

# A Democratic Audit for European Multilevel Governance

## Background Paper

### 1.1 Introduction

What is a 'Democratic Audit'? What does an 'assessment of democracy' entail? What criteria ought to be tested to determine the 'democratic quality' of a given country? International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)<sup>1</sup> defines a democracy audit as "a systematic assessment of a country's political life in order to answer the question: how democratic is it? [...]"<sup>2</sup>. In other words, democratic auditing is "benchmarking", i.e., a "standard set of criteria and indicators are used to measure the condition of democracy in a particular country".<sup>3</sup> Given that democracy is a disputed concept and has numerous definitions, it is important in a democratic audit to consider both different democratic models and definitions of democracy (Lord 2000).

An early attempt at defining coherent indicators of democracy can be found in Robert Dahl (1971). They include free and fair elections, universal suffrage, the election of key office holders, access to alternative sources of information, and the freedoms of association and expression. Most democratic audits elaborated since have been based on Dahl's seminal work.

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<sup>1</sup> IDEA was established in 1995 and currently includes 21 members. IDEA is an "intergovernmental organization with member states across all continents, [which] seeks to support sustainable democracy in both new and long-established democracies. IDEA draws on comparative experience, analyses democracy trends and assistance, and develops policy options, tools and guidelines relating to political participation, electoral systems, political parties and post-conflict democracy building." (as quoted from IDEA's web site at [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)).

<sup>2</sup> as quoted from IDEA's web site [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)

<sup>3</sup> as quoted on SNS's web site [www.const.sns.se/dr/english/viewpoint18.htm](http://www.const.sns.se/dr/english/viewpoint18.htm)

## 1.2 State-of-the-art: previous audits

### 1.2.1 Audits of national democracies

#### 1.2.1.1 Freedom House

The Freedom in the World survey, an institutional effort by Freedom House to monitor the progress and decline of political rights and civil liberties was launched in 1955. The survey derives its information from a wide array of sources, such as human rights activists, journalists and political actors. A number of publications including reports of human rights organizations, regional newspapers, journals, and think tank and academic analyses. Fact-finding missions are also carried out to acquire more in-depth knowledge about the level of freedom enjoyed in the 192 nations and 18 related and disputed territories examined by Freedom House.

'Freedom' is measured by assessing two broad categories, political rights<sup>4</sup> and civil liberties<sup>5</sup>. The survey does not rate governments or government performance *per se*, but rather the actual rights and freedoms enjoyed by individuals as the result of actions by state and non-governmental actors. The methodology of the survey established basic standards which were drawn from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Raymond Gastil developed the survey's methodology in 1972, which rates a given country's political rights and civil liberties and categorizes them as being free, partly free or not free. The country/territory ratings are proposed by the writers of each country/territory report and are reviewed on a comparative basis in a series of regional discussions involving the analysts and regional academic experts. A cross-regional assessment is subsequently carried out to ensure comparability and consistency in the findings. The ratings are furthermore compared to the previous year's findings, and any major numerical shifts or category changes are subjected to more intense scrutiny.

The survey's methodology is reviewed by an advisory committee on methodological issues. Throughout the years, the committee has made a number of modest methodological changes to adapt Freedom House's survey to evolving ideas about political change and civil liberties. However, any

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<sup>4</sup> Political rights enable people to participate freely in the political process and include the right to vote and compete for public office, and to elect representatives who have a decisive vote on public policies.

<sup>5</sup> Civil liberties include the freedom to develop opinions, institutions and personal autonomy without interference from the state.

alteration to the methodology are introduced incrementally to ensure comparability of the ratings from year to year. The ratings process involves awarding a country or territory 0 to 4 raw points for each of 10 questions grouped into three subcategories in a political rights checklist, and for each of the 15 questions grouped into four subcategories in a civil liberties checklist (Figure 1).

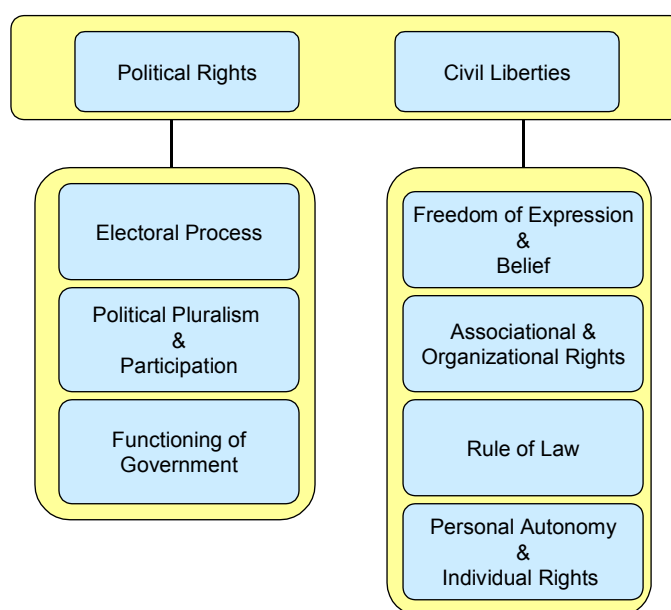


Figure 1. Freedom House Conceptual Framework for a Democratic Audit

Each question in both the political rights and civil liberties checklists is awarded from 0 to 4 raw points per checklist item. Zero represents the smallest degree and 4 the greatest degree of rights or liberties enjoyed by the citizens. The highest possible total score that can be achieved for political rights is 40 (i.e. a total of up to 4 points for each of 10 questions), and 60 points for civil liberties (a maximum of 4 points for each of 15 questions). The total number of raw points is the definitive factor that determines the final status of each country/territory. Those with combined raw scores of 0 – 33 points are ‘not free’, 34 – 67 points are ‘partly free’ and 68 – 100 points are ‘free’.

### 1.2.1.2 The democratic audit of Great Britain

The methodological groundwork for evaluating the success of political systems in achieving specific standards of democratic governance was laid by the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex, which was selected by the

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust in 1994 to carry out the Democratic Audit of Great Britain.<sup>6</sup> This systematic and comprehensive assessment of democracy and human rights in the UK resulted in two publications, *The Three Pillars of Liberty: Political Rights and Freedoms in the United Kingdom* (Francesca Klug, Keir Starmer and Stuart Weir, 1996<sup>7</sup>) and *Political Power and Democratic Control in Britain* (Stuart Weir and David Beetham, 1998<sup>8</sup>). Numerous future democratic audits built on and adapted the methodology introduced in these two publications.

