



Civis

Weaving Participation into Governance

Responsive, inclusive policymaking
for a new India



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1. STATE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS IN INDIA

The inclusion of citizen voices in governance is a cornerstone of democratic decision-making. Public consultations enable governments to draw on lived experience, domain expertise, and diverse social perspectives, strengthening both the legitimacy and effectiveness of policy outcomes. For citizens, they create meaningful pathways to influence the rules and systems that shape everyday life; for institutions, they offer a way to build trust through openness, dialogue, and responsiveness.

Public consultation in India is evolving in meaningful ways — in scale, scope, visibility, and accessibility. Since the introduction of the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP) in 2014 by the Ministry of Law and Justice, the number of public consultations has grown nearly twentyfold. Beyond this headline, several trends show how consultation practices are becoming more inclusive and participatory.

More consultations are aligning with the PLCP's recommended 30-day feedback window, with the number open for 30 days or more increasing by nearly 85%, going from 103 in 2024 to 190 in 2026. Multilingual publishing has also expanded significantly, with consultations available in more than one language nearly doubling from 54 in 2024 to 104 in 2026.

Consultations are also making greater use of digital and hybrid engagement methods for outreach and feedback collection, with the number rising from 113 in 2024 to 222 in 2026, reflecting a move toward more accessible and scalable participation. Moreover, these practices are gradually extending beyond central and state government departments: while no consultations were recorded from Union Territories in 2024, 8 consultations were conducted in 2025 and another 8 in 2026.



Taken together, these shifts reflect not only a rise in the number of consultations, but a gradual strengthening of how accessible, participatory, and citizen-oriented they are. In a context where many citizens feel disconnected from government, public consultation creates a visible channel for transparency, responsiveness, and participation.

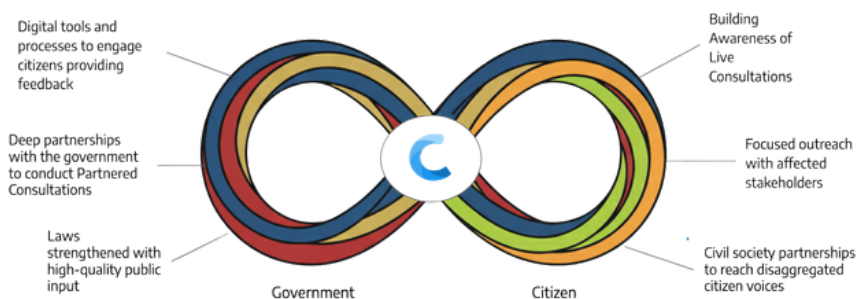
Because the PLCP is a guideline rather than a binding mandate, each consultation undertaken in its spirit represents an active institutional choice. Ministries, departments, and regulators that consistently seek public feedback do more than gather comments — they signal a willingness to engage citizens as stakeholders in governance, helping build trust, deepen accountability, and strengthen the legitimacy of policymaking over time.

2. THE POLICY ENGAGEMENT LOOP

At the heart of Civis' work is a simple idea: laws are stronger when citizens and governments help shape them together.

When citizens are informed, supported, and empowered to participate in public consultations, and when governments are enabled, encouraged, and recognised for running participatory consultations, it fosters a more inclusive, transparent, and trusted process of lawmaking.

Civis' policy engagement loop captures this relationship in action. Represented as an infinity loop, it has the government on the left, citizens on the right, and the Civis platform at the centre, bridging citizen participation and public policy.



The model is grounded in four principles:

- **Continuity:** An evolving, iterative cycle of policy engagement that enables a steady process of improvement
- **Co-creation:** Rather than separate engagements, active collaboration between citizens and government, with each side shaping and strengthening the other
- **Inclusivity:** A commitment to representative participation through civil society partnerships that reach diverse, disaggregated voices
- **Trust:** A trust-building approach that values the quality of engagement as much as the policy outcomes it shapes

On the government side, Civis strengthens public consultation by providing institutions with digital infrastructure to collect structured, meaningful feedback at scale. We also engage in deep partnerships to co-design consultations that get embedded within official policy workflows. This contributes to evidence based governance shaped by broader, better-quality, public input.

On the citizen side, Civis builds awareness of live consultations and lowering barriers to participation. We also target outreach to affected stakeholders, and disaggregated citizen voices — including marginalised or hard-to-reach communities —to ensure public input is more representative and inclusive.

Together, they turn public consultation from a one-time exercise into a continuous loop of responsive, democratic engagement.

3. INDIA'S PRE-LEGISLATIVE CONSULTATION POLICY, 2014

The Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP), 2014, marked an important step toward strengthening transparency and public participation in India's lawmaking process. Recognising that legislation benefits from wider deliberation before it is finalised, the Policy introduced a structured framework encouraging ministries and departments to engage citizens, stakeholders, and experts during the drafting stage itself. Revisiting the PLCP grounds the practice of public consultation in the principles that first gave it both institutional shape and democratic significance.

At its core, the PLCP establishes that policymaking should be open, informed, and participatory. By placing draft laws in the public domain and inviting feedback prior to enactment, the Policy seeks to ensure that governance reflects diverse perspectives and real-world experience.

The Policy outlines several key practices that consultation bodies are encouraged to follow:

- **Proactive Publication of Drafts:** Ministries and departments should place draft legislation in the public domain, ensuring that citizens have access to proposed laws before they are finalised.
- **Explanatory and Background Material:** Drafts should be accompanied by clear supporting documents explaining the objectives, rationale, and key provisions of the proposal. These materials should also outline likely financial, social, and environmental impacts, enabling informed participation.

- **Adequate Consultation Period:** Draft legislation should remain open for public comments for a minimum consultation window, allowing sufficient time for stakeholders to review and respond meaningfully.
- **Inclusive Outreach and Engagement:** Consultation bodies are encouraged to undertake wider publicity efforts and reach out to affected stakeholders, ensuring participation extends beyond limited or specialised audiences.
- **Transparency and Feedback Disclosure:** After the consultation period concludes, departments should publish a summary of feedback received, helping demonstrate how public inputs contributed to policymaking and strengthening accountability.

Since its introduction in 2014, the PLCP has helped shape expectations around openness, accessibility, and responsiveness in legislative processes. Although it is a guiding framework rather than a statutory mandate, it marks an important institutional commitment to participatory governance in India.

Its emphasis on transparency, informed participation, and feedback loops reflects a broader shift in policymaking — one that increasingly recognises public engagement as essential to democratic decision-making.

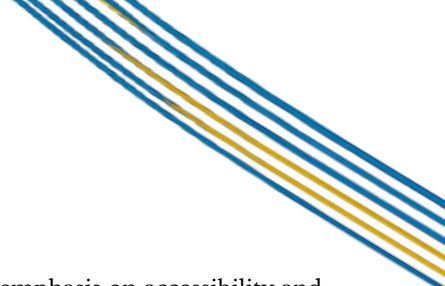
4. BEST PRACTICES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

Public consultation has, in many parts of the world, evolved into a more mature and institutionalised feature of democratic governance. Across jurisdictions, governments are not only inviting citizens to participate in policymaking, but are also building systems that make such participation more structured, transparent, and accessible.

One important area where global consultation systems have advanced is in showing how public feedback shapes final decisions. In the United Kingdom, government departments routinely publish detailed response documents after consultations conclude. These reports summarise stakeholder perspectives, indicate the number of submissions received, and explain how inputs were considered in final policy decisions.

This is reflected in consultations such as the National Planning Policy Framework, which drew over ten thousand responses and were accompanied by published responses from the government. By making these processes more visible, they strengthen transparency and clarify how consultation feeds into decision-making.

