

**Decidim -
Your platform for building an
active local community**





Introduction

Welcome to the world of modern public participation, where citizens increasingly expect to have real influence on decisions made at the local level. This raises the question of how to leverage new technologies to create a platform for effective dialogue and co-decision-making on community matters while building social capital.

The answer to these challenges is Decidim—a revolutionary tool that transforms public participation and local government management. In this ebook, we will introduce you to what Decidim is, the benefits it brings to local governments and citizens, and how it can help build an engaged local community.

Whether you are a municipal representative, a nonprofit professional, or simply someone interested in e-participation, you will find valuable information and inspiration here about modern, transparent, and effective local government management.



Chapter 1:

Public participation in the 21st century – challenges and opportunities

The Importance of public participation

Public participation is the foundation of modern local democracy. It allows citizens to influence decisions that directly affect them and contributes to building a sense of community and responsibility for the local space.

Public participation:

Builds social capital: By engaging in local affairs, citizens establish relationships, learn cooperation, and build mutual trust. This leads to the creation of stronger, more integrated communities.

Increases trust in authorities: When citizens have real influence on decisions, their trust in the local government grows. The transparency of decision-making processes strengthens the legitimacy of local authorities.

Allows for better alignment of decisions with citizens' needs: No one knows local problems better than the citizens themselves. Their involvement leads to more accurate and accepted solutions.

Strengthens the sense of responsibility for the hometown: Participation makes citizens feel like co-managers of their local community, translating into greater care for the common good.

Promotes civic education: Active participation in decision-making processes increases citizens' knowledge about how the government functions and democratic mechanisms.

Barriers to civic engagement

Despite the obvious benefits of public participation, we still observe relatively low levels of citizen engagement in local affairs. This phenomenon has complex roots and results from a range of factors, both individual and systemic.

Understanding these barriers is essential for developing effective strategies to overcome them and increase participation, especially among traditionally less active or excluded groups.

The most common obstacles that discourage citizens from actively participating in local community life are:

- ▶ Low level of knowledge about participation mechanisms
- ▶ Lack of time to engage in traditional forms of participation
- ▶ Feeling of helplessness and the belief that „nothing will change anyway.“
- ▶ Technological barriers, particularly for older citizens
- ▶ Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities
- ▶ Insufficient representation of different social groups.

Modern technologies as a tool to increase engagement

The development of technology opens up new opportunities to overcome these barriers. Modern solutions can significantly facilitate citizens' involvement in local affairs while increasing the efficiency and reach of participatory processes.

They offer a range of possibilities that can encourage a broader group of local community members to engage in public participation:

Accessibility of information: Online platforms provide easy access to documents and data 24/7.

Facilitated communication: Citizens can submit ideas and comments without leaving home.

Co-decision-making opportunities: Online voting or participatory budgeting engages a wider audience.

Inclusivity: Online tools can be adapted to the needs of different groups, including people with disabilities.

Civic education: Interactive platforms can serve as tools to increase knowledge about democratic processes.

Benefits for local governments from implementing IT solutions

Implementing modern technological solutions in the area of public participation can become a catalyst for positive changes in the functioning of local administration.

Local governments that decide to implement such tools can expect tangible benefits:

Time and cost savings: Automating consultation processes reduces administrative costs and the time needed to organize traditional forms of participation.

Improved image: Modern tools build the image of an open and innovative local government, which can contribute to increasing the community's attractiveness for citizens and investors.

Increased operational efficiency: Data analysis allows for a better understanding of citizens' needs and making more accurate decisions.

Higher citizen engagement: Easier access to participatory tools translates into greater activity and representativeness of citizens' opinions.

Greater transparency: Digital tools enable better tracking of decision-making processes, increasing trust in local authorities.

Positive environmental impact: Digitizing participatory processes contributes to reducing paper usage and emissions related to transportation.



Chapter 2: Decidim – A revolution in public participation

What is Decidim?

Decidim is a public participation platform created with modern local governments in mind. It enables citizens, organizations, and local communities to actively participate in various participatory processes.

The platform was originally developed in 2016 in Barcelona in response to the need to increase transparency and citizen engagement in decision-making processes. Since then, it has gained popularity worldwide and is currently used in many cities such as New York, Helsinki, Warsaw and Milan.

As a result, Decidim regularly ranks high in international rankings of e-participation tools, confirming its effectiveness and innovativeness.