Stuart Weir and David Beetham's study (1998) determined that a political system could be considered a representative democracy if public control and political equality were guaranteed. Authorization, accountability and responsiveness were established as the three intermediating principles providing substance to these two democracy requisites.

The third step was to "typologise empirical preconditions for the realization of the core values [public control and political equality] and their mediating principles [authorization, accountability and responsiveness]" (Lord, 2000, p.1). These empirical preconditions were free and fair elections, open, representative and accountable government as well as democratic society and civil liberties. Beetham subsequently extended the list of empirical preconditions to include citizenship, law and rights, participation and governance responsiveness and democracy beyond the nation state. Figure 2 displays the conceptual framework of the Democratic Audit of Great Britain.

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<sup>6</sup> The project was completed in October 2001. Kevin Boyle was the Academic Director, and Stuart Weir was the Director of the project.

<sup>7</sup> The study audits the UK's compliance with international human rights standards and examines law and practice with reference to freedom of information, freedom of assembly and public protest, freedom of expression, freedom of association and trade unionism, the right to life and liberty, the right to vote and stand in elections, and state surveillance. The study measures political freedom specifically against international standards and includes a Human Rights Index, a system for measuring political rights.

<sup>8</sup> A comprehensive analysis of the formal institutions and processes of the UK's democratic state, detailing the absence of effective checks and balances and the inability of Parliament to render the executive open and accountable. It measures democratic practice in the UK against an index of democratic criteria specifically constructed by the authors.

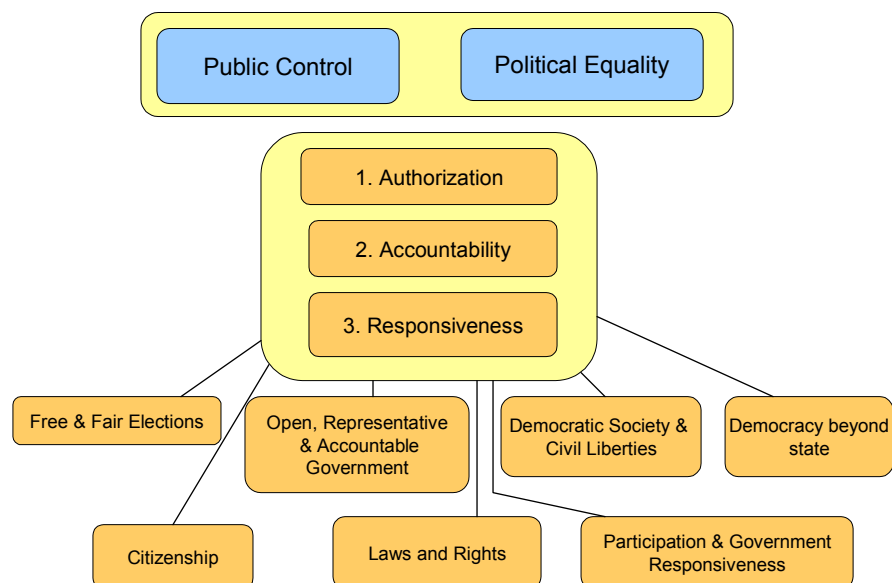


Figure 2. *The Democratic Audit of Great Britain*

The fourth step included formulating a number of *generic* questions for each category. For instance, questions relating to responsiveness include the degree of openness and systematic character of procedures for public consultation; the existence of opportunities for the public to influence policy agendas; the extent to which the making of law and policy correspond to the ideals of political deliberation; the existence of evaluation arrangements for existing policy and law in the light of citizen feedback and the degree of trust in political institutions.

### 1.2.1.3 The democratic audit of Sweden

The Democratic Audit of Sweden was established by the Center for Business and Policy Studies (SNS) the same year as the UK's Audit, in 1994. One of the reasons the audit was launched was an increasing realization by economists working on the SNS annual report on the state of Sweden's economy that problems within the political system were linked to weak economic performance. Consequently, a framework was developed to evaluate Sweden's democratic quality and uncover the barriers to stronger economic performance.

The SNS framework consists of three main criteria and thirteen indicators. The main criteria comprised:

1. Popular Government (the people must be free to govern themselves in an organized manner)

2. Constitutional Government (the legal system must satisfy certain fundamental requirements that are respected by administrative authorities and the general public)
3. Effective Government (the institutional capability of a political system to carry out its decisions)

Five indicators are used to measure popular government, and three indicators each to assess constitutional government and effective government (Figure 3).

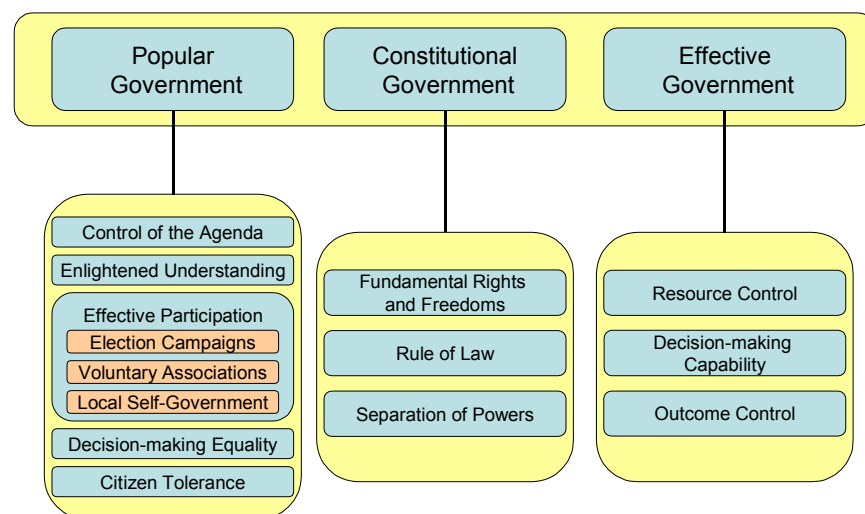


Figure 3. The Democratic Audit of Sweden

The indicators of 'Popular Government' are further specified as follows:

- 'Control of the agenda' permits people to decide "what politics is all about" through their representatives.
- By 'enlightened understanding', the SNS means the existence of a public sphere understood as free and open debate to allow the resolution of conflicts through dialogue and deliberation.
- 'Effective participation' is sub-divided into three categories, 'election campaigns', which constitute the primary means for calling those in power into account, 'voluntary associations' and 'local self-government', which are important arenas for citizen involvement and training in democracy.
- 'Decision-making equality' entails that all citizens and social groups have the same right to participate in the political community.

