Acerca de ti...
En las siguientes preguntas, señala tus respuestas.

¿Cuántos años tienes?

6 7 8 9

Tú eres...

 Niña  Niño **Ninguno de los dos**
Soy: _____

¿Tienes alguna condición de discapacidad?
(Tienes alguna dificultad permanente para caminar, subir o bajar escaleras, ver, mover o usar los brazos o tus manos, aprender o recordar cosas, oír, hablar con personas, entre otras)

    **Sí** ¿Cuál? _____ **No**

¿Dónde vives?

 **En una casa o departamento**  **En una institución o albergue**  **En la calle** **En otro lugar**
¿Cuál? _____

2

¿Cómo se llama el lugar donde vives?
(Escribe estado, municipio o alcaldía)

 **¿Recibes clases de alguna maestra, maestro o escuela?**

Sí ¿En qué grado? _____
¿Cómo recibes las clases?
Puedes seleccionar más de una opción.

 Teléfono de casa  Radio  Televisión

 Celular o computadora  Presencial  Cuadernoillo

Otro
¿Cuál? _____

No ¿Cuál fue el último grado que cursaste? _____
¿Por qué no recibes clases o no vas a la escuela? _____



¿Trabajas?

Sí  ¿En qué trabajas? _____ **No**

¿Recibes un pago por tu trabajo? Sí No

¿Te obligan a trabajar? Sí No

¿Realizas actividades domésticas en el lugar donde vives?

Sí  ¿Qué haces? _____ **No**

¿Eres parte de alguno de estos grupos?

 **Indígena** Sí No
¿A qué grupo indígena perteneces? _____
¿Hablas su lengua? Sí No

 **Afrodescendiente** Sí No

 **Migrante** Sí No

¿De dónde eres?
De México Sí No
¿En dónde naciste? (Anota la entidad) _____
De otro país Sí No
¿De qué país eres? _____

Otro grupo ¿Cuál? _____

4

Cuidado del planeta

1. ¿Quiénes deberían participar para cuidar el planeta?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.


Las personas adultas


Las autoridades


Maestras y maestros


Niñas y niños


Científicas y científicos

Otro
 ¿Quién? _____

2. ¿Qué haces para cuidar el medio ambiente?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.


Cuidar las plantas y sembrar más árboles


Cuidar y no maltratar a los animales


Cuidar el agua, los ríos y los mares


Reducir el uso de desechables (plástico, unical y enlatados)


Separar y reciclar la basura

Otro
 ¿Qué? _____

5

3. ¿Qué propones para cuidar el medio ambiente en México?
 Comparte aquí tu propuesta.

4. ¿Cómo te has sentido durante la pandemia de coronavirus?
 Señala una respuesta en cada línea.

	Siempre	Algunas veces	Nunca
 Triste	●	●	●
 Con miedo	●	●	●
 Aburrida o aburrido	●	●	●
 Enojada o enojado	●	●	●
 Preocupada o preocupado	●	●	●
 Tranquila o tranquilo	●	●	●
 Protegida o protegido	●	●	●
 Feliz	●	●	●
 Sola o solo	●	●	●
De otra forma	●	●	●

¿Cuál? _____



6

Cuidado y bienestar

4.1 ¿Qué extrañas más de no poder ir a la escuela?
 Escribe qué extrañas más.

5. Cuando estás con alguna de estas personas, ¿cómo te sientes?
 Señala tu respuesta en cada renglón.

	Feliz	Triste	Con enojo	Con miedo
 Mamá	●	●	●	●
 Papá	●	●	●	●
 Abuela	●	●	●	●
 Abuelo	●	●	●	●
 Hermana	●	●	●	●
 Hermano	●	●	●	●
Otra persona que me cuida	●	●	●	●
¿Quién?	_____			

7

5.1 Tú, ¿a quién cuidas y qué haces para cuidarla o cuidarlo?
 Comparte aquí tu respuesta.

6. ¿Qué tienen que aprender las personas con las que convives para cuidarte mejor?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.


