

PROBLEM

Corruption



Informal connections and personal favors undermine democratic norms, damaging public trust in the system.

“The politician makes a small exemption for his brother’s construction company to build a parking lot on protected land.”

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Digital Divide



Prioritizing digital civic participation creates inequality. People without stable internet, up-to-date devices, or digital skills are left behind.

“An elderly woman gets a text message: ‘Vote on the city center reconstruction. All voices count. Follow the link.’ She taps it and sees, “Sorry, your browser is out of date”

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Information and Communication Gaps



Civic information is buried in lengthy notices and bureaucratic language, while updates are spread across many channels.

“A young man looks at the assembly participation invitation and sighs: Thirty pages of bureaucratic language? Who reads that?”

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Institutional Failures



The law guarantees services, but local authorities reply “no funds,” so civic rights stay on paper.

“Ana’s son uses a wheelchair. By law he has school transport, yet the council keeps saying ‘not possible, no funds’”

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No Dialogue, No Decision Trail



Officials invite public input but provide no real dialogue or record of its impact. Meetings and surveys tick a box and decisions go ahead unchanged.

“I shared my idea and asked to be kept up to date. Months passed; no update, no follow-up.”

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Participation Barriers



Lack of time due to work and caring duties turns participation into a luxury, even for motivated people.

“She is a single mom, she works 60 hours a week, she works in the hospitality and she has a baby.”

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Social Isolation



People feel distant from each other and politics; disconnection weakens willingness to engage.

“My parents knew everyone on the block and acted together. Now I pass neighbors in silence, and when our park funding was cut, no one organized a response.”

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Participation Paralysis



People engage in debates online but avoid public commitment. Online engagement doesn't translate into collective action.

“We argue all day online, but when I called a meeting and asked to sign the bike lane petition, the neighborhood chat went quiet.”

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Infrastructures for Civic Life



Inaccessible civic spaces turn participation into a privilege. Democracy requires infrastructure that doesn't exclude people by location, schedule, or circumstance.

“The center is four stops away and closes at 18:00. Neighbors met in the courtyard; half couldn't come, rain sent the rest home.”

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Unbalanced Dialogue



Dominant groups take the floor while the process lacks moderation and accessible expertise, so quieter voices fade.

“The invitation promised an ‘open residents dialogue.’ She arrived hopeful. In practice, only fluent, confident voices were heard. She left without speaking.”

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Youth Engagement



Without meaningful engagement in democratic processes, youth cannot develop civic skills or bring fresh perspectives and innovation to democracy.

“A group of young people are building a startup to track politicians’ promises, but they lack support and aren’t taken seriously.”

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