

Relationship of Concertation Strategies with Collaborative Governance and Citizen Participation: A Systematic Review of the Last 5 Years

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Abstract

This systematic review aims to identify ways to collaborate effectively. Guided by the PRISMA 2020 methodology, it analyzes consensus-building strategies in situations involving governance, citizen participation, social growth, and teamwork. To this end, the 10 most relevant texts were selected from databases such as Scopus, SciELO, Redalyc, Dialnet, Latindex, ERIC, ALICIA Concytec, and the César Vallejo University Library. After an exhaustive search, the first 1,285 data points were obtained, which were re-analyzed, and inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to reduce the number of articles. The results show that historical consensus-building mechanisms, such as the Contadora Group, and newer ones, such as the Pacific Alliance and CELAC, remain in place. These mechanisms contribute to consensus-building, business, and the coordination of plans among key actors to overcome challenges such as poverty, unifying economies, and bridging border issues. Therefore, coordination among many countries or the creation of support groups is a priority. The objective was to answer the question: What are the most effective strategies for achieving citizen participation documented in the literature of the last five years? The data collection involved different countries, variables, methods, and outcomes. Finally, a narrative discussion was presented, along with several recommendations tailored to the specific situation. This approach ensures transparency and the replicability of the results, enabling the design of public policies that include stakeholders from across the region.

Keywords: *Strategies For Consensus Building, Collaborative Governance, Citizen Participation, Regional Integration.*

Introduction

Consensus-building, seen as the process of speaking, agreeing, and aligning important actors to reach shared goals in development, public management, or research projects, is very important in citizen participation (Galiano et al., 2023). In this systematic review, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) method is used to find and summarize what is already known about ways to achieve consensus among people, to define stages ranging from deciding on goals and making plans to negotiating that help to implement ideas effectively.

In this case, these consensus-building strategies help identify the most influential actors for resolving problems and making plans in conjunction with other citizens, as seen in situations involving interactions between governments or in social administration (Zambrano-Cedeño & Mantuano-Zambrano, 2024). Therefore, their importance lies in transforming opponents into allies through conversations and minor adjustments, thus enabling efficient governance and sustainable growth.

In Latin America, collaborative work models have emerged as important means of addressing local problems, such as external debt, trade restrictions, and conflicts in Central America, through dialogue (Paniagua, 2024). For example, cooperation among many nations, such as in the Contadora Group or the Cartagena Agreement in the 1980s, involved countries like Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela. Those who participated worked together, shared data, and found internal solutions to common

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problems, achieving political and economic inclusion. This demonstrates that its value remains important today in situations where collaborative leadership is needed.

Since the G8 summits in Acapulco and Cartagena, efforts have focused on strengthening democracies, activating collaborative work mechanisms, and engaging in dialogue with blocs of countries on issues such as refugee issues and rules for providing economic assistance to countries in need (Villarreal & Bernal, 2024). Subsequent proposals, such as international cooperation mechanisms, further developed these collaborative strategies to try to eliminate poverty and achieve security in the region through joint consultations and actions. This shift represents a step toward ongoing dialogue, contributing to the alignment of countries' agendas in order to achieve shared goals.

However, the mechanisms currently in place, such as the Pacific Alliance, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Mesoamerica Project, and the Ibero-American Conference, coordinate efforts to maintain dialogue, participation, and consensus-building in Colombia and other countries in the region. Therefore, they seek to join forces for economic, social, and sustainable development (Gallegos-Zúñiga, 2021). Similarly, in the area of trade, the natural convergence within groups like Mercosur and the Andean Community leads to standardized regulations through joint agreements, contributing to local efficiency and generating a multiplicity of economic connections. Consequently, these spaces demonstrate the need for positive and secure inclusion in the region to foster better and more enriching competitiveness.

Despite the progress made, gaps remain in how the new idea and practice of cross-border integration are implemented, such as in the Mercosur border system, where the influence of European models clashes with the realities of the Latin American region, hindering Latin American freedom. In this context, consensus-building in education and the equitable distribution of power suffers from tensions due to problems not resolved through dialogue. This highlights the need for consensus-building strategies for citizen participation in decision-making, adapted to local situations. Therefore, this research, applying the PRISMA method, attempts to summarize evidence to fill these gaps and provide innovative ideas.

