

**Article History***Received: 7 Apr 2025**Reviewed: 31 July 2025**Accepted: 25 Aug 2025**Published: 9 Sep 2025*

Comparison of the Principle of Meaningful Participation in the Process of Law Formation in Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of applying the principle of meaningful participation in lawmaking in Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden

The method used is normative juridical with a case study and comparative law approach. Data collection was conducted through a literature review of regulations, official documents, and related literature, which was then analyzed qualitatively using a descriptive-comparative framework.

The novelty of this research lies in its functional comparative approach, which not only compares legal frameworks but also the practical implementation of the principle of participation in the legislative processes of each country.

This study highlights the gap between formal regulations and substantive practices in Indonesia, and identifies best practices from Swiss referendum democracy and Swedish public consultation mechanisms. The results show that Indonesia still faces challenges in ensuring substantive public participation, which tends to be formal and limited without influencing the substance of regulations. In contrast, Switzerland implements direct democracy through referendums, and Sweden has developed transparent and structured public consultation mechanisms. However, the future prospects in Indonesia are quite positive, with increasing demands for transparency, technological advances, and the role of civil society opening up opportunities to develop more inclusive and effective public participation in law-making.

In conclusion, although Indonesia is still limited in ensuring substantial public participation, the opportunities to improve participation mechanisms through transparency and technology are quite promising, leading to a more inclusive and influential system in law formation.

Keywords : Meaningful Participation; Lawmaking; Deliberative Democracy.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis efektivitas penerapan prinsip partisipasi bermakna dalam pembentukan undang-undang di Indonesia, Swiss, dan Swedia

Metode penelitian yang digunakan yakni yuridis normatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus dan hukum perbandingan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui studi kepustakaan terhadap

peraturan, dokumen resmi, dan literatur terkait, lalu dianalisis secara kualitatif dengan kerangka deskriptif-komparatif.

Kebaruhan penelitian ini terletak pada pendekatan perbandingan fungsional yang tidak hanya membandingkan kerangka hukum, tetapi juga implementasi praktis prinsip partisipasi dalam proses legislasi masing-masing negara. Penelitian ini menyoroti kesenjangan antara pengaturan formal dan praktik substantif di Indonesia, serta mengidentifikasi praktik terbaik dari demokrasi referendum di Swiss dan mekanisme konsultasi publik di Swedia.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan Indonesia masih menghadapi tantangan dalam menjamin partisipasi publik yang substantif, yang cenderung formal dan terbatas tanpa memengaruhi substansi regulasi. Sebaliknya, Swiss mengimplementasikan demokrasi langsung melalui referendum, dan Swedia mengembangkan mekanisme konsultasi publik yang transparan dan terstruktur. Namun, prospek ke depan di Indonesia cukup positif, dengan meningkatnya tuntutan transparansi, kemajuan teknologi, serta peran masyarakat sipil yang membuka peluang untuk mengembangkan partisipasi publik yang lebih inklusif dan efektif dalam pembentukan hukum.

Kesimpulannya, meski Indonesia masih terbatas dalam memastikan partisipasi publik yang substansial, peluang untuk memperbaiki mekanisme partisipasi melalui transparansi dan teknologi cukup menjanjikan, mengarah pada sistem yang lebih inklusif dan berpengaruh dalam pembentukan undang-undang.

Kata Kunci: Partisipasi Bermakna; Pembuatan Undang-Undang; Demokrasi Deliberatif.

1. INTRODUCTION

Public participation in forming laws is one of the main indicators in assessing the quality of democracy in a country.¹ The principle of meaningful participation emphasizes that public involvement is not only a formality but also has a real influence on the substance of the resulting policy.² The concept of meaningful participation in the law-making process has undergone significant historical evolution, in line with the development of democracy and the principle of the rule of law. Initially, public participation was symbolic and limited to formal representation in legislative bodies. However, in modern developments, particularly after World War II, there has been a paradigm shift toward active community involvement as an essential element in achieving legal legitimacy and accountability. This concept is reinforced by international instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which affirms the right of every citizen to participate in public affairs. In the context of lawmaking, meaningful participation includes the right to access information, provide input, and play a substantive role in decision-making, rather than merely fulfilling administrative formalities. This is in line with the views of Craig and de Búrca (2024) in *EU Law: Text, Cases, and Materials*, which emphasize that public participation is a key component of a democratic and inclusive legislative process.³ The principle of meaningful participation is one of the

¹ Callychya Juanitha Raisha Tuhumena, Jemmy Jefry Pietersz, and Victor Juzuf Sedubun, "Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Pembentukan Undang-Undang," *TATOHI: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 1, no. 3 (2021).

² Entol Zaenal Muttaqin and Sahrul Hikam, "Konsep Meaningful Participation dalam Proses Legislasi di Indonesia Pasca Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Nomor 91/PUU XVIII/2020," *Amnesti: Jurnal Hukum* 6, no. 1 (February 2, 2024): 62–80, <https://doi.org/10.37729/amnesti.v6i1.4091>.

³ Paul Craig and Gráinne De Búrca, *EU Law: Text, Cases, and Materials* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024).

fundamental elements of a democratic State's law.⁴ This principle emphasizes that the community must be substantially involved in forming statutes so that the resulting regulations reflect the public's aspirations and needs. Meaningful community participation is not only limited to procedural formalities but must also influence the substance of the policies formed.

In modern democracy, countries such as Switzerland and Sweden have developed mechanisms that allow the public to participate effectively in legislation, either through referendums, comprehensive public consultations, or active involvement of interest groups.⁵ In contrast, in Indonesia, although the concept of public participation has been recognized in various regulations (such as Law No. 12 of 2011 on the Formation of Legislation, as last amended by Law Number 13 of 2022), its implementation still faces multiple challenges, including lack of transparency, limited accessibility, and the dominance of political elites in the legislative process. Public participation in forming laws is a fundamental principle guaranteed in various regulations in Indonesia. Article 1, paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution emphasizes that sovereignty lies in the hands of the people and is implemented according to the Constitution, which means that every legislative process should reflect the people's aspirations. In addition, Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning the Formation of Legislation, as last amended by Law Number 13 of 2022, stipulates that the public has the right to provide input at every stage of the formation of laws.⁶ However, in its implementation, the public participation mechanism is often only a formality and does not significantly influence the substance of the drafted regulations.

