Overview of Citizen Participation in the Legislative Process

There are opportunities to engage citizens at various stages of the legislative process and these can be coordinated by various actors who are responsible for the process at any given stage. Considering the type of input sought at each stage and the responsibilities of corresponding actors can help determine an appropriate methodology and combination of mechanisms to effectively obtain citizens’ input.

**Oversight**
Explore the impact of existing laws and oversee the actions of the Executive.

**Agenda setting**
Establishment of specific issues as public policy priorities. Responsible actors:
- Political parties developing policy platforms
- Legislators representing constituents
- Committees defining their agenda
- Presidency or board of directors of parliament defining plenary agenda
- Parliamentary caucuses
- Cabinet and public institutions determining government legislative priorities
Possible citizen engagement at this stage: open-ended dialogue allowing the identification of issues and suggestion of legislative solutions.

**Content development of a bill**
Determination of the main components of specific legislation. Responsible actors:
- Cabinet and public institutions proposing bills
- Legislators proposing bills in parliamentary systems
- Committees tasked with creating a report as the basis on which a bill will be drafted
Possible citizen engagement at this stage: input on a specific issue and suggestion of legislative solutions.

**Drafting of a bill**
Legal drafting of the text of a bill. Responsible actors:
- Cabinet, public institutions, and the relevant legal departments drafting bills
- Legislators and legislative counsel of the chamber drafting private members’ bills in parliamentary systems
- Committees and legislative counsel of the chamber drafting bills in committee
Possible citizen engagement at this stage: input on the text to be included within a specific bill.

**Vote on a bill**
Vote to adopt or reject a bill. Responsible actors:
- Legislators voting in plenary on the principle of bill and on the adoption of the bill
Possible citizen engagement at this stage: poll of citizens’ views on a specific bill.

**Review of a bill**
Study of the bill in committee and debate in plenary. Responsible actors:
- Committees considering bills
- Legislators in plenary debate considering the principles, content, and proposed amendments of bills
Possible citizen engagement at this stage: input based on the draft of a specific bill.