No pegar a niñas y niños


No gritar, no ofender ni castigar


Platica, escuchar y convivir con respeto


Respetar mi cuerpo


Que las personas adultas no peleen entre ellas


Que me quieran

Otro
 ¿Qué? _____



8

7. ¿Alguna vez te han rechazado o tratado diferente?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes marcar más de una.



Por el color de piel



Por mi peso o mi estatura



Por ser indígena



Por ser afrodescendiente



Por mi edad



Por tener alguna discapacidad



Por vivir en la calle



Por ser migrante



Por mi religión



Por ser pobre



Por vivir en un albergue o institución

Por otra razón

¿Cuál?

No me ha pasado

9

8. Donde vives, ¿qué problemas y peligros tienen niñas y niños?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.



Robo o secuestro de niñas y niños



Drugs, alcoholismo



Personas que obligan a niñas y niños a hacer algo contra la ley



Robos en la calle, en el transporte y en las casas



Calles, parques y jardines desolados y sucios

Ninguno

Otros

Comparte aquí tu respuesta.

Derechos humanos

9. ¿Qué es lo que haces para cuidar tu salud?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.



Comer sano



Hago ejercicio y juego



Voy al doctor cuando me enfermo



Me lavo las manos y uso cubrebocas para no contagiarme de coronavirus

Otro

¿Qué haces?

10

10. Lo que me gustaría proponer cuando regrese o esté en la escuela es...

Señala tu respuesta, puedes elegir más de una opción.



Aprender temas que nos interesen



Tener menos tareas



Tener becas



Convivir con niñas y niños con discapacidad



Poder opinar y que nos escuchen



Estar tranquilo, tranquilo y no preocuparme por las clases a distancia



Tener computadoras o celular para estudiar



Hacer más deporte



Que las clases no sean aburridas



Estar con mis amigas y amigos



Tener más recreo



Leer más cuentos y leyendas



11

10.1 ¿Qué otras propuestas tienes para que niñas y niños aprendan más y mejor en la escuela?

Comparte aquí tu respuesta.



12

13. Me gustaría opinar sobre...
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.



-  Los derechos que protegen a las niñas y los niños
-  Los problemas y decisiones que afectan mi vida
-  El derecho que tengo de participar en el consejo infantil de mi comunidad
-  Las decisiones de las autoridades o personas que gobiernan

15

¡Gracias por participar!
 Comparte esta experiencia con tus amigas y amigos



 /INEMexico
 CONTAMOS TODAS TODOS |  INE

11. ¿Consideras que se respetan tus derechos? ¿Cuáles?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

-  Respeto a mis costumbres, mi lengua y creencias
-  Tener una vida libre de violencia
-  Tener salud y atención médica
-  Convivir con niñas y niños con discapacidad
-  Ir a la escuela
-  Tener tiempo y lugares para descansar y jugar
-  Que me escuchan y contar con información para participar
-  Contar con protección cuando la necesite
-  Tener acceso a Internet

Ninguno



13

12. Durante la pandemia de COVID-19, ¿dónde y cuánto tiempo jugaste?
 Señala tu respuesta en cada región.

	Mucho	Poco	Nada
 En casa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
 En el parque	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
 En el patio de mi casa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
 Con el celular, la tableta o videojuegos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
 En la calle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> En otro lugar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

¿Cuál?

¿Con quién jugaste?
 Comparte aquí tu respuesta.

14

ANNEX 8

Ballot 10 to 13 years old



CONSULTA INFANTIL Y JUVENIL 2021

¡Hola!

Tu participación es muy importante y es uno de tus derechos. Responder esta boleta es voluntario y completamente anónimo. Nadie sabrá que has sido tú quien ha contestado. Puedes responder libremente, no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas, solo queremos conocer tu opinión. Si tienes alguna duda, puedes pedir ayuda a las personas de confianza que están a tu alrededor.



CONTAMOS TODAS TODOS 

Acerca de ti...
En las siguientes preguntas, señala tus respuestas.