Several controversial laws, such as the Job Creation Law and the revision of the Criminal Code (KUHP), show how the public consultation process is more of an administrative requirement than an instrument that strengthens deliberative democracy.⁷ A similar phenomenon was also seen in ratifying the revised Law on the Indonesian National Armed Forces (UU TNI), which was recently passed. This Law has drawn criticism from various groups because it is considered to contain provisions that have the potential to expand the military's role beyond defense functions, which is contrary to the principle of civilian supremacy in a democratic system. Although the House of Representatives (DPR) and the government have claimed that this revision has gone through a consultation stage with various parties, many civil society groups, academics, and human rights organizations consider the process not transparent enough and do not provide adequate space for substantive debate. This criticism shows that public participation in legislation in Indonesia still faces serious challenges, where

⁴ Sarah Malena Andrea Dondokambey, "Penerapan Prinsip Partisipasi Masyarakat Bermakna (Meaningful Participation) Dalam Pembentukan Peraturan Daerah," *Lex Privatum* XI, no. 2 (2023).

⁵ Yuri Kovalev et al., "Alternative Models of Political Participation of Population in Developed and Developing Countries: Cases of Switzerland, Germany, Brazil and Uruguay," in *Proceedings of Topical Issues in International Political Geography*, ed. Radomir Bolgov et al., Springer Geography (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 204–16, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-58263-0_17.

⁶ Henny Andriani, "Partisipasi Bermakna Sebagai Wujud Asas Keterbukaan Dalam Pembentukan Undang-Undang," *UNES Journal of Swara Justisia* 7, no. 1 (May 18, 2023): 306, <https://doi.org/10.31933/ujsj.v7i1.337>.

⁷ Tobias Gunas, "Kontroversi Undang-Undang Cipta Kerja Nomor 11 Tahun 2020: Kajian Linguistik Forensik Dari Pendekatan Analisis Wacana Kritis," *Kongres Internasional Masyarakat Linguistik Indonesia*, April 2, 2022, 390–96, <https://doi.org/10.51817/kimli.vi.85>.

existing mechanisms cannot guarantee that public aspirations are truly accommodated in policy formulation. Therefore, reforms in the public consultation system are urgent so that the process of forming laws in Indonesia is not only procedurally democratic but also substantively.⁸

In contrast, countries like Switzerland and Sweden have stronger mechanisms to ensure public participation in the legislative process. In Switzerland, the direct democracy system allows citizens to form laws through referendums and popular initiatives as stipulated in the Swiss Federal Constitution.⁹ This enable citizens to vote on controversial bills before they are enacted. Sweden implements a broad public consultation model in the formation of laws as stipulated in the Swedish Constitution (Instrument of Government)¹⁰ Article 7 Chapter 8, which requires every draft law to go through a consultation process before being submitted to parliament (Riksdag). This process is carried out through a remiss system, whereby drafts are sent to various stakeholders such as government agencies, academics, civil society organizations, and the private sector to gather input from various parties. This mechanism ensures that every draft law has been thoroughly reviewed in terms of both legal substance and its impact on the wider community.¹¹ In addition to being regulated by the constitution, this system is also reinforced by subsidiary regulations such as the Administrative Procedure Act (Förvaltningslag) and the Freedom of the Press Act (Tryckfrihetsförordningen), which guarantee transparency of information, making public consultation an integral part of the deliberative democratic system that enhances transparency, accountability, and the legitimacy of the legislative process in Sweden.¹²

In Indonesia, public participation in forming laws is a fundamental principle guaranteed in various regulations including Article 1, paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution, Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning the Formation of Legislation, as last amended by Law Number 13 of 2022.¹³ However, in its implementation, the public participation mechanism is often only a formality and does not significantly influence the substance of the drafted regulations.

⁸ Awan Darmawan, "Dinamika Pembentukan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan Di Indonesia: Antara Kebutuhan Dan Realitas," *Jurnal Kajian Ilmiah Multidisipliner* 8, no. 10 (2024).

⁹ Miroslaw Matyja, "Federal System and Direct Democracy in Switzerland," *Polit Journal: Scientific Journal of Politics* 1, no. 3 (August 25, 2021): 91–101, <https://doi.org/10.33258/polit.v1i3.484>.

¹⁰ Richard Sannerholm, "Rule of Law and Public Administration in Sweden. Law, Politics, Culture," *Scandinavian Studies in Law*, no. 2023 69 (May 31, 2023): 231–50, <https://doi.org/10.53292/32f26f7c.5b65be00>.

¹¹ This process includes an in-depth analysis of the compatibility of the proposed legal norms with the national and international legal frameworks, as well as an evaluation of the social, economic, and environmental consequences that may arise from the implementation of the regulations. For example, in the formulation of carbon tax policy, a comprehensive assessment is conducted of its impact on the industrial sector and low-income households, as well as its implications for achieving environmental sustainability targets. This evidence-based approach reflects Sweden's commitment to the principles of transparent, accountable, and responsive governance to public interests. View: Julius J. Andersson, "Carbon Tax and CO2 Emissions: Sweden as a Case Study," *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 11, no. 4 (November 2019): 1–30, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1257/pol.20170144>.

¹² Stine Hesstvedt and Peter Munk Christiansen, "The Politics of Policy Inquiry Commissions: Denmark and Norway, 1971–2017," *West European Politics* 45, no. 2 (February 23, 2022): 430–54, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2020.1858597>.

