



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament d'Acció Exterior,
Relacions Institucionals i Transparència
**Direcció General
de Participació Ciutadana
i Processos Electorals**

How to organise a citizens' consultation?

Theory, practice... and strategy

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Vision & Mission of Citizen Participation

Vision

The Administration keeps a constant dialogue with citizens.

Mission

To transform the Administration by means of citizen participation, and to transform the Administration to enable citizen participation.

Theory of change (most abridged)

Electoral processes

Direct democracy

Deliberative processes

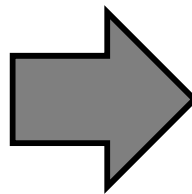


Transformation of
the Administration



New actors & new spaces

Infrastructures



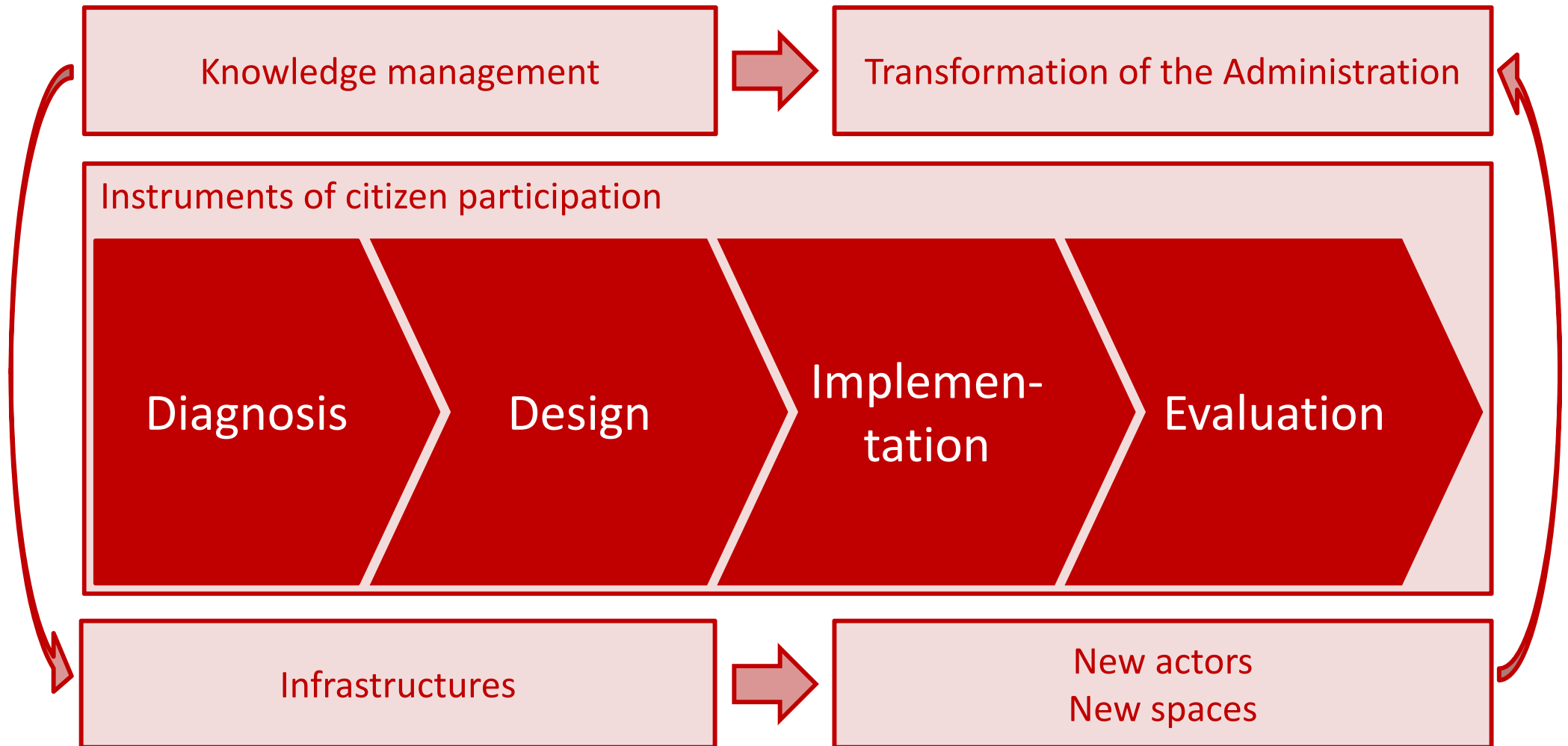
Improve efficacy and efficiency
of public policies

