

Piensa

CHILE DELIBERA - REPORT 1: PENSIONS

INSTITUTE FOR
DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Chile Resolution

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INSTITUTE FOR
**DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT
AND ACCOUNTABILITY**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 14, 2023, Plensa together with IDEA (Institute for Democratic Engagement and Accountability, at Ohio State University), held a Deliberative Town Hall (DTH), in which two members of the Constitutional Council participated and 728 citizens from different territories of the country and selected randomly.

The DTH is a deliberation mechanism (citizen participation) based on inclusion, focus, preparation and neutrality. The format used has wide academic recognition, having been successfully implemented in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

For the particular Chilean case, the participants in the process, after having responded to an initial survey and having received a document with neutral information that sought to establish certain bases for conversation, were able to deliberate for an hour and a half about the future of the pension system, one of the key elements of the ongoing constitutional process.

After the meeting, 658 participants (of the 728 total) responded to an exit survey. By comparing both measurements (entry and exit), it is possible to detect some changes in the results of different indicators, which could be attributed to the impact of DTH as an unprecedented and inclusive participation mechanism.

The results of the DTH, presented in great detail in this report, show that deliberation can generate a positive impact on the democratic system, both on the institution associated with the process and on the system in general. The effects go hand in hand with good design and good execution that contemplates a random selection of participants, a key element to minimize the selection risks present in all participatory mechanisms.

Furthermore, in a particular climate of polarization, this type of event shows that citizens and politicians can disagree even on elementary issues, but this does not imply that there cannot be a willingness to reach agreements and a friendly spirit within the deliberative process. Finally, when a citizen participation mechanism is inclusive and well designed, various indicators of the state of health of our democratic system can only improve.

KEY POINTS

- The data confirm a persistent polarization in the debate. That is, there would be a distance in ideological terms between positions on specific issues. Additionally, emotions and the feeling of lack of legitimacy towards the process are high.
- Despite the above, the Deliberative Town Hall (DTH) produced positive and relevant changes in areas such as the legitimacy associated with the process, the interest it arouses, the emotions it produces, in a series of political attitudes and in positions regarding specific themes.
- Beyond the constitutional aspects themselves, the impact of the DTH went further. There was an increase in the feeling of legitimacy of different democratic bodies (not just the Constitutional Council) and an increase in the feeling that the political system responds to the people.
- There were substantial changes in opinion about solidarity after the DTH, mainly among those who self-identify with the right.
- Finally, differences are seen in people's responses by socioeconomic group, geographic area, gender and ideology.

INTRODUCTION

For some years now, Chilean democracy has been going through a crisis. After a social outbreak, a pandemic and a failed constituent process, the country's democratic institutions are facing increasing challenges. Among them, the question of how to respond to citizen demands and connect with residents has taken on great relevance.

This issue is not minor, the CEP survey from last July shows that only 3% of respondents trust political parties and 8% trust Congress.

Something similar shows the Plensa Foundation's Political Opinion survey for the year 2023 focused on the Valparaíso region, where it can be seen that only 12% trust political parties. People feel distant from the democratic institutions that should represent them. All of this, by the way, extends to the current constitutional process, because as the same CEP survey shows, one in two people would have no interest in the process, while one in three evaluates it poorly.

An attempt has been made to respond to this growing disinterest with different participatory instances, such as popular standard initiatives - present in the two constituent processes -, town meetings, citizen dialogues, among others. But do we really know how these influence citizens' perceptions? Even if we seek to promote new mechanisms, how can we know the effect they have on people?

Under this context and as a result of a broader investigation into the ongoing constituent process, Fundación Plensa and the Institute for Democratic Engagement & Accountability (IDEA) of the University

State of Ohio, developed a Deliberative Town Hall, a method of deliberative participation that, for several years, has been spread around the world by the North American organization. Specifically, the format has already been successfully applied with US congressional committees, in the UK parliament and the Australian parliament.

In simple terms, this democratic innovation consists of generating an online deliberative event in which politicians and their constituents discuss, which has four essential elements:

- 1. The discussion is only about one topic, which allows go deeper into it.**
- 2. A large number of participants are recruited, maintaining a representative and random sample of the country.**
- 3. Participants are provided with neutral information on the topic before the event.**
- 4. The conversation is managed by a facilitator neutral independent of the participating politicians.**

As part of this process, Plensa and IDEA worked together with the consulting firm Feedback Research to recruit a representative sample of citizens so that they can answer an entry questionnaire (pre survey) about their visions of the state of politics and pensions. People who successfully completed the survey were randomly assigned to a control or treatment group in order to avoid self-selection bias.

Those selected in the treatment group (6,553 in total) were given neutral information about pensions based on constituent, public and online discussion.

the information present on the website of the Superintendency of Pensions. In addition, this group was invited to participate in the online deliberative event on September 14, 2023.

The event had the participation of two Constitutional Advisors - María Pardo from Convergencia Social and Sebastián Figueroa from the Republican Party - and 728 attendees, most of whom were in the session for more than an hour to talk about pensions. Study participants, both in the control and treatment groups, were then sent a post survey *that* re-measured many of the same aspects asked in the pre survey, which would allow the researchers to compare changes in opinion caused by participation in DTH.

This report contains comprehensive information about the sample of Chilean citizens who responded to both surveys and, specifically, about those who participated in the event with the aim of providing an answer to the questions raised above.

