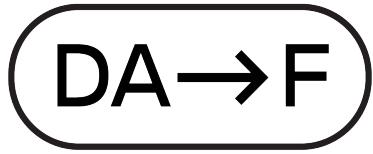
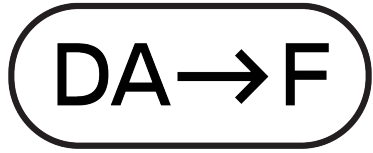


**Democratic  
Action → Fund**



Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy  
Mexico City  
March 3, 2023



Democratic Action Fund team:

**Peter MacLeod** - Founder & Executive Director

**Marjan H. Ehsassi** - Strategic Program Director

$DA \rightarrow F$

Democracy is an audacious proposition.

DA→F

Democracy is either moving forward or falling back.

$DA \rightarrow F$

Democracy is also being tested.

DA → F

Four hundred years to build democratic frameworks such as the universal franchise — and it's still incomplete.

DA → F

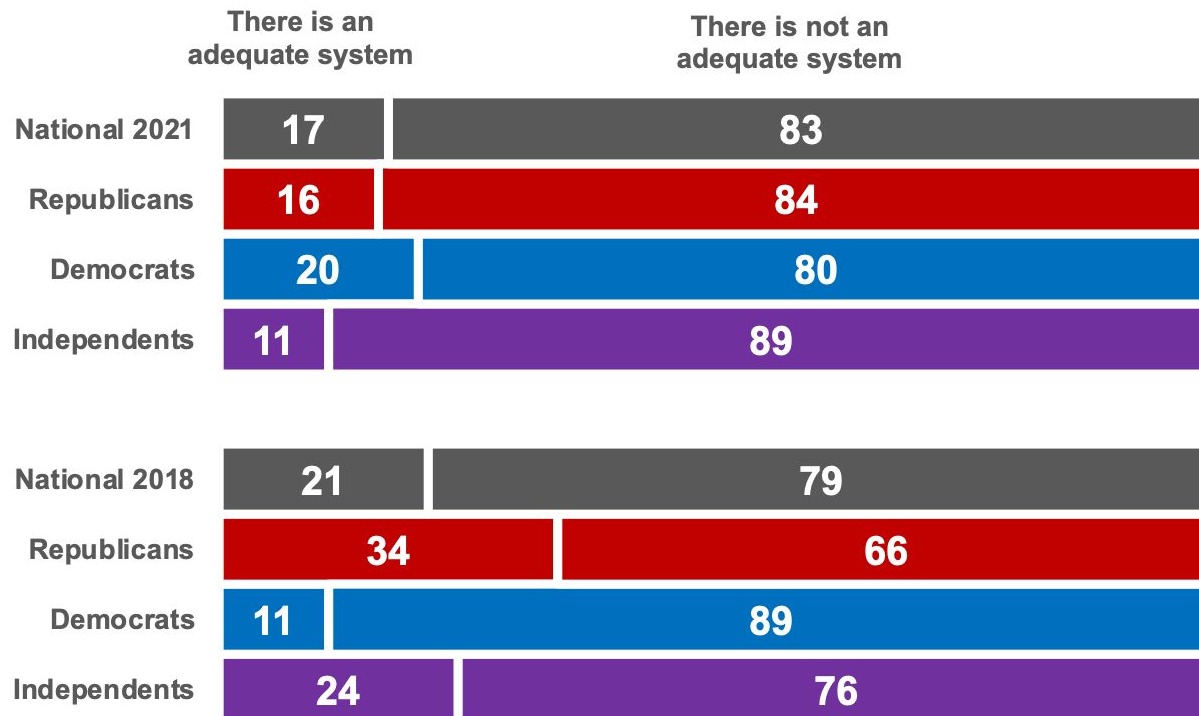
In what ways are these frameworks not democratic?