Understanding the complexity of
public decision-making

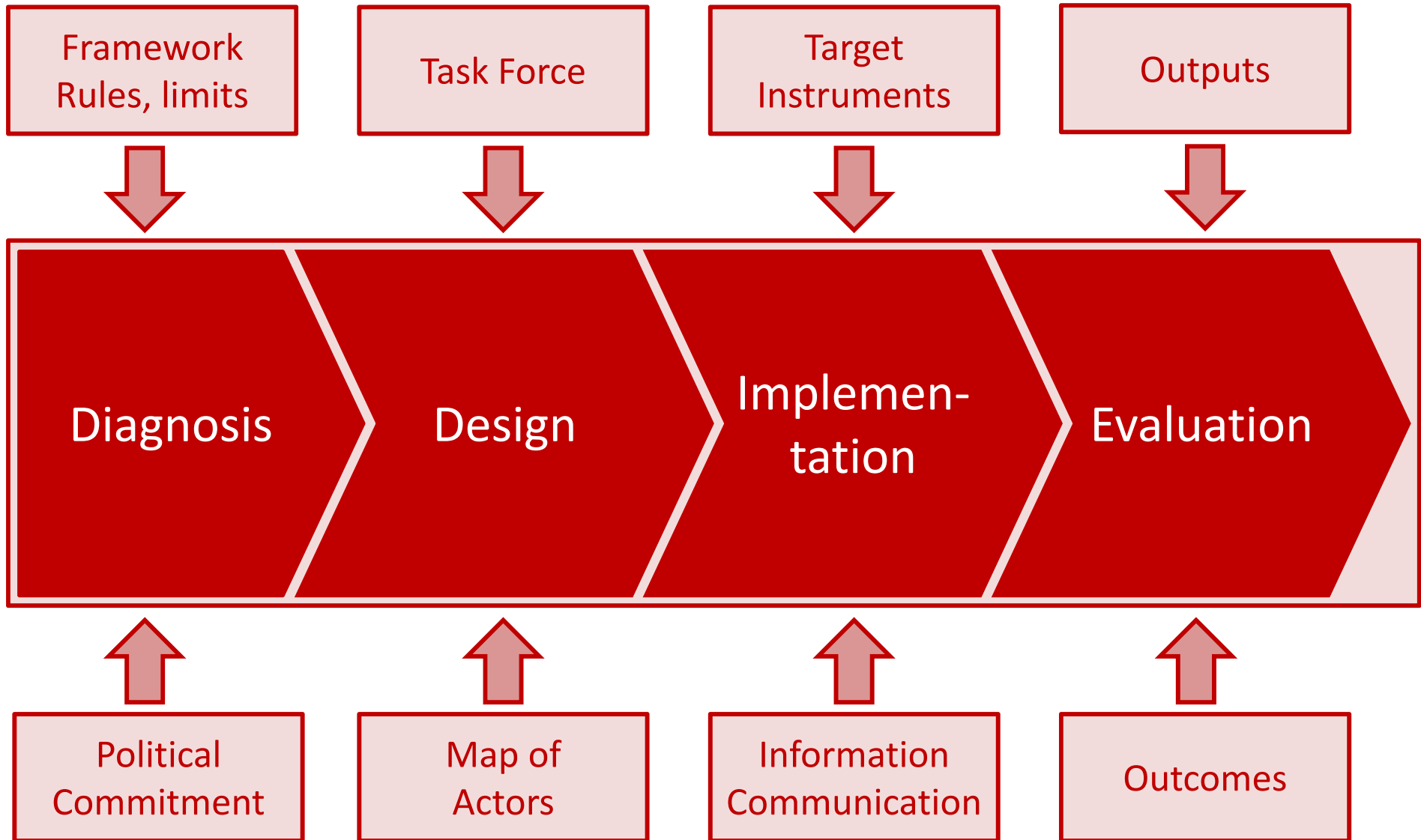
Reduce populism (fascism)

Foster a shift towards a
technopolitical paradigm
of collective action

Value chain



A citizens' consultation in a nutshell



Shifts in meaning (i)

- Legitimization** of (1) participation (2) at any level/commitment.
- Participation means not direct democracy (substitution), but **dialogue** (complementation).

Shifts in meaning (ii)

- “**Horizontalization**” of government-citizen in decision-making.
- **Sovereignty** over (1) agenda setting (2) institutions (3) the system.
- **ICTs** not as substitutes, but as **enablers** and boosters and to increase efficacy and efficiency.

Shifts in norms (i)

- **Institutions** as **neutral** enablers, as rich nodes, as hubs.
- All contributions matter: the power of **granularity** in participation.
- Deep **change of culture** within the Administration.
- (Digital) **infrastructures are public**, including its governance.

Shifts in norms (ii)

- Participation is **binding** and has an impact.
- Transparency** as a PRE-requisite for policy-making.
- Against disenchantment and disaffection: no “listening” but “**engaging**”.

Shifts in power (i)

- Small in size, **significant** in qualitative terms.
- Agenda setting** is now public/open/participated.
- Decrease** of the layers of **intermediation** (openness of the rest).
- Total **disclosure** of the full process and outputs.

Shifts in power (ii)

- Real **devolution** of sovereignty:
 - From institutions to citizens.
 - From civil organizations to individual citizens.
 - From media to participants.
- An **ecosystem** of open participatory governments and citizenries

Conclusions (i)

- Deliberation** becomes the new democracy standard.
- Openness** as the pre-requisite for deliberation.
- Accountability** and legislative footprint to achieve legitimacy.
- Participation for more pluralism and stronger **social capital** (& GOTO 1)

Conclusions (ii)

- Lesser role of intermediation and traditional institutions.
- Major role of informed deliberation.
- Balance between institutions, experts/leaders and individual citizens in a new ecosystem of actors, roles and relationships: networks and communities with liquid and reconfiguring affiliation.



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