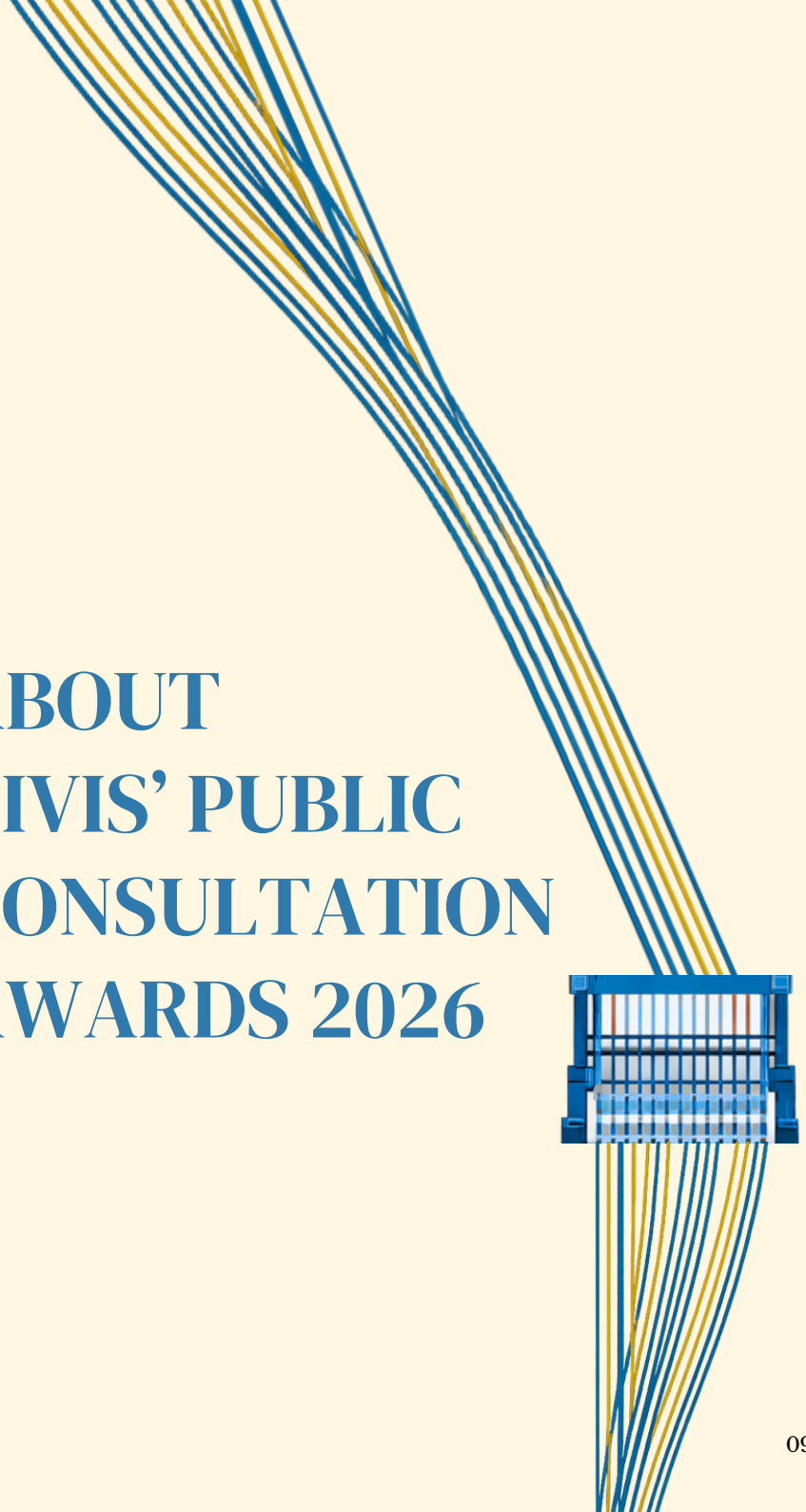
Finland offers another example of a more embedded consultation culture, where public participation is built directly into the legislative drafting process. Draft proposals prepared by ministries are released for public comment at an early stage, often alongside explanatory materials that make the process easier to engage with. Consultation summaries are later incorporated into legislative proposals, creating a traceable link between citizen feedback and the evolution of the law.



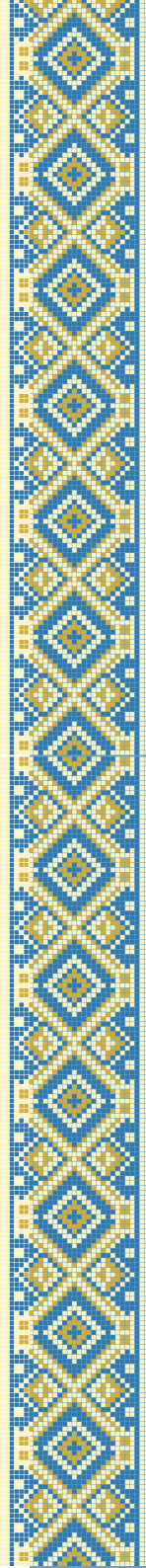
Several jurisdictions have also placed strong emphasis on accessibility and inclusion in consultation design. In Canada, consultation guidance highlights the importance of plain language, accessible communication formats, and targeted outreach to communities most affected by proposed policies. At the supranational level, the European Union has centralised consultations through its ‘Have Your Say’ portal, which brings together draft texts, supporting documents, timelines, and submission channels in one place. Such systems make participation easier to navigate and more open to a wider range of stakeholders.

Digital participation platforms also illustrate how consultation can operate at scale. Brazil’s national participation portal offers a notable example. During the preparation of the 2024–2027 Multi-Year Plan, the platform enabled citizens to submit and prioritise policy proposals at scale, generating 8,254 citizen proposals and nearly 4 million visits. A substantial share of these proposals were taken forward into the final Plan, demonstrating a visible pathway from citizen input to policy adoption.

Taken together, these examples show how public consultation can move beyond isolated engagement exercises to become a more durable part of governance. They offer useful lessons in how transparency, accessibility, and responsiveness can be built into consultation systems over time.



ABOUT CIVIS' PUBLIC CONSULTATION AWARDS 2026



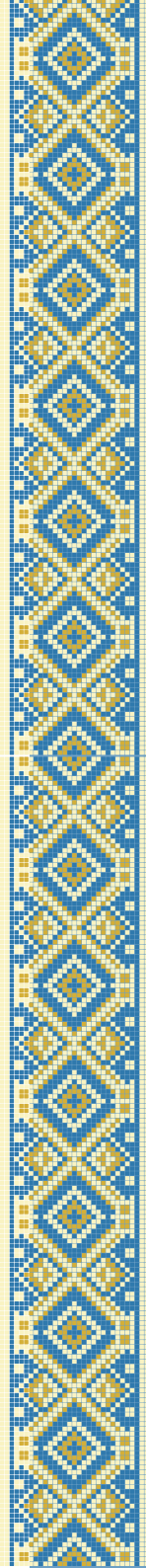
Each year, Civis convenes the Public Consultation Awards to recognise institutions and individuals advancing participatory governance in India.

They seek not only to celebrate exemplary public consultations, but also to set benchmarks for what meaningful public consultation can look like. The inaugural edition of the Civis' Public Consultation Awards (CIPCA) was held in New Delhi in 2024, marking a decade of the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP), 2014.

Across successive editions, CIPCA has aimed to track the evolution of participatory practices within India's policymaking ecosystem. Its impact points to a growing interest among lawmakers in being acknowledged for conducting quality consultations. In doing so, the Awards help reinforce consultation as a norm within lawmaking, and encourage stronger institutional adoption of consultation processes.

The methodology underpinning CIPCA 2026 draws on Indian institutional experience, global principles of participatory governance, and insights from practitioners, researchers, and public servants.

Each public consultation is assessed through a rigorous 10-point matrix, evaluating factors such as ease of comprehension, accessibility, and the extent of outreach undertaken. The highest-scoring consultations are then reviewed by an independent jury with over 85 years of cumulative experience in policymaking and governance.

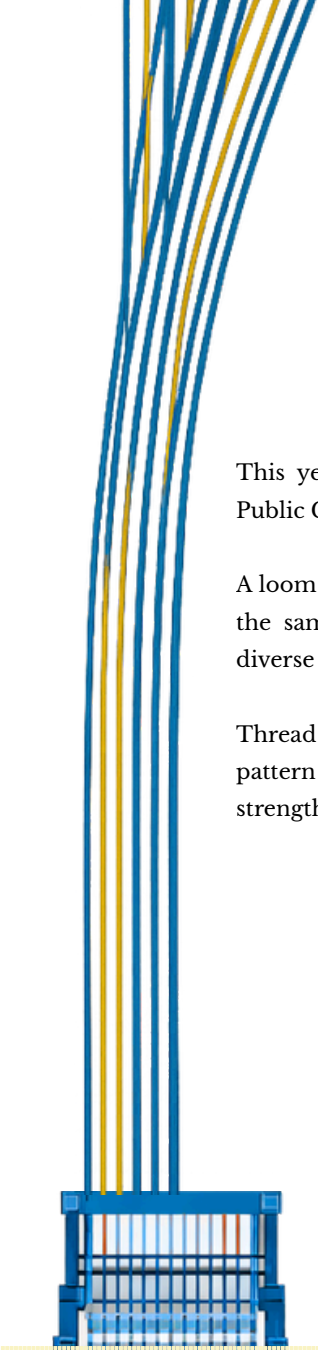


As consultation practices expand across ministries, state governments, and regulatory bodies, the 2026 edition builds on earlier learnings to examine both the quality of individual consultations and the extent to which consultation is evolving into a sustained institutional practice.

In this spirit, the Awards serve as both recognition and reflection, highlighting Civis' ongoing effort to deepen the discourse around public consultation — moving beyond procedural compliance toward meaningful engagement.

Through this continued effort, Civis aims to support a governance ecosystem in which participation is not episodic, but embedded in the everyday functioning of public institutions.