¹³ Henny Andriani, "Partisipasi Bermakna Sebagai Wujud Asas Keterbukaan Dalam Pembentukan Undang-Undang," *UNES Journal of Swara Justisia* 7, no. 1 (May 18, 2023): 306, <https://doi.org/10.31933/ujsj.v7i1.337>.

Several controversial laws, such as the Job Creation Law, the revision of the Criminal Code (KUHP), and the ratification of the revised Law on the Indonesian National Armed Forces (UU TNI), which was recently passed, show how the public consultation process is more of an administrative requirement than an instrument that strengthens deliberative democracy.¹⁴ In Indonesia, the concept of public participation still faces multiple challenges, including lack of transparency, limited accessibility, and the dominance of political elites in the legislative process. This shows that existing mechanisms cannot guarantee that public aspirations are truly accommodated in policy formulation; therefore, reforms in the public consultation system are urgent to ensure that the process of forming laws in Indonesia is not only procedurally democratic but also substantively.¹⁵

This research needs to be conducted because public participation in forming laws is crucial in realizing substantive democracy, but it still faces various challenges in Indonesia. Indonesia still implements procedural and passive participation compared to countries such as Switzerland and Sweden, which have more structured and effective participation mechanisms. By analyzing the application of the principle of meaningful involvement in the three countries, this study can provide insight into the best model that can be applied in Indonesia to increase real public participation in the legislative process. In addition, the results of this study can be a reference for policymakers in designing regulations that are more inclusive and responsive to public needs to strengthen the legitimacy of the resulting law and prevent controversy due to minimal public involvement in the process of forming laws.

Several previous studies are related to this research issue. First, a study by Muhammad Nur Jamaluddin entitled "Comparison of People's Participation in the Formation and Amendment of the Constitutions of Indonesia, Thailand, and South Africa: A Preliminary Study" examines people's involvement in constitutional changes in the three countries. The study results indicate that people's participation is limited and only involves certain dominant groups. The people are not involved from the beginning of the process, so their participation is not optimal. The main difference lies in how people's participation is optimized, while the similarity is the existence of quorum provisions in constitutional changes. Thailand and South Africa have explicit rules regarding people's involvement in Article 255, paragraph (4) of the 2017 Thai Constitution, and Article 59 of the 1996 South African Constitution. Indonesia does not explicitly regulate this in its constitution.¹⁶ Second, a study by Muhammad Ihsan Firdaus entitled "The Omnibus Law Method in Legal Reform in the Formation of Legislation in Indonesia (Comparative Study of Canada, the United States, the Philippines, and Vietnam)" examines the application of the omnibus law method in the Indonesian legal system compared

¹⁴ Tobias Gunas, "Kontroversi Undang-Undang Cipta Kerja Nomor 11 Tahun 2020: Kajian Linguistik Forensik Dari Pendekatan Analisis Wacana Kritis," *Kongres Internasional Masyarakat Linguistik Indonesia*, April 2, 2022, 390–96, <https://doi.org/10.51817/kimli.vi.85>.

¹⁵ Awan Darmawan, "Dinamika Pembentukan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan Di Indonesia: Antara Kebutuhan Dan Realitas," *Jurnal Kajian Ilmiah Multidisipliner* 8, no. 10 (2024).

¹⁶ Muhammad Nur Jamaluddin, "Perbandingan Partisipasi Rakyat Dalam Pembentukan Dan Perubahan Konstitusi Indonesia, Thailand, Dan Afrika Selatan: Suatu Penelitian Awal," *Jurnal Poros Hukum Padjadjaran* 2, no. 2 (May 31, 2021): 316–41, <https://doi.org/10.23920/jphp.v2i2.368>.

to several other countries.

The study results show that countries such as Canada, the United States, the Philippines, and Vietnam have different legal reasons for implementing the omnibus law, such as consolidative norms, increasing investment, and simplifying overlapping regulations. In Indonesia, the omnibus law method is implemented through Law Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation, which was later revoked by Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2022. However, this study concludes that its implementation in Indonesia does not yet reflect the objectives of the law, namely justice, benefit, and legal certainty, and does not fully fulfill the principles of forming good laws and regulations.¹⁷ Third, research by Pran Mario Simanjuntak, Pran Mario Simanjuntak, and Sultan Fadillah Effendi entitled "Quo Vadis: Implementation of the Principle of Public Participation in the Formation of Legislation in Indonesia" examines the role of public participation in the legislative process in Indonesia. The study results show that Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning the Formation of Legislation, which has been amended through Law Number 15 of 2019 and Law Number 13 of 2022, does not make public participation the main principle in drafting laws. Although accommodated in Article 96 of the Law, existing public participation is still passive, so the public is often disadvantaged because the passed laws do not represent their will. This study emphasizes the importance of active public participation, where the public must be directly involved in forming laws and regulations. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate new rules that explicitly consider public participation as a fundamental element in legislation.¹⁸

The research reviewed in this paper has strong originality. It is different from previous studies because it specifically compares the application of the principle of meaningful participation in the legislative process in three countries with other legal systems and democratic traditions. Different from previous studies that generally only highlight public involvement in the formation of laws in one country or discuss public participation in general, this study provides an in-depth comparative analysis by highlighting the extent to which the principle of meaningful participation is applied in Indonesian legislative practice compared to Switzerland and Sweden, which are known for their extensive public consultation systems. With this approach, this study not only identifies the advantages and disadvantages of each country in accommodating public participation but also provides a new perspective on how Indonesia can adopt best practices from other countries to improve the quality of public involvement in the formation of laws. This comparison shows a gap between the public participation mechanisms in Indonesia and those implemented in Switzerland and Sweden. Indonesia still faces challenges in increasing more substantial public involvement in forming laws. Therefore, this study aims to analyze and compare the application of the principle of meaningful participation in forming laws in Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden to identify

¹⁷ Muhammad Ihsan Firdaus, "Metode Omnibus Law dalam Pembaharuan Hukum Pembentukan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan di Indonesia (Studi Perbandingan Negara Kanada, Amerika Serikat, Filipina dan Vietnam)," *Jurnal Hukum Ius Quia Iustum* 30, no. 2 (May 1, 2023): 233–55, <https://doi.org/10.20885/iustum.vol30.iss2.art1>.