Main advantage of Decidim

The main advantage of Decidim is its openness. As open-source software, it publicly shares its source code, which anyone can use (and modify if necessary). This approach allows continuous development and adaptation of the platform to the needs of different communities.

Key Features of Decidim:

Open source: The tool is freely available with no licensing fees.

Scalability and modular structure: The platform can be adapted to various needs, making it an excellent fit for local governments of any size.

Ease of use: The platform has an intuitive interface that is user-friendly for both users and administrators.

Continuous development: The software is constantly improved by an international community.

Transparency: The platform ensures transparency of processes.

Moreover, Decidim is not just a tool but also an international community engaged in the development of digital democracy (more information about this community and the platform itself can be found on the official Decidim.org website).

Currently, the development of the platform is managed by the democratic association "Decidim Free Software Association." It is responsible for managing the project's community and collaborates with a wide range of programmers, researchers, and users under the Metadecidim initiative. This ensures that Decidim is continuously enhanced and adapted to changing needs.

Furthermore, the platform is used not only at the city level but also across entire countries and institutions. Its versatility and flexibility make it an effective tool for increasing public participation and building more democratic communities at various levels.

Main modules of the platform

Decidim offers a range of modules that can be tailored to the specific needs of a local government:



Process module:

allows the creation and management of various participatory processes,

supports social consultations,

includes tools such as surveys, idea collection, meetings, etc.

it allows flexible configuration of process stages.



Participatory budget module:

manages the entire participatory budget process online, enabling project submissions, verification, voting, and monitoring their implementation,

ensuring transparency and ease of participation for citizens.



Initiatives module:

allows citizens to submit civic initiatives,

supports collecting signatures for ideas,

enables tracking the status of submitted initiatives.



Teams module:

facilitates collaboration and communication within working groups, committees, councils,

supports organizing meetings and managing documents,

allows creating internal and public discussion spaces.



Additional functionalities and capabilities:

integration with maps and other tools,

managing meetings and events,

notification and newsletter systems,

an educational module to increase knowledge about democratic processes.

Advantages of using the platform

These characteristics and the structure of Decidim translate into many specific benefits:

Open source code:

No licensing fees

Ability to customize the tool to specific needs

Transparency of operation

Modularity and flexibility:

Ability to select and configure only the needed modules

Easy scaling of the platform as needs grow

Adapting to the specifics of different local governments

Integration with other systems

Ease of use and management:

Intuitive user interface
 Clear administrative panel
 Access to training materials

Time and cost savings:

Reduction of administrative costs
 Optimization of participatory processes

Security and GDPR compliance:

Guarantee of personal data security
 Compliance with GDPR requirements

Environmental aspect:

Reduction of paper usage
 Decreased need for transportation related to traditional forms of participation

Continuous development and community support:

Access to updates
 Ability to submit suggestions
 Leveraging the knowledge and experience of other users

Innovative image:

Building the image of a modern and open local government
 Increasing the community's attractiveness for citizens and investors

Transparency:

Increased transparency of decision-making processes
 Building trust between authorities and citizens

Building social capital:

Strengthening social bonds
 Creating an active local community

Examples of Decidim platform applications

Decidim has been successfully implemented in many places around the world:



New York: Backing various processes, including participatory budgeting and public consultations.



Helsinki: Utilization of the platform for managing the participatory budget.



Barcelona: Implementation of the platform across a wide range of participatory processes.



Milan: Deployment of the platform to support civic initiatives.



Warsaw: Decidim has been used for conducting social consultations and the participatory budget.



Gdynia: The platform has been used for managing social consultations and advisory bodies.

The platform also enables easy creation and management of petitions, ensuring transparency and the ability to track the progress of each initiative. For example, in France, Decidim has been integrated with the official website of the National Assembly, allowing citizens to create, sign, and track petitions that are then reviewed by parliamentary committees (petitions.assemblee-nationale.fr).



Chapter 3:

Decidim step by step – implementation guide for municipalities

Implementing Decidim requires thorough preparation and a well-thought-out strategy. Below, we present a step-by-step guide on how to effectively implement this solution in your municipality, considering technical, social, and organizational aspects.

Stage 1: Identifying needs and goals

Before starting the implementation, your main task is to determine what resources you have and what exactly you expect from the platform:

Analysis of current participatory processes:

- ▶ Which processes require citizen engagement?
- ▶ What forms of community consultation are currently used?
- ▶ Which areas need improvement?
- ▶ What is the level of citizen engagement?
- ▶ Which social groups are underrepresented?