Given the above, the most important question is posed as follows: What are the most effective consensus-building strategies for achieving citizen participation recorded in the literature of the last 5 years? This question is asked under the adjusted PICO model: Population (actors who are in governance or projects together), Intervention (strategies to achieve consensus for dialogue and the creation of alliances), Comparison (old versus new strategies) and Outcome (improvement in the alignment and execution of shared goals).

In order to provide a satisfactory answer to the question posed, the objectives of this systematic review are to map and synthesize the consensus-building strategies identified in the existing academic literature over the last five years, and to evaluate whether they are being effectively applied in situations of governance, social progress, and government management. All these objectives will pay close attention to important stages such as dialogue between groups, agreements to reach a consensus, and the formation of aligned agendas. It is also important to identify gaps in the current data and provide suggestions for implementation in Latin American contexts.

Methodology and Materials

The PRISMA method will be implemented in this systematic review of consensus-building strategies using a predefined process that includes a clear statement of the research question, the selection criteria (inclusion and exclusion), and a comprehensive plan for searching scientific databases such as Scopus, SciELO, Redalyc, Dialnet, Latindex, ERIC, ALICIA Concytec, and the César Vallejo University Library. In this regard, Boolean operators, synonyms, and meaningful phrases were applied to the systematic review to ensure a comprehensive search and replicability. A two-stage screening process was then conducted: first, a quick scan of the title and abstract, followed by a full reading of the texts, with justifications provided to develop the PRISMA matrix. This matrix justified the exclusions, showing the number of indexed documents and the elimination of duplicates to detail only the documents relevant to this study.

In the stage of evaluating and synthesizing the information, the methodological quality of the selected studies and their potential biases were reviewed using previously tested tools. This was done to obtain important information about consensus strategies for developing a summary or general analysis. This ensures clarity when presenting the results and achieves the reliability of the evidence.

This approach reduces bias and facilitates the replication of results, following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, which allow for the development of high-quality reviews (Zabalza & González, 2024).

Therefore, the criteria for selecting the studies in this work are detailed in the following table:

Table 1 Criteria for the Selection of Studies

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Population	Actors in Latin American governance	Non-Latin American contexts
Intervention	Defined negotiation strategies	No explicit strategies
Publication year	2001-2025	Studies prior to 2001
Study type	Empirical or reviews	Grey literature or studies not directly related to negotiation strategies
Languages	Spanish, English, Portuguese	Other languages
Quality	Blind peer-reviewed	No access to peer review
Results	Present results	No results

Note: Prepared by the author using the PRISMA Method

On the other hand, to select the most important information from the studies found in this systematic review of consensus-building strategies, the data were systematized. Then, two groups of reviewers analyzed this data using a standardized table previously created in spreadsheets to reduce errors and allow for replicability, in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Key data collected included the authors' names, the year the document was published, the methodology used, the most important results regarding the effectiveness of the strategies and any problems encountered, giving importance to numerical or descriptive information that could be used to create a summary, and finally, the conclusions reached by the study authors. Any discrepancies between the reviewers were resolved through dialogue among themselves or by consulting a third party, ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the information obtained.

This approach, which closely follows the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, aims to ensure clarity, replicability, and unbiased results at every stage of the systematic review of consensus-building strategies in Latin America and countries in other continents and regions, from a comprehensive search to data analysis and summarization. Similarly, a PRISMA flow diagram describes the entire data selection and collection process, enabling other researchers to replicate or strengthen this evidence to guide the development of public policies and collaborative practices in the region.

Results and Discussion

After an extensive search of the aforementioned databases, using specific keywords such as "concertation strategies," "dialogue between actors," "joint negotiation," and "governance" with Boolean operators, 1,285 documents initially appeared relevant. After removing 342 duplicates and applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the two screening stages, 10 high-quality documents were ultimately selected as the basis for this systematic review. These are shown in Table 2 with their main characteristics, such as authors, year, country, and results. This process, illustrated in the PRISMA diagram (Figure 1), ensures that the selection is transparent and replicable.