As participatory processes become more regular, predictable, and institutionalised, they strengthen the democratic fabric itself, contributing to the rebuilding of procedural trust between citizens and the state.

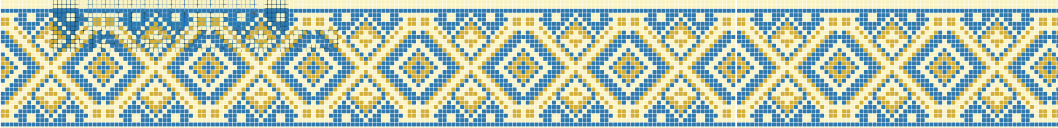


6. VISUAL LANGUAGE OF CIPCA 2026

This year, the loom anchors the visual language of the Civis' Public Consultation Awards.

A loom weaves individual threads into a cohesive fabric. In much the same way, meaningful public consultation brings together diverse voices and perspectives to shape stronger public policy.

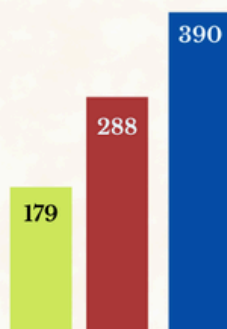
Thread by thread, consultation weaves a harmonious, resilient pattern of citizen trust and participatory governance, thereby strengthening the democratic fabric of our nation.



TRACKING THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

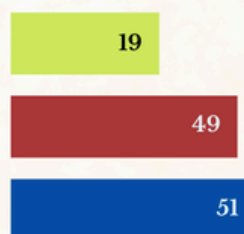
2024 2025 2026

GROWTH IN PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS



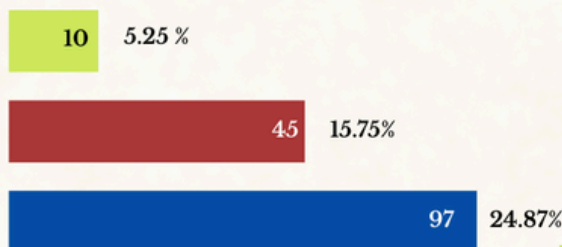
The number of public consultations tracked under CIPCA increased from 179 in 2024 to 390 in 2026, reflecting rapid growth in opening policies for public input.

STATE ADOPTION OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS



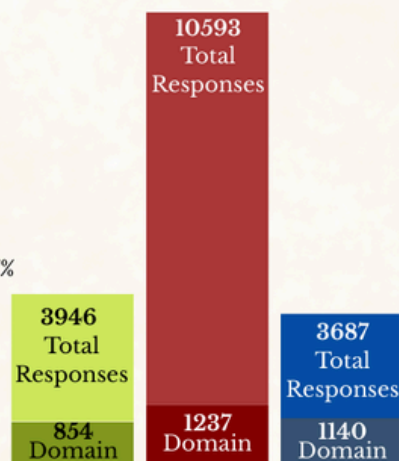
Consultations conducted by state government departments rose from 19 in 2024 to 51 in 2026, indicating growing consultation adoption at the state level.

CONSULTATIONS IN CROSS-CUTTING POLICY DOMAINS



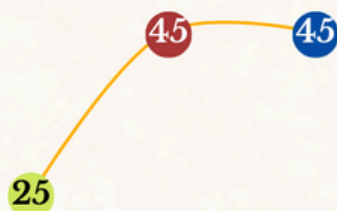
The share of consultations addressing cross-cutting policy areas increased from 5.25% in 2024 to 24.87% in 2026, reflecting a growing focus on multi-sectoral policy shifts

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN CONSULTATIONS



Consultations received thousands of public responses each year, with participation peaking at 10,593 responses in 2025.

INSTITUTIONS CONDUCTING REPEAT CONSULTATIONS



The number of institutions conducting repeat consultations increased from 25 in 2024 to 45 in 2025, and remained steady in 2026, signalling the institutionalisation of public consultation practices.

AVERAGE DURATION OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS



Consultations remained open for around one month on average, with durations of 31 days in 2024, 34 days in 2025, and 29 days in 2026.

CONSULTATION FREQUENCY PER INSTITUTION



The average number of consultations conducted by each institution rose sharply to 5.49 in 2026, compared to 2.59 in 2024, indicating more frequent use of consultations in policymaking.

TIME FROM CONSULTATION TO POLICY NOTIFICATION



The average time taken for policies to move from consultation to final notification reduced significantly to 106 days in 2026, compared to 479 days in 2024, indicating faster policy cycles.

8. MEET THE JURY

The Awards and the methodology are guided by a distinguished group of experts whose vast experience in public policy, regulation, and governance strengthens its methodological rigour and intellectual credibility.



Dr. K.P. Krishnan

Honorary Senior Fellow, ICPP Ashoka University

Dr. KP Krishnan is former Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Prior to that, he served in a number of other positions in the government, after joining the Indian Administrative Service in 1983. Dr. Krishnan has chaired or served as a member of several

Government of India committees, including the Krishnan Committee on Cross Border Insolvency Rules/Regulation, the Krishnan Committee on Comprehensive Regulation of Credit Rating Agencies, AND the Rangarajan High-level Expert Committee on Efficient Management of Public Expenditure, among others.

Dr. Krishnan has taught as a visiting professor at the Indian School of Business, and as BOK Visiting International School Professor of Regulation at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He regularly lectures at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie. He has also published on a range of public policy issues in books, journals, and the mainstream media. He holds a PhD in economics and finance from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.



Dr. MS. Sahoo

Advocate and Founder, Dr. Sahoo Regulatory Chambers

Dr. M. S. Sahoo, an authority on markets and regulations, practices regulatory laws at Dr. Sahoo Regulatory Chambers. He has served as Distinguished Professor, National Law University Delhi; Chairperson, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI); Member, Competition Commission of India; Secretary, Institute of Company Secretaries of India; Whole-time Member, SEBI; and Economic Adviser, NSE.

As a member of the Indian Economic Service, he also served the Ministries of Finance and Commerce and the Prime Minister's Office. He sat on the boards of Oriental Bank of Commerce, Management Development Institute, and NSDL. Dr. Sahoo spearheaded India's insolvency reforms, founding the IBBI, the world's first insolvency regulator, and establishing the insolvency and valuation professions.

His work earned India recognition as the 'Most Improved Jurisdiction' (Global Restructuring Review, 2018), and improved its rise in the 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking on insolvency from 136 to 52 within three years. He also shaped securities market reforms, shaping regulatory architecture, derivatives trading, and stock exchange demutualisation. He authored the Depositories Ordinance, 1995, enabling dematerialisation of securities and positioning India as a global leader.



Dr. Ajay Shah
Co-founder, XKDR Forum

Dr. Ajay Shah has held positions at Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research (IGIDR), Department of Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Finance and National Institute for Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP).

His research is at the intersection of economics, law and public administration. He has studied at IIT, Bombay and USC, Los Angeles.

His second book, co-authored with Vijay Kelkar, 'In Service of the Republic: The Art and Science of Economic Policy', featured in Bloomberg's global '2020 Best Books on Business and Leadership'. He is the founder and chief editor of The Leap Blog (<https://blog.theleapjournal.org/>). His work can be accessed on his home page (<https://www.mayin.org/ajayshah>).

MEET OUR AMICUS



Dr. Renuka Sane **Managing Director, TrustBridge** **Rule of Law Foundation**

Renuka Sane is the Managing Director of TrustBridge Rule of Law Foundation. She has played an essential role in several initiatives such as Task Force of Experts set up by the Employees Provident Fund Organisation to study its pension scheme;

the research team of the Bankruptcy Legislative Reforms Commission on individual insolvency, the Pension Advisory Committee of the Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority, and the Working Group on personal insolvency at the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India.

Renuka's research interests lie in financial markets regulation, the regulatory state, credit and bankruptcy, pensions, and household finance. She has a PhD in Economics from the University of New South Wales and holds an M.A. in Economics from Mumbai University.



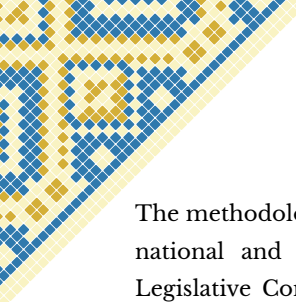


9. CIPCA METHODOLOGY & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Mapping the landscape of public consultations in India remains a complex and evolving exercise. While adoption has expanded steadily across ministries, state governments, and regulatory institutions, significant variation persists in how consultations are designed, conducted, and documented. The absence of uniform reporting practices and standardised disclosure makes comparative evaluation a careful and deliberative process.

At the same time, this evolving landscape presents an important opportunity. Systematic evaluation helps identify emerging standards, recognise institutional innovation, and encourage greater consistency in participatory governance. The Civis Public Consultation Awards contribute to this process by documenting consultations across the country and assessing them through a structured and transparent methodology.

We undertook a comprehensive mapping exercise of public consultations conducted between April 2024 and March 2025. In total, 390 consultations by ministries, state governments, and statutory or regulatory bodies were identified through official government websites, regulatory portals, gazette notifications, press releases, and other publicly available sources. Of these, 133 consultations were undertaken by Union ministries, 206 by statutory bodies, and 51 by state governments. Each consultation was reviewed to understand its scope, documentation, participation mechanisms, and publicly disclosed outcomes.



The methodology underpinning CIPCA 2026 is anchored in established national and international reference points, including India's Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP), 2014, the OECD Practitioner's Guide for Stakeholder Engagement, and the UNDP Public Consultation Index. While its core structure remains consistent, the methodology is refined each year to reflect emerging practices, address gaps identified through previous evaluations, and remain responsive to real-world consultation experiences.

THE SCORING FRAMEWORK

The CIPCA 2026 scoring framework carries a maximum total of 50 points, of which 47 points are derived from ten parameters, grouped under four pillars:

- Quality of the Consultation Document
- Scope of Engagement and Opportunities
- Inclusivity
- Open Governance

Together, these pillars assess whether a consultation enables understanding, participation, accessibility, and accountability across its full lifecycle. These parameters are evaluated by the Civis team using a structured methodology, and the resulting scores are reviewed by the jury to ensure rigour, consistency, and fairness in assessment.

The remaining 3 points are allocated through a new citizen polling component, introduced for the first time in CIPCA 2026. Adding a direct participatory layer to the Awards scoring process, citizens were invited to review shortlisted consultations within each category, and rank them from highest to lowest based on their overall assessment of consultation quality. To support informed participation, simple summaries of shortlisted consultations were prepared, outlining key features of the consultation design as well as publicly available post-consultation practices.



These rankings were then converted into weighted scores, with higher-ranked consultations receiving proportionately higher points. Together, this scoring approach combines institutional evaluation with direct public input, reinforcing the principle that public consultation processes must ultimately be responsive to the citizens they seek to engage.

THE EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

PILLAR 1: QUALITY OF THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The consultation document forms the starting point of public participation, which directly influences both the depth and diversity of responses received. This pillar assesses whether the consultation materials equips stakeholders with an understanding of the proposal to engage meaningfully with it. It examines whether the document provides the justification for the proposal, presents its key provisions clearly, sets out broader implications, and communicates in language accessible to a broad audience.

Parameter 1: Justification

This parameter assesses whether the consultation explains the need for the proposal, the problem it seeks to address, and the policy context within which it is introduced. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Thorough, compelling, and well-evidenced justification with detailed policy context
- 4: Good explanation of the need for the proposal, supported by adequate context and evidence
- 3: Satisfactory rationale provided, though some context or evidence may be limited
- 2: Limited or vague explanation with little supporting material
- 1: No meaningful explanation of the need for policy change



Parameter 2: Essential Elements

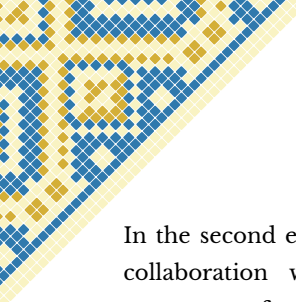
This parameter assesses whether the substantive provisions of the proposal are clearly presented and structured in a way that allows stakeholders to understand how it would operate in practice, including proposed rights, obligations, regulatory mechanisms, or policy directions. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: All key provisions are clearly outlined, well-structured, and thoroughly detailed
- 4: Provisions are well presented, with only minor gaps in clarity or structure
- 3: Main provisions are satisfactorily outlined, but some detail or clarity is missing
- 2: Changes are vaguely presented and lack detail
- 1: Key provisions are absent or extremely unclear

Parameter 3: Impact Assessment

Meaningful participation depends on stakeholders understanding how a proposal may affect institutions, industries, communities, or individuals. This parameter assesses whether the consultation acknowledges likely financial, social, and/or environmental consequences, enabling more informed and evidence-based responses. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Comprehensive and detailed analysis of likely impacts, supported by robust data
- 4: Good analysis of impacts, though some areas may need greater detail
- 3: Satisfactor impact analysis is provided, but depth is limited
- 2: Minimal impact discussion with insufficient detail or evidence
- 1: No meaningful analysis of likely impacts



In the second edition of the Awards, this parameter was strengthened in collaboration with TrustBridge, which helped develop a 25-point assessment framework to examine the depth and clarity of impact disclosures. These sub-criteria are assessed using an AI-assisted tool trained on a consultation dataset, enabling more systematic and consistent evaluation.

Parameter 4: Comprehension

Documents that simplify complex ideas enable broader participation. This parameter assesses whether the consultation material is clear, well-organised, and understandable to a broad audience without specialised expertise. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Exceptionally clear, accessible, and easy to understand for readers with or without domain expertise
- 4: Clear overall, with only minor barriers to accessibility
- 3: Generally understandable, though some sections may be unclear or complex
- 2: Difficult to follow and requires significant effort to understand
- 1: Highly confusing or inaccessible to most readers
-

Through these four parameters of Justification, Essential Elements, Impact Assessment, and Comprehension, the evaluation considers whether consultation documents function as effective tools for public understanding, rather than merely formal publications.

PILLAR 2: SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

Publishing a draft alone does not ensure meaningful consultation. This pillar assesses whether stakeholders were given sufficient opportunity, time, and awareness to engage meaningfully with the proposal. This pillar examines the extent to which consultation bodies make reasonable efforts to reach affected audiences.



Parameter 5: Duration

The 30-day consultation period recommended under the PLCP serves as an important benchmark for enabling informed participation. This parameter assesses whether the consultation period gave stakeholders enough time to review the proposal, deliberate where necessary, and prepare considered submissions. The two-point scale is as follows:

- 2: Consultation remained open for 30 days or more
- 0: Consultation remained open for fewer than 30 days

In the previous edition, consultations lasting 30 days or more received 5 points, while those below 29 days received 1 point. For CIPCA 2026, the Duration parameter has been revised from a 5-point scale to a binary model aligned with the PLCP's standard.

Parameter 6: Outreach

Awareness is recognised as a critical precondition for participation. This parameter assesses the extent to which consultation bodies took active steps to proactively inform the public about the consultation through appropriate communication channels. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Extensive outreach through multiple channels, reaching a broad audience, including efforts such as meetings, interviews, focus groups, or extensive social media campaigns,
- 4: Good outreach through several channels, reaching a reasonably diverse audience, including efforts such as news, or social media
- 3: Adequate outreach through basic channels, reaching the expected audience, with at least three channels used
- 2: Limited outreach through few channels, with narrow reach, with two channels used
- 1: Minimal or no outreach, failing to reach the intended audience, with only one channel used



Together, these two parameters of Duration & Outreach assess whether consultations move beyond passive publication toward active public engagement.

PILLAR 3: INCLUSIVITY

Public consultations are most effective when participation reflects the diversity of communities affected by policy decisions. This pillar assesses whether the consultation design reduced barriers to participation and expanded access across different audiences.

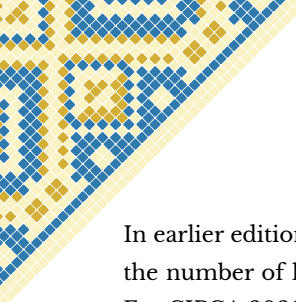
Parameter 7: Feedback Collection

This parameter assesses whether consultation bodies provided multiple avenues through which stakeholders could submit responses, to accommodate participants with differing levels of digital access and institutional capacity. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Four or more response mechanisms, accessible to a wide range of citizens, including those not digitally enabled
- 4: Three response mechanisms, accessible to most citizens
- 3: Two response mechanisms, with some limitations in accessibility
- 2: Only one response mechanism, limiting accessibility
- 1: No clear response mechanism, not accessible to most citizens

Parameter 8: Translations

Language accessibility plays a crucial role in enabling engagement across India's diverse linguistic landscape. This parameter assesses whether consultation materials were made available in additional languages or formats that expand participation and strengthens representativeness within consultation.



In earlier editions, this parameter was assessed on a 5-point scale based on the number of languages in which consultation materials were published. For CIPCA 2026, the scoring framework has been revised to better reflect contexts of different institutional bodies.

For consultations by Ministries and Regulatory Bodies, the five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Available in three or more languages and/or accessible formats such as sign language or braille
- 3: Available in two languages
- 1: Available in only one language, with no translations provided

For consultations by State Governments and Union Territories, the five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Available in two or more languages, including English and Hindi/local language
- 1: Available in only one language, with no translations provided

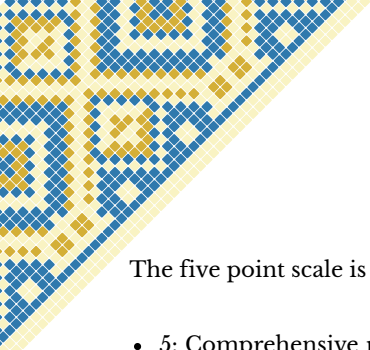
Through these two parameters of Feedback Collection and Translation, the evaluation recognises that inclusivity is achieved not only by formally opening consultations, but by actively reducing barriers to participation.

PILLAR 4: OPEN GOVERNANCE

Public participation builds trust when stakeholders are able to see how their inputs are acknowledged, and how institutions remain open to engagement beyond submission. This pillar assesses whether institutions demonstrate transparency and accountability in how feedback is acknowledged, disclosed, and carried forward.

Parameter 9: Transparency

This parameter assesses whether consultation bodies publicly shared responses received, summaries of stakeholder input, or information on next steps following the consultation.



The five point scale is as follows:

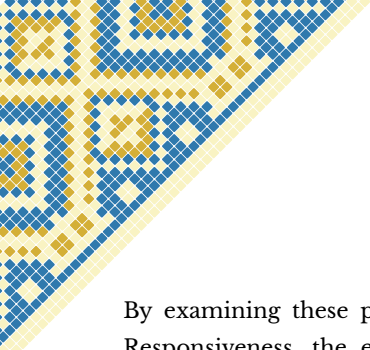
- 5: Comprehensive report and/or all responses, along with clear outline of next steps, ensuring complete transparency and accountability
- 4: Detailed report or full responses published, ensuring strong transparency
- 3: Basic report or summary of responses published
- 2: Minimal information or partial responses published
- 1: No responses, report, or follow-up information published

Parameter 10: Responsiveness

This parameter assesses whether consultation bodies provide evidence that feedback was acknowledged, considered, and reflected in subsequent policy decisions.

This assessment is based primarily on publicly available information showing how stakeholder inputs were addressed in subsequent outcomes, supplemented by information shared in response to Civis' outreach to shortlisted consultations. The five-point scale is as follows:

- 5: Detailed and structured evidence showing how feedback informed revisions or final decisions, with clear linkage between feedback received and outcomes
- 4: Substantive evidence that feedback was reviewed and considered, though without detailed mapping to outcomes
- 3: Limited disclosure such as the number or categories of responses received, with general statements that feedback was reviewed
- 2: Feedback acknowledged, but no meaningful information provided on how it was considered
- 1: No publicly available information indicating whether feedback was acknowledged, reviewed, or incorporated



By examining these post-consultation parameters of Transparency and Responsiveness, the evaluation recognises that open governance must extend beyond collecting feedback to demonstrating accountability to participants.

Taken together, the ten parameters across the four pillars provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating consultations as full governance processes rather than isolated actions. The methodology assesses whether consultations communicate clearly, enable meaningful participation, reduce barriers to engagement, and remain open after feedback is received.

By examining these dimensions together, the framework identifies practices that strengthen collaborative policymaking and support continuous improvement in consultation design. As consultation practices evolve, so too will the framework through ongoing learning and engagement with institutions and practitioners. Its purpose is not only to recognise exemplary consultations, but also to establish shared benchmarks for stronger participatory governance across India.





10. MEET THE NOMINEES

CIPCA 2026 recognises exemplary public consultation practices across four award categories: Best Consultation – Ministry, Best Consultation – State, Best Consultation – Statutory Body, and a Special Mention for Volume of Consultations.

Across these categories, eighteen nominees have been shortlisted from Central Government Ministries, State Governments and Union Territory Administrations, and statutory and regulatory bodies. These authorities have exemplified consultation processes that enabled informed public participation in policy and regulatory development.

BEST CONSULTATION – MINISTRY

This award recognises a public consultation conducted by a Central Government Ministry, that demonstrates structured engagement with the public and clear communication of policy proposals. The nominees for this category are:

Draft Guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Unsolicited and Unwarranted Business Communication, 2024 **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**

The draft guidelines were issued to regulate commercial communications, and set out safeguards governing how businesses engage with consumers. The consultation sought to strengthen consumer protection by addressing regulatory gaps in business communication practices.



A key strength of the consultation was in the clarity and usability of the draft. It clearly explained the limitations of existing measures, and proposed specific, actionable safeguards such as explicit digital consent, opt-out mechanisms, mandatory identity disclosures, and restrictions on unauthorised intermediaries.

The consultation period was extended beyond the original deadline, and outreach through official platforms enhanced visibility. The consultation draft was published in English and the draft's accessibility supported meaningful public engagement. Overall, the consultation translated a technical regulatory issue into a clear and operational framework that enabled public engagement with proposed safeguards governing business communications.

Draft Guidelines for Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (Manthan Shivir), 2024

Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The draft guidelines aimed to address developmental gaps in tribal regions through coordinated delivery of infrastructure, health, education, and livelihood services, with a strong focus on inter-ministerial convergence.

The consultation stood out for the structured and coherent presentation of the draft. Objectives, institutional roles, implementation timelines, and monitoring mechanisms were clearly articulated and supported by visual aids and a glossary. The draft was published in English and organised to enable engagement with a complex, multi-departmental programme. Taken together, the clarity of objectives, institutional roles, and monitoring mechanisms supported informed engagement with a large-scale, convergence-based development programme.



Draft Notification on the Western Ghats

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

The draft notification proposed regulatory controls for activities in the Western Ghats, an ecologically sensitive region, with the objective of balancing environmental protection and sustainable development. The consultation was notable for the depth and rigour of its documentation. The draft clearly established the ecological significance of the region and grounded regulatory measures in expert committee reports and scientific assessments.

Detailed annexures and spatial references aided comprehension of the proposed framework. The lengthy consultation period of 60 days and availability of materials in English and Hindi supported informed public engagement. The consultation materials presented a comprehensive and evidence-based regulatory framework, enabling public understanding of proposed controls in an ecologically sensitive region.

Report on AI Governance Guidelines – Public Consultation

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

The consultation addressed the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence technologies and the absence of a comprehensive governance framework tailored to the Indian context. A defining strength of the consultation was its clear articulation of policy rationale. The report identified governance gaps, situated India's approach within global regulatory debates, and proposed a lifecycle-based governance model supported by inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms.



The report was published in English and presented in a coherent format that supported engagement with an emerging and technically complex subject. The consultation provided a coherent basis for public engagement on emerging governance issues related to artificial intelligence and institutional coordination.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024

Ministry of Minority Affairs

The draft Bill proposed reforms to address long-standing challenges in the governance and management of waqf properties, including incomplete records, ownership disputes, and limited administrative oversight.

The consultation was supported by multiple supplementary documents that presented the proposed amendments in plain and accessible language. These explainers used simple phrasing, bullet points, and multilingual formats to outline the central reforms and procedural changes, enabling engagement by non-legal audiences. The consultation notice was disseminated through official public channels, supporting wider awareness of the proposed reforms. The combination of a clearly structured draft and plain-language explanatory materials supported broader engagement with proposed reforms to waqf governance and administration.



BEST CONSULTATION – STATE

This award recognises a State Government or Union Territory Administration's efforts in conducting public consultations that go beyond basic requirements. It recognises consultations that reflect a commitment to inclusive, transparent, and structured engagement at the sub-national level, supporting meaningful dialogue with citizens. The nominees for this category are:

Draft Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (Advertisement) Bye-Laws, 2024

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

The draft bye-laws sought to regulate outdoor advertising in Bengaluru with objectives centred on transparency, public safety, and urban aesthetics. They aimed to streamline permissions, reduce visual clutter, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms.

The consultation was distinguished by the completeness and procedural clarity of the draft. Regulatory objectives, enforcement structures, and compliance mechanisms were clearly articulated, providing citizens with a strong understanding of how outdoor advertising would be governed. The availability of the draft in both Kannada and English further supported accessibility.

The clarity and structure of the draft enabled informed public engagement with city-level regulation. The consultation materials enabled citizens to engage with the objectives, procedures, and enforcement mechanisms governing outdoor advertising at the city level.



Draft Ladakh Unified Building Bye-Laws, 2024

Administration of the Union Territory of Ladakh

The draft bye-laws aimed to unify building regulations across Leh and Kargil, replacing fragmented local rules with a single, coherent framework to bring consistency and sustainability to construction practices in the Union Territory.

A key strength of this consultation was its iterative approach. The draft underwent multiple rounds of public consultation, with revisions informed by feedback and technical review before re-publication. The document itself was comprehensive and well-structured, covering zoning, building standards, permissions, and sustainability norms, supported by clear definitions and visual aids.

The multi-stage process and drafting clarity strengthened transparency and engagement. The multi-stage consultation process and structured drafting supported engagement with a unified regulatory framework applicable across Leh and Kargil.

Draft Maharashtra Factories (Amendment) Rules, 2025

Government of Maharashtra

The draft rules proposed amendments to modernise factory regulation in Maharashtra, with a focus on digitising processes and improving administrative efficiency for licensing and compliance.

The consultation stood out for the clarity with which procedural changes are presented. Amendments relating to electronic licence applications, automatic renewals, and revised reporting formats were clearly structured and easy to follow.



The availability of the draft in both Marathi and English significantly enhanced accessibility, while the consultation period provided adequate time for review. Additionally, the operational clarity of the draft enabled meaningful engagement within a complex landscape. The consultation enabled stakeholders to engage with clearly articulated procedural changes affecting factory licensing and compliance processes.

Draft Puducherry Regularisation of Unauthorisedly Constructed Buildings Policy

Government of Puducherry

The draft policy addressed the regularisation of unauthorised constructions, a recurring challenge in urban governance, by proposing a structured mechanism to bring such buildings within the formal regulatory framework.

The consultation benefitted from the straightforward articulation of policy intent. The draft clearly set out eligibility criteria, scope, and procedural steps in simple language, allowing affected citizens to understand how regularisation would operate in practice. The comprehensibility and clarity of the document enabled informed engagement and simplified public participation on a technically sensitive urban issue.

The clear articulation of scope and procedures supported public understanding of the proposed regularisation framework for unauthorised constructions.



Odisha State Data Policy

Government of Odisha

The draft policy sought to strengthen data governance in Odisha by promoting responsible data use, transparency, and digital innovation across government departments, while safeguarding privacy and security.

A notable strength of the consultation was in the clarity of its policy rationale. The draft opened with a detailed preamble and clearly articulated mission and vision, helping readers understand both the need for the policy and its intended outcomes.

Supported by a comprehensive glossary and structured presentation of institutional roles and implementation mechanisms, the document enabled non-expert engagement. The draft provided sufficient clarity to support informed participation. The consultation materials supported informed engagement with a comprehensive framework for data governance, implementation, and institutional responsibility at the state level.



BEST CONSULTATION – STATUTORY BODY

This award recognizes a statutory authority or regulatory body's efforts in conducting public consultations that exceed minimum procedural standards. It recognises consultations that demonstrate transparency, clarity, and sustained engagement in the development of regulatory frameworks. The nominees for this category are:

Consultation Paper on Proposed IFSCA (Listing) Regulations, 2024 **International Financial Services Centres Authority**

The consultation paper proposed a comprehensive framework for listing and disclosure requirements at International Financial Services Centres in India.

The document clearly outlined regulatory objectives and situated the proposed framework within global practices. Eligibility norms, disclosure standards, governance requirements, and regulatory oversight mechanisms were presented in a structured and accessible format, supported by clear formatting and comparative references. The publication of all public comments further strengthened transparency.

The consultation enabled stakeholders to engage with a clearly articulated and benchmarked regulatory framework for listings in international financial centres.



Consultation Paper on Regulatory Framework for Ground-based Broadcasters

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

The consultation paper proposed a regulatory framework for ground-based broadcasters, addressing licensing, digitisation, and coordination between regulatory authorities. The document provided a detailed justification and logically structured presentation of proposals for regulatory intervention.

The draft clearly explained essential elements of the proposed framework, including licensing mechanisms, migration pathways, and institutional coordination. Tables, images, and accessible formatting helped explain both policy intent and operational mechanisms. Transparency was reinforced through the publication of comments and counter-comments, as well as outreach through a PIB release.

The consultation supported informed engagement with procedural and institutional aspects of broadcasting regulation through clear justification and transparent disclosure of stakeholder inputs.

Discussion Paper on Amendments to IBBI (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India

The discussion paper proposed amendments aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate insolvency resolution processes. The consultation stood out for its structured presentation. For each proposal, the paper set out the existing framework, identified gaps, and explained the rationale for change before introducing regulatory language.



New provisions were outlined upfront and elaborated conceptually, with regulatory amendments presented in annexures. Following the consultation, IBBI published a comprehensive summary of responses along with its reasoning, reinforcing transparency. The consultation linked problem identification, proposed reforms, and regulatory outcomes in a structured manner that supported stakeholder understanding of insolvency process reforms.

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The consultation linked problem identification, proposed reforms, and regulatory outcomes in a structured manner that supported stakeholder understanding of insolvency process reforms.



Draft CERC (Deviation Settlement Mechanism and Related Matters) (First Amendment) Regulations, 2024

Central Electricity Regulatory Commission

The draft regulations proposed amendments to the deviation settlement mechanism in the electricity sector to improve grid stability and align operations with evolving energy systems. A key strength of this consultation was the clarity and transparency of its supporting materials: a public notice, the draft regulations, and a detailed explanatory memorandum setting out the justification for proposed changes.

New provisions were clearly structured and explained, and multiple avenues for feedback were provided. The Commission conducted a public hearing and published all submissions and presentations received during the consultation. The consultation enabled engagement with a technically complex regulatory mechanism through clear documentation, multiple participation channels, and transparent disclosure practices.

Draft MERC (Demand Flexibility and Demand Side Management) Regulations, 2024

Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission

The draft regulations introduced a framework for demand-side management and demand flexibility to support grid efficiency and renewable energy integration. The consultation was notable for its structured policy rationale. It was accompanied by an explanatory memorandum outlining the need for regulatory intervention and the structure of proposed changes.

The draft regulations were well-organised, supported by definitions, and established a detailed evaluation, measurement, and verification framework. MERC published a comprehensive report of responses received along with its reasoning and next steps.



SPECIAL MENTION: VOLUME OF CONSULTATIONS

This award recognises institutions that consistently conduct public consultations ahead of regulatory action. This year's Special Mention category highlights bodies where consultation is integrated into routine policymaking, reflecting a sustained commitment to seeking public input across laws and policy initiatives introduced within a given financial year. The nominees for this category are:

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

As India's food regulator, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India governs standards for food products, ingredients, labelling, imports, and consumer safety. During FY 2024–25, FSSAI issued 42 regulatory instruments, of which 19 were issued for public consultation, covering 45.2 per cent of its regulatory output.

Consultations were conducted across product standards, food additives, contaminants, labelling, packaging, imports, and fortification, including both consumer-facing regulations and technical matters. Most consultations were open for around sixty days and were issued through the FSSAI website and the Gazette.

Drafts were published in both Hindi and English, and feedback was collected through the National Stakeholders Consultation Portal and other digital tools.



International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)

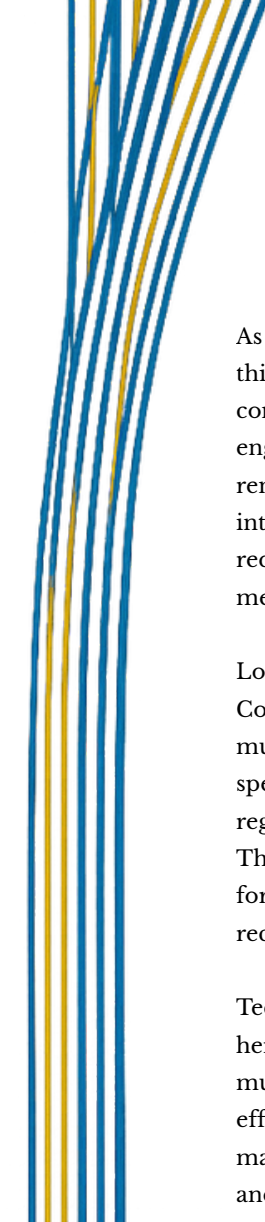
The International Financial Services Centres Authority regulates financial markets and services operating in India's international financial centres, including capital markets, banking, insurance, and fund management. In FY 2024–25, IFSCA issued 36 regulatory instruments, of which 19 were released as consultation papers, accounting for approximately 66 per cent of its regulatory activity.

Consultations covered capital markets, insurance, fund management, and payment systems, including several, new, early stage regulatory frameworks. Consultation papers were published on the IFSCA website, supported by professional outreach and inclusion in the Quarterly Bulletin. Consultations were typically open for an average of twenty-one days, and all public comments received were published, enhancing transparency in the consultation process.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

The Securities and Exchange Board of India regulates India's securities markets, including equity and debt markets, intermediaries, market infrastructure institutions, and investment vehicles. During FY 2024–25, SEBI issued 156 regulatory instruments, of which 85 were issued as consultation papers, resulting in more than half of its regulatory output being subject to public consultation.

Consultations spanned equity and debt markets, derivatives, mutual funds, alternative investment funds, REITs and InvITs, ESG frameworks, and market intermediaries. Consultation papers were published on the SEBI website, with feedback invited through the consultation portal and email. Consultation periods were typically open for 15 to 21 days.

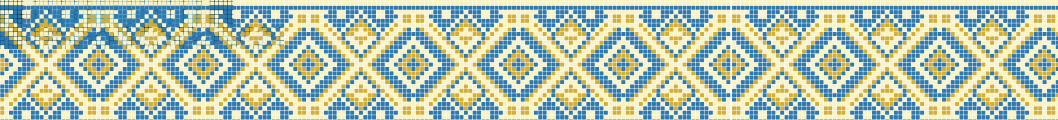


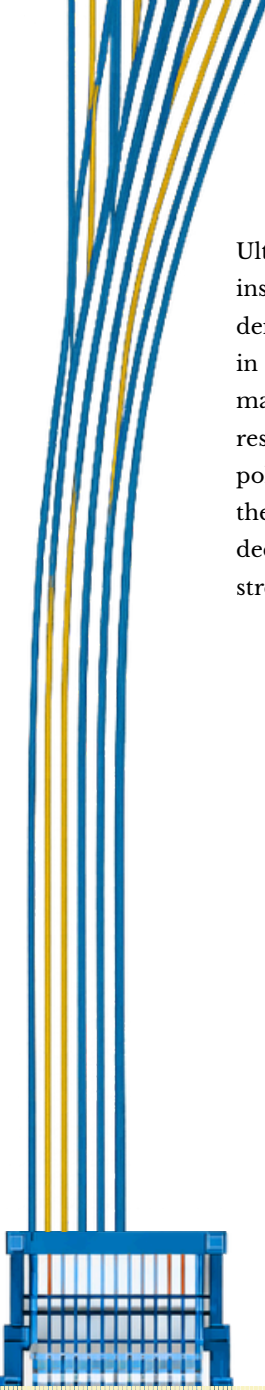
11. LOOKING AHEAD

As consultation practices continue to expand, the next phase of this evolution will depend not only on increasing the number of consultations, but on strengthening the quality and depth of engagement. While important progress is visible, such practices remain uneven across institutions. This depends not only on intent, but also on the time, capacity, and internal systems required to process public feedback in a structured and meaningful way.

Looking ahead, there is clear direction for improvement. Consultation documents can become more accessible, outreach must do more to reach non-urban and regional language-speaking publics, and closing the loop must become a more regular part of the process rather than an exceptional practice. This will require institutions to build stronger internal systems for reviewing, synthesising, and responding to the feedback they receive.

Technology and data-driven tools can play an important role here — helping simplify complex policy documents, expand multilingual access, and process large volumes of feedback more efficiently. Used thoughtfully, these tools can help institutions make participation more inclusive, while making it more scalable and administratively feasible.

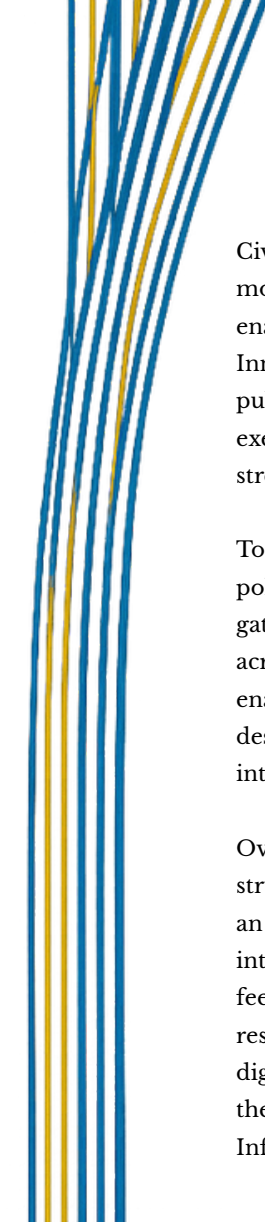




Ultimately, the future of public consultation will rest on institutions not only inviting participation, but also demonstrating that it mattered. When public institutions invest in more accountable consultations, they signal that due process matters, and that policymaking is not merely procedural, but responsive. This, in turn, creates the possibility for laws and policies that are more closely grounded in citizens' needs, and therefore more likely to inspire public trust. As these practices deepen, consultations can play a more central role in strengthening responsive, inclusive governance for a new India.

ABOUT Civis

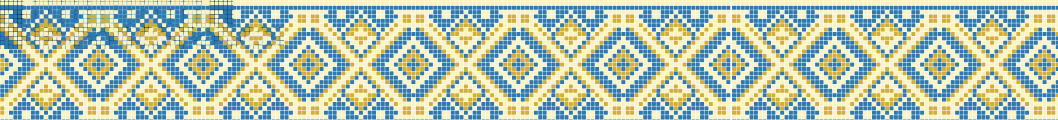


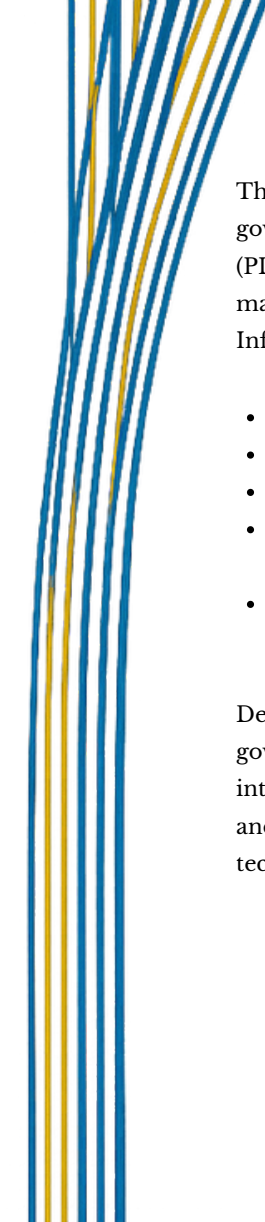


Civis works with governments to make stakeholder consultation more participatory, evidence-based, and scalable through AI-enabled technology. As a civic technology initiative of the Civic Innovation Foundation Civis aims to institutionalise meaningful public participation in policymaking — not as a one-time exercise, but as a consistent and reliable public system that strengthens dialogue between governments and citizens.

To date, Civis has facilitated feedback on 1,300+ draft laws and policies through its citizen-facing consultation platform, gathering 8.24 lakh+ citizen inputs from 777+ cities and towns across India. Our long-term partnerships with governments enable us to embed stronger consultation practices through co-designed processes, capacity building, and tailored digital interventions.

Over the years, this experience has revealed a persistent structural gap: while consultations are increasingly recognised as an important part of policymaking, institutions often lack the integrated systems needed to manage outreach, accessibility, feedback analysis, and post-consultation transparency at scale. In response, Civis has built a secure, open-source, and interoperable digital infrastructure for policy consultations, supported under the IndiaAI Mission Grant of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.



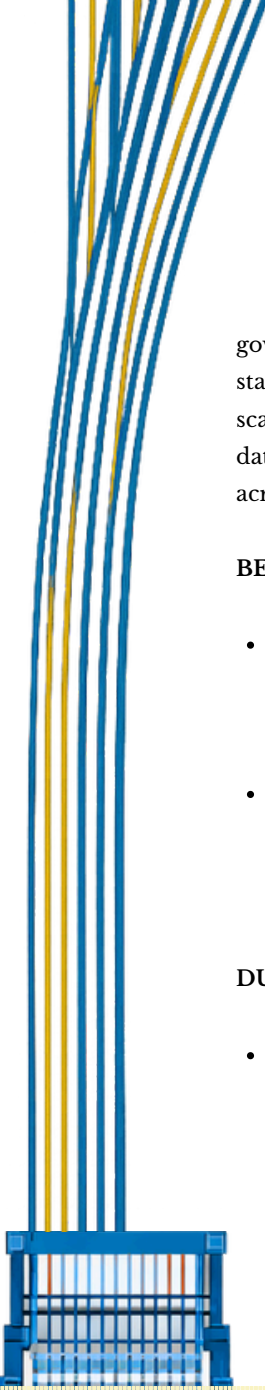


This infrastructure functions as a digital good for participatory governance, in line with the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP) and emerging best practices in consultative policy-making. Our systems follow the principles of Digital Public Infrastructure, as outlined in national DPI frameworks:

- interoperable with existing government portals,
- reusable across departments and policy initiatives,
- scalable for state-wide deployments,
- built on modular components that can be adopted with minimal technical effort, and
- designed to enhance institutional capacity, not replace existing workflows.

Designed as a long-term public asset for participatory governance, this infrastructure strengthens institutional capacity, integrates with departmental workflows of government bodies, and can scale across consultations without creating additional technical burden.