The presentation of the results goes from the general to the particular. Specifically, the following order will be followed: (1) Demographic description; (2) Trust in institutions and external and internal political effectiveness; (3) Perception of the constitutional process; (4) Pensions; (5) Qualitative information of the DTH and (6) Conclusion.

Appendix 1 contains extra information on the questions included in the report, while Appendix 2 contains the results of the rest of the questions not included.

For the analysis of the items that report people's opinions, the average opinion differences between pre and post survey among attendees are shown. These data were weighted to match the population of Chile according to age, gender, socioeconomic group and region of the country.

“When a citizen participation mechanism is inclusive and well designed, it can only improve the indicators of the state of health of our democratic system.”

WHO PARTICIPATED?

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

The graphs presented below show the changes in perception of the participants regarding political institutions and external and internal political effectiveness. Although not included in the presentation of results, in each case the treatment group has been compared with the control condition of the exit survey. These differences follow the pre-post differences quite well, so it is unlikely that the changes that occurred are due to peculiarities in the composition of the group that participated in the experiment.

Weighted exit questionnaire data from those who responded based on socioeconomic group, gender, region, and ideology are presented to give an idea of what public opinion by group would be like if the entire country had been able to deliberate.

All relevant changes are presented from this section to VI, while the rest of the graphs can be found in appendices 1 and 2.

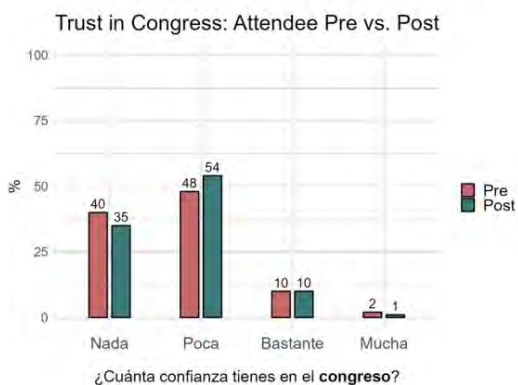
Institution	Bit	Anything	Quite	A lot
National Congress of Chile	-5	6	0	-1
Political parties	-7	6	1	0
Supreme Court of Chile	-3	2	-2	2
Constitutional Council	-10	7	3	0

Table 1 Variation in levels of distrust for the institutions studied. Source: ChileDelibera

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF CHILE

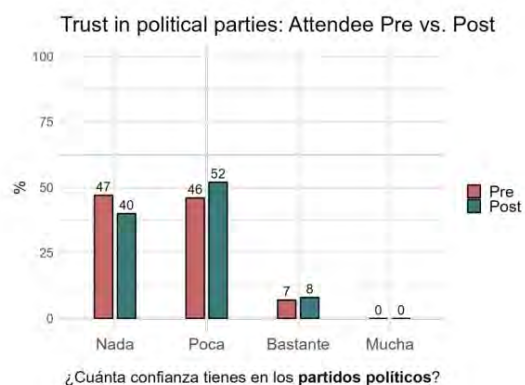
A large majority of those surveyed, **89%**, express distrust towards the National Congress of Chile. However, after participating in the DTH event, there was a variation in the perception of distrust among people who initially did not trust Congress, showing a five percent decrease.

Although the DTH event was not related to the activities of the National Congress and did not have the participation of deputies or senators, a positive effect is perceived in trust towards the institutions representative.



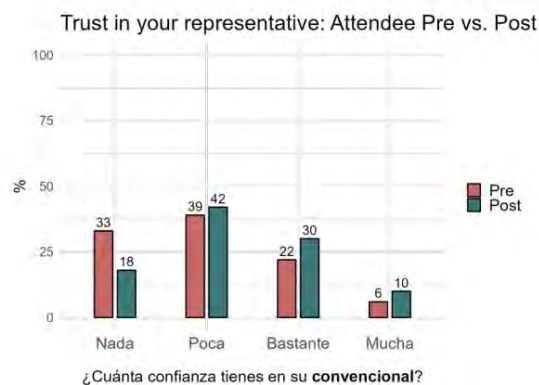
POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties also benefit, achieving a seven-point decrease in their levels of distrust.



YOUR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL

Distrust in the representatives before the Constitutional Council decreased from 33 to 18% after participating in the DTH.





SUPREME COURT OF CHILE

The perceptible change in each representative institution is not replicated when consulting about trust in the Supreme Court¹. The results could suggest that deliberation would positively affect, particularly the representative institutions of our democracy, improving people's trust in them.

This is no small fact, given that if all the graphs are observed as a whole, a certain positive trend linked to DTH could be established.

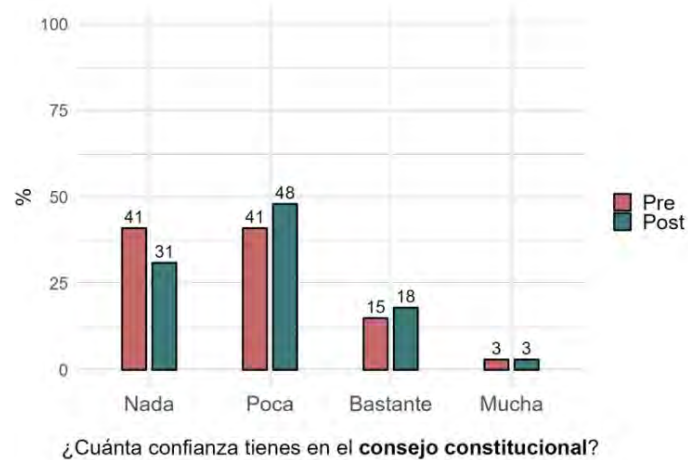


¹ Unlike the rest of the institutions studied, the Supreme Court is not directly elected. The ministers of the Supreme Court of Chile are appointed by the President of the Republic, selecting them from a list proposed by the Supreme Court itself, and must then be ratified by the Senate.

