Chapter 13. Periodic table of governance deliberative processes – the resolution of interests

Introduction

Deliberation is one of the most important pieces of human architecture. Whenever people have to act together, they have differences to process. Families do it. Teams do it. Companies do it. Governments do it. Courts, boards, parliaments, committees, professions and international institutions all do it. Deliberative processes run horizontally across human activity and vertically through every level of civilisation.

That is why deliberation cannot be treated as a feature owned by democracy. It existed before democracy and exists inside every form of government. Families discuss and negotiate. Tribes use elders and councils. City-states developed assemblies. Kingdoms used courts, advisers and privileged estates. Elite democracies built parliaments and parties. Pluralistic democracies widened participation through universal voting, competing parties, media and civil society. Global institutions provide forums in which states negotiate across national boundaries.

The form changes. The job does not. Different interests, experiences, beliefs and felt truths have to be heard, tested and brought to enough settlement for people to act together.

The quality of that process matters enormously. When deliberation is too narrow, power closes around the ruler, party, elite or dominant group. Challenge becomes unsafe. Inconvenient evidence is filtered out. The system can move toward dictatorship, one-party rule, captured institutions or an elite serving its own ends. The names differ. The structural failure is similar: too few people can question the aim, the evidence, the agenda or the decision.

But more deliberation is not automatically better. A system can also deliberate itself into paralysis. If every voice has a veto, every issue remains open and no decision is allowed to close, the institution loses the ability to act. The failure at one end is domination. The failure at the other is endless discussion without action.

Deliberation therefore holds a paradox. A competent process must be open enough to admit difference, counterclaim and inconvenient truth, yet disciplined enough to reach closure, preserve legitimacy and act. It must protect pluralism without making action impossible. It must create enough restraint to stop domination without creating so much process that nothing moves.

Seen this way, deliberation is not a decorative feature of governance. It is one of the main ways human systems prevent power, felt truth and self-interest from becoming self-sealing. It is also one of the main ways a system finds error before reality corrects it more brutally through failure, conflict or violence.

This chapter takes deliberation out of the larger Governance Periodic Table and opens it up. We identify the invariant nouns inside the process, show how the operating verbs change through the levels, and build a Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes. The aim is diagnostic visibility: to see which parts of a deliberative system are operating at which level, where they fit, where they do not, and where the next best move may lie.

As with the Governance Periodic Table, this is a minimum viable product. The eleven nouns, their level descriptions and the country placements should be tested, challenged and improved as better evidence becomes available. The purpose is not to declare a finished taxonomy. It is to make the architecture visible enough that each cell can be examined against evidence rather than hidden inside a label such as democracy, autocracy or dictatorship.

How this chapter unfolds

1. Why deliberative processes matter — Shows why every human institution needs a way to process difference, and why both too little deliberation and too much deliberation can make a system fail.

2. The eleven invariant nouns: what they do and what happens if they fail — Identifies the recurring components of deliberation and explains both the job each noun performs and the consequence when it is absent, weak or captured.

3. The periodic table of deliberative processes — Keeps the eleven nouns fixed on the X-axis while showing how their operating verbs change through six levels on the Y-axis.

4. Horizontal and vertical coherence — Explains the two coherence tests used to interpret a periodic table: whether the nouns fit together across a level, and whether each noun is supported by the capabilities required beneath its apparent level.

5. Backsighting: testing the cells against evidence — Explains the cell-first discipline through which a proposed placement is tested against supporting and contradictory evidence rather than inferred from a country label.

6. Denmark — Applies the table independently to Denmark, using one lower-defensible level for every noun, and interprets both horizontal and vertical coherence.

7. Russia — Applies the same single-level rule independently to Russia and shows the scatter between sophisticated formal machinery and weaker political correction.

8. Denmark and Russia together — Places both countries on the same level-by-noun architecture using one placement per cell so differences in level and coherence can be read immediately.

9. Making deliberation visible — Develops the table from a static exhibit into a citizen-facing diagnostic that can expose evidence, confidence, trajectory and deeper recursion.

10. What this means for humans — Explains how citizens and leaders can use greater visibility to improve collective judgement without reducing politics to a single ideological label.

11. What this means for AI — Sets out how AI can support evidence, comparison, memory and recursion while remaining bounded, contestable and subordinate to legitimate human judgement.

1. Why deliberative processes matter

Deliberation is one component of governance, but it performs a critical job. Human beings living together will have different interests, experiences, beliefs and preferences. Every durable institution therefore needs some way to express those differences, test them and convert them into enough settlement for collective action.