13. GOV.CIVIS.VOTE

PARTICIPATORY POLICYMAKING X AI

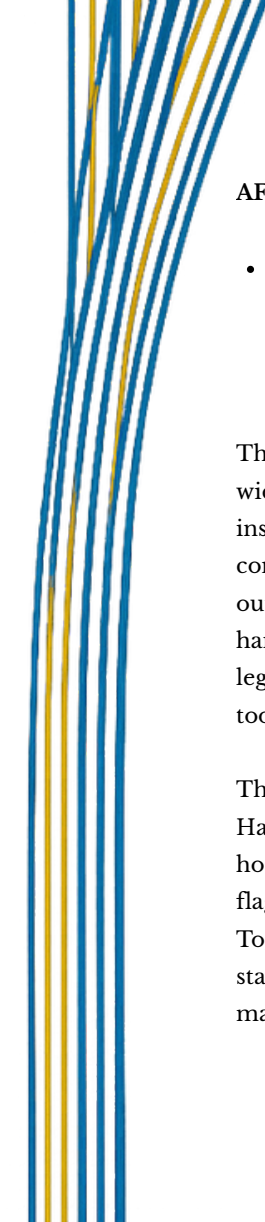
gov.civis.vote is the platform that enables governments to make stakeholder consultation more participatory, evidence-based, and scalable through civic technology. It hosts a suite of AI-enabled, data driven tools that enhance implementation of consultations across the policy cycle.

BEFORE CONSULTATION

- **Policy Summariser:** An AI-enabled tool that turns complex policy drafts into clear, multilingual summaries, helping policy teams prepare public notices, departmental briefs, and review materials faster and more consistently.
- **Policy Analyser:** An AI-enabled tool that reviews draft policies for quality, completeness, and translation accuracy, producing diagnostic scorecards that help governments identify gaps early and strengthen drafts before release.

DURING CONSULTATION

- **Civis Consultation Platform:** A ready-to-deploy consultation platform that enables governments to run internal and external stakeholder consultations in an inclusive, multilingual, and accessible manner, and securely collecting feedback across web, WhatsApp, IVR, email, and offline inputs.

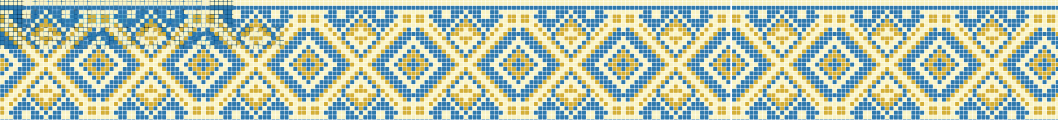


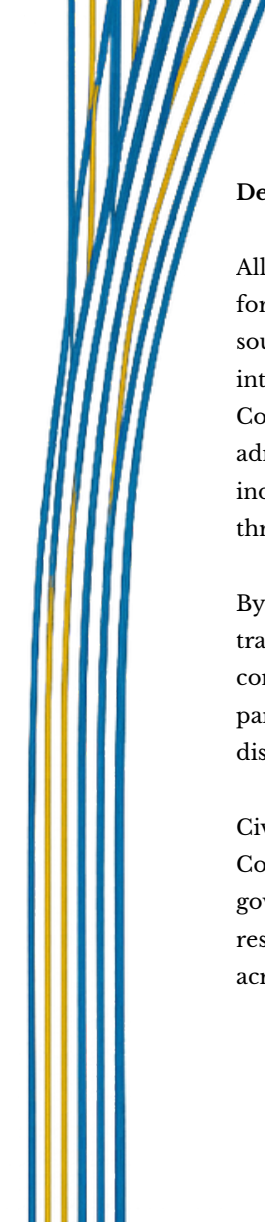
AFTER CONSULTATION

- **Response Analyser:** An AI-enabled tool that analyses citizen feedback at scale, maps responses to policy clauses, and surfaces structured, auditable datasets to support faster, transparent, and evidence-based revisions of draft policies

Through gov.civis.vote, government partners can also access a wider ecosystem of case studies, published reports, and institutional resources that support more effective public consultations across the policy cycle — from drafting and outreach to analysis and refinement. Civis also develops handbooks, learning resources, and courses to equip officers, legislators, and policy teams with the knowledge and practical tools needed to design and run stronger consultations.

These include the Parliamentarian's Handbook, the Consultation Handbook, the Introduction to Public Consultations course hosted on the iGOT Karmayogi platform, and Dispatch, Civis' flagship newsletter on participatory governance in practice. Together, these resources help institutions engage citizens and stakeholders in a more systematic, informed, and meaningful manner.



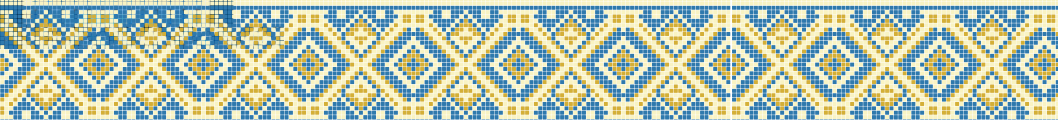


Designed for Scale, Accessibility, and Trust

All components are WCAG 3.0 compliant, ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities, and are built on principles of open-source design, data protection, multilingual access, interoperability, and modular deployment. The backend Consultation Manager Admin integrates all tools within a unified administrative interface, enabling departments to deploy individual modules or manage the entire consultation lifecycle through a single system.

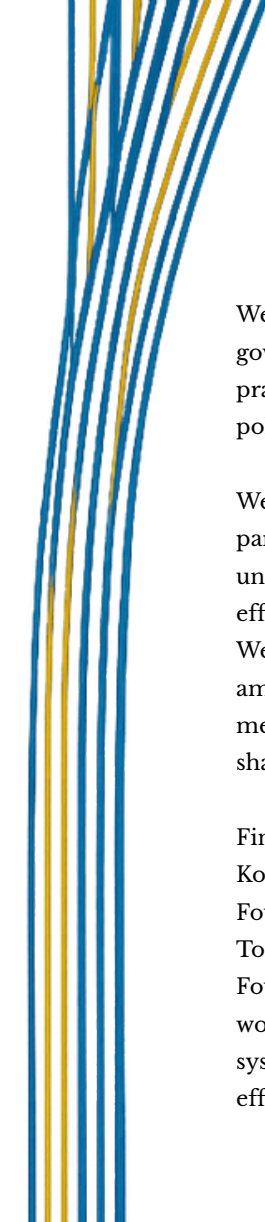
By embedding structured quality checks, multilingual outreach, transparent analytics, and auditable feedback processing within consultation workflows, Civis advances a model where public participation becomes institutional infrastructure rather than discretionary practice.

Civis is registered as a Section 8 non-profit company under the Companies Act, 2013, and works with Union ministries, state governments, and regulatory institutions to build more responsive, transparent, and participatory governance systems across India.





Maharashtra Legislative Assembly



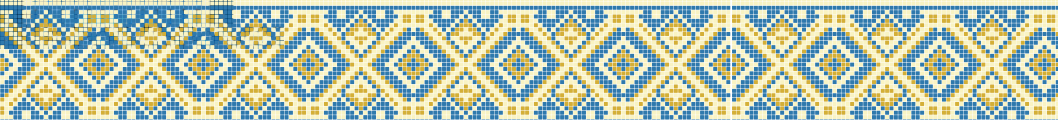
14. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

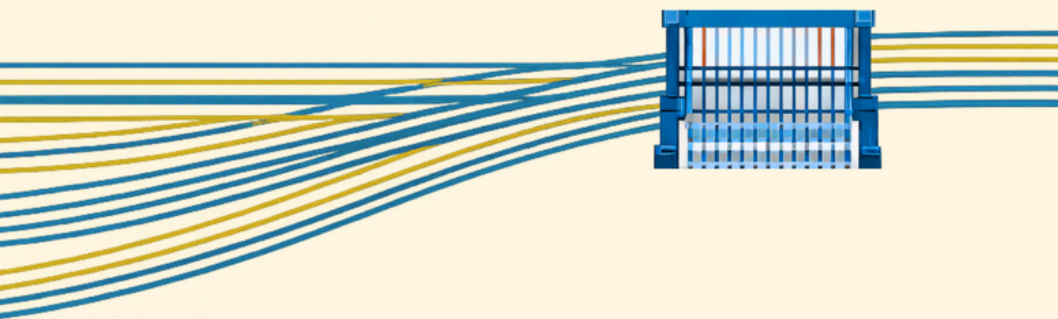
We would like to acknowledge and thank the ministries, state governments, and statutory bodies that have embraced the practice of public consultation, and are working to make policymaking more transparent, participatory, and responsive.

We are grateful to all the nominees and institutions that participated in the Civis Public Consultation Awards 2026, and undertook thoughtful consultations over the past year. Your efforts set important benchmarks for inclusive governance.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to our esteemed jury and amicus for their consistent guidance to evaluate and refine the methodology, and rigorously scrutinise submissions, helping shape a robust and credible assessment framework.

Finally, we thank our donors and partners: Bhikchandani Family, Koita Foundation, Manupatra, Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies Foundation, SAP, SVP Philanthropy Foundation, Tata Trusts, Toshvin Analytical Pvt. Ltd, Tree Of Life Foundation, and Bansuri Foundation. Your continued support enables Civis to advance its work in strengthening participatory governance, and building systems that make public consultation more accessible and effective.





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