## “BY” THE PEOPLE

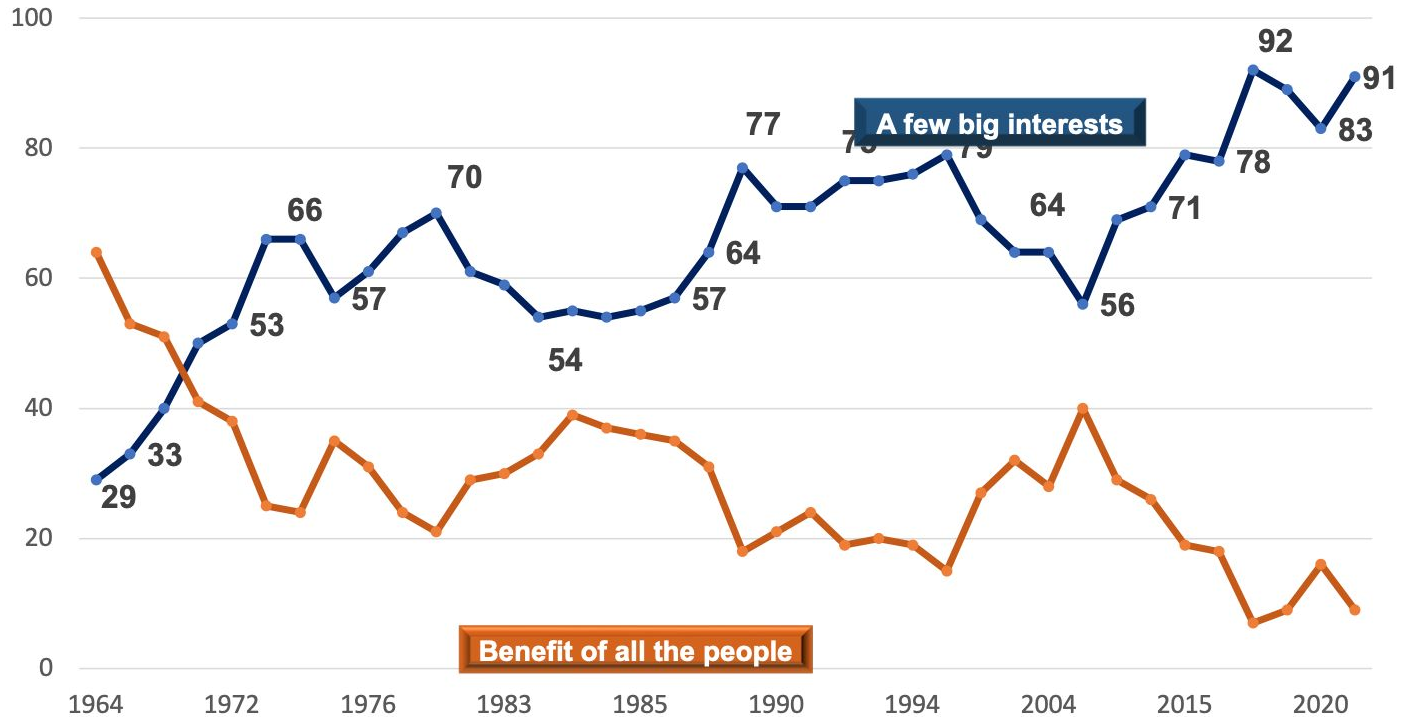
### Adequate System for The People to be Heard (*Program for Public Consultation, 2022*)

Do you believe that currently there is or is not an adequate system in place for the voice of the American people to be heard in Congress?



# “FOR” THE PEOPLE?

Is the government run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or is it run for the benefit of all the people?