¹⁸ Rizky Julranda, Pran Mario Simanjuntak, and Sultan Fadillah Effendi, "Quo Vadis: Penerapan Asas Partisipasi Publik Dalam Pembentukan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan Di Indonesia," *Padjadjaran Law Review* 10, no. 2 (2022).

best practices that can be implemented in Indonesia to increase public participation in the legislative process.

This research needs to be conducted because public participation in forming laws is crucial in realizing substantive democracy, but it still faces various challenges in Indonesia. Indonesia still implements procedural and passive participation compared to countries such as Switzerland and Sweden, which have more structured and effective participation mechanisms. By analyzing the application of the principle of meaningful involvement in the three countries, this study can provide insight into the best model that can be applied in Indonesia to increase real public participation in the legislative process. In addition, the results of this study can be a reference for policymakers in designing regulations that are more inclusive and responsive to public needs to strengthen the legitimacy of the resulting law and prevent controversy due to minimal public involvement in the process of forming laws.

2. METHOD

This study uses normative legal research methods¹⁹ with a case study approach and comparative legal studies to analyze the application of the principle of meaningful participation in forming laws in Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden. Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies by reviewing rules and regulations, official documents, scientific journals, and related literature.²⁰ The data obtained are then analyzed using qualitative analysis methods with a descriptive-comparative approach. This aims to identify similarities and differences in applying the principle of meaningful participation in the three countries.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Implementation of Meaningful Participation in the Formation of Laws in Indonesia

Indonesia's legal, political, and democratic systems are the result of a synthesis between modern democratic principles and local values rooted in the history of the archipelago. Legally, Indonesia adheres to a civil law system influenced by European Continental legal traditions, with the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia as its highest constitutional foundation. In the political sphere, Indonesia implements a presidential system with a clear separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, although in practice, political dynamics often reflect complex multiparty coalition patterns. Democracy in Indonesia is electoral and procedural in nature, characterized by direct elections, freedom of expression, and growing public participation, although it still faces challenges such as political oligarchy and low political literacy. Public participation in the formation of laws is a fundamental principle in a democratic system that aims to ensure that the resulting policies reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.²¹ In Indonesia, this principle is regulated in various regulations, including in Article 1 paragraph (2) of the 1945

¹⁹ Elisabeth Nurhaini Butar-Butar, *Metode Penelitian Hukum, Langkah-Langkah Untuk Menemukan Kebenaran Dalam Ilmu Hukum* (Bandung: PT. Refika Aditama, 2018).

²⁰ Jonaedi Efendi and Johnny Ibrahim, *Metode Penelitian Hukum Normatif Dan Empiris* (Depok: Kencana, 2018).

²¹ Muhamad Khoirul Wafa, "Peran dan Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pembentukan Undang-undang," *Siyasah Jurnal Hukum Tatanegara* 3, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 85–100, <https://doi.org/10.32332/siyasah.v3i1.6883>.

Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD 1945), which states that sovereignty lies in the hands of the people.²² In addition, Article 22A of the 1945 Constitution mandates that the procedures for forming laws must be further regulated in law. The implementation of this principle was then outlined in Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning the Formation of Legislation, which has undergone several changes through Law Number 15 of 2019 and Law Number 13 of 2022.

Article 96 of Law Number 12 of 2011 stipulates that the public has the right to provide input in forming laws and regulations, both verbally and in writing.²³ However, in practice, public involvement is often only a formality and does not have a significant impact on the substance of the regulations being formed. This can be seen in various cases of the formation of controversial laws, such as the Job Creation Law (Law Number 11 of 2020), the revision of the Criminal Code (KUHP), and the Law on the Second Amendment to Law Number 34 of 2004 concerning the Indonesian National Army (TNI) which was recently passed.

For example, the government and the DPR claimed to have involved public participation through consultations with various stakeholders in forming the Job Creation Law. However, many elements of society, including trade unions, academics, and civil society organizations, criticized the lack of transparency and the short time to provide input.²⁴ The Constitutional Court, in Decision Number 91/PUU-XVIII/2020, stated that the Job Creation Law was conditionally unconstitutional because its formation procedures did not meet the principles of openness and meaningful participation.²⁵

A similar phenomenon also occurred in the revision of the Criminal Code, which was passed in 2022. Although the discussion lasted for several years, civil society considered that the substance of the changes still contained many problematic articles that did not fully reflect public input. Several elements of society who rejected the revision of the Criminal Code highlighted that the government and the DPR had done more to socialize the draft that had been made rather than opening up a space for genuine dialogue to accept changes based on public aspirations.

The latest case is the recently passed revision of the TNI Law. Several provisions in this revision have received criticism from various parties, including those related to expanding military authority in the civilian sector. The discussion process is considered not transparent

²² Waisol Qoroni and Indien Winarwati, "Kedaulatan Rakyat Dalam Konteks Demokrasi Di Indonesia," *Journal Inicio Legis* 2, no. 1 (2021).

²³ Fiqih Rizki Artioko, "Pengadopsian Partisipasi Masyarakat Yang Bermakna (Meaningful Participation) Dalam Undang-Undang Nomor 13 Tahun 2022 Tentang Perubahan Kedua Undang-Undang Nomor 12 Tahun 2011 Tentang Pembentukan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan," *Al-Qisth Law Review* 6, no. 1 (October 6, 2022): 52, <https://doi.org/10.24853/al-qisth.6.1.52-83>.

²⁴ Vincentius Pantjahjono Heru Prasetyo et al., "Evaluating The Implications of Indonesia's Omnibus Law: Legal, Political, and Economic Perspectives," *Law Development Journal* 7, no. 1 (March 2025): 132-143, <http://dx.doi.org/10.30659/ldj.7.1.132-143>.

²⁵ Geofani Milthree Saragih, "Kajian Filosofis Terhadap Pemberlakuan Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2020 Tentang Cipta Kerja Dari Perspektif Teori Jhon Austin Pasca Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Nomor 91/PUU/XVII/2020," *JURNAL HUKUM, POLITIK DAN ILMU SOSIAL* 1, no. 4 (November 7, 2022): 28-41, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jhpi.v1i4.631>.

enough and does not involve broad public participation.²⁶ The main criticism is that this revision has a major impact on governance and civil-military relations, but the available space for public discussion is limited.

The main problem in implementing meaningful participation in the formation of laws in Indonesia is the strong pattern of procedural and not substantive involvement. Public participation is often only carried out to fulfill administrative requirements without any mechanism to guarantee that input from the community is truly taken into account in the legislative process.²⁷ As a result, many laws are still passed despite widespread rejection from the community.

To improve the effectiveness of public participation in forming laws in Indonesia, reforms are needed in the public consultation mechanism to make it more substantive. One step that can be taken is to extend the public consultation period and increase public access to discussed legal documents. In addition, there is a need to set up a mechanism that ensures that every public input gets a clear response from lawmakers so that public participation is not just a formality. These are the steps to take for the legislative process in Indonesia to better reflect the principles of democracy based on the community's active involvement in the formation of laws that regulate their lives.

3.2 The Application of Meaningful Participation in the Formation of Laws in Switzerland

Switzerland is known as one of the countries with a direct democracy system that allows the public to participate actively in the legislative process.²⁸ In this system, meaningful participation is both procedural and substantial, where the people have a direct role in determining the legal policies that will be implemented. The mechanism of public participation in forming laws in Switzerland occurs through public consultation referendums and popular initiatives, which are expressly regulated in the Swiss Constitution.²⁹

The main legal basis governing public participation in the formation of legislation in Switzerland is the Swiss Federal Constitution of 1999 (Bundesverfassung der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft), specifically in Articles 136 to 142.³⁰ Article 136 regulates the political rights of Swiss citizens, including the right to vote in elections and referendums. Meanwhile, Articles 138 to 142 regulate the mechanism of people's initiatives and referendums as a form of direct

²⁶ Muh. Syah Quddus and Febri Muhamad Firdaus, "Dualisme Peran TNI: Bagaimana UU TNI Baru Memperkuat Atau Melemahkan Prinsip Supremasi Sipil dan Tata Kelola Pemerintahan?," *J-CEKI : Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah* 4, no. 4 (Juni 2025): 464–473, <https://doi.org/10.56799/jceki.v4i4.8686>.

²⁷ Fredy Rahalus, "Kajian Filosofis Terhadap Pembentukan Hukum Di Indonesia Berdasarkan Pemikiran Filsafat Hukum Jacques Ranciere," *SAPIENTIA ET VIRTUS* 7, no. 1 (March 30, 2022): 18–33, <https://doi.org/10.37477/sev.v7i1.342>.

²⁸ Prof., Visiting Researcher/Lecturer at the Institute of Federalism, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, Asim Ari, and Nicolas Schmitt, "Democracy Education in Switzerland, Known for Its Strong Democracy," *International Journal of Instruction* 14, no. 3 (July 1, 2021): i–iv, <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.1430a>.

²⁹ Ignatius Yordan Nugraha, "Popular Sovereignty and Constitutional Referendum: Can 'The People' Be Limited by Human Rights?," *German Law Journal* 23, no. 1 (February 2022): 19–43, <https://doi.org/10.1017/glj.2022.2>.

³⁰ Anna Petrig, "Democratic Participation in International Lawmaking in Switzerland after the 'Age of Treaties,'" in *Encounters between Foreign Relations Law and International Law*, ed. Helmut Philipp Aust and Thomas Kleinlein, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2021), 180–212, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108942713.010>.

participation in the legislative process. Through this mechanism, the people can convey their aspirations and have the power to change or reject legal policies deemed not in their interests.³¹

One of the most significant forms of public participation in the Swiss legal system is the popular initiative, which allows citizens to propose amendments to the Constitution.³² To submit an initiative, the proposer must collect at least 100,000 signatures within 18 months.³³ If the number of signatures is sufficient, the proposal is submitted to Parliament, and the people can vote on it through a referendum. Real-life examples of this mechanism are the popular initiatives on immigration restrictions and environmental issues that have influenced Swiss national policy in recent years.³⁴

In addition to the popular initiative, Switzerland also implements a referendum system that is divided into two types: mandatory and optional. The compulsory referendum is applied to significant constitutional changes and international agreements, where the people must vote on every change. Meanwhile, an optional referendum can be used to reject laws passed by parliament. In this system, if within 100 days after the ratification of a law, there are at least 50,000 signatures rejecting it, then the law must be submitted back to the people to be decided through a referendum.

The practice of meaningful participation in Switzerland is also reflected in the public consultation process before a law is drafted and passed.³⁵ The Swiss government has a long tradition of conducting a consultation procedure known as Vernehmlassungsverfahren. This mechanism allows various community groups, including professional organizations, academics, and private sector representatives, to provide input before a draft law is submitted to parliament. This procedure is not only symbolic but is also actually considered in the formulation of legal policies.

For example, in formulating laws related to environmental and financial policies, the Swiss government often conducts extensive consultations with stakeholders at the federal and cantonal levels.³⁶ This approach reflects the principle of Swiss federalism, where each canton has autonomy in implementing its own policies so that decisions taken at the national level

³¹ Kostyantyn Flissak, "International and National Law in Ensuring the Foreign Economic Activity of the Swiss Confederation," *Aktual'ni Problemi Pravoznnavstva* 1, no. 3 (2024): 48–55, <https://doi.org/10.35774/app2024.03.048>.

³² Daniel Kübler, "Citizen Participation through Direct Legislation: A Road to Success? A Perspective from Switzerland," *Global Public Policy and Governance* 4, no. 2 (June 2024): 184–96, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-024-00092-7>.

³³ Magdalena Perkowska, "Popular Initiative as an Instrument of Migration Policy in Switzerland," *Studia Iuridica Lublinensia* 29, no. 1 (August 30, 2020): 181–195, <http://dx.doi.org/10.17951/sil.2020.29.1.181-195>.

³⁴ Eva G. Heidbreder et al., "EU referendums in context: What can we learn from the Swiss case?," *Journal of Public Administration* 97, no. 2 (June 1, 2019): 370–383, <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12566>.

³⁵ Odile Ammann and Audrey Boussat, "The Participation of Civil Society in European Union Environmental Law-Making Processes: A Critical Assessment of the European Commission's Consultations in Connection with the European Climate Law," *European Journal of Risk Regulation* 14, no. 2 (June 2023): 235–52, <https://doi.org/10.1017/err.2022.39>.

³⁶ Peter Hettich and Aya Kachi, eds., *Swiss Energy Governance: Political, Economic and Legal Challenges and Opportunities in the Energy Transition* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80787-0>.

truly reflect the needs of communities in the various regions.³⁷

The success of the meaningful participation system in Switzerland is inseparable from the political culture that values people's involvement as a key element in democracy.³⁸ The Swiss government consistently ensures that every decision taken has strong legitimacy through active community participation. This not only increases public trust in the government but also ensures that the laws implemented have high community support.

However, despite Switzerland's strong public participation system, some challenges are still being faced. One is the complexity of understanding the legal issues raised in the referendum.³⁹ Not all people have sufficient knowledge to understand the legal implications of each proposed policy.⁴⁰ Therefore, the Swiss government also seeks to improve the legal literacy of the public by providing clear and easy-to-understand information before each vote is held.

Overall, implementing meaningful participation in the formation of laws in Switzerland can be an example for other countries, including Indonesia. With a system that allows active community involvement from the early stages of policy formulation to the ratification stage through a referendum, Switzerland has created a more transparent, democratic, and public interest-oriented legislative process.

3.3 The Application of Meaningful Participation in Law Making in Sweden

Sweden is known as a country with a strong parliamentary democracy system, where the principle of meaningful participation in forming laws is one of the main elements of governance.⁴¹ In Sweden, public participation in the legislative process is not only limited to the involvement of people's representatives in parliament but also includes extensive consultation mechanisms with the community, non-governmental organizations, academics, and other stakeholders. This principle is based on transparency, openness, and accountability in the Swedish legal system, which has progressively developed to ensure that the resulting legal policies truly reflect the people's aspirations.

The main legal basis for public participation in developing legislation in Sweden is the Swedish Constitution of 1974 (*Regeringsformen*), one of the four constitutional instruments that form the country's basic law.⁴² In this constitution, the principle of openness and public

³⁷ Klaus Armingeon, Fritz Sager, and Reimut Zohinhöfer, *Switzerland Report: Sustainable Governance Indicators* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.11586/2022120>.

³⁸ Jason Ostrander, Tobias Kindler, and Janelle Bryan, "Using the Civic Voluntarism Model to Compare the Political Participation of US and Swiss Social Workers," *Journal of Policy Practice and Research* 2, no. 1 (March 2021): 4–19, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42972-020-00020-z>.

³⁹ Paul Kildea and Rodney Smith, "The Challenge of Informed Voting at Constitutional Referendums," *The University of New South Wales Law Journal* 39, no. 1 (January 2016): 368–400, <https://doi.org/10.3316/024817561941519>.

⁴⁰ Ron Levy, "Shotgun Referendums: Popular Deliberation and Constitutional Settlement in Conflict Societies," *Melbourne University Law Review* 41, no. 3 (January 2018): 1237–1277, <https://doi.org/10.3316/750640637677646>.

⁴¹ Jussi Kurunmäki, "Parliamentary Debate and the Construction of the National Characteristics of Swedish Parliamentarism," *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 44, no. 3 (September 2024): 345–61, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02606755.2024.2417142>.

⁴² Henrik Wenander, "Sweden: Non-Binding Rules against the Pandemic – Formalism, Pragmatism and Some Legal Realism," *European Journal of Risk Regulation* 12, no. 1 (March 2021): 127–42, <https://doi.org/10.1017/err.2021.2>.

participation is emphasized in Chapter 8, which regulates the process of creating legislation. In addition, the Freedom of the Press Act (Tryckfrihetsförordningen) of 1766, which is one of the oldest press freedom laws in the world, also plays an important role in ensuring public access to information on public policy, thus enabling them to participate in the legislative process actively.⁴³

One of the main mechanisms for implementing meaningful participation in the formation of laws in Sweden is the public consultation process (remissförfarandet). In this mechanism, before a draft law is drafted and submitted to parliament (Riksdag), the government first consults with various stakeholders. This consultation aims to collect views, criticisms, and input from different community groups, including academics, civil society organizations, the private sector, and individuals affected by the policy to be made.

This consultation process is not just a formality, but has a real impact on the substance of the regulations to be passed. The Swedish government actively considers every input given and often makes revisions to draft laws based on the results of consultations. In some cases, draft laws can even be withdrawn or postponed if significant objections are found from the public.

For example, in 2017, Sweden proposed changes to its immigration policy to tighten regulations for asylum seekers.⁴⁴ However, after extensive public consultation, it was found that the policy would negatively impact vulnerable groups, including children and families separated by conflict. As a result, the bill underwent substantial revisions before being passed by the Riksdag. This case shows how public consultation mechanisms in Sweden work to ensure that policies are taken into account in the wider community's interests.

In addition to public consultation mechanisms, the Swedish legal system allows citizen participation through petitions and other forms of direct involvement.⁴⁵ Although Sweden does not have a referendum system as strict as Switzerland, citizens can still propose political initiatives and express their concerns through petitions addressed to the government or parliament. If the petition receives sufficient support, the government will consider including it on the legislative agenda.

Openness of information is also an important aspect of implementing meaningful participation in Sweden. The Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (Offentlighetsprincipen) ensures that the public has full access to government documents, including draft laws being discussed. With this policy, the public can actively follow the development of legislation and provide input before a law is passed.

Digital technology further enhances transparency in the legislative process in

⁴³ Ngaire Naffine, "Hidden Presuppositions and the Problem of Paradigm Persons: Visa AJ Kurki's 'A Theory of Legal Personhood,'" *Revus*, no. 44 (November 1, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4000/revus.6953>.

⁴⁴ Victoria Canning, "Managing Expectations: Impacts of Hostile Migration Policies on Practitioners in Britain, Denmark and Sweden," *Social Sciences* 10, no. 2 (February 10, 2021): 65, <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10020065>.

⁴⁵ Anders Røsten Mærøe et al., "Increasing Citizen Participation in E-Participatory Budgeting Processes," *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 18, no. 2 (April 3, 2021): 125–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2020.1821421>.

Sweden.⁴⁶ The Swedish government actively uses online platforms to expand public participation. Official government and parliamentary websites provide easy access for the public to read draft laws, provide comments, and follow legislative sessions live. This allows the public to engage in the legal process without attending physical meetings, often a barrier to public participation in many countries.

However, despite Sweden's advanced meaningful participation system, some challenges remain. One of them is the uneven level of participation across different groups in society.⁴⁷ Some groups, such as immigrant communities and people in remote areas, still face obstacles in accessing information and providing input into the legislative process.⁴⁸ Therefore, the Swedish government strives to increase inclusivity by providing legislative materials in various languages and holding consultation forums in multiple regions to ensure that all voices are heard.

Overall, implementing meaningful participation in developing laws in Sweden shows how public involvement can be effectively integrated into the legislative process. With a broad public consultation system, high transparency, and the use of technology to expand access to information, Sweden has succeeded in creating a model of participation that can be an example for other countries, including Indonesia. This practice proves that when the public is given sufficient space to participate in the legal process, the resulting policies tend to be more responsive, legitimate, and to the needs of the people.

3.4 Comparison of the Implementation of Meaningful Participation in the Formation of Laws in Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden

The principle of meaningful participation in the formation of laws is a fundamental aspect of a democratic country, which emphasizes the active involvement of the community in the legislative process. Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden apply this principle with different approaches, influenced by each country's legal system, democratic traditions, and governmental structure. Comparing the application of this principle in the three countries provides an overview of how an effective legislative system can strengthen legal legitimacy and improve the quality of the resulting regulations.

3.4.1. Indonesia: Formal and Limited Public Participation

In Indonesia, the mechanism for public participation in forming laws has been regulated in Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning the Formation of Legislation, which was later amended by Law Number 15 of 2019 and Law Number 13 of 2022. Article 96 of the law recognizes public participation in forming statutes, but this participation is more procedural and limited in practice.

⁴⁶ Heli Valokivi et al., "Digital Ageing in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Italian, Finnish and Swedish National Policies on eHealth," *Ageing and Society* 43, no. 4 (April 2023): 835–56, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X21000945>.

⁴⁷ Bozena Guziana, "Only for Citizens? Local Political Engagement in Sweden and Inclusiveness of Terms," *Sustainability* 13, no. 14 (2021): 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13147839>.

⁴⁸ Therese Hellman et al., "Facilitators and Barriers for Creating A Sustainable Working Life for First-Generation Immigrants – Perceptions of Multiple Stakeholders in Sweden," *European Journal of Social Work* 28, no. 2 (2025): 259–272, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2024.2353850>.

Although there are mechanisms such as hearing Meetings (RDP) and public tests, the legislative process is often carried out behind closed doors with minimal substantial public involvement. The omnibus law in the Job Creation Law (Law Number 11 of 2020) exemplifies how public participation is not fully implemented meaningfully. The formation process took place quickly with minimal effective public consultation, giving rise to controversy and a wave of rejection from various elements of society. The Constitutional Court, in Decision Number 91/PUU-XVIII/2020, stated that the formation of the Job Creation Law was formally flawed and contrary to the principles of openness and public participation.

One of the main obstacles to implementing meaningful participation in Indonesia is the weak public access to adequate legislative information and the tendency to politicize the legislative process. In addition, although the space for involvement has been regulated in regulations, its implementation is still often symbolic without directly influencing the substance of the resulting rules.

3.4.2. Switzerland: Direct Participation Model through Referendum

In Switzerland, meaningful participation in the formation of laws is very strong because the country adopts a direct democracy system, where the public has the right to vote directly on policies to be enacted. The main legal basis that guarantees public participation in the legislative process is the Swiss Constitution of 1999, especially regarding the referendum mechanism and the people's initiative.

One of the most significant forms of public participation in Switzerland is the optional and mandatory referendums. If parliament passes a law, the public can oppose it by submitting a petition that obtains 50,000 signatures within 100 days. If this requirement is met, the law will be submitted to a referendum to determine whether or not it will remain in force. In addition, the public can also propose changes to the constitution through the people's initiative mechanism, which requires 100,000 signatures within 18 months.

This mechanism gives the public direct control over the legislative process and ensures that laws passed have high legitimacy. For example, in 2021, Switzerland held a referendum on environmental policies and carbon taxes, where the results showed that the public rejected the policies. This proves that the people's voice is truly a determining factor in the legislative process.

However, this direct democracy system also has challenges, such as the potential for low participation in certain referendums and the influence of political campaigns that can shape public opinion. Nevertheless, this mechanism is still considered one of the world's most effective meaningful participation models.

3.4.3. Sweden: Structured and Transparent Public Consultation

In Sweden, meaningful participation in the formation of laws is implemented through a very strong public consultation mechanism. The legal basis that guarantees transparency and public involvement in the legislative process is the Swedish Constitution of 1974 (Regeringsformen) and the principle of openness stipulated in the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (Offentlighetsprincipen).

The main process in public participation in Sweden is the remissförfarandet (public consultation) mechanism. Every draft law to be submitted by the government must consult various stakeholders, including academics, NGOs, the private sector, and the general public. The government is obliged to consider all input provided, and a report on the results of the consultation must be included in the legislative document submitted to parliament (Riksdag).

In addition, broad access to information allows the public to follow the development of regulations that are being drafted. All legislation-related documents are published online, and the public can provide input through digital platforms offered by the government. This reflects the Swedish legal system's high level of transparency and openness.

One example of the success of this system is in the discussion of laws on social policy, where the government conducted a series of consultations with various community groups before finally drafting more inclusive regulations. The success of the Swedish system shows how public involvement can create laws more responsive to public needs.

3.5 Recommendations

Based on a comparative analysis with other countries, it becomes evident that Indonesia continues to face significant challenges in ensuring meaningful and effective public participation in the law-making process. To address these issues, several lessons can be drawn from Switzerland and Sweden and adapted to the Indonesian context. One of the primary steps is to improve transparency and public access to legislative information. By adopting principles of openness as practiced in Sweden, Indonesia can ensure that draft laws and regulatory proposals are made widely available to the public through accessible digital platforms. This would not only enhance awareness but also empower citizens to engage more actively in the legislative process.

In addition to improving access, it is crucial to strengthen public consultation mechanisms. The consultation process in Indonesia often tends to be procedural and symbolic rather than truly participatory. Learning from the Swedish model, public input should be treated as a substantive component of the legislative process, where feedback from citizens and civil society organizations can genuinely influence the content and direction of proposed laws. This shift from formality to meaningful engagement requires a commitment from both lawmakers and institutions to value and incorporate public perspectives in policymaking.

Another possible approach is to explore the introduction of a referendum mechanism for issues that have far-reaching implications for society. While a full-fledged system like that in Switzerland may not be entirely feasible within Indonesia's current political framework, a more limited form of referendum could be considered for highly strategic or controversial policies. Such a mechanism could serve as a democratic safeguard, ensuring that major decisions reflect the will of the people and not just elite consensus.

Finally, Indonesia must ensure that public participation is not merely a procedural requirement but a substantial element embedded within the legislative framework. This calls for stricter legal provisions that mandate meaningful involvement of citizens throughout the law-making stages. By institutionalizing genuine public participation, Indonesia can not only

enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of its laws but also foster a more responsive and accountable governance system. Ultimately, these improvements would help align legal outcomes more closely with the real needs and aspirations of the Indonesian people.

Indonesia should consider the experiences of Switzerland and Sweden in building meaningful and effective public participation in the legislative process because both countries have demonstrated success in strengthening participatory democracy. Switzerland is known for its direct democracy system, where citizens have the right to propose legal initiatives and reject laws through referendums. This model has encouraged government accountability and enhanced policy legitimacy. Meanwhile, Sweden implements a structured and transparent public consultation process through the remissförfarande mechanism, where draft regulations are sent to various stakeholders for thorough review and feedback. Both provide examples of how public involvement can produce legal products that are more inclusive and responsive to public needs.

For Indonesia, adopting elements from both models has the potential to bring various benefits, such as increased public trust in state institutions, strengthening legal legitimacy, and political education for the wider community. However, the implementation of this model is not without challenges. Legally, although Indonesia has a regulatory framework through Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning the Formation of Legislation, as last amended by Law Number 13 of 2022, the mechanism for public participation in practice remains weak and often merely symbolic. From a political perspective, elite dominance and a transactional political culture hinder genuine public involvement. Socially and culturally, low legal literacy and unequal access to information and technology pose significant obstacles to building equitable and fair participation.

Therefore, Indonesia needs to make contextual adaptations by strengthening technical regulations on public participation, building inclusive digital infrastructure, and promoting civic education to enhance public legal awareness. Additionally, an independent institution is needed to facilitate and oversee the participatory process fairly and transparently. Learning from Switzerland and Sweden does not mean copying their models outright, but rather adopting the principles of their success to be adapted to the legal, political, and cultural framework of Indonesia. In this way, public participation can become an important pillar in creating a more democratic, transparent, and people-orientated legislative system.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the comparison of the implementation of meaningful participation in the formation of laws in Indonesia, Switzerland, and Sweden, it can be concluded that Indonesia still faces challenges in ensuring substantive public involvement in the legislative process. Switzerland's direct democracy system allows the public full control through a referendum mechanism, while Sweden implements structured and transparent public consultation with broad access to information. Although it has regulated public participation in legislation, Indonesia still tends to implement it formally and limitedly, without a mechanism that influences the substance of the regulation. Therefore, Indonesia needs to adopt best practices

from Switzerland and Sweden, such as increasing legislative transparency, strengthening public consultation mechanisms, and considering more active forms of public involvement in the regulatory formation process to create more inclusive, legitimate, and effective laws. Research on meaningful and effective public participation in the legislative process in Indonesia has several limitations that need to be noted. One of the main limitations lies in the lack of comprehensive empirical data related to the implementation of public participation at every stage of legislation, particularly in the technocratic processes occurring within the legislative and executive environments. Moreover, the heterogeneity of the community's ability to access and understand the legislative process, as well as the disparity in the representation of interest groups, are factors that limit the generalisation of the research results. Nevertheless, the prospects for the future show positive opportunities. The increasing demand for transparency and public accountability opens up space for participatory reforms in the legislative process, supported by advancements in information technology and the strengthening of civil society's role. With the development of a clearer legal framework, the enhancement of the capacity of legislative organising institutions, and the strengthening of public legal literacy, inclusive, substantive, and effective public participation in the legislative process in Indonesia has the potential to be institutionalised more systematically and sustainably.

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