The process exists everywhere. Families deliberate. Tribes deliberate. Companies deliberate. Boards, committees and professions deliberate. City-states, kingdoms, elite democracies and pluralistic democracies deliberate through different institutions. The mechanisms change with scale and level, but the underlying work persists.

Failure can occur at either end. Too little pluralistic deliberation lets power close around a ruler, party or elite. Agenda, evidence and challenge become controlled, and the system loses correction. Too much deliberation can produce the opposite failure: endless process, weak closure and inability to act. A competent deliberative process must therefore hold openness and closure together.

Its quality affects legitimacy, minority protection, truth-seeking, error correction and stability. A process can look sophisticated and still fail if agenda control is closed, inconvenient evidence cannot survive challenge, rules are manipulated, or participants will not accept legitimate defeat. Equally, a process can be highly inclusive and still fail if it cannot make a decision.

The Periodic Table therefore asks a more useful question than 'Is this democracy?' It asks: what are the parts of deliberation, at what level is each part actually operating, do those parts fit together, and where would greater visibility reveal the next best move?

2. The eleven invariant nouns: What they do and what happens if they fail

Once deliberation is taken out of the larger Governance Periodic Table and examined at a lower level of granularity, a surprisingly stable architecture appears. What changes through the levels is not so much the existence of the noun as the verb attached to it. The exhibit below therefore makes two things explicit for every noun: the institutional job it performs, and what happens when that part of the architecture is weak, absent or captured.

The architecture as a sequence

Where are we? → Who is here? → Why are they entitled to be here? → What can we discuss? → Who controls the discussion? → How may we engage? → What counts as reality? → How do we decide? → How does the decision persist? → Why do we honour the process? → What gives it legitimacy and continuity?

Function and failure of the nouns of deliberative process. Exhibit 13.1

Invariant noun	What it does	If it is not working
Place	Creates the bounded arena in which deliberation occurs and gives the process institutional standing and legitimacy.	Participation becomes ambiguous, the process loses a recognised boundary, and people may not know when discussion has authoritative standing.
Membership	Determines who belongs to the deliberative community and who may participate.	Affected people can be excluded from voice and the resulting settlement can lose legitimacy.
Qualification	Determines what gives a participant standing, weight or authority within a particular body.	Participation becomes either arbitrary and ungrounded or unnecessarily closed to people whose representation or expertise is required.
Agenda	Determines what issues may enter deliberation, in what order and often in what form.	An apparently open process can be controlled before discussion begins because important questions never reach the table.
Chair	Manages speaking order, time, procedure, fairness and movement toward settlement.	The process becomes disorderly if chairing is weak, or covertly controlled if the chair can manipulate participation, procedure or outcome.
Rules of engagement	Govern how participants speak, contest, respond and behave.	Powerful or louder actors can dominate, conflict becomes personal, and the process ceases to be a reliable means of collective judgement.
Information & evidence	Governs what representation of reality enters the process, whether claims can be challenged and whether inconvenient evidence can survive.	A procedurally sophisticated process can still reach poor decisions because it is deliberating on a distorted picture of reality.
Decision mechanism	Converts discussion into sufficient settlement for collective action.	Discussion can continue indefinitely, decisions can be imposed outside the process, or participants may refuse to recognise the outcome.
Recording & institutionalisation	Preserves decisions, reasons, votes and settlements through time so they can be communicated, enforced and reconsidered.	Decisions are easily denied, altered, forgotten or inconsistently applied, weakening accountability and institutional memory.
Honour	Provides the informal commitment to truthfulness, restraint, listening, legitimate opposition and acceptance of lawful defeat.	Formal rules are forced to carry more weight than they can bear; participants exploit procedure, reject unwelcome outcomes and turn deliberation into permanent conflict.
Ritual	Provides repeated forms, symbols and conventions that reinforce legitimacy, continuity and respect for the institution.	Deliberation can lose seriousness, continuity and shared meaning, especially across generations and changes of leadership.

3. The Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes

The table uses six forms of institutional complexity: Family, Tribe, Kingdom, Nation State / Elite democracy, Pluralistic democracy and Global order. The levels form the Y-axis, with Level II at the bottom and Level VII at the top. The eleven invariant nouns form the X-axis. The noun remains fixed; what changes vertically is the mechanism through which that deliberative function is performed.