Table 2 Data Collection

Author(s)	Year	Objective of the Study	Methodology	Main Results	Conclusions
Falabella	2021	This study analyzes official speeches and public documents to examine the logic and political project of the Concertación	Documentary analysis with a qualitative approach.	The main findings show that the principles underlying the governments' political thinking were rooted in policies developed during	The research provides evidence demonstrating how the government's educational program remained true to

		coalition in school education.		their years in power, both before and after the coalition.	its own system of thought.
García-Obando	2025	Analyze the management of public policies related to consensus-building in Latin America.	Methodological approach of hermeneutic-documentary review.	The study determined that the focus of the action is oriented towards social progress, creating public policies that dignify the human condition.	The author concluded that public policy management must respond to the existing dialogue problems in society, evidenced by actions materialized in the region.
Orellana et al.,	2025	Analyze citizen participation in decision-making and the significant contributions to the comprehensive strengthening of civil society and local management for consensus-building.	Structured methodology with a qualitative, descriptive and exploratory approach using documentary sources for a systematic review.	One of the main findings indicates that it is necessary to foster open and participatory dialogues with comprehensive perspectives; likewise, it is necessary to guarantee government oversight and transparency and expand new channels or resources for decision-making.	It is concluded that citizen participation is a pillar for establishing an open government and strengthening democratic management through consensus-building with greater legitimacy in the State.
Azcu y et al.,	2021	To understand positions on the issue, promote debate, generate consensus and seek solutions among the actors in the territory to contribute, from multi-actor participation, to the treatment of older people and thus form consensus strategies.	Paradigm of community development with the participatory action research method and techniques such as document analysis, interviews, discussion groups and techniques such as alliance network mapping, Nominal Groups, brainstorming.	Dialogue tables for consensus-building are tools for solving problems through consensus, dialogue, and coherent reflection to achieve a specific goal with the existing means.	These types of roundtables constitute a methodological tool that enables multi-actor participation, at the local level, for the transformation of reality with an integrative and articulating vision of the different levels in decision-making.
Herrera et al.,	2025	Develop a digital governance model that promotes citizen	Basic research, with a descriptive-propositive level,	The results revealed that 41% of citizens never participate in	The implementation of a digital governance

		participation through consensus-building in a municipality of Piura.	a non-experimental design and a quantitative approach.	forums or debates, 31% almost never do, 14% participate occasionally, and only 4% reported frequent participation.	model is essential as a technological tool that fosters consensus for active and effective citizen participation in municipal decision-making processes.
Jaramillo et al.,	2022	Analyze the political scope and methodological challenges involved in territorial social dialogue in Buenaventura (Colombia).	Case study with participatory research.	The results suggest that social dialogue has shown itself to be prone to conceptual ambiguity.	This study concluded that territorial social dialogue is an ontological, political, and historical resource for consensus-building in diverse social sectors and local communities to confront hegemonic imagination and planning regarding development and territory.
Montoya	2024	To locate and analyze two practices that can be considered as experiences of social and civil dialogue in the United States without state intervention.	Qualitative methodology.	The main result of the study shows the recognition of rights and obligations of two labor-related movements.	It was concluded that public institutions are not required to promote dialogue: it is the social and economic actors themselves who spontaneously generate dynamics that allow negotiation and conflict resolution.
Canalda	2023	Analyze the favorable frameworks for the emergence of social dialogue since the 2000s.	Qualitative analysis of the institutional framework for the participation of social agents.	The factors analyzed do not preclude the existence of social consensus at the state level regarding employment policy.	Successful experiences of social dialogue at the regional level in employment policies over the last 10 years demonstrate the possibility of finding common ground and the effective

					participation of social partners.
Maturo y Bochio	2021	To evaluate the impact of different aspects of school management on the educational quality of Ecuadorian institutions.	Quantitative approach with surveys and observations.	The results, obtained through surveys and observations, reveal that the participation of the educational community is a key factor in improving the quality of teaching.	This study underlines the importance of comprehensive and participatory school management to achieve quality education.
Reyes	2023	To critically analyze the strategies implemented by the District Coordination Body (IDC) of Villa El Salvador to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women.	Mixed approach, combining qualitative documentary analysis and interviews with key actors, with a quantitative component through a Likert questionnaire applied to IDC members.	Its main finding indicates that tools such as district plans have enabled the implementation of local public policies, while training programs have strengthened capacities and promoted cultural changes.	It concludes that the IDC has consolidated an effective model based on intersectoral articulation, active participation of actors and empowerment of women's organizations, contributing to more equitable and violence-free societies.