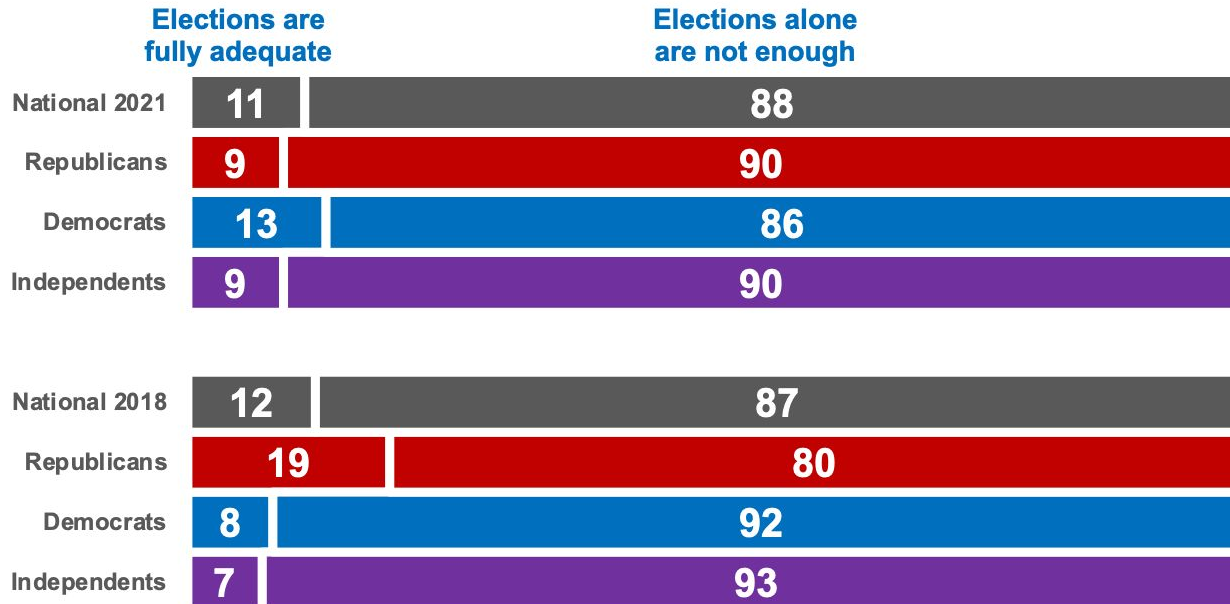
Source: American National Election Survey, CBS News, New York Times, Pew Research Center, Program for Public Consultation

# “OF” THE PEOPLE

## Adequacy of Elections

Do you think in the United States today:

1. Elections have proven to be a fully adequate means for the people to express their views on what the government should do, and to set a direction for the country until the next election.
2. Elections alone are not enough. The government should make an active effort in between elections to find out how the people view the issues the government is dealing with.



$DA \rightarrow F$

What happens in the space between elections?

DA→F

A quiet revolution is underway — to make people part of policy-making — and dramatically extend the privilege of representation.

DA→F

Over the past decade more than 500 Citizens' Assemblies have taken place throughout the world.

Brussels Parliament Deliberative Committee  
(Summer 2021)



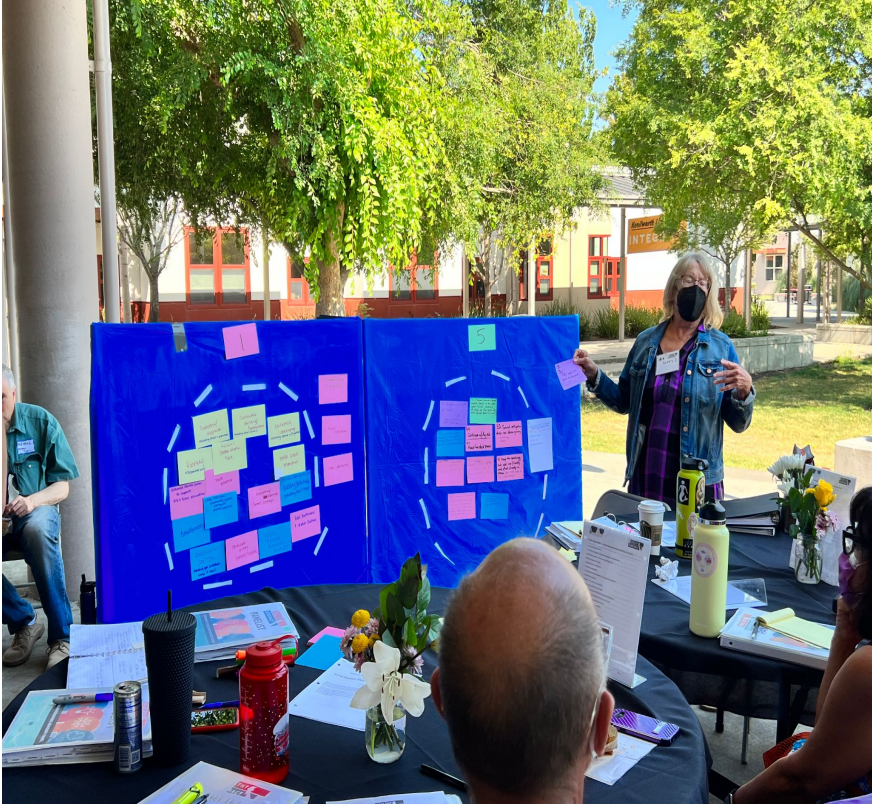
Canadian CADE  
(Fall 2021)