TRUST IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL

When citizens were asked about trust in the Constitutional Council, the decrease in distrust in this institution was quite relevant, dropping 10 percentage points. If the results are analyzed by socioeconomic group, gender, ideology and area, variations in perceptions can be noted that are interesting to analyze:

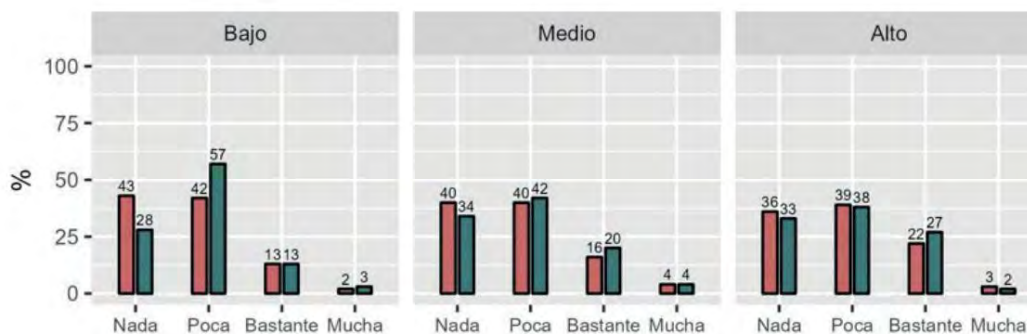
- 1. At the socioeconomic level:** The greatest increase in confidence occurs in the lowest income group.
- 2. At the gender level:** the variation occurs mainly in women.
- 3. At the geographical territory level:** the center of the country is the area that remains constant without presenting considerable variations. Meanwhile, among those who inhabit the southern and northern macrozones there was an important variation that allows us to see how the event could have positively affected the connection of the most distant areas with the institutions that by their nature are centralized.



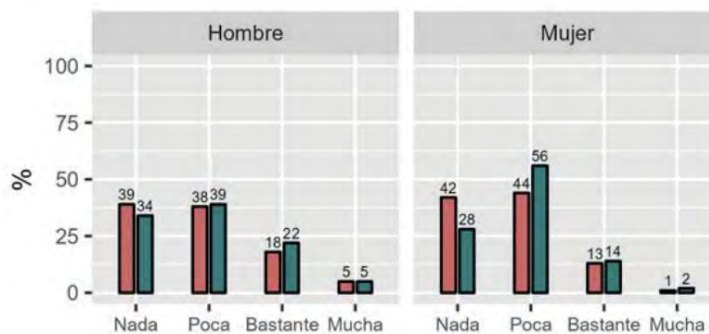
TRUST IN THE COUNCIL CONSTITUTIONAL

DOBLE CLICK

Socioeconomic level

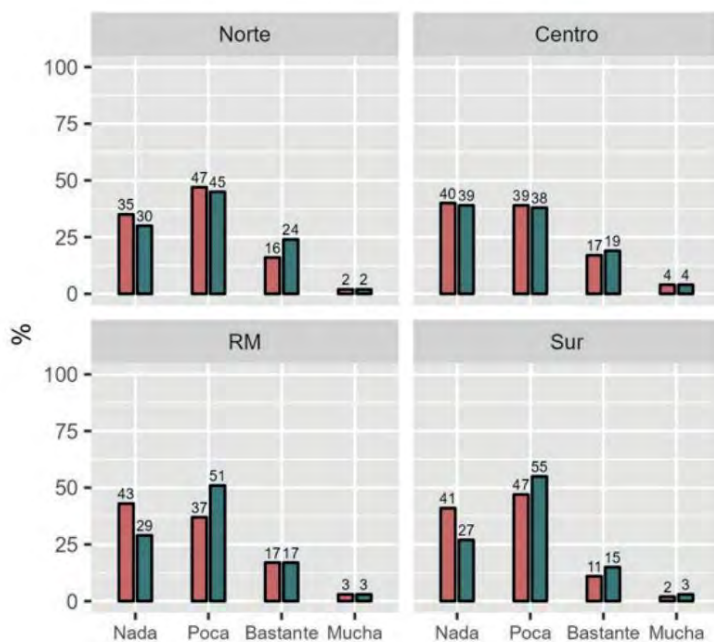


Gender



Zone

Geographic



POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

Political efficacy is a term that measures the trust and perception that citizens have about their influence and the functioning of the political system. In general, from the DTH we were able to observe some variations in the political attitudes of the participants.

Internal political efficacy refers to citizens' perception of their own ability to influence politics and government. It measures the extent to which people feel they can understand and affect political issues, that is, whether they consider their participation meaningful and whether they believe that leaders and institutions respond to their demands or needs.