- Citizen tolerance taps on the political capability of citizens and the civil society to respect democratic principles as giving voice also to minority views.

‘Constitutional Government’ comprises

- ‘Fundamental freedoms and rights’ covering the spectrum of human rights.
- ‘Rule of law’ which prohibits the discrimination or arbitrary treatment of individual citizens and demands that all citizens have access to effective means for the assertion of their rights, and
- ‘Separation of powers’, as government power is less likely to be abused if it is separated into different branches of government and subjected to regulation.

Finally, ‘Effective Democracy’ relates to the ability of democratic political institutions to formulate and implement effective policy decisions for the general interest. It is measured by three indicators, namely:

- ‘Resource control’, i.e. that the government must have control over an adequate supply of available resources;
- ‘Decision-making capability’, meaning that political institutions must be able to make lasting decisions, and
- ‘Outcome control’, the need for successful implementation of legislative acts.

A scale of five grades are used in the SNS audit. Two plus signs (++) indicate that current conditions lie as close to the ideal as they plausibly can. One plus sign (+) signifies that the conditions are close to the ideal, while zero (0) represents an acceptable level. One minus sign (-) demonstrates a departure from the democratic norm, whereas two minus signs (--) indicate a substantial departure of democratic quality from the norm.

#### 1.2.1.4 IDEA

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) further developed the UK Democratic Audit’s work on democracy assessment into a more universal system and subsequently published *The IDEA Handbook on Democracy Assessment* (2002). The framework of questions was agreed on by an international panel of experts following in-depth debates and comparisons of existing assessment frameworks and methodologies and functions as IDEA’s key instrument for its programme ‘State of Democracy’. The programme was designed to measure the condition of democracy in countries from all regions of the world. IDEA’s framework is based on the assumptions that: democratisation is a process that is never completed; the idea of democracy is a common one,

and can be disaggregated into a set of specific criteria or indices, and the best people to act as auditors or assessors are a country's own citizens.

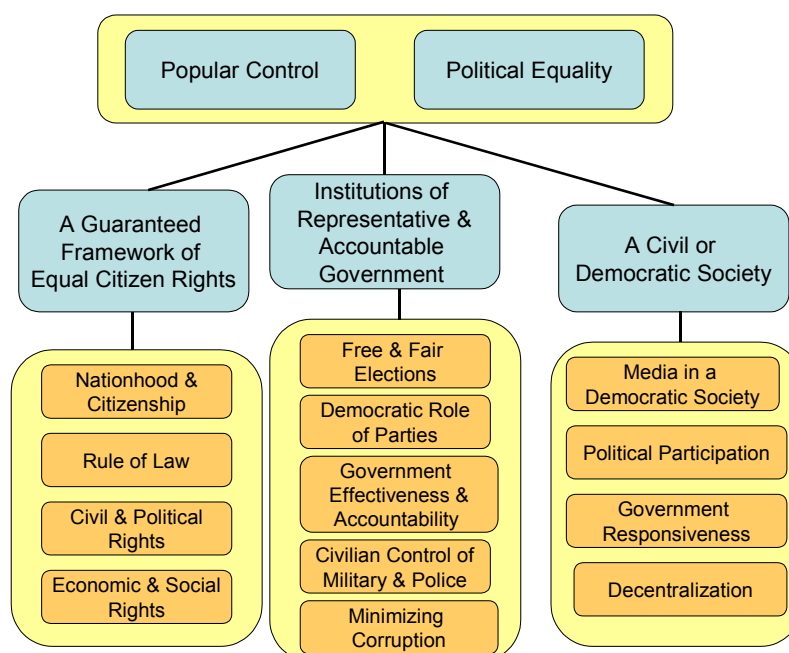


Figure 4. The IDEA framework for a democratic audit

IDEA adopted the notion established in the Democratic Audit of Great Britain that popular control and political equality are the two key principles of democracy. A distinct set of institutional and societal components are required for these two key principles to be achieved, namely:

1. A guaranteed framework of equal citizen rights;
2. Institutions of representative and accountable government;
3. A civil or democratic society.

These three fundamental components of democracy provide the structure for the assessment framework used by IDEA. Each component in turn comprises several sections (as illustrated in Figure 4), which are further sub-divided into a number of interrelated questions.

A fourth section IDEA's framework which does not appear in Figure 3 is the international dimension of democracy, that is, are the given country's external relations conducted in accordance with democratic norms and is it itself free from external subordination?

The IDEA audit framework is intentionally conceptualised in a flexible manner insofar as the standards and benchmarks are concerned. A number of questions on each of the key dimensions are available on the IDEA Web Site to answer from the subjective perspective. This is in line with the basic assumption underlying the work of IDEA that the people most suitable to evaluate a country's democracy are its own citizens.

#### *1.2.1.5 The democratic audit of Australia*

The Political Science Programme in the Australian National University's Research School of Social Sciences is conducting a democratic audit to evaluate Australia's strengths and weaknesses as a democratic society. The audit which has International IDEA's framework as its starting point was launched in 2002 and ends in 2005. The five key areas the audit will address include:

1. Citizenship, law and rights;
2. Representative and accountable government;
3. Participation and government responsiveness;
4. Democracy beyond the state, and
5. Democracy and federalism.

The Democratic Audit of Australia is basing its framework on the two key values established by Weir and Beetham and subsequently adopted by IDEA, i.e. popular control and equality. Certain adaptations will be made to take account of Australia's federal system and the resulting requirement to assess the complex processes of intergovernmental decision-making. The research aims to focus on the value of the protection of civil liberties and human rights more strongly than IDEA's audits have in the past, and the different ways in which the design of representative government has limited the scope for popular control will be evaluated as well. The Audit will furthermore examine whether some of these limitations in fact serve to facilitate the "intrusion" of sectional interests into the work of government. The quality of public debate and discussion, i.e. the degree to which debates and discussions can be distorted by manipulation, strategizing, deception and restrictions on "allowable" communication will represent another key focus of the research. As this project was only recently launched, very few details are available as to how the research group will proceed. A web site has however been established which is regularly updated ([www.democratic.audit.anu.edu.au](http://www.democratic.audit.anu.edu.au)).