Defining expectations for the platform:

- ▶ Which processes do you want to transfer to Decidim?
- ▶ What new forms of participation do you want to introduce?
- ▶ Which citizen groups do you particularly want to engage?
- ▶ How can Decidim contribute to building social capital?

Setting goals to achieve:

- ▶ Quantitative (e.g., increasing the number of consultation participants by 30%)
- ▶ Qualitative (e.g., improving the quality of proposals in participatory budgeting)
- ▶ Social (e.g., greater engagement of marginalized groups)
- ▶ Economic (e.g., reducing administrative costs by 15%)
- ▶ Environmental (e.g., reducing paper usage by 40%)

Stage 2: Selecting modules and configuring the platform

In the next stage, you tailor Decidim to your municipality's specific needs:

Choosing the appropriate modules:

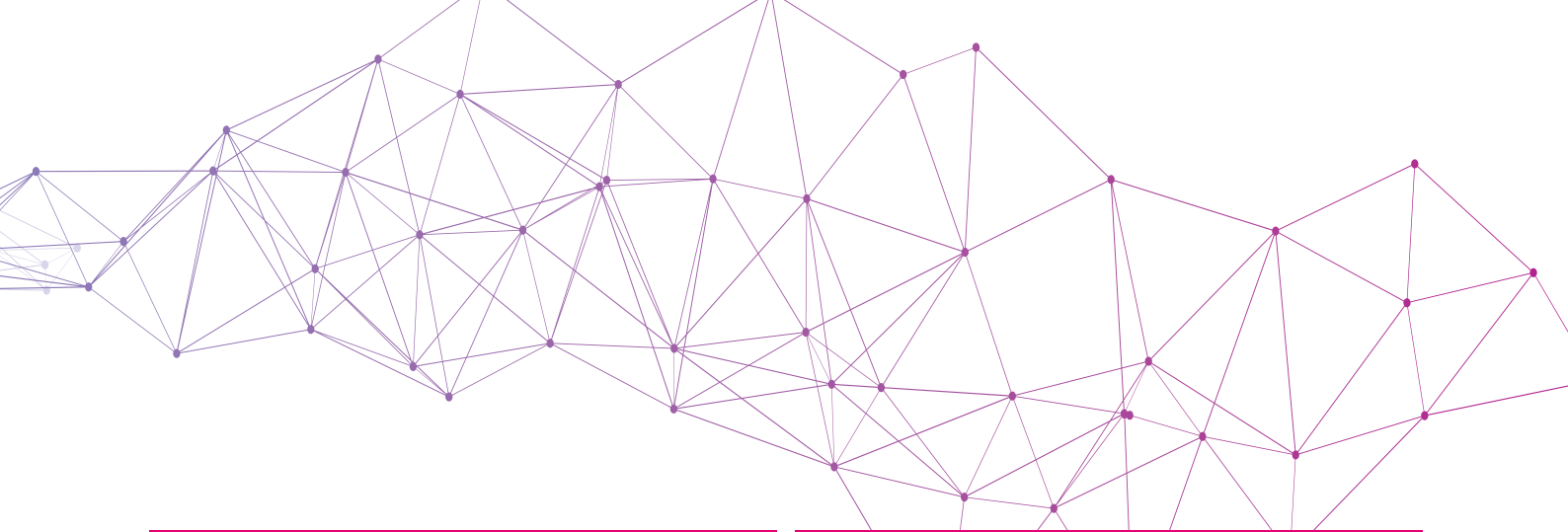
- ▶ Processes (conducting community consultations)
- ▶ Participatory budgeting (submitting, verifying, voting on, and implementing projects)
- ▶ Initiatives (collecting ideas and petitions)
- ▶ Committees (collaborating within working groups or advisory bodies)

Configuring platform settings:

- ▶ Adapting the appearance to the municipality's visual identity
- ▶ Setting the language and local parameters
- ▶ Configuring the notification system

Designing the user interface:

- ▶ Ensuring intuitive navigation
- ▶ Adapting to the needs of different user groups (e.g., seniors)
- ▶ Designing to meet digital accessibility requirements compliant with WCAG



Stage 3: Integrating with existing IT systems

To fully leverage Decidim's potential, it is worthwhile to integrate it with your existing IT infrastructure:

Connecting with systems used by the municipality:

- ▶ Integration with document management systems (e.g., EZD RP)
- ▶ Maps (municipal or publicly available like OpenStreetMap)
- ▶ User verification and registration systems

Integrating with databases:

- ▶ Citizen registry (compliant with data protection regulations)
- ▶ Database of city projects and investments

Ensuring data security:

- ▶ Implementing appropriate security protocols
- ▶ Conducting system penetration tests
- ▶ Regular security audits

Stage 4: Training and support for users

Effective implementation of Decidim also requires proper preparation of both employees and citizens:

Training for employees:

- ▶ Operating the platform from the administrative side
- ▶ Managing participatory processes
- ▶ Data analysis and reporting
- ▶ Principles of communication with citizens

Workshops for citizens:

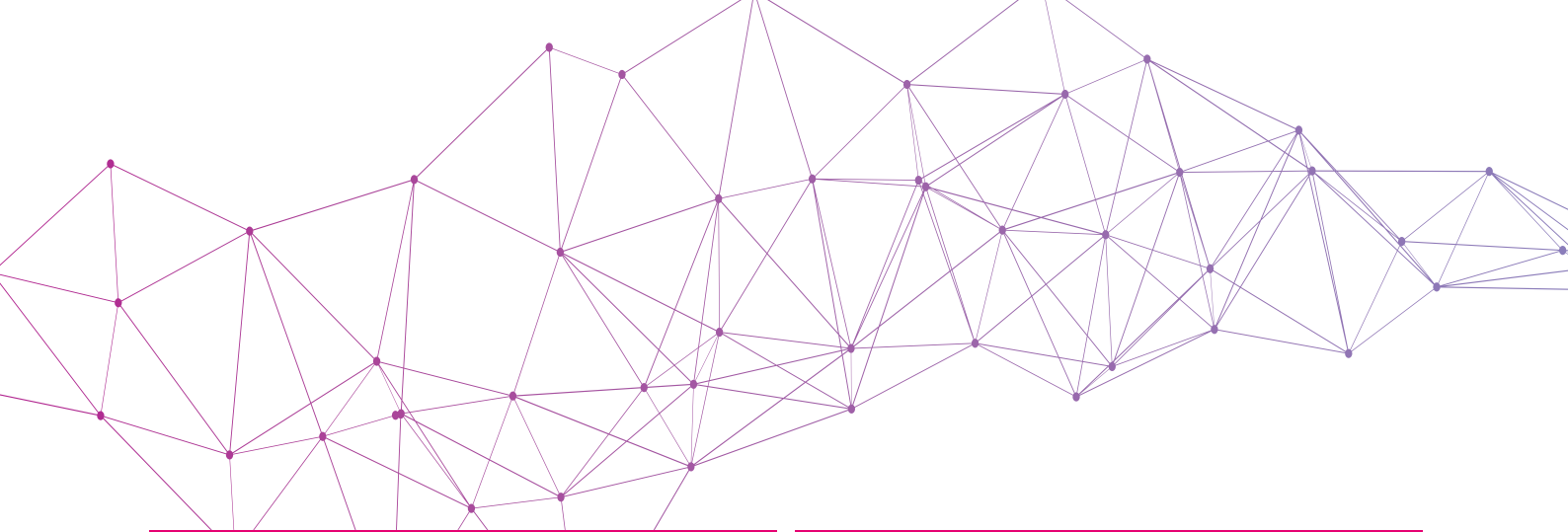
- ▶ How to use Decidim
- ▶ Available opportunities for engagement
- ▶ How to effectively submit proposals and participate in voting
- ▶ The importance of public participation for local development

Preparing educational materials:

- ▶ User manuals
- ▶ Instructional videos
- ▶ FAQs

Providing ongoing technical support:

- ▶ Service maintenance (SLA)
- ▶ Regular system updates
- ▶ Helpdesk for users
- ▶ Support for users with limited digital skills



Stage 5: Promoting the platform and building citizen engagement

Implementation alone is not enough. It is also crucial to encourage citizens to actively use Decidim:

Developing a promotion strategy:

- ▶ Information campaigns in local media
- ▶ Utilizing social media platforms
- ▶ Organizing promotional events
- ▶ Collaborating with local opinion leaders and NGOs

Encouraging citizens to use the platform:

- ▶ Contests and rewards for active users
- ▶ Highlighting the real impact of participation on municipal decisions
- ▶ Regularly informing citizens about new engagement opportunities
- ▶ Special initiatives targeted at less engaged groups

Monitoring and evaluation:

- ▶ Regularly surveying user satisfaction
- ▶ Analyzing platform usage statistics
- ▶ Continuously improving functionalities based on feedback
- ▶ Assessing the platform's impact on building social capital

Stage 6: Development and optimization

To achieve the best results after implementing the platform, it's worthwhile to treat the implementation as an ongoing process that can be gradually improved:

Regularly analyzing effectiveness:

- ▶ Studying the level of engagement of different social groups
- ▶ Evaluating the impact on decision-making processes in the municipality
- ▶ Analyzing time and cost savings

Introducing new functionalities:

- ▶ Responding to changing citizen needs
- ▶ Implementing innovative participatory tools
- ▶ Adapting to new technological trends

Sharing experiences:

- ▶ Sharing best practices with other municipalities
- ▶ Collaborating with experts in public participation



Chapter 4: Applications of artificial intelligence in Decidim

Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most rapidly developing areas of technology, becoming an increasingly important element of our daily lives. Therefore, Atende enables the expansion of Decidim's capabilities by integrating AI.

Integrating AI with Decidim opens up new, exciting possibilities that can significantly impact the quality and efficiency of participatory processes in our local communities. Below, we show how, with Atende's help, you can enhance the capabilities of this solution.

Content analysis using AI

One area where AI can significantly improve Decidim's functionality is the analysis of user-generated content. Traditionally, moderation and content verification are time-consuming tasks that require significant effort from administrators.

AI can be trained to recognize and flag profanity in various linguistic contexts. This allows the system to automatically warn users about inappropriate language before publishing content or direct such posts for additional verification by moderators.

More advanced AI models can analyze the context of statements and recognize emotions and intentions in comments, identifying subtle forms of hate speech that simple keyword filters might miss. This makes the platform a safe place for expressing opinions and exchanging ideas.

AI can be used to automatically verify whether the content published by users complies with the platform's regulations. The system can check not only for prohibited words or phrases but also analyze the structure and context of statements to ensure that posts are fully appropriate.

Speed and efficiency: AI can analyze vast amounts of data in real-time, significantly speeding up the moderation process.

Consistency: Unlike humans, AI always applies the same criteria, ensuring consistency in content evaluation.

Scalability: As the number of users and the volume of generated content grow, AI can easily scale its performance without the need to proportionally increase the number of moderators.

Reducing administrative burden: Automatic content analysis allows administrators to focus on more complex tasks that require human judgment.

Improving discussion quality: Quickly detecting and removing inappropriate content helps maintain high-quality discussions on the platform.

AI support in the participatory budgeting process

Participatory budgeting is one of Decidim's functionalities, allowing citizens to directly decide on the allocation of a portion of public funds. Integrating AI into this area can significantly streamline the entire process by automating much of the clerical work.

Firstly, AI can be used for the initial verification of submitted projects for compliance with regulations. The system can check, for example, whether a project meets basic criteria such as:

- ▶ Location in the appropriate area of the city
- ▶ Compliance with municipal competencies
- ▶ No violation of intellectual property rights

This way, many projects that do not meet basic requirements can be automatically rejected or directed for additional verification, significantly reducing the workload of reviewers.

AI can also support the project cost estimation process by analyzing historical data on the costs of similar initiatives and price lists prepared for participatory budgeting. The system can:

- ▶ Suggest approximate costs for individual project elements
- ▶ Identify potential gaps in the budget
- ▶ Compare estimates with similar projects from previous cycles

Such support can help both applicants better plan their budgets and reviewers assess the realism of proposed costs. Moreover, based on the analysis of previous projects and standard practices, AI can suggest elements that should be included in the budget.

The benefits of using AI in the participatory budgeting process are numerous:

Improved quality of submitted projects: AI suggestions can help applicants better prepare their proposals, including all necessary elements.

Accelerated verification process: Automatic initial verification and support in cost estimation can significantly shorten the time needed to evaluate projects.

Greater transparency: Using AI for project cost estimation can increase the sense of fairness and objectivity in cost assessments.

Cost optimization: With more accurate estimates and complete budgets, the implementation of selected projects can be more cost-effective.

