



## Country case: Citizen participation mechanisms in public procurement processes in Latin America



Public Procurement Principle: **Participation, Transparency, Efficiency, Accountability**



Procurement Stage: **All stages**



Audience: **Procuring entity, Policy maker, Civil society, Private sector**

### Description

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In Mexico, social witnesses are required to participate in all stages of the federal public procurement procedures above certain thresholds as a way of promoting public scrutiny. Social witnesses are non-governmental organisations or individuals selected by the Ministry of Public Administration (SFP). The SFP is responsible for keeping a registry of the selected social witnesses and evaluating their performance. This monitoring by social witnesses has had an impact on improving procurement procedures, and has contributed to ensuring the transparency and credibility of the public procurement system in Mexico.

In Peru, the Comptroller General of the Republic (CGR) launched a citizen control mechanism called Monitores Ciudadanos de Control. Citizen monitors will visit construction sites at the beginning, during, and/or upon completion of public works in order to monitor the construction. Since its launch in 2018, CGR has registered about 1 400 citizen monitors, and about 300 construction projects were subject to this monitoring. CGR plans to increase the number of citizen monitors by 2 000 in 2019. CGR also launched a portal site INFOBRAS (Sistema de Información de Obras Públicas, Public Work Information System) in order to reinforce the transparency of infrastructure projects. Citizens can access the information of each construction project, such as progress and visual images of construction.

In Colombia, the Secretariat of Transparency of the Presidency of the Republic launched an anti-corruption mobile application called Elefantes Blancos in order to promote the citizen control of white elephant projects (neglected, abandoned or overbilled public works projects). Citizens can use this mobile application to report white elephant projects, obtain information on the projects reported by other citizens, and follow up with the updated information of case investigations. Since its introduction in 2013, this smartphone

application has contributed to identifying 54 white elephant projects. Incomplete construction projects are estimated to have cost the country 163 million Colombian pesos.

Source: OECD (2020), [Towards a new vision for Costa Rica's Public Procurement System: Assessment of key challenges for the establishment of an action plan](#), OECD Publishing, Paris