# French Citizens' Assembly on the End of Life (Dec 2022-Present)



# Petaluma (CA) Advisory Panel (Summer 2022)





DA→F

They represent the future of a more inclusive, consensus-based representative democracy

$DA \rightarrow F$

What are some of the trends?

DA → F

Constitutional

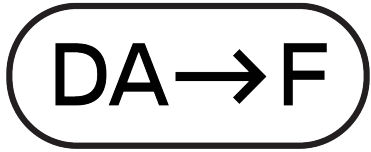
Parliamentary

Regulatory

DA→F

Different levels of government (+ Direct Dem):

- National (Irish Citizens' Assembly on Abortion; French Citizens' Assembly on the End of Life)
- Local (The Parliament of Brussels; City of Paris)
- Supra-national (Conference on the Future of Europe)

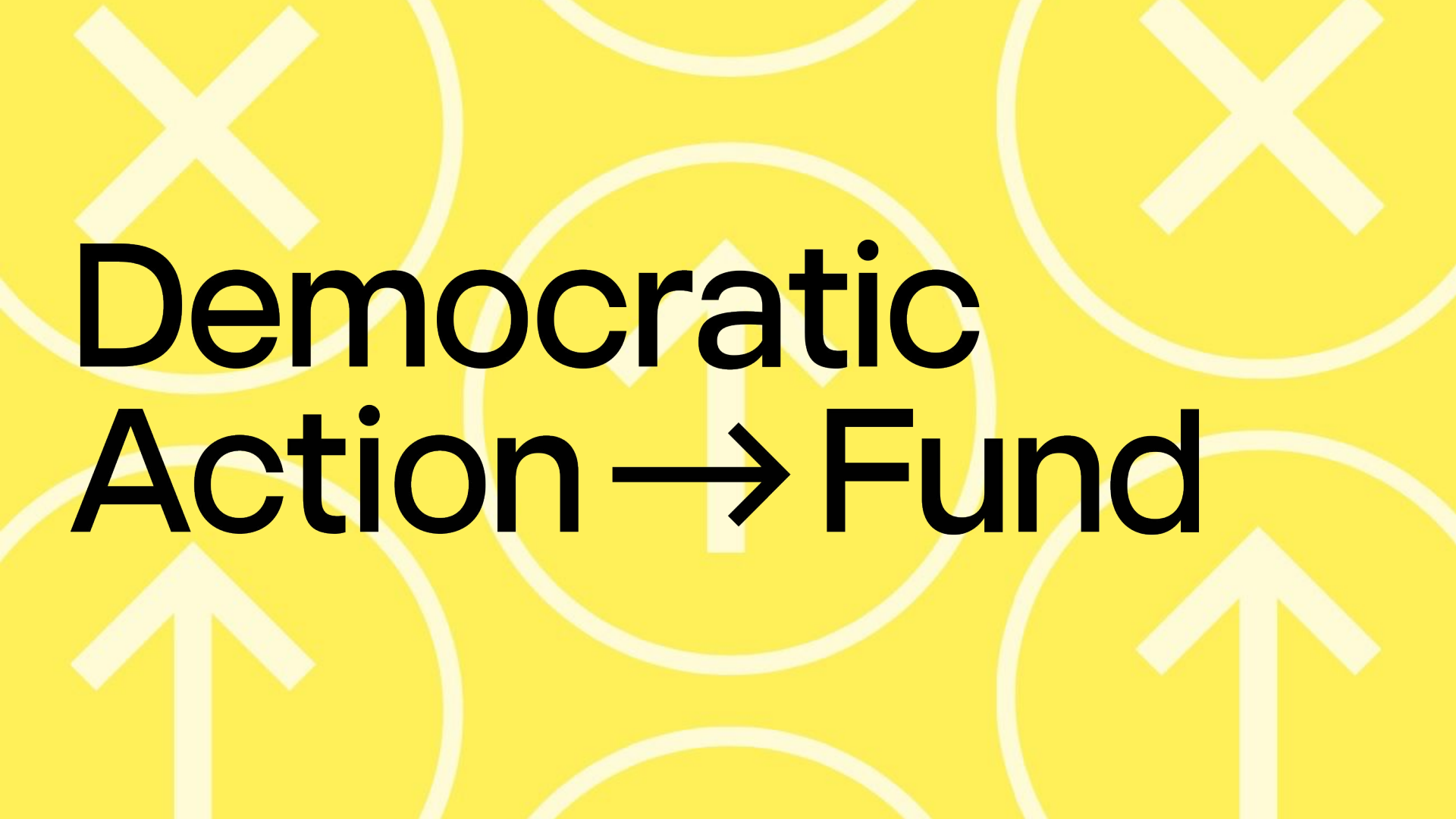


Institutionalized Citizens' Committees  
embedded within governmental bodies:

- *Local Ostbelgien* Parliamentary Model - Citizens' Council and Assembly
- National German Bundestag's - Citizens' Assembly
- City of Paris' Standing Citizens' Assembly

DA→F

How can we ensure that high-quality deliberative processes become a central feature of our democratic culture?



**Democratic  
Action → Fund**

DA→F

Each year, mature democracies spend billions of dollars to conduct elections and operate their councils, legislatures and parliaments.

Add campaign expenses and political communications to the mix, and the annual expenditure grows considerably.



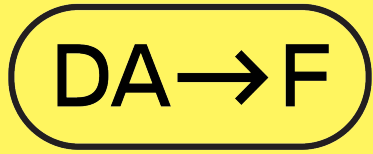
DA→F

Most industries spend 3-5% of their revenues on research and development.

Democracy has no such budget — which, in part, is why the pace of democratic innovation is slow.

DA→F