¿Cuántos años tienes? 10 11 12 13

¿Cómo te identificas?

Niña/mujer Niño/hombre No me identifico con ninguno de los dos Soy... _____

¿Tienes alguna condición de discapacidad?
(Tienes alguna dificultad permanente para caminar, subir o bajar escaleras, ver, mover o usar los brazos o tus manos, aprender o recordar cosas, oír, hablar con personas, entre otras.)

Sí ¿Cuál? _____ No

¿Dónde vives? En una casa o departamento

En una institución o albergue En la calle En otro lugar

¿Cuál? _____

¿En qué estado de la República Mexicana vives?
(Escribe estado, municipio o alcaldía) _____

2

¿Recibes clases de alguna maestra, maestro o escuela?

Sí ¿En qué grado? _____

¿Cómo recibes las clases? Puedes seleccionar más de una opción.

Teléfono de casa Televisión Presencial
 Radio Celular o computadora Cuadernillo
 Otro ¿Cuál? _____

No ¿Cuál fue el último grado que cursaste? _____

¿Por qué no recibes clases o no vas a la escuela?

¿Trabajas?

Sí ¿En qué trabajas? _____ **No**

¿Recibes un pago por tu trabajo? Sí No
 ¿Te obligan a trabajar? Sí No

¿Trabajas o realizas actividades domésticas en el lugar donde vives?

Sí ¿Qué haces? _____ **No**

3

¿Eres parte de alguno de estos grupos?

Indígena Sí No

¿A qué grupo indígena perteneces? _____

¿Hablas su lengua? Sí No

Afrodescendiente Sí No

Migrante Sí No

¿De dónde eres?
 De México Sí No
 ¿En cuál entidad naciste? _____
 De otro país Sí No
 ¿De qué país eres? _____

Otro grupo ¿Cuál? _____



4

Cuidado del planeta

1. De los siguientes temas, ¿cuáles son los que más te preocupan? Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

<input type="checkbox"/> El calentamiento global y el cambio climático	<input type="checkbox"/> La contaminación del agua, los ríos y los mares
<input type="checkbox"/> La tala de árboles	<input type="checkbox"/> La basura y los desechables (plástico, unícel y enlatados)
<input type="checkbox"/> El maltrato y la extinción de los animales	<input type="checkbox"/> No me preocupa ninguna

2. ¿Qué te gustaría proponer para cuidar el medio ambiente en México?
Escribe tu propuesta.

5

3. Durante la pandemia de COVID-19, ¿cuántas veces te has sentido...?
Señala tus respuestas. Elige una opción para cada una de las siguientes emociones o sentimientos.

	Nunca	Pocas veces	Algunas veces	Muchas veces	Siempre
Triste	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Con miedo	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Aburrida o aburrido	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Enojada o enojado	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Preocupada o preocupado	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tranquila o tranquilo	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Protegida o protegido	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Feliz	<input type="checkbox"/>				

De otra forma, ¿cuál? _____

4. A partir de la pandemia de COVID-19, ¿qué ha cambiado en tu vida?
Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

<input type="checkbox"/> Tus hábitos de sueño y alimentación	<input type="checkbox"/> Tus emociones y estado de ánimo
<input type="checkbox"/> Tu forma y el tiempo para jugar y divertirse	<input type="checkbox"/> La muerte o enfermedad de personas queridas
<input type="checkbox"/> Tu relación con amigas y amigos	<input type="checkbox"/> Otro, ¿qué? _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Tu relación con las personas con quienes vives	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> La escuela y las tareas	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Las personas con quienes vives tienen menos dinero que antes	<input type="checkbox"/> No hubo cambios en tu vida

6

4.1 ¿Qué extrañas más de no poder ir a la escuela?
Escribe aquí.