#### *1.2.1.6 The Center for Democracy and Governance (USAID)*

The Center for Democracy and Governance which was established in 1994 is the U.S. Agency for International Development's focal point for democracy and

governance programming. The Center's role is to provide USAID and other development practitioners with the technical and academic expertise needed to support democratic development. It provides expertise in the four areas critical to democratic governance, namely Rule of Law, Elections and Political Processes, Civil Society, and Governance. These are also the four areas covered by the democracy audit elaborated by the USAID.

The assessment framework developed by USAID defines the above four areas as strategic objectives and defines for each a set of intermediate objectives. Subsequently performance indicators are defined for each strategic or intermediate objective. These are presented in the form of so-called 'results frameworks' comprising a summary template and excel spreadsheets.

The indicators proposed by USAID unlike those of the previous audits reviewed so far are measurable and performance oriented. Both quantitative and qualitative indicators are included. Each indicator is defined with reference to the unit of analysis, its relevance, issues relating to target setting or interpretation and data collection methods and costs.

Analytically the four strategic objectives and related indicators cover the following areas:

*Rule of law and respect for human rights*

- Foundations for human rights and gender equity in conformity with international commitments, covering legislation, effective advocacy and government mechanisms
- Laws, regulations and policies to promote a market-based economy, covering legislation, effective advocacy and government mechanisms.
- Equal access to justice, covering increased availability of legal services, information and decreased barriers.
- Effective and fair legal sector institutions, covering the issues of transparency, independence, improved management and administrative capacity, functional organisation and professionalisation of technical personnel.

*Genuine and competitive political processes*

- Impartial electoral framework
- Credible electoral administration
- An informed and active citizenry, covering understanding of political system, consumption of political information and political participation.
- Effective oversight of electoral process
- Representative and competitive multiparty system, covering institutional and democratic procedures, administrative structures and institutional capacities of political parties.

- Inclusion of women and disadvantaged groups covering legislation against discrimination, participation processes, voter education and political parties' programmes.
- Effective transfer of political power, covering procedures, the role of agencies, public ethos as well as trust of electorate.

#### *Development of a politically active civil society*

- Legal framework on civil society, covering advocacy for legal and regulatory reform as well as public support
- Citizen participation, covering role of civil society organisations, openness of institutions to civil society and the representation of marginalised populations.
- Institutional and financial viability of civil society organisations
- Free flow of information
- Democratic political culture, covering civic education and civic actions.

#### *Transparent and accountable government institutions*

- Government responsiveness to citizens at local level, covering constitutional and legal reform for the devolution of power, local government's capability to act and mechanisms of participation at local level.
- Citizen access to government information, covering legislation and practices of information dissemination as well as civilian competence.
- Ethical practices in government, covering legislation, oversight mechanisms and professionalisation of personnel.
- Civil-military relations supportive of democracy, covering constitutional and legal issues, civilian competence, civilian-military networking and size of military-security forces.
- Effective, independent and representative legislatures, covering internal management systems, legislative capacity to influence policy process, and citizen access to legislative procedures
- Enhanced policy processes in the executive branch, covering rules for policy reform, policy formulation and implementation, intra-governmental consultation, opportunities for public participation and executive leadership.

## 1.2.2 European Democratic Audits

### 1.2.2.1 The Democratic audit of the EU project

The 'Democratic Audit of the European Union' project lasted from October 1999 to October 2002 and was financed by the ESRC 'One Europe or Several?' programme. In order to adapt democratic auditing to the case of the European Union, tests of democratic performance suited to a non-state political system

had to be devised. A significant number of evaluations to date have taken the EU as a single unit of assessment, claims being made that it is the Union that is in 'democratic deficit', rather than specific EU institutions or practices. This "obscures significant variations in democratic performance in a system where opportunities for representation and accountability are institutionalized differently across policies, legal instruments and member states."<sup>9</sup> Consequently, the democratic audit of the EU required the Union to be broken down into a number of assessment units, i.e. the three Pillars, the institutions and various policy instruments. The project's aims were thus formulated as being:

- a) "develop tests that are clearly related to a range of competing justifications for wanting a democratic EU in the first place;
- b) treat any democratic qualities of the Union as being as worthy of assessment as any deficiencies;
- c) replace generalizations about the 'democratic deficit' in the EU with more discriminating measures to ascertain which attributes of democracy deficiencies or achievements are most marked." (ESRC, 2003, p. 8).

The most basic challenge when attempting to assess democracy in the EU is to clarify the "acquis démocratique" of the EU (Lord, 2001, p.642). Does a "democratic EU" meet one set of normative standards or several? Another important question to ask is who should judge the EU's democratic performance? The Democratic Audit of the European Union based its work on four hypotheses, namely:

- the democratic audit criteria must be adapted to popular expectations that European institutions should demonstrate high levels of respect for forms of democratic rule at other levels of governance;
- citizens are likely to expect structures, institutions and key policies to be the subject of authorization, accountability and responsiveness;
- the core principles of popular control and political equality provide clear means of "gatekeeping the admission of supplementary values to the democratic pantheon", and
- the co-habitation of the same territorial space by European integration and other forms of democratic governance does not require significant adjustment of the democratic audit criteria; rather, it creates some convergence in meanings and expectations that citizens attach to democratic rule (Lord, 2000, pp. 5-6).

In order to adapt indices of democratic performance to the specific case of the EU, competing models of European democracy had to be distinguished. An "adequately democratic" EU was determined as being either a "competitive

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/polis/methodology.htm>

democracy”,<sup>10</sup> “consensual democracy”<sup>11</sup> or a “participatory democracy”.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, indices of democratic performance for each model of European democracy were identified. Indices for the competitive democratic model included questions like the extent to which appointment to political office at EU level was determined by popular competitive election, electoral turnout and the development of party systems at European level. Indices for the consensual democracy model included the extent to which cultural differences are acknowledged and minorities protected or the extent to which Union institutions represent different social and ideological interests. Finally indices for participatory democracy were concerned with the role of the media, civil society and the scope of participatory frameworks in decision-making.

