

Roberto Falanga (ICS-ULisboa) | *Critical Trends of Citizen Participation in Policymaking: Insights from Portugal*

While citizenry trust towards democratic institutions decreases, mechanisms of citizen participation in policymaking grow worldwide. Praised by international agencies like the World Bank, the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the European Union, citizen participation shifted from values of state reform and social justice towards a governance-oriented agenda from 2000s. This shift, according to a critical perspective, produced trends concerning the localisation of practices against global flows of capitals; the political neutralisation of citizen participation via the globalisation of technocratic approaches; and the proliferation of pilots despite scarce evidence sharing on their impacts. Against this backdrop, the chapter discusses the case of Portugal, currently holding records of participatory processes at both local and national levels. Light will be shed on the extent to which, within a context that passed through a harsh austerity agenda, critical trends are being reproduced in the country. Towards this end, the discussion will conclude that weak scaling-up of citizen participation, non-binding institutional designs, and scarce demand of public accountability should be more critically approached by the scientific community.