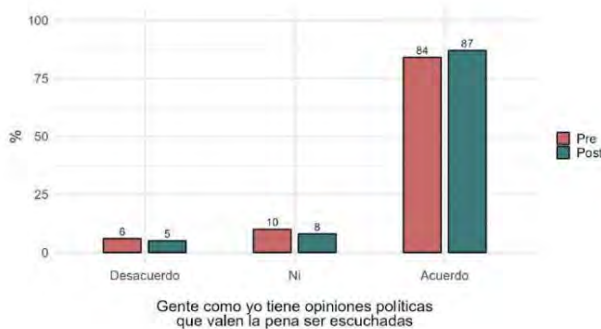
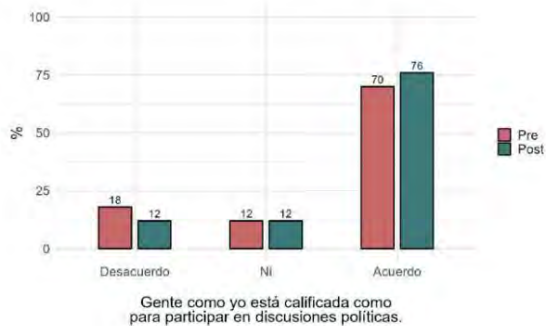
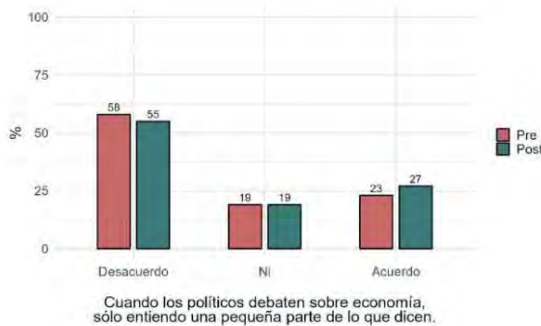
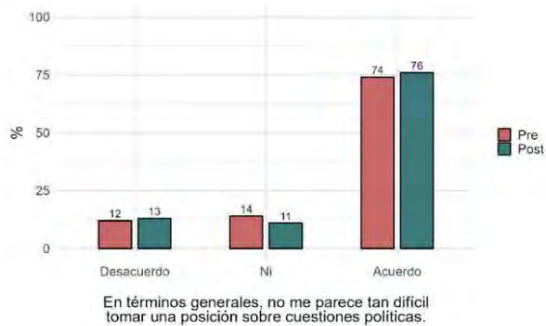
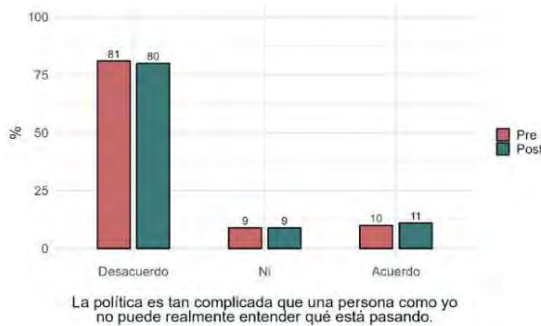
Meanwhile, **external political efficacy** evaluates the confidence that citizens have in their political system to respond and be receptive to the needs and demands of the population. It measures the perception that government institutions and political representatives are efficient, effective and act in the best interest of the public. In short, it focuses on trust in institutions rather than the perception of the individual's own ability to influence.

Each of these components is measured using different questions, among which those that present the greatest variations after DTH will be analyzed.

It is important to highlight that this event was around the discussion on Pensions and with Constituent Councilors. Even so, the positive effects can be felt in the democratic system in general, which is consistent with the evidence from other countries after carrying out this type of deliberative mechanism.

HOW ABLE DO CHILEANS FEEL TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS? - INTERNAL EFFICIENCY

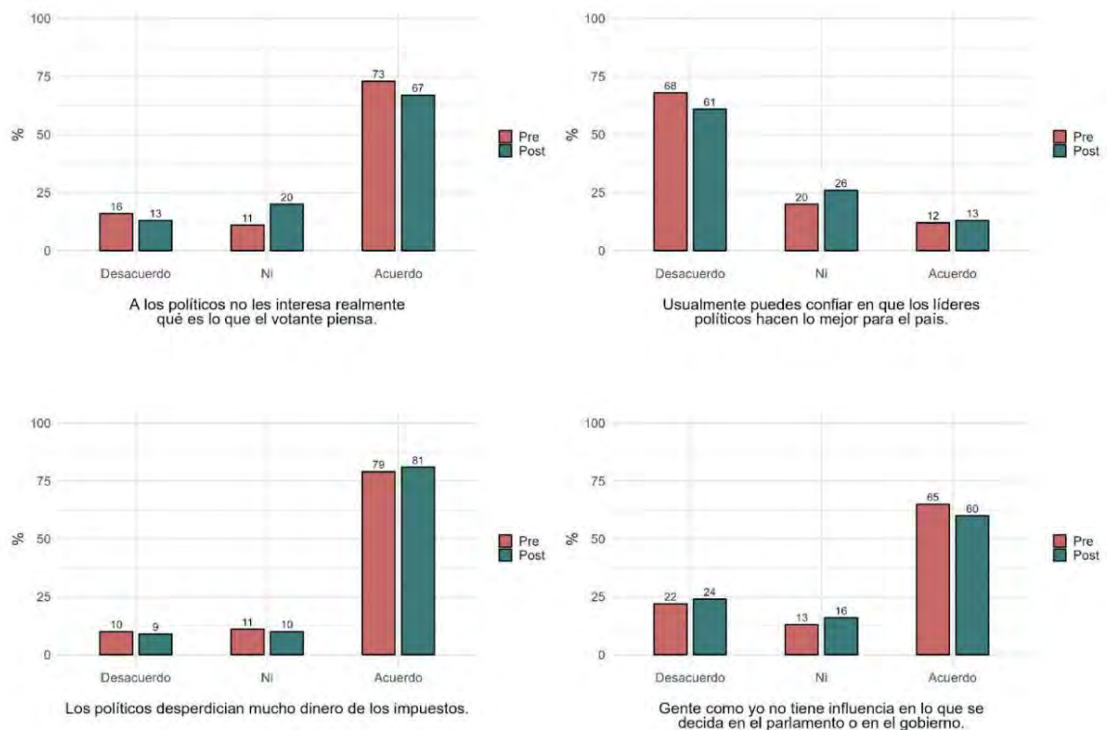
Participants felt more qualified to participate in politics with a 6-point increase in the question *“people like me are qualified to participate in politics.”* There were also changes in the perception that each participant's political opinions are worth listening to.