Applicant education: AI suggestions can help citizens better understand the process of planning and executing public projects.

Data analysis and summary using AI

One of the biggest challenges in participatory processes is analyzing and interpreting the vast amounts of data generated by users. AI can significantly streamline this process by providing valuable insights and aiding decision-making.

AI can analyze data from the entire participatory budgeting cycle, creating comprehensive reports that include:

- ▶ Statistics on the number and types of submitted projects
- ▶ Trend analysis in submitted proposals
- ▶ Mapping projects in the context of the needs of different districts or social groups
- ▶ Comparison with previous cycles and identification of changes in citizens' preferences

In the case of community consultations or other forms of opinion gathering, AI can help by:

- ▶ Categorizing submitted comments and requests
- ▶ Identifying main topics and issues raised by citizens
- ▶ Analyzing sentiment in statements
- ▶ Detecting recurring themes and proposals.

Using AI for data analysis offers numerous benefits:

Time savings: Automatic data analysis can save hundreds of hours that would otherwise be needed for manual processing.

Deeper understanding of citizens' needs: AI can detect subtle patterns and trends that might be missed with traditional analysis.

Decision-making support: Comprehensive reports generated by AI can serve as valuable information sources for decision-makers.

Increased transparency: Automatically generated summaries can be easily shared with citizens, enhancing transparency.

Continuous process improvement: Analyzing historical data allows for continuous improvement of participatory processes in future cycles.

Virtual chat supporting citizens

Introducing an AI-powered chatbot can significantly enhance user experience on the Decidim platform by providing instant assistance and support. Such a chatbot can be configured to utilize the existing knowledge base and FAQ list, enabling it to quickly and accurately respond to typical user inquiries.

The chatbot can assist users in various areas, such as:

- ▶ Information about current participatory processes
- ▶ Explanations of rules and guidelines
- ▶ Instructions for using different platform features

The chatbot can also help users navigate the platform by suggesting appropriate sections or features based on user needs. For example:

- ▶ Directing users to relevant submission forms
- ▶ Showing where to find voting results
- ▶ Assisting in the registration or login process

Additionally, based on users' interaction history with the platform, AI can offer personalized recommendations, such as:

- ▶ Reminders about upcoming deadlines in participatory processes
- ▶ Suggestions for consultation topics relevant to the user

It is also important to note that the chatbot can collect user feedback about the platform, aiding in its continuous improvement.

Main Benefits of Implementing an AI-Based Chatbot:

24/7 availability: Users can receive assistance at any time.

Quick responses: Immediate answers increase user satisfaction.

Reducing support team burden: Routine inquiries can be handled automatically.

Scalable support: AI can handle multiple inquiries simultaneously, which is especially important during periods of increased activity.

Continuous learning: The system can be continuously improved based on new interactions.

Application	Area	Recipient	Benefits
Content analysis for profanity	Comments, feedback, requests	All users	Correct form submission, reduced moderation, content compliant with system rules
Content analysis for hate speech	Comments, feedback, requests	All users	Correct form submission, reduced moderation, content compliant with system rules
Content analysis for compliance	Comments, feedback, requests	All users	Correct form submission, reduced moderation, content compliant with system rules
Project compliance verification	Participatory budgeting	Project submitters	Proper project submission, higher chances of approval, less reviewer involvement
Project cost estimation and suggestions	Participatory budgeting	Project submitters	Higher chances of approval, less reviewer involvement, more cost-optimized projects
Project assessment support	Participatory budgeting	Reviewers	Time optimization
Summary generation	Participatory budgeting	Administrators	Time optimization, broader context analysis with trend identification
Citizen feedback analysis	Processes, community consultations	Administrators/ Coordinators	Time optimization, broader analysis of content, generation of aggregate summaries
Online chat (knowledge base and faq)	Public page	All users	Easier information retrieval without involving internal staff

Implementing AI in Decidim – practical steps

To successfully integrate AI with the Decidim platform, municipalities should consider the following steps:

Needs analysis: Identify the areas where AI can bring the most benefits.

Choosing appropriate technologies: Determine which AI solutions best meet the identified needs.

Pilot implementation: Test AI solutions on a smaller scale before full deployment.

Training: Prepare administrators and moderators to work with the new system.

Communication with users: Clearly inform users about the changes being introduced and their benefits.

Monitoring and evaluation: Regularly assess the effectiveness of implemented AI solutions and their impact on participatory processes.

Continuous improvement: Update and develop AI systems in response to changing needs and technological advancements.

The future of AI in public participation

Integrating artificial intelligence with the Decidim platform is a significant step forward in the digital transformation of municipalities. AI not only supports the management of public participation but also contributes to building stronger and more integrated local communities.

Utilizing modern technologies in this area enables a better understanding of citizens' needs, optimization of decision-making processes, and increased citizen engagement – all crucial for the development of modern local democracies.



Chapter 5:

Atende – Your trusted partner in municipal digital transformation

Implementing an advanced solution like Decidim requires an experienced and competent technology partner. Atende, a leader in digital transformation, offers comprehensive support in implementing Decidim, distinguishing itself from the competition.

Experience in executing IT projects for the public sector

Atende has extensive experience in executing projects for the public sector:

- ▶ Numerous IT system implementations for government administrations
- ▶ Deep understanding of the specific operations of municipalities
- ▶ Knowledge of legal regulations regarding e-administration, public participation, and data protection
- ▶ Experience in projects related to public participation and smart cities.

Our experience translates into:

- ▶ Faster and more efficient implementations
- ▶ Avoiding common pitfalls and mistakes
- ▶ Customizing tools to the unique needs of municipalities
- ▶ The ability to combine technological and social aspects

Support in platform implementation

Atende offers full support at every stage of platform implementation:

Needs analysis:

Auditing current participatory processes
Identifying areas requiring improvement
Defining implementation goals
Supporting the development of platform requirements
Analyzing the needs of different social groups

Implementation:

Installing and configuring the platform
Integrating with existing IT systems
Adapting the interface and functionalities
Implementing accessibility tools

Training:

Workshops for system administrators
Training for municipal employees
Preparing educational materials for citizens

Technical support:

Ongoing technical assistance and quick response to reported issues
Regular system updates
Performance and security monitoring

Development and optimization:

Analyzing platform usage
Recommendations for new functionalities
Continuously adapting to changing needs
Supporting the building of a participatory culture

Team of experts ready to meet client expectations

Atende boasts an interdisciplinary team of specialists, including:

- ▶ Experienced programmers specializing in Ruby on Rails technology
- ▶ Business analysts who understand the specifics of the public sector
- ▶ UX/UI experts ensuring user-friendly interfaces
- ▶ AI implementation specialists
- ▶ Consultants in e-participation and city management

Our team guarantees:

- ▶ High-quality implementation
- ▶ Innovative problem-solving approaches
- ▶ Continuous communication and support at every project stage
- ▶ A comprehensive view of the participation process, combining technological and social aspects.

Examples of successful platform implementations by Atende

Atende proudly showcases successful Decidim implementations:

City of Warsaw¹:

Challenge: The capital city of Warsaw needed an effective tool to conduct extensive social consultations due to a high volume of such processes.

Solution: In collaboration with Atende, Warsaw implemented the Decidim platform, focusing on social consultation and idea mapping modules. The platform was integrated with existing city systems and tailored to the city's specific needs.

Effect: 30% increase in participation in consultations and acquisition of innovative ideas from citizens.

City of Gdynia:

Challenge: Streamlining the social consultation process.

Solution: Implementing Decidim to handle social consultations and advisory bodies.

Effect: Consolidation of all consultation processes and advisory bodies into one platform.

Note: While these examples are from Polish cities, they demonstrate the scalability and adaptability of Decidim for municipalities worldwide..



Conclusion

Public participation in the 21st century goes beyond traditional consultations or meetings with citizens. It is a continuous process of dialogue and collaboration, supported by modern technologies that build strong and engaged local communities.

Decidim is not just a technological platform but a tool for building a more open, transparent, and engaged society. It is an investment in the future that brings benefits to both municipal authorities and citizens.

If you want to learn more about the platform's capabilities and its implementation in your municipality, we encourage you to contact Atende's experts. Our experienced team will help you digitally transform public participation and build an active local community.

Contact us today and start your journey towards a modern, digital local democracy.

Case study: Social consultation platform in Warsaw

International example demonstrating decidim's capabilities

Challenge:

The city of Warsaw needed an effective tool to conduct extensive social consultations due to a high volume of such processes.

Solution:

In collaboration with Atende, Warsaw implemented the Decidim platform, focusing on social consultation and idea mapping modules. The platform was integrated with existing city systems and tailored to the city's specific needs.