Source: Own elaboration

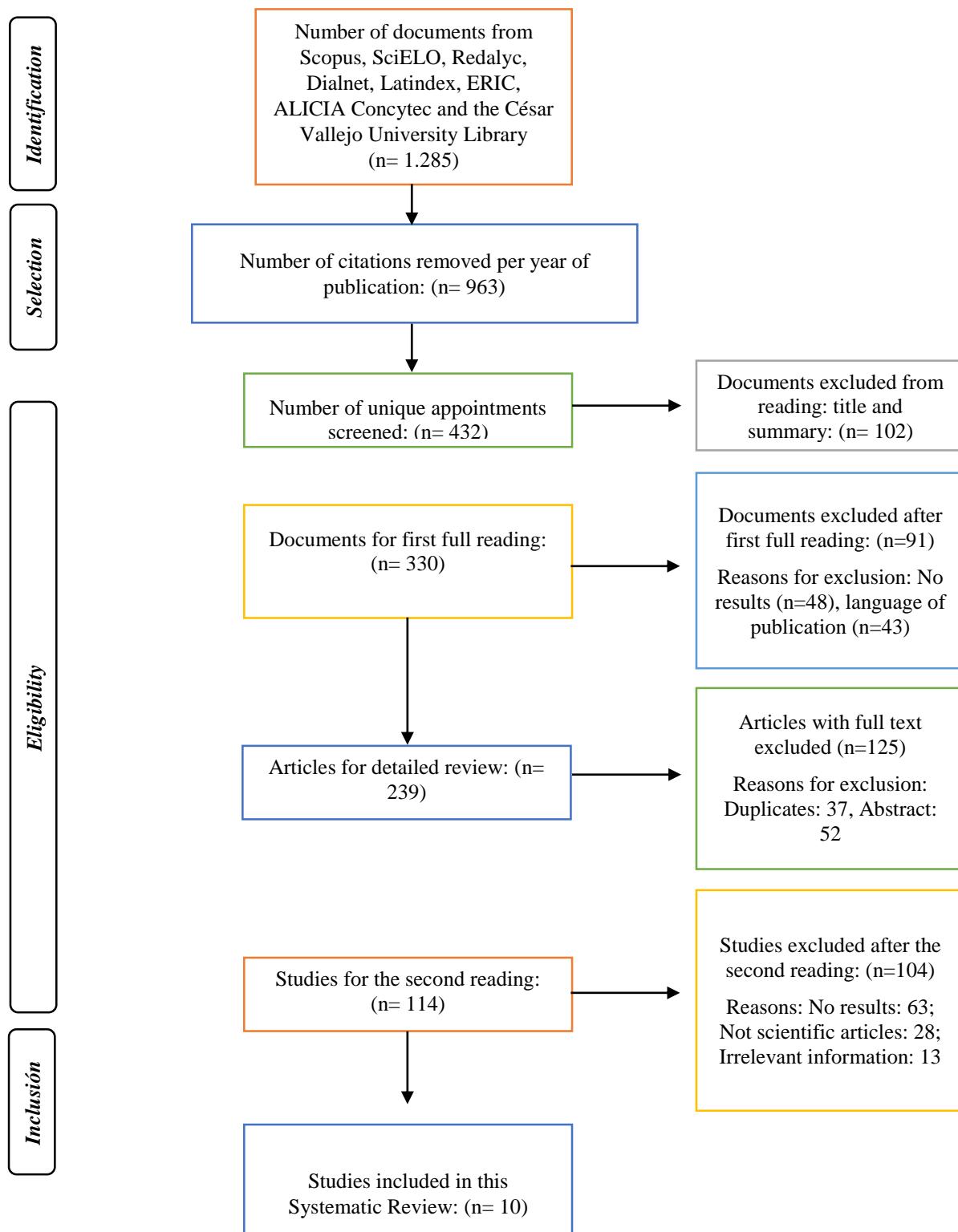


Figure 1 Search diagram

Source: Own elaboration

The ten selected studies show that consensus-building strategies in Latin America place greater emphasis on dialogue among diverse groups and community participation as key ways to shift the