HOW MUCH DO PEOPLE FEEL THAT THE POLITICAL SYSTEM RESPONDS TO THEIR DEMANDS? - EXTERNAL EFFICIENCY

Regarding external effectiveness, greater variation can be observed, given that there is an increase in the feeling that politicians do care about what the voter thinks (Q1), as well as that people like me can influence the government (Q4).

An obvious improvement can be seen in citizens' feelings about their ability to participate in politics and, more importantly, that politicians will listen to them by looking at both efficiencies before and after DTH together.

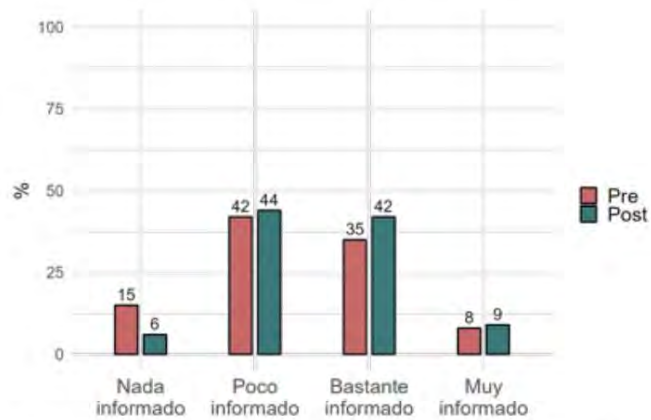


PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROCESS CONSTITUTIONAL

This section presents the results regarding people's perceptions of the constitutional process. On the one hand, data is presented regarding the perception of legitimacy and importance of the process, in addition to how informed they believe they are about it.

INFORMED

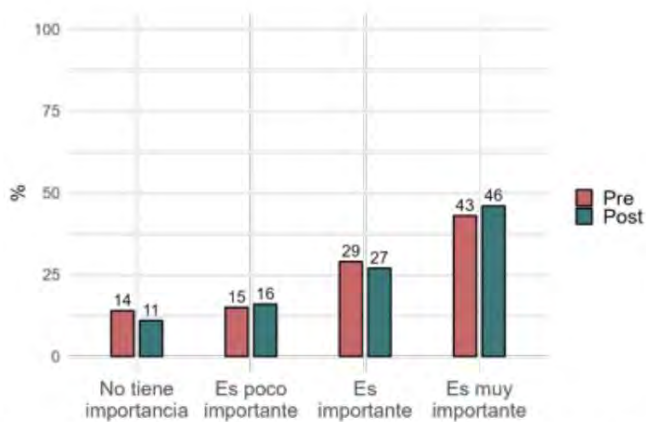
After the event, the perception of information about the constituent process seems to have improved, increasing by seven points those who feel “fairly informed.”



¿Cuán informado está usted sobre el actual proceso constituyente?

IMPORTANCE

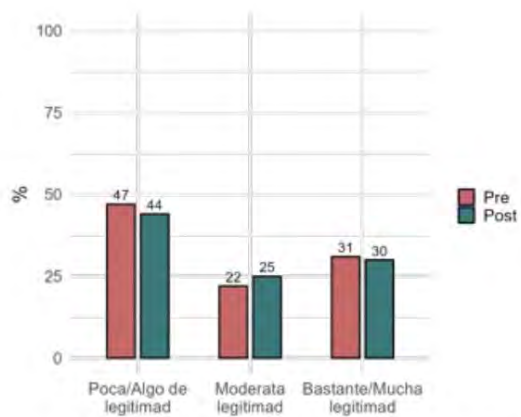
In addition to the above, participating in the DTH also seems to have increased the understanding of how relevant the constitutional process is for the development of the country.



¿Cuán importante es para usted que se elabore una nueva constitución?

LEGITIMACY

Regarding the feeling of legitimacy associated with the process, it is possible to observe an improvement after DTH. Despite this, questions about the process remain high.



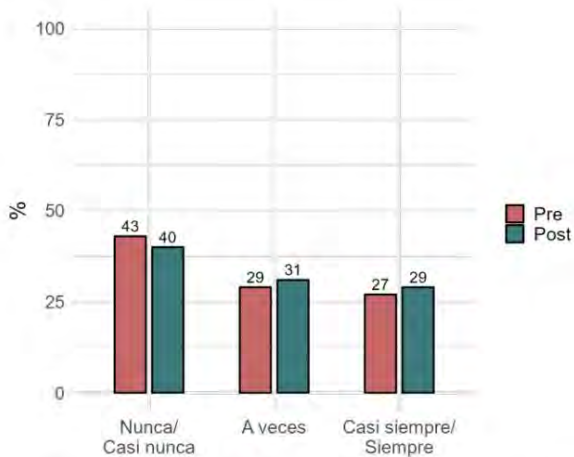
¿Cuánta legitimidad tiene el nuevo proceso constitucional?

EMOTIONS

Regarding the questions about the emotions that the constitutional process provokes, four of the ten included are presented here (the rest of the graphs on emotions are in Appendix 2). As can be seen, there seem to be small but clear variations towards a positive feeling of the constituent process after DTH.

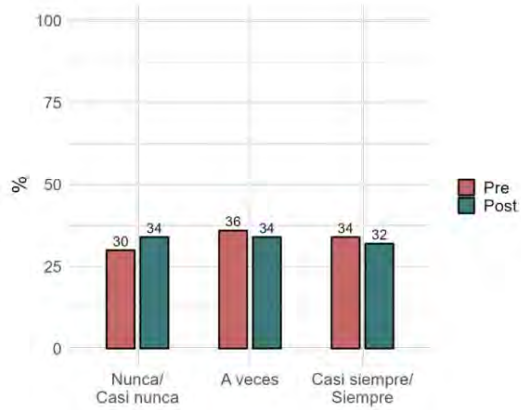
On the one hand, there was a minor increase in the hope and level of worry generated by the process, on the other, there was a decrease in the anger, bitterness, and contempt generated by the process after the event.

HOPE



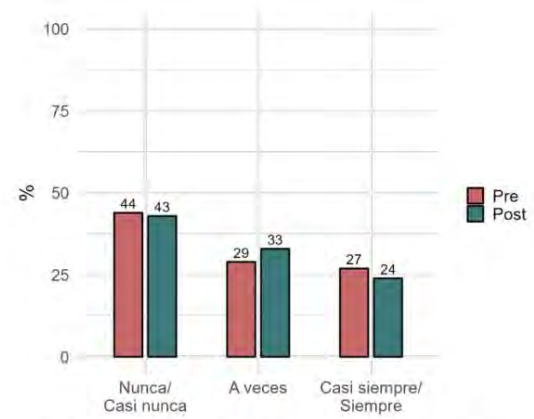
Siento **esperanza** hacia el proceso constituyente actual.

ANGER



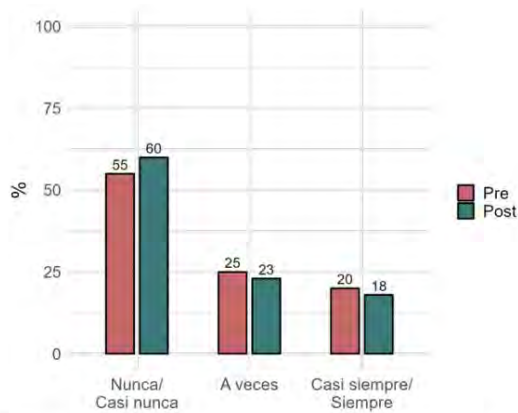
Siento **enojo** hacia el proceso constituyente actual.

BITTERNESS



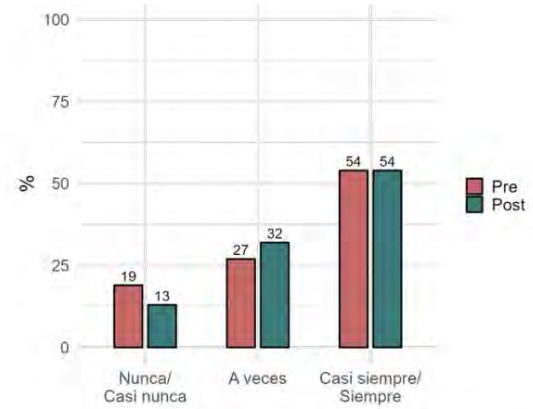
Siento **amargura** hacia el proceso constituyente actual.

DISPARAGEMENT

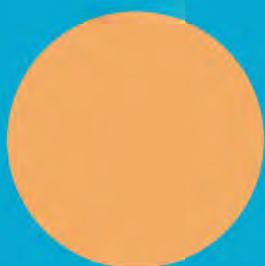


Siento **menosprecio** hacia el proceso constituyente actual.

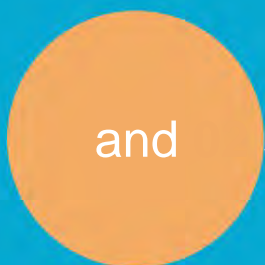
WORRY



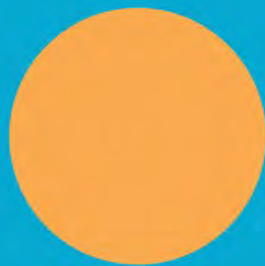
Siento **preocupación** hacia el proceso constituyente actual.