As a third step, the units of assessment had to be specified. The indicators would have to be “applied at a minimum of three levels of aggregation” (Lord, 2001, p. 646) to determine the main variations in democratic standards in EU politics. The units of assessment were specified with reference to the different institutional methods of integration:

1. Standard Community method (an independent and supranational Commission acting as agenda-setter, while decisions are taken by a Council of Ministers whose members are indirectly elected);
2. Intergovernmentalism according to the second pillar method (the Council functions as the only authoritative executive authority, and prima facie, accountability is to national parliaments);
3. Intergovernmentalism according to the third pillar model (the Council functions as the executive authority, with nominal accountability to national parliaments, i.e., decisions are subject to a complex comitologie);
4. European integration as an ‘independent fourth branch of government’ (a democratic authoritative process is used to delegate powers to an independent technocracy, subject to a tightly defined mandate, regular reporting requirements, and reserve powers to recall or amend terms of agency);

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<sup>10</sup> based on the majoritarian model in which key executives and legislative positions are either directly or indirectly elected by EU citizens acting as a single electorate.

<sup>11</sup> Outposts are aligned with the preferences of “as many people as possible” (quoted from Lijphart, 1984 in Lord, 2001, p. 645), and emphasizes the corresponding consent of Member States or a fusion of government and non-governmental actors.

<sup>12</sup> European citizenry should either “constitute itself” (quoted from Bellamy and Warleigh, 1998 in Lord, 2001, p. 645), or assume the deliberative qualities of a “public sphere” with equal access for all citizens and opinions (quoted from Habermas, 1989 in Lord, 2001, p. 646), non-coercive deliberation on alternatives, “procedures that decouple decisions from power distributions, open-minded reflection on the preferences of others, and obligations to reason publicly.” (from Rawls, 1997, quoted from Lord, 2001, p. 646).

5. Flexible integration models (cutting across the above-mentioned models, which entails different rights of representation for citizens and variable access to democratic accountability); and
6. Integration beyond the EU (the institutions of European integration provide governance beyond the EU as well as governance beyond the state). (Lord, 2000, pp. 8-10).

Document data was assembled and scored, and case studies on several less researched procedures of EU institutions carried out. Respondents were asked to comment on democratic standards in their own institutions (self-assessments), as well as on other institutions with which they have frequent dealings (peer-reviews). The results of these audits are not yet available, a publication is currently under preparation. The audits followed largely the generic question type developed for the UK Democratic Audit (section 1.2.1.2)

### 1.2.2.2 Charter 88

Charter 88 is an independent organization whose philosophy is that people should have as much say as possible about how they are governed and the choices that are made for them. Charter 88 convened a working group comprising representatives from civil society with expertise on European Union issues to draft democratic tests for Europe to advance a serious debate about the future of the EU with the issue of democracy at the core. The 'Five Democratic Tests for Europe' focused on:

1. Representation (are EU citizens fairly represented in EU institutions?)
2. Participation (are there opportunities for EU citizens to participate in EU affairs?)
3. Rights (are the rights of EU citizens and Member States safeguarded?)
4. Accountability (are EU institutions held accountable for their actions?) and
5. Openness and Transparency (are EU institutions open and transparent?).

To accompany the tests, Charter 88 commissioned *YouGov* to conduct a survey to measure UK public opinion about involvement in the EU and its democratic accountability. Examples of the questions posed are as follows:

Which of the following comes closest to what you think 'fair representation' in the EU should mean? Representatives with real power, elected directly by the people of the EU OR Government ministries acting for the countries they represent; OR A combination of both?

If we were to have an EU President, how should he or she be chosen? Direct elections throughout the EU OR Electoral College comprised of Members of the

European Parliament and MPs from National Parliaments OR The Heads of Government of EU countries OR By the leader of the EU political party with the most seats in the European Parliament

There was a low turnout in the last election for Members of the European Parliament. Which one of the following changes would be most likely to encourage you to vote in future European Parliament elections? A European Parliament with more powers OR More information about how MEPs affect your life OR Stronger party manifestos concerning Europe OR None of these, Etc.

Which of the following sets of rights, if any, would you like to see safeguarded by national governments alone and NOT by the EU as a whole? Tick as appropriate: civil rights (the right to be free from discrimination); social rights (the right to basic health and education); economic (the right to work in any EU country); political (the right to vote and stand for European elections); None (the EU should safeguard them all).

### 1.3 **The EUROPUB Monitoring System: A Democratic Audit for European Multilevel Governance**

#### 1.3.1 **Conceptual and methodological framework in relation to state-of-the-art**

The review of previous work (see section 1.2) shows that existing democratic audits share a number of characteristics with regard to overall approach as well as principles addressed. Key areas like civil liberties or effectiveness of government institutions, fair electoral processes or participation are practically to be found in all audits. A comprehensive analysis of all previous work provides an almost exhaustive reference system with regard to what dimensions are important when constructing a democratic audit. In specifying the EUROPUB monitoring system we have relied on the previous audits in this respect.

The majority of the existing audits tend to formulate the relevant questions in a loose fashion, allowing both for flexibility in interpretation (considering the variation of democratic models and performance criteria) and their reliance on expert judgement or citizen assessments as prime sources of information. This, however, is also one principal weakness of existing audits. The exception in this connection is the analytical framework elaborated for USAID, which for this reason also forms the main methodological reference for the EUROPUB monitoring system.

Multilevel governance or democracy in loose federal systems is not really addressed or only beginning to be addressed by the scientific literature. While

the European Democratic Audit developed by the ESRC recognises the importance of judging democracy at European level from different perspectives or aggregation levels, the framework proposed ends again being primarily institution-oriented, with the European institutions and methods of coordination or integration being at the focus of attention.

The EUROPUB monitoring system takes some steps further. It is based on the following assumptions over and beyond those already entailed in existing democratic audits.

- a) Even though the European Union does not represent a state in the traditional sense, it has assumed state-like functions over time. These have to be assessed from the democratic perspective. The state framework is a useful starting point in this respect provided explicit reference is made to subsidiarity.
- b) Given the multilevel, loose federal organisation of the European Union it is important to consider not only how democracy functions at the European level but also at the national and sub-national levels. A democratic audit should ideally be one that is based on dimensions and indicators that can be assessed at different levels.
- c) Given that Europe follows different methods of models of policy coordination and harmonisation, it is important to take this into account when developing a democratic audit.
- d) Democratic processes need to be judged from two inter-related perspectives: democratic input and policy output. Most existing audits focus on democratic input but policy output is equally important to consider.

### 1.3.2 Key dimensions and intermediate results frameworks

The EUROPUB monitoring system is constructed around the following key dimensions or strategic objectives (following the USAID terminology):

- Subsidiarity
- Coherence and effectiveness of policies
- Effective, independent and representative legislature
- Rule of law and access to justice
- Openness and participation
- Civil, corporate and media responsibility
- Citizenship

Figure 5 visualises the first-level structure of the EUROPUB monitoring system.

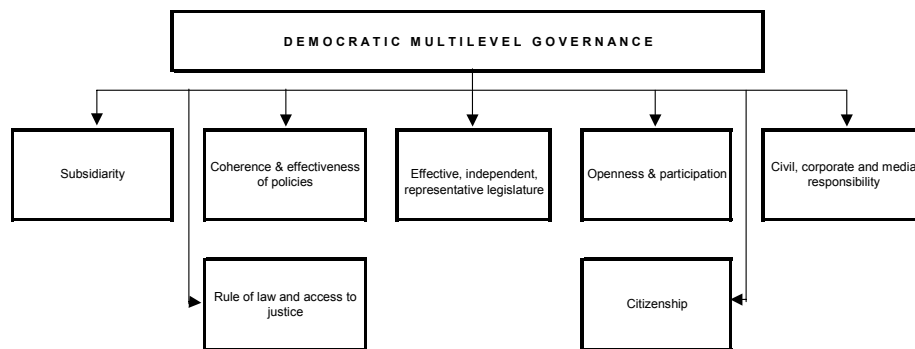


Figure 5. EUROPUB Audit\_Conceptual Framework

For each of the above seven strategic objectives, a series of intermediate objectives and measurable indicators have been developed.

Figure 6 displays the results framework for 'subsidiarity'. This covers the division of powers at European level, the extent of sharing competencies between the European, national and regional levels and the responsiveness to local level.

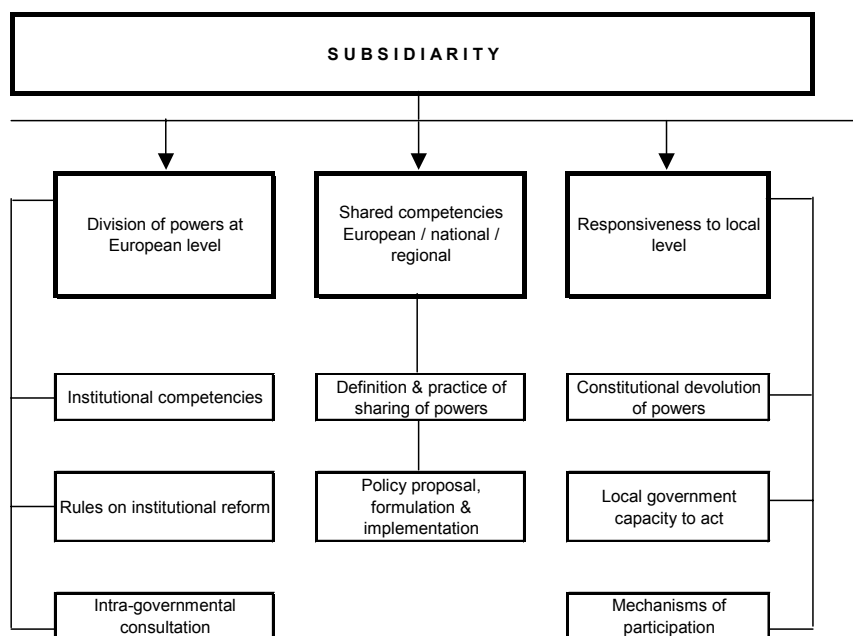


Figure 6. Intermediate results\_Subsubsidiarity

The individual indicators corresponding to subsidiarity and related intermediate objectives can be read in the Excel spreadsheet entitled 'Monitoring System\_Subsubsidiarity' (xls)

Figure 7 displays the results framework for 'coherence and effectiveness of policies'. Here we distinguish between the governance mode and the policy process. Specifying the governance mode of a specific policy sector is of particular importance for the European polity which displays plural modes of governance across policies and levels. The assessment of the policy process must be carried out with reference to the governance model of a specific policy sector.

Indicator dimensions relating to governance mode include: the extent and scope of 'command and control' instruments, market or economic instruments, voluntary agreements, the use of the open method of coordination and policy-mixes. Also relevant in this connection is the role of autonomous agencies as well as evaluation.

Insofar as the policy process is concerned, the audit seeks to scrutinise the role of different functions of government as well as evaluate the different stages of policy-making from the perspective of efficiency and effectiveness as well as openness and participation.

The complete list of the indicators relating to this results framework can be read in the excel spreadsheet 'Monitoring System\_Policies' (xls).

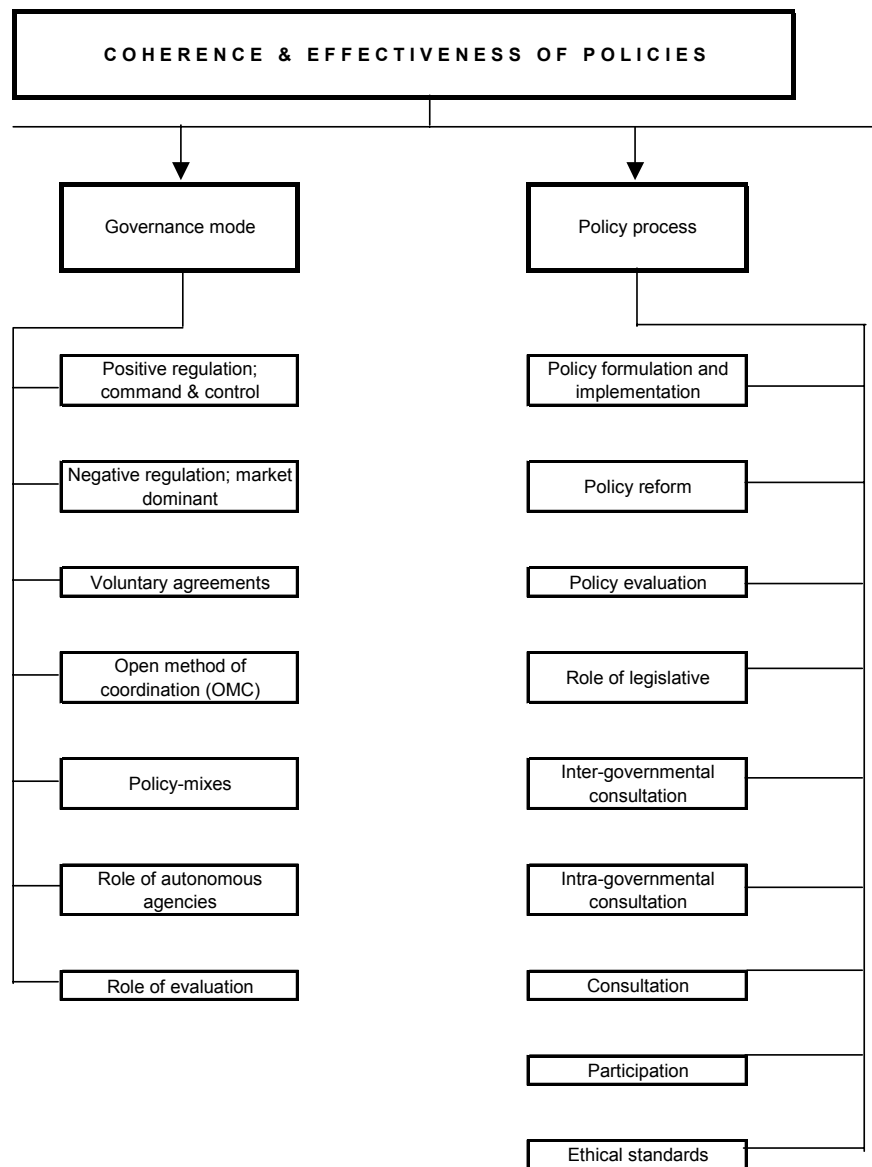


Figure 7. Intermediate Results\_Coherence & Effectiveness of Policies

The next figure (Figure 8) summarises the analytical indicator framework for an effective, independent and representative legislature. Three areas are addressed: the legislative capacity to influence policy, citizens' access to legislative procedures and the role and capacity of political parties (with regard to internal management and democracy, the representation of marginalised groups, political programmes and political elites). The full list of indicators can be read in the excel spreadsheet 'Monitoring System\_Legislative' (xls).

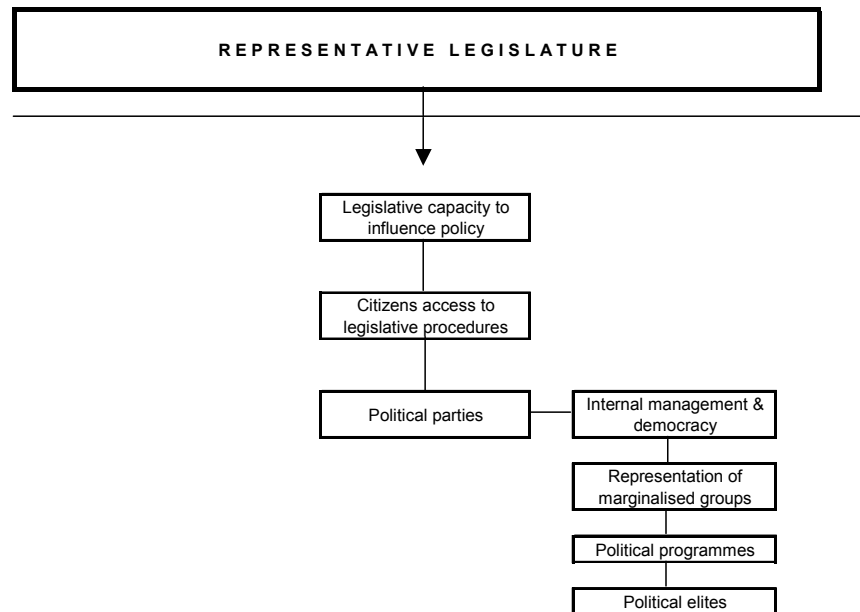


Figure 8. Intermediate Results\_Representative Legislature

Another key dimension for a democratic polity is the rule of law and access to justice. The legal and constitutional framework is referred to repeatedly across all strategic objectives. The indicators under the results framework 'rule of law' (Figure 9) capture the principal issues of human rights, enabling a market-economy and access to justice (see also Monitoring System\_Rule of Law.xls)

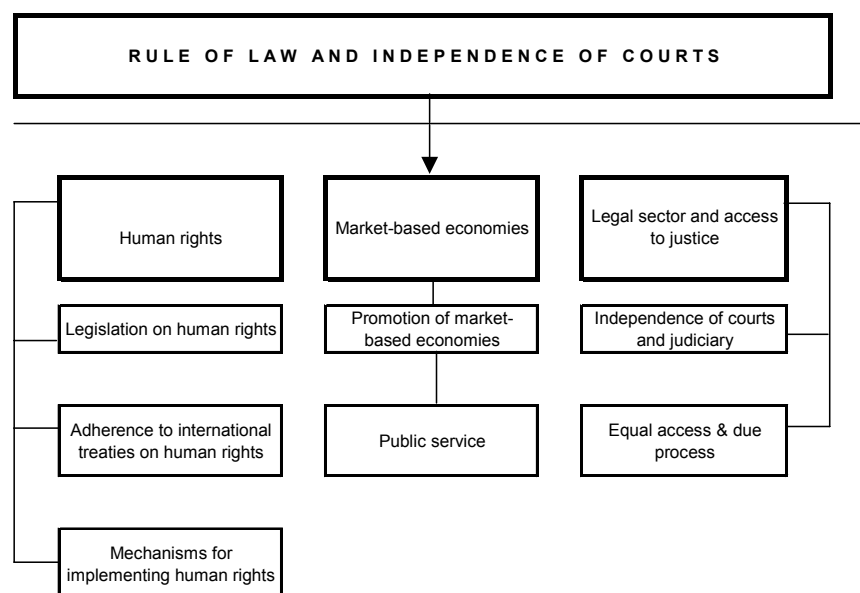


Figure 9. Intermediate Results\_Rule of Law & Access to Justice

Mechanisms for encouraging deliberative democracy are as significant at the European level as mechanisms to promote representation (see Deliverable 1). The results framework 'openness and participation' assembles all indicators related to this aspect of modern democracies.

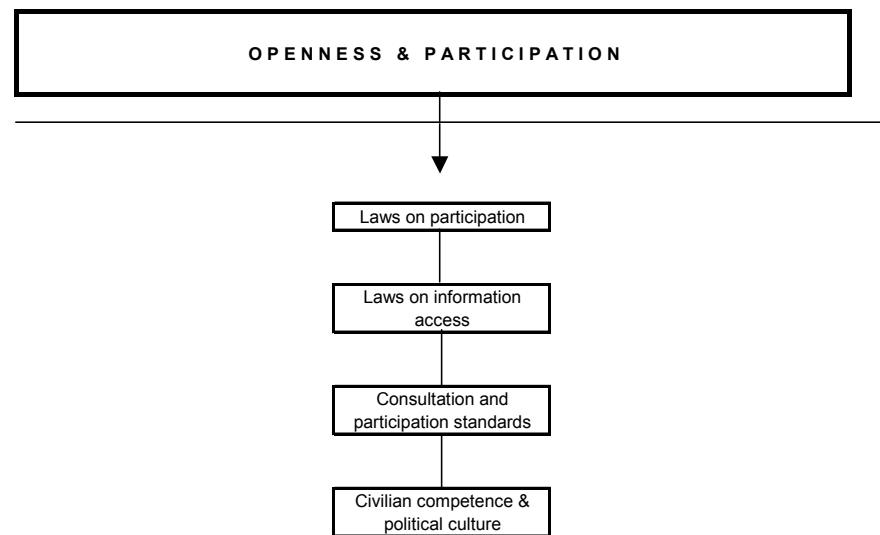


Figure 10. Intermediate Results\_ Openness & Participation

Important with regard to deliberative democracy are: the legal framework on information access and participation; standards on consultation and participation as well as civilian competence and political culture. The full list of indicators relating to this strategic dimension can be read in the excel spreadsheet 'Monitoring System\_Openness and Participation' (xls).

The last two key dimensions relate to political capability as reflected in the self-organisation and operation of the civil society, the economic sector and the media as well as citizens in general.

Figure 11 displays the analytical framework for the strategic objective 'civil, corporate and media responsibility' (see excel spreadsheet Monitoring System\_Civil et al responsibility, xls for full set of indicators).

With regard to the civil society, key issues to be addressed are: the legal framework on civil society, the existence of key civil society organisations (CSO), the representation by civil society organisations of marginalised groups and the institutional and financial capacity of CSOs.

A key concept with regard to the economic sector is that of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The identification and analysis of principal economic lobbies is also of importance.

Finally, turning to the media, key areas to address are: the legal framework on media ownership and management, the existence of plural information sources and prevalence of investigative media.

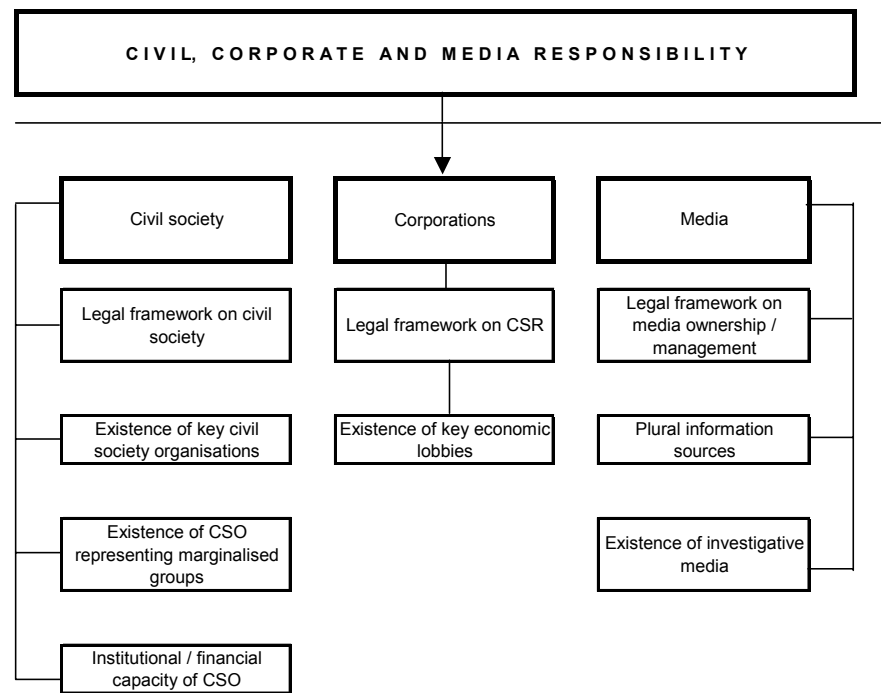


Figure 11. Intermediate Results\_Civil, corporate and media responsibility

Finally, Figure 12 displays the indicator framework on citizenship. Three areas are addressed: inclusive citizenship to cover constitutional and political arrangements as well as the legal framework and practices with regard to migration and multiculturalism; civil and political rights as well as social rights. The full list of indicators relating to citizenship can be read in the excel spreadsheet Monitoring System\_Citizenship (xls).

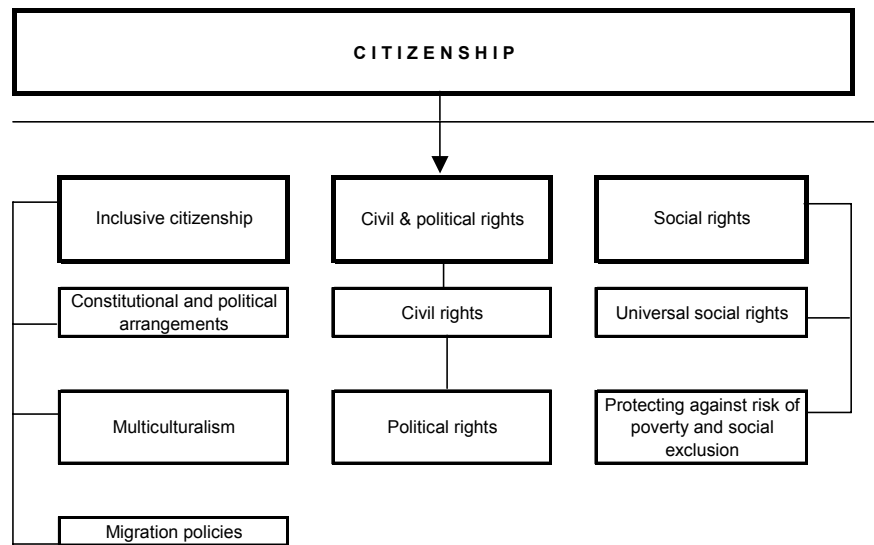


Figure 12. Intermediate Results\_Citizenship

For each of the indicator corresponding to the above strategic and intermediate objectives, the monitoring system provides the following information: definition; unit of analysis; relevance; input required (for assessment); key projects / literature (examples).

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