Main Functionalities:

- ▶ Consultation module with commenting and discussion capabilities
- ▶ Interactive maps for submitting ideas related to specific locations
- ▶ Notification system informing citizens about new consultations

Results:

- ▶ 30% increase in participation in social consultations
- ▶ Over 1,000 comments from citizens within the first six months
- ▶ Reduction in the duration of consultation processes by an average of 20%
- ▶ Increased citizen satisfaction with participatory processes (25% rise in surveys)



FAQ:

Frequently asked questions about the Decidim platform

What are the costs of implementing and maintaining the platform?

The costs of implementing and maintaining the platform are flexible and depend on the scale of implementation and the selected modules. The software itself is free, which represents significant savings compared to commercial solutions. The main expenses involve customizing the platform to the municipality's specific needs, hosting, and technical support.

Atende offers a transparent pricing model tailored to the budget capabilities of various municipal units. Our experience shows that implementing Decidim can bring long-term savings by:

- ▶ Reducing administrative costs associated with traditional forms of participation
- ▶ Optimizing decision-making processes
- ▶ Decreasing paper and other resource usage

Moreover, Decidim's modular structure allows for the gradual expansion of platform functionalities, enabling the distribution of costs over time.

Is Decidim compliant with data protection regulations?

Yes, the platform has been designed with data protection requirements in mind. Atende, as an experienced implementation partner, ensures full compliance of the implementation with applicable personal data protection regulations. This includes appropriate technical safeguards, data management processes, and the ability to fulfill the rights of individuals whose data is being processed.

How long does it take to implement Decidim?

The average time for implementing the platform is 3 to 6 months, although it may vary depending on the project's scale and the degree of customization required for the specific municipality.

Atende uses proven project management methodologies, allowing for effective planning and execution of the implementation. This process includes:

- ▶ Needs analysis
- ▶ Adapting the platform to the client's specific needs
- ▶ Integrating with existing systems
- ▶ Training for employees
- ▶ Testing and optimization phase

Our team ensures that the implementation process is minimally disruptive to the municipality's ongoing operations, offering flexible schedules and continuous support.

Can Decidim be integrated with other local government systems?

Yes, the platform offers extensive integration capabilities with various systems used in local governments. It can be integrated with:

- ▶ CRM systems,
- ▶ citizen databases,
- ▶ e-service platforms,

- ▶ document management systems,
- ▶ urban data analysis tools.

Atende's experts have experience in implementing such integrations, ensuring the smooth operation of the local government's entire IT ecosystem.

What technical support does Atende offer after implementation?

Atende provides comprehensive technical support after the platform's implementation, including:

- ▶ regular system updates,
- ▶ performance and security monitoring,
- ▶ resolving reported issues,
- ▶ assistance in developing the platform to meet the evolving needs of the local government.

Atende offers various support packages tailored to the client's individual needs, ensuring continuity and stability of the platform's operation.

Do citizens need special skills to use the platform?

No, Decidim is designed with intuitiveness and ease of use in mind. The interface is user-friendly and does not require advanced technical skills. Nevertheless, Atende offers educational materials and training for citizens to help them get started with the platform and encourage active participation.

How can Decidim help increase participation in participatory processes?

Decidim offers a range of tools to boost engagement:

- ▶ notifications and newsletters about new initiatives,
- ▶ integration with social media to facilitate sharing and promote participation,
- ▶ gamification of participatory processes, such as a point and badge system for activity,
- ▶ the ability to participate 24/7, eliminating time and space barriers.

Is Decidim adapted to the needs of people with disabilities?

Yes, Decidim is designed with digital accessibility standards in mind. The platform offers:

- ▶ options to enlarge text and adjust contrast,
- ▶ compatibility with screen readers,
- ▶ keyboard navigation,
- ▶ alternative descriptions for graphic elements.

Atende can further configure the interface to meet the specific needs of the local community, ensuring the widest possible access to participatory tools.

How does Decidim support the building of social capital?

Decidim not only facilitates participation but also actively contributes to building social capital by:

- ▶ creating spaces for dialogue and collaboration among citizens,
- ▶ enabling the formation of groups and teams around specific initiatives,
- ▶ promoting transparency in decision-making processes, which builds trust,
- ▶ providing civic education and increasing awareness of local issues.

Want to learn how to effectively implement
an e-participation platform in your local government?

Let's talk.

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