Selection of the topic
according to the Council discussion
Constituent



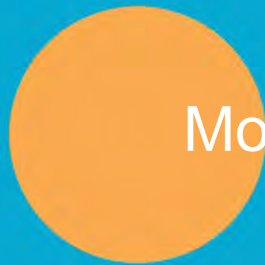
Preparation of minutes
and selection of participants



Delivery of minutes to participants



Deliberation



Monitoring

PENSIONS: THE FOCUS OF THE EVENT

The structure of the DTH involves the treatment of only one topic of conversation, which seeks to be treated in depth during the deliberative process. To achieve this, participants are sent a document with neutral information that serves as preparation for the event. On this occasion, the topic chosen was “pensions”. In addition to being a very sensitive issue among the population, in those days it also focused the attention of public opinion. Specifically, this section presents the changes caused by the DTH regarding the questions on pensions, considered in both the entry and exit questionnaires. Also

Variations by socioeconomic group, gender, geographic area and ideology are included.

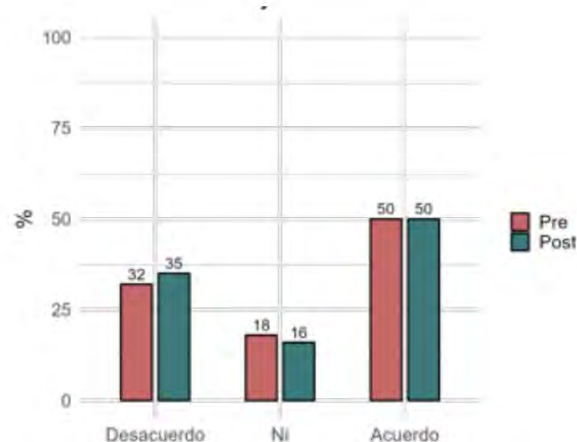
Looking at both surveys together, they seem to suggest that people don't have a clear choice between the two policies. Rather, there is a tendency to reach agreements and combine both ways of seeing the pension system.

POLICY 1: INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION

When people were asked whether savings for the old-age pension should go into an individual account – like the current individually funded system – preferences were maintained after the event. A minor shift can be observed toward the disagreement option after the event, caused by those who initially seemed undecided.

However, when we analyze the responses by different characteristics of the population, the situation is different. On the one hand, there is an increase in people according to an individual contribution system in low-income people, especially compared to the group middle and high income.

On the other hand, regarding ideology, there is an increase against this option by participants who identify with the left. While those who identify with the right remain constant.



La pensión de vejez debe depender de **cada individuo**, por lo tanto, las cotizaciones de los trabajadores deben ir a una **cuenta de ahorro individual** de cada trabajador.

OPINIONS IN THE MOUTH OF THE PARTICIPANTS

OPINIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants submitted a total of 1616 comments and questions during DTH. In general, the questions were of a very high level, reflecting that participants have been attentive to the discussion on pensions and/or prepared for the event by reading the supplementary material in advance. The following questions were asked during the event and were the trigger for most of the panelists' responses:

“Through the constitution, could you ensure that my present and future contributions and any contributions generated from my work go to my individual account?” [Male, 35, Tall, RM]

“Who should administer pensions and why?” [Female, 61, Tall, RM]

“Hello, I'm Nicolas Vargas. How will you ensure that the pension system is sustainable and fair for all citizens? For example, what will happen to street vendors who have never paid contributions. Will they have the same pension as a homeless person who has never contributed? "Isn't the indirect economic contribution that street vendors generate to the country valued?" [Female, 42, Middle, Center]

“Very good afternoon, what would be the proposals regarding the ages of men and women? What do you think of the PGU?” [Male, 57, Tall, RM]

“It is possible to guarantee that more actors enter the social security market and open other institutions that administer

funds?" [Male, 46, Tall, RM]

"And what about heritability?" [Female, 37, Medium, RM]

"How are they going to improve the pensions of women who have had to stop working to raise their children?"

[Male, 75, Tall, South]

"Why don't we imitate the Armed Forces system that is PAYOUT with a lot of contribution from the State? Why should the market take precedence over basic social rights of citizens? "I am a teacher and I am terrified of retirement." [Female, 49, Low, South]

"If the private system has already failed, why are we still considering a private administration system?"

[Male, 36, Middle, Center]

"I would like to know if the proposal they make is going to be the best long-term alternative, or the constitution is going to leave things tied up that will prevent modernizing this issue according to what happens in 20 or 30 more years." [Male, 62, Tall, RM]

"Why aren't two mechanisms created? That is, a private and individual mechanism and a shared one? And so the citizen and/or contributor is the one who decides where to distribute their resources." [Female, 58, Short, Center]

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“Is it possible to ensure that more actors enter the social security market and open other institutions that manage the funds?” [Male, 46, Tall, RM]

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“Why aren't two mechanisms created? That is, a private and individual mechanism and a shared one? And so the citizen and/or contributor is the one who decides where to distribute their resources.” [Female, 58, Short, Center]

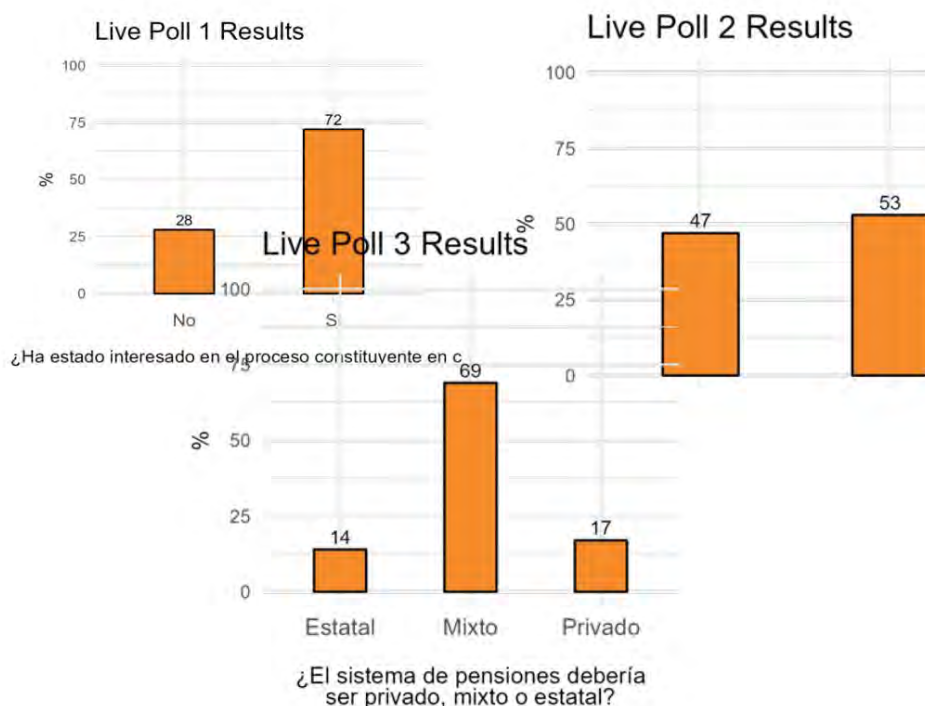
QUESTIONS FROM THE COUNSELORS

During the DTH, Counselor Pardo asked the participants two direct questions for them to answer live. Below are the two questions and the answers that were selected by the moderation team and shared with the audience:

Question 1: What is your diagnosis about the functioning of the FEP agencies today?

"In response to Maria Pardo, the AFP's performance is bad, they have had multimillion-dollar losses, we do not know where and with whom and why they invest, for example the Sahie group, etc...finally it is just a medium where and they are used

the economic groups the banks....-pensions are not a priority for these companies" [Male, 56, Tall, RM]



CLUSTERS

The remaining 1500 questions have been clustered thematically and are presented below in order of frequency, together with a representative sample of the questions/comments on the topic. A representative list of questions and comments is included in Appendix 3.

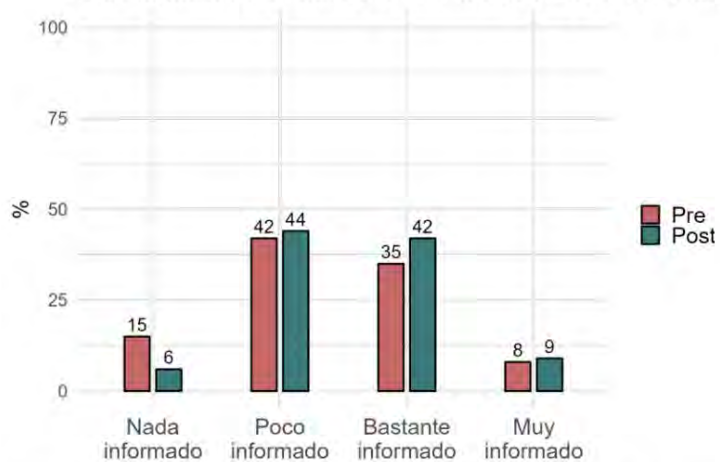
The themes presented below represent fairly well the list of priorities that were shared with participants in the previous material, but they also touch, sometimes in great depth, on other concerns that participants had.

CONCLUSIONS

GRADES

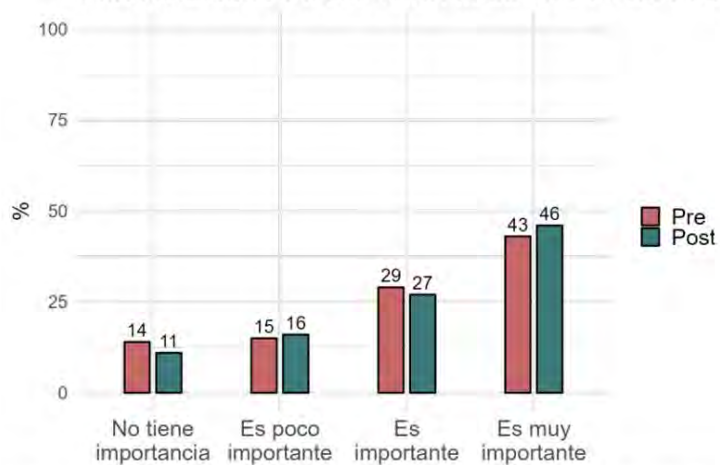
REFERENCES

Constitutional Process Q.1: Attendee Pre vs. Post



¿Cuán informado está usted sobre el actual proceso constituyente?

Constitutional Process Q.2: Attendee Pre vs. Post



¿Cuán importante es para usted que se elabore una nueva constitución?