Cuidado y bienestar

5. Para ti, ¿quiénes te cuidan mejor?
Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

<input type="checkbox"/> Mamá	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal del albergue o institución	<input type="checkbox"/> Nadie
<input type="checkbox"/> Papá	<input type="checkbox"/> Amigos y amigas	<input type="checkbox"/> Te cuida otra persona
<input type="checkbox"/> Abuela	<input type="checkbox"/> Vecinas y vecinos	¿Quién? _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Abuelo	<input type="checkbox"/> Tu mascota	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hermano	<input type="checkbox"/> Tú misma, tú mismo	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hermana		

5.1 Y tú, ¿a quiénes cuidas?
Escribe aquí.

7

6. Las personas adultas que te cuidan, ¿qué tanto...?
Señala tus respuestas. Elige una opción para cada una de las siguientes acciones.

	Nunca	Algunas veces	Siempre
Te golpean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Se enojan contigo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Te gritan o insultan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Te castigan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respetan tu opinión y forma de ser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Te tratan con amor y cariño	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Platican, escuchan y conviven con respeto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Se golpean o gritan entre personas adultas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respetan tu cuerpo y tu intimidad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Otras acciones, ¿cuáles? _____

7. De los siguientes problemas, ¿cuáles son los que más te afectan?
Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

<input type="checkbox"/> La violencia en la escuela por parte de personas adultas	<input type="checkbox"/> La pobreza y la falta de trabajo
<input type="checkbox"/> El acoso escolar entre compañeras y compañeros	<input type="checkbox"/> El abuso sexual infantil
<input type="checkbox"/> La discriminación hacia las personas	<input type="checkbox"/> Otro problema, ¿cuál? _____
<input type="checkbox"/> La desigualdad y la violencia en contra de las mujeres	<input type="checkbox"/> Ninguno me afecta

8

8. ¿Alguna vez te has sentido discriminada o discriminado por...?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Ser indígena
- Ser afrodescendiente
- Tu color de piel
- Tu edad
- Tu forma de hablar y de vestir
- Tu peso o tu estatura
- No tener dinero
- Tener una enfermedad
- Tu religión
- Tu forma de pensar
- Vivir con una discapacidad
- El lugar donde vives
- Ser niña/mujer
- Ser niño/hombre
- Tu orientación sexual
- Estar embarazada
- Otra razón de discriminación, ¿cuál? _____
- No has sentido discriminación

9. En la comunidad en donde vives, ¿cuáles son los riesgos relacionados con la violencia?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- El robo o el secuestro de niñas, niños y adolescentes
- La inseguridad y el maltrato que viven las niñas y las mujeres
- El robo y la inseguridad en las calles
- El alcohol y las drogas
- Presionan a niñas, niños y adolescentes para cometer delitos
- La violencia y el abuso hacia niñas, niños y adolescentes
- La violencia entre las personas adultas
- Otro riesgo, ¿cuál? _____
- Ninguno



Derechos humanos

10. Tú, ¿qué necesitas para tener una vida saludable?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Tiempo y lugares para hacer ejercicio
- Acceso gratuito a los servicios de salud física y emocional
- Una alimentación sana y balanceada
- Saber cómo cuidarnos del COVID-19 y otras enfermedades
- Una vivienda digna
- Otro, ¿cuál? _____
- Ninguno

11. Para cuidar tu salud, ¿sobre qué temas te gustaría tener información?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- El embarazo en la adolescencia
- El cuidado de la salud emocional
- Anorexia, bulimia y sobrepeso
- Ejercicio y deporte
- Higiene y cuidado personal
- Educación sexual y métodos anticonceptivos
- Alimentación saludable
- Otro, ¿cuál? _____
- Ninguno

12. En la escuela, me gustaría que...
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Hubiera más becas y mejores instalaciones
- Tomaran en cuenta mis emociones
- Enseñaran sobre educación sexual
- Maestras y maestros aprendieran otras formas de enseñar
- Hubiera mejor convivencia
- Enseñaran otras cosas, como oficios, artes y tecnología
- Tomaran en cuenta mis propuestas y sugerencias
- Siguera igual y sin cambios

12.1 ¿Qué te gustaría proponer para mejorar la escuela y el aprendizaje?
 Escribe aquí. _____

Si recibes clases, continúa con la pregunta 13.
 Si NO recibes clases, pasa a la pregunta número 14.

13. Durante la pandemia de COVID-19, ¿cómo te has sentido con...?
 Señala tus respuestas. Elige "mal", "más o menos" o "bien" para cada una de las siguientes opciones.

	Mal	Más o menos	Bien
Las clases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Las tareas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La conexión a internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
El lugar donde estudias o tomas tus clases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La relación con tus compañeras y compañeros	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
El recreo y el tiempo de descanso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Las personas con quienes vives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Para que haya igualdad entre hombres y mujeres es necesario...
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Que tengan las mismas oportunidades de estudiar
- Que ganen lo mismo en su trabajo
- Que niñas y niños puedan jugar a lo que quieran
- Eliminar la violencia en contra de las mujeres
- Tratar a todas y todos con respeto
- Otra cosa, ¿cuál? _____
- No hacer nada

15. De las siguientes actividades, ¿cuáles prefieres hacer?
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Jugar videojuegos
- Estar en las redes sociales
- Ver televisión
- Jugar en un parque o en la calle
- Jugar dentro del lugar en donde vives
- Estar con tus amigas y amigos
- Pasar tiempo con la familia o las personas con quienes vives
- Escuchar música, leer u otras actividades artísticas
- Otra actividad, ¿cuál? _____
- No hacer nada

16. Me gustaría que me tomen en cuenta para...
 Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

<input type="checkbox"/> Decidir sobre quién gobierna	<input type="checkbox"/> Opinar sobre los problemas que hay en mi país
<input type="checkbox"/> Opinar sobre las leyes que tratan del cuidado a niñas, niños y adolescentes	<input type="checkbox"/> Denunciar la violencia y el maltrato en mi contra
<input type="checkbox"/> Decidir si quiero trabajar	<input type="checkbox"/> Otro, ¿cuál? _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Participar y que me escuchen sobre las decisiones que afectan mi vida	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ninguna de estas opciones

13

Conoce a Urnita
 y sus diferentes transformaciones

14

15

¡Gracias por participar!
 Comparte esta experiencia con tus amigas y amigos

/INEMexico
 CONTAMOS TODAS TODOS | INE
Instituto Nacional Electoral

ANNEX 9

Ballot 14 to 17 years old



CONSULTA INFANTIL Y JUVENIL 2021

¡Hola!

Tu participación es muy importante y es uno de tus derechos. Responder esta boleta es voluntario y completamente anónimo. Nadie sabrá que has sido tú quien ha contestado. Puedes responder libremente, no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas, solo queremos conocer tu opinión. Si tienes alguna duda, puedes pedir ayuda a las personas de confianza que están a tu alrededor.



CONTAMOS TODAS TODOS | **INE**
Instituto Nacional Electoral

Acerca de ti...
En las siguientes preguntas, señala tus respuestas.

¿Cuántos años tienes? 14 15 16 17

¿Cómo te identificas?
 Mujer Hombre No me identifico con ninguno de los dos Soy... _____

¿Tienes alguna condición de discapacidad?
(Tienes alguna dificultad permanente para caminar, subir o bajar escaleras, ver, mover o usar los brazos o tus manos, aprender o recordar cosas, etc, hablar con personas, entre otras.)
 Sí ¿Cuál? _____ No

¿Dónde vives?
 En una casa o departamento En una institución o albergue En la calle En otro lugar
 ¿Cuál? _____

¿En qué estado de la República Mexicana vives?
(Escribe estado, municipio o alcaldía) _____

2

¿Recibes clases de alguna maestra, maestro o escuela?

Sí ¿En qué grado? _____

¿Cómo recibes las clases? Puedes seleccionar más de una opción.

Teléfono de casa Televisión Presencial
 Radio Celular o computadora Cuadernillo
 Otro ¿Cuál? _____

No ¿Cuál fue el último grado que cursaste?