mindset of opponents. This is achieved through a focus on discussion forums, interactive spaces, and digital governance, fostering a sense of urgency among individuals to reach agreements on local issues such as schooling, government regulations, and city management. Specifically, the selected studies highlight a focus on document review to understand the topic (Falabella, 2021; García-Obando, 2025), as well as participatory research that leads to a deeper understanding of the actions of those directly involved in problem-solving, as they are the ones experiencing the situation (Azcuy et al., 2021). Hence, the studies highlight the common approach of working through shared agendas to improve living conditions and address territorial problems. Meanwhile, research focusing on numerical data (Herrera et al., 2025; Maturo and Bochio, 2021) shows low levels of initial participation (41% never get involved), but this improves with the use of technological tools and leads to agreements with other sectors (Table 2).

On the other hand, consistent patterns emerged, such as the need for clarity in governance and direct methods to legitimize decisions (Orellana et al., 2025; Reyes, 2023), with positive results in collaborative processes, as shown in Table 2. This table demonstrates that certain collaborative bodies integrate anti-violence policies by empowering individuals with knowledge. However, challenges remain, such as a lack of understanding of dialogue and collaboration among people from different groups (Jaramillo et al., 2022) and limited self-directed action without government support (Montoya, 2024; Canalda, 2023). All of this highlights the gaps in achieving cross-border scalability and digital adaptation in remote areas. These findings align with regional shifts toward collective participation for integration.

Furthermore, the findings of this systematic review align closely with other studies analyzing political and social integration in Latin America, such as those of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). For example, it highlights recent achievements in regional cooperation by bringing together 33 nations to discuss peace, education, and sustainable growth, but notes that it faces significant challenges, including the lack of a clear plan and dedicated funding, as well as difficulties in ensuring the commitment of all members (Freire, 2023). Unlike the studies selected for this review, which showcase numerous active local processes, other reviews reveal greater complexity in large-scale regional cooperation, where obstacles to inclusion and collaborative work persist, thus highlighting the unequal, fragmented, and evolving nature of consensus and cooperation in the region.

The results of this review coincide with the latest analyses on regional cooperation within the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which highlighted significant progress in peace and education talks among 33 nations. However, according to Bernal (2025), there are "minor" shortcomings, such as the lack of a "clear plan" and dedicated funding, similar to the gaps in "cooperation" among citizens identified in the contextualized analyses studied. Furthermore, other research on social processes has shown that they become cyclical, meaning they regress to the initial stages with regard to social policies aimed at poverty reduction. All of this underscores the need to promote community-based cooperation, emphasizing the importance of "digital tools" and clarity in overcoming confusing conceptualizations within Latin American contexts.

Conclusión

In summary, this systematic review strictly adheres to the PRISMA 2020 guidelines and emphasizes transparency at every stage, from the comprehensive search shown in the flowchart to the double-checking of data and the table of criteria for selecting articles. All of this aimed to ensure that other scientists could replicate the findings of this research. Furthermore, by clearly outlining the process, the variables analyzed, and the explanations for why some documents were excluded, scientific honesty is strengthened, and the replication or expansion of these findings on strategies or forms of collaboration is encouraged, thus contributing to the design of collaborative and cooperative public policies, both in Latin America and in other parts of the world.

Finally, regarding the main objective of this systematic review on mapping and organizing consensus-building strategies in the existing literature, it can be seen that to achieve effective governance, efforts must be directed towards consensus-building among various stakeholders involved in the issues (Azcuy et al., 2021). Furthermore, effective management of digital media is needed, as Herrera et al. (2025) pointed out, as well as the design of collaborative agendas among different groups (Reyes, 2023) to reach contextualized, local, and community-based agreements that contribute to providing solutions to the problems. This will only be achieved with active citizen participation, working with common plans to identify gaps and open up to other spaces (Table 2). Finally, the data collected in this systematic review show how essential it is to identify these gaps, in order to provide useful ideas

and plans such as employing the aforementioned digital tools and seeking transparency in citizen participation processes.

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