Democratic Action Funds are a mechanism to tie funding to the electoral budget and invest in democratic innovations that deepen our democratic culture in between elections.



We're asking elected governments each year to commit 5% of what they spend to run their elections to fund democratic innovations like high-quality deliberative processes that can meaningfully engage thousands of residents and citizens.

DA→F

We're focussed on cultivating the space between elections for more participation and deeper engagement.

# DA→F

As an example:

Canadian election: \$500m

Canadian DAF: \$25m/year

Ontario election: \$70m

Ontario DAF: \$3.5m/year

Toronto election: \$12m

Toronto DAF: \$600k/year

DA → F



**A Randomly Selected Committee of Citizens** Review and Assess the Proposals from government bodies

Training  
Grant-making  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Research and Development of Best Practices

Awards are made on a cost-shared basis with successful government proponents

DA→F

Types of Awards:

- Reference Panels
- Deliberative Town Halls
- Citizen Juries
- Deliberative Polling
- Digital Platforms for Citizen Engagement
- Citizens' Assemblies (+ tied to direct dem)

# Support from leading democracy organizations

**G1000**

**MASSLBP**



**MEHR  
DEMOKRATIE**

new  
**DEMOCRACY**



**Berggruen**  
Institute



**DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL**

**-FIDE**

FEDERATION FOR INNOVATION  
IN DEMOCRACY - EUROPE

**WE DO  
DEMOCRACY**



DA → F

[demafund.org](https://demafund.org)