 ¿Por qué no recibes clases o no vas a la escuela?

¿Trabajas?

Sí ¿En qué trabajas? _____ No

¿Recibes un pago por tu trabajo? Sí No
 ¿Te obligan a trabajar? Sí No

¿Trabajas o realizas actividades domésticas en el lugar donde vives?

Sí ¿Qué actividades haces? _____ No

3

¿Eres parte de alguno de estos grupos?

Indígena Sí No
 ¿A qué grupo indígena perteneces? _____
 ¿Hablas su lengua? Sí No

Afrodescendiente Sí No

Migrante Sí No
 ¿De dónde eres?
 De México Sí No
 ¿En cuál entidad naciste? _____
 De otro país Sí No
 ¿De qué país eres? _____

Otro grupo ¿Cuál? _____



4

Cuidado del planeta

1. De los siguientes temas, ¿cuáles son los que más te preocupan? Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

El calentamiento global y el cambio climático La basura, los desechables y las bolsas de plástico
 La tala de árboles La contaminación y la basura en las calles
 El maltrato y la extinción de los animales No me preocupa ninguna
 La contaminación del agua, los ríos y los mares

2. ¿Qué te gustaría proponer para cuidar el medio ambiente en México?

Escribe aquí. _____

5

3. Durante la pandemia de COVID-19, ¿con qué frecuencia te has sentido...?

Señala tus respuestas. Elige una opción para cada una de las siguientes emociones o sentimientos.

	Nunca	Casi nunca	Algunas veces	Casi siempre	Siempre
Triste	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Con miedo	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Aburrida o aburrido	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Enojada o enojado	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Preocupada o preocupado	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tranquila o tranquilo	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Protegida o protegido	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Feliz	<input type="checkbox"/>				

De otra forma, ¿cuál? _____

4. A partir de la pandemia de COVID-19, ¿qué ha cambiado en tu vida?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

Tus hábitos de sueño y alimentación Tus emociones y estado de ánimo
 Tu forma y el tiempo para jugar y divertirse La muerte o enfermedad de personas queridas
 Tu relación con amigas y amigos Otro, ¿cuál? _____
 Tu relación con las personas con quienes vives _____
 La escuela y las tareas _____
 Las personas con quienes vives tienen menos dinero que antes No hubo cambios en tu vida

4.1 ¿Qué extrañas más de no poder ir a la escuela?

Escribe aquí. _____

6

Cuidado y bienestar

5. Para ti, ¿quiénes te cuidan mejor?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

Mamá Personal del albergue o institución Nadie
 Papá Te cuida otra persona
 Abuela Amigos y amigas ¿Quién? _____
 Abuelo Vecinas y vecinos Tú, ¿a quiénes cuidas?
 Hermano Tu mascota Escribe aquí. _____
 Hermana Tú misma, tú mismo

6. Las personas adultas que te cuidan, ¿con qué frecuencia...?

Señala tus respuestas. Elige una opción para cada una de las siguientes acciones.

	Siempre	Algunas veces	Nunca
Te golpean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Se enojan contigo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Te gritan o insultan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Te castigan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respetan tu opinión y forma de ser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Platican, escuchan y conviven con respeto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Se golpean o gritan entre personas adultas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respetan tu cuerpo y tu intimidad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Otras acciones, ¿cuáles? _____

7

7. De los siguientes problemas, ¿cuáles son los que más te preocupan?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

La violencia en la escuela por parte de personas adultas El abuso sexual infantil
 El acoso escolar entre compañeras y compañeros El acceso a la educación para todas y todos
 La discriminación Otro problema, ¿cuál? _____
 La desigualdad y la violencia en contra de las mujeres
 La pobreza y la falta de trabajo No me preocupa ninguno

8. ¿Alguna vez te has sentido discriminado o discriminada por...?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

Ser indígena El lugar donde vives
 Ser afrodescendiente Tener una enfermedad
 El color de tu piel No estar en la escuela
 Tu edad Ser mujer
 Tu forma de hablar o de vestir Ser hombre
 Tu peso o tu estatura Estar embarazada
 Tu situación económica Otra razón de discriminación, ¿cuál? _____
 Tu religión
 Tu orientación sexual
 Tu forma de pensar No has sentido discriminación
 Vivir con una discapacidad



8

9. En la comunidad en donde vives, ¿cuáles son los riesgos relacionados con la violencia?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Las desapariciones, el secuestro y los asesinatos
- La inseguridad que viven las mujeres y los feminicidios
- El robo y la inseguridad en las calles
- La presión para cometer algún delito
- Las drogas y las adicciones
- La violencia y el abuso hacia niñas, niños y adolescentes
- La violencia entre las personas adultas
- Otro riesgo, ¿cuál? _____
- Ninguno

Derechos humanos



10. Tú, ¿qué necesitas para tener una vida saludable?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Tiempo y lugares para hacer ejercicio
- Acceso gratuito a los servicios de salud física y emocional
- Dinero para alimentarme sanamente
- Saber cómo cuidarnos del COVID-19 y otras enfermedades
- Una vivienda digna
- Otro, ¿cuál? _____

9

11. Para cuidar tu salud, ¿sobre qué temas te gustaría tener más información?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- El embarazo en la adolescencia
- El cuidado de la salud emocional
- Anorexia, bulimia y sobrepeso
- Ejercicio y deporte
- Alimentación saludable
- Educación sexual y métodos anticonceptivos
- Otro, ¿cuál? _____
- Ninguno



12. En la escuela, te gustaría que...

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Hubiera más becas
- Tener mejores instalaciones
- Tomaran en cuenta mis emociones
- Maestras y maestros aprendieran otras formas de enseñar
- Hubiera mejor convivencia
- Enseñarían otras cosas, como oficios, artes y tecnología
- Tomaran en cuenta mis propuestas y sugerencias
- Mayor seguridad dentro de la escuela
- Otro, ¿cuál? _____
- Siguiera igual y sin cambios

10

12.1 ¿Qué propuestas tienes para mejorar la vida en la escuela y el aprendizaje de niñas, niños y adolescentes?

Escribe aquí. _____

13. Durante la pandemia, ¿cómo te has sentido en la escuela con...?

Señala tus respuestas. Elige "bien", "más o menos" o "mal" para cada una de las siguientes opciones.

	Bien	Más o menos	Mal
Las clases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Las tareas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La conexión a internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
El lugar donde estudias o tomas clases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
La relación con tus compañeras y compañeros	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
El recreo y el tiempo de descanso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Las personas con quienes vives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Para que haya igualdad entre hombres y mujeres es necesario...

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Que tengan las mismas oportunidades de estudiar
- Eliminar la violencia en contra de las mujeres
- Que ganen lo mismo en su trabajo
- Eliminar los estereotipos de género
- No hacer nada
- Otra cosa, ¿cuál? _____

11

15. De las siguientes actividades, ¿cuáles prefieres?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Jugar videojuegos
- Estar en las redes sociales
- Ver televisión
- Jugar en un parque o en la calle
- Jugar dentro del lugar en donde vivo
- Estar con mis amigas y amigos
- Pasar tiempo con la familia o las personas con quienes vivo
- Escuchar música, leer u otras actividades artísticas
- No hacer nada
- Otra actividad, ¿cuál? _____

16. ¿Te gustaría que te tomaran en cuenta para...?

Señala tu respuesta. Puedes elegir más de una opción.

- Decidir sobre quién gobierna
- Opinar sobre las leyes que tratan del cuidado a niñas, niños y adolescentes
- Decidir si quiero trabajar
- Participar y que me escuchen sobre las decisiones que afectan mi vida
- Opinar sobre los problemas que hay en mi país
- Denunciar la violencia y el maltrato en mi contra
- Ninguna de las anteriores
- Otra cosa, ¿cuál? _____

12