Because eleven columns would be unreadable on a normal book page, the table is presented in three landscape panels. They are one periodic table conceptually, not three different diagnostics.

Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes, panel 1. Exhibit 13.2A

Level	1. Place	2. Membership	3. Qualification	4. Agenda
VII	UN assemblies, treaty bodies, international courts, summits and transnational forums create deliberative arenas across sovereign states.	Sovereign states are principal members; international organisations, experts and civil society gain limited or indirect voice.	State representation, treaty status, institutional office, expertise and accreditation determine standing; individuals usually participate indirectly.	States, international organisations and major coalitions place issues on agendas; great-power influence and institutional mandates constrain access.
VI	Parliament, committees, public inquiries, media, civil society, digital forums and consultation create multiple interconnected deliberative arenas.	Universal adult citizenship broadly establishes political membership, supplemented by organised interests, civil society and representative institutions.	Citizenship and universal franchise dominate; elected mandate, expertise, representation and transparent appointment provide additional qualifications.	Government, opposition, committees, citizens, media, civil society, courts and organised interests compete to place issues on the public agenda.
V	Parliament, committees, clubs, press and recognised civic institutions provide formal arenas, but access remains substantially elite.	Political membership expands but participation may remain restricted by property, sex, race, class, education or institutional status.	Property, education, profession, party standing or restricted franchise qualify political participants and representatives.	Government, parliamentary leaders, parties and influential elites structure the agenda, with growing press and public influence.
IV	Royal court, council chamber, estates, religious institutions or authorised local forums. Access to place reflects hierarchy.	Subjects belong to the kingdom, but participation in deliberation is restricted to sovereign, nobles, clergy, officials or invited representatives.	Birth, title, land, religious office, royal appointment or bureaucratic position determine qualification to participate.	Sovereign, ministers, court or privileged estates substantially control what can be formally considered.
III	Recognised communal meeting place: council circle, fire, elders' place or ceremonial ground. Place carries customary authority.	Kinship, clan, age, status or accepted affiliation determines who belongs and who may enter collective discussion.	Age, lineage, initiation, reputation, warrior status, spiritual authority or recognised wisdom qualify participants.	Chiefs, elders, custom or urgent communal problems determine what the group considers.
II	Household or informal family setting. Deliberation occurs wherever members gather and remains private, immediate and relational.	Membership follows family relationship; those affected are normally known personally. Entry and exit occur through birth, marriage, separation or adoption.	Age, parental role, experience or family standing informally determine whose voice carries weight.	Usually set by immediate need or by the dominant family member; issues arise directly from shared life.

Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes, panel 2. Exhibit 13.2B

Level	5. Chair	6. Rules of engagement	7. Information & evidence	8. Decision mechanism
VII	Presidents, secretariats or appointed chairs manage procedure but depend on institutional rules, state consent and diplomatic legitimacy.	Treaties, charters, diplomatic protocol, voting rules and negotiated procedure govern engagement among formally sovereign participants.	International agencies, science, national reporting, NGOs and independent experts provide evidence, but access and verification remain uneven.	Consensus, state voting, weighted voting, vetoes, treaties and voluntary commitments convert deliberation into incomplete collective settlement.
VI	Speaker, president or chair is institutionally constrained, expected to apply published rules impartially and protect participation across competing positions.	Published standing orders, time limits, rights of reply, committee procedures, protections for opposition and public scrutiny structure engagement.	Independent media, science, statistics, experts, inquiries, public data, civil society and competing information sources allow claims to be challenged.	Universal elections, representative voting, majority and supermajority rules, coalition bargaining, referenda and constitutional constraints convert deliberation into decisions.
V	Speaker or committee chair becomes increasingly procedural and rule-bound, although selected through elite political institutions.	Standing orders, parliamentary conventions, recognised debate and procedural protections formalise engagement among qualified participants.	Professional bureaucracy, newspapers, experts, statistics and parliamentary evidence expand information, though access remains socially uneven.	Representative voting and parliamentary majorities determine decisions within a restricted electorate and elite political system.
IV	Sovereign, minister, noble or appointed officer controls proceedings; chairing and substantive authority frequently overlap.	Court etiquette, royal procedure, religious convention and formal hierarchy determine who may speak and how.	Officials, advisers, clergy, military commanders and court networks provide information upward; rulers control substantial information flows.	Sovereign authority ultimately decides, even where councils, estates or advisers deliberate beforehand.
III	Chief, elder or respected intermediary manages speaking and settlement according to custom; legitimacy comes from standing.	Custom governs speaking order, respect for elders, forms of argument, taboo and acceptable conduct.	Collective memory, elders, witnesses, oral history, practical experience and spiritual or customary knowledge inform decisions.	Consensus, elder judgement, chief's authority, acclamation or customary settlement determines the outcome.
II	Parent, elder or dominant member guides discussion; neutrality is secondary to responsibility and authority.	Implicit norms govern interruption, respect, authority and acceptable behaviour; enforcement is personal.	Personal observation, memory and trusted family knowledge dominate; evidence is direct but narrow.	Authority, negotiation, compromise or informal consensus converts discussion into action; formal voting is unusual.

Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes, panel 3. Exhibit 13.2C

Level	9. Recording & institutionalisation	10. Honour	11. Ritual
VII	Treaties, resolutions, minutes, judgments, reports and digital archives preserve decisions, although implementation remains state-dependent.	Reciprocity, treaty compliance, diplomatic restraint and acceptance of negotiated outcomes support cooperation, but enforcement is weak.	Summits, assemblies, diplomatic protocol, treaty signing and international ceremony reinforce continuity without creating a single global political identity.
VI	Public records, legislation, transcripts, voting records, digital archives and judicial review make decisions durable, visible and contestable.	Commitment to constitutional rules, truthful participation, legitimate opposition, peaceful transfer, restraint and acceptance of lawful defeat sustains the system.	Parliamentary and civic rituals remain, but coexist with public broadcasting, citizen participation and plural cultural forms; ritual legitimises the process rather than a ruler.
V	Parliamentary records, statutes, official minutes, newspapers and administrative systems create an extensive institutional memory.	Parliamentary honour, gentlemanly conventions, acceptance of electoral outcomes and restraint supplement formal institutional rules.	Parliamentary dress, formal language, openings, divisions, ceremonies and conventions give continuity to representative institutions.
IV	Royal decrees, statutes, court records and bureaucratic documentation preserve authoritative decisions.	Loyalty to sovereign, religion, rank and inherited codes of honour sustain the deliberative hierarchy.	Royal ceremony, dress, titles, precedence, religious forms and court protocol reinforce hierarchy and legitimacy.
III	Oral memory, custom, elders and ritual preserve settlements across time.	Personal honour, reputation, courage, loyalty and respect for elders or custom support compliance with collective settlements.	Ceremony, speaking objects, council forms, dress, initiation, storytelling and sacred practices mark collective deliberation.
II	Memory, habit and family expectation preserve decisions; little formal documentation is required.	Trust, loyalty, care and willingness to preserve relationships encourage acceptance of decisions despite disagreement.	Family habits, seating, meals, celebrations and repeated conversational practices frame important discussions.

4. Horizontal and Vertical Coherence

The Periodic Table should always be read in two directions. Horizontal coherence asks whether the nouns that make up one deliberative system are operating at levels that fit together. A country may have a highly sophisticated parliament, records and procedures, but much weaker agenda contestability or information freedom. The table should show that mismatch rather than smoothing it into one national label.

Vertical coherence asks a different question. A placement at a higher level should be supported by the capabilities implied by the levels beneath it. A formal Level V or Level VI mechanism is not truly operating at that level if its practical behaviour still depends on lower-level permission, loyalty, patronage or personal authority. The operating verb matters more than the institutional title.

These two tests are particularly important when interpreting country results. Tight clustering across nouns suggests horizontal coherence. Scatter suggests that different parts of the deliberative machinery are working at materially different levels. Vertical incoherence appears where high-level forms exist without the lower-level foundations or operating behaviours needed to make them real. The country pattern is therefore not merely a collection of scores; it is a picture of how well the deliberative architecture fits together.

5. Backsighting: Testing the Cells Against Evidence

The Periodic Table is only a hypothesis until its cells are tested against evidence. The discipline is to avoid beginning with a judgement about a country as a whole. Each noun is assessed independently. We start with evidence, describe the operating mechanism in neutral institutional language, identify its structural characteristics, assign a provisional level, record confidence, and only then reveal the whole-country pattern.

Where the evidence could defensibly support two adjacent levels, this chapter uses the lower defensible level. That is a deliberate conservative rule. It avoids overstating institutional capability where the formal design appears stronger than the observed operation.

Backsighting is not source counting. Evidence has to be weighed. Primary institutional evidence, comparative datasets, specialist analysis, historical research and direct indicators of institutional practice may carry different weights. Contradictory evidence should be actively sought because its purpose is to challenge the provisional placement rather than decorate it.

The working sequence is:

Provisional position → Evidence → Challenge→ Revised position.

Over time each cell should be capable of exposing the evidence behind its placement, contradictory evidence, confidence, comparison with other countries and trajectory through time.

6. Denmark

Denmark is assessed noun by noun rather than being given a country label first. Using the lower-defensible-level rule produces ten Level VI placements and Ritual at Level V. The result is a tightly clustered profile.

Exhibit 13.3

Deliberative noun	Level	Cell diagnosis
Place	VI	Multiple open, formal deliberative arenas operate across parliament, committees, public inquiry, media and civil society.
Membership	VI	Political membership is broad and participation is substantially protected through universal citizenship and representative institutions.
Qualification	VI	Election, citizenship, expertise and transparent appointment provide legitimate routes to standing.
Agenda	VI	Multiple competing actors can place issues into public and parliamentary consideration.
Chair	VI	Chairing is strongly procedural and constrained rather than personal.
Rules of engagement	VI	Standing orders and wider norms support plural participation and orderly contest.
Information & evidence	VI	Competing information sources, professional expertise and protected challenge can enter deliberation.
Decision mechanism	VI	Representative voting, coalition bargaining and constitutional constraint convert contest into accepted settlement.
Recording & institutionalisation	VI	Decisions, reasons and votes are systematically recorded and reviewable.
Honour	VI	Norms of legitimate opposition, restraint and acceptance of lawful defeat remain strong.
Ritual	V	Institutional rituals reinforce continuity and legitimacy, although this noun is somewhat less strongly Level 6 than the rest.

Denmark deliberative processes. Exhibit 13.4

	Place	Membership	Qualification	Agenda	Chair	Rules of engagement	Information & evidence	Decision mechanism	Recording & institutional-isation	Honour	Ritual
VII	UN assemblies, treaty bodies, international courts, summits and transnational forums create deliberative arenas across sovereign states.	Sovereign states are principal members; international organisations, experts and civil society gain limited or indirect voice.	State representation, treaty status, institutional office, expertise and accreditation determine standing; individuals usually participate indirectly.	States, international organisations and major coalitions place issues on agendas; great-power influence and institutional mandates constrain access.	Presidents, secretariats or appointed chairs manage procedure but depend on institutional rules, state consent and diplomatic legitimacy.	Treaties, charters, diplomatic protocol, voting rules and negotiated procedure govern engagement among formally sovereign participants.	International agencies, science, national reporting, NGOs and independent experts provide evidence, but access and verification remain uneven.	Consensus, state voting, weighted voting, vetoes, treaties and voluntary commitments convert deliberation into incomplete collective settlement.	Treaties, resolutions, minutes, judgments, reports and digital archives preserve decisions, although implementation remains state-dependent.	Reciprocity, treaty compliance, diplomatic restraint and acceptance of negotiated outcomes support cooperation, but enforcement is weak.	Summits, assemblies, diplomatic protocol, treaty signing and international ceremony reinforce continuity without creating a single global political identity.
VI	Parliament, committees, public inquiries, media, civil society [illegible] forums and [illegible] multiple [illegible] deliberat[illegible]	Universal adult citizenship broadly establishes political [illegible]ship, supplem[illegible] organis[illegible] civil society [illegible] institutions.	Citizenship and universal franchise dominate; elected [illegible] expertise [illegible]tation and tra[illegible] appoint[illegible] de additional qualifications.	Government, opposition, committees, citizens, media, civil society, courts and org[illegible]ests compe[illegible]ssues on the p[illegible]da.	Speaker, president or chair is institutionally constrain[illegible]pected to apply [illegible]les impar[illegible]otect particip[illegible]es competing positions.	Published standing orders, time limits, rights of reply, committe[illegible]edures, protect[illegible]position and pu[illegible] structur[illegible]ment.	Independent media, science, statistics, experts, inquiries, [illegible]data, civil society a[illegible]g informa[illegible]allow claims to [illegible]ged.	Universal elections, representative voting, majorit[illegible] super[illegible]es, coalit[illegible]g, referen[illegible] constitutional constraints convert deliberation into decisions.	Public records, legislation, transcripts, voting records, d[illegible]rchives and ju[illegible]make decisio[illegible]isible and con[illegible]	Commitment to constitutional rules, truthful pa[illegible]ion, legitima[illegible]n, peaceful[illegible] restraint[illegible]tance of lawful defeat sustains the system.	Parliamentary and civic rituals remain, but coexist with public broadcasting, citizen participation and plural cultural forms; ritual legitimises the process rather than a ruler.
V	Parliament, committees, clubs, press and recognised civic institutions provide formal arenas, but access remains substantially elite.	Political membership expands but participation may remain restricted by property, sex, race, class, education or institutional status.	Property, education, profession, party standing or restricted franchise qualify political participants and representatives.	Government, parliamentary leaders, parties and influential elites structure the agenda, with growing press and public influence.	Speaker or committee chair becomes increasingly procedural and rule-bound, although selected through elite political institutions.	Standing orders, parliamentary conventions, recognised debate and procedural protections formalise engagement among qualified participants.	Professional bureaucracy, newspapers, experts, statistics and parliamentary evidence expand information, though access remains socially uneven.	Representative voting and parliamentary majorities determine decisions within a restricted electorate and elite political system.	Parliamentary records, statutes, official minutes, newspapers and administrative systems create an extensive institutional memory.	Parliamentary honour, gentlemanly conventions, acceptance of electoral outcomes and restraint supplement formal institutional rules.	Parliamentary dress, formal language, openings, ceremo[illegible] conventi[illegible] continuity to representative institutions.
IV	Royal court, council chamber, estates, religious institutions or authorised local forums. Access to place reflects hierarchy.	Subjects belong to the kingdom, but participation in deliberation is restricted to sovereign, nobles, clergy, officials or invited representatives.	Birth, title, land, religious office, royal appointment or bureaucratic position determine qualification to participate.	Sovereign, ministers, court or privileged estates substantially control what can be formally considered.	Sovereign, minister, noble or appointed officer controls proceedings; chairing and substantive authority frequently overlap.	Court etiquette, royal procedure, religious convention and formal hierarchy determine who may speak and how.	Officials, advisers, clergy, military commanders and court networks provide information upward; rulers control substantial information flows.	Sovereign authority ultimately decides, even where councils, estates or advisers deliberate beforehand.	Royal decrees, statutes, court records and bureaucratic documentation preserve authoritative decisions.	Loyalty to sovereign, religion, rank and inherited codes of honour sustain the deliberative hierarchy.	Royal ceremony, dress, titles, precedence, religious forms and court protocol reinforce hierarchy and legitimacy.
III	Recognised communal meeting place: council circle, fire, elders' place or ceremonial ground. Place carries customary authority.	Kinship, clan, age, status or accepted affiliation determines who belongs and who may enter collective discussion.	Age, lineage, initiation, reputation, warrior status, spiritual authority or recognised wisdom qualify participants.	Chiefs, elders, custom or urgent communal problems determine what the group considers.	Chief, elder or respected intermediary manages speaking and settlement according to custom; legitimacy comes from standing.	Custom governs speaking order, respect for elders, forms of argument, taboo and acceptable conduct.	Collective memory, elders, witnesses, oral history, practical experience and spiritual or customary knowledge inform decisions.	Consensus, elder judgement, chief's authority, acclamation or customary settlement determines the outcome.	Oral memory, custom, elders and ritual preserve settlements across time.	Personal honour, reputation, courage, loyalty and respect for elders or custom support compliance with collective settlements.	Ceremony, speaking objects, council forms, dress, initiation, storytelling and sacred practices mark collective deliberation.
II	Household or informal family setting. Deliberation occurs wherever members gather and remains private, immediate and relational.	Membership follows family relationship; those affected are normally known personally. Entry and exit occur through birth, marriage, separation or adoption.	Age, parental role, experience or family standing informally determine whose voice carries weight.	Usually set by immediate need or by the dominant family member; issues arise directly from shared life.	Parent, elder or dominant member guides discussion; neutrality is secondary to responsibility and authority.	Implicit norms govern interruption, respect, authority and acceptable behaviour; enforcement is personal.	Personal observation, memory and trusted family knowledge dominate; evidence is direct but narrow.	Authority, negotiation, compromise or informal consensus converts discussion into action; formal voting is unusual.	Memory, habit and family expectation preserve decisions; little formal documentation is required.	Trust, loyalty, care and willingness to preserve relationships encourage acceptance of decisions despite disagreement.	Family habits, seating, meals, celebrations and repeated conversational practices frame important discussions.

● **Denmark**

Horizontal coherence

Denmark is highly coherent across the X-axis. Place, Membership, Qualification, Agenda, Chair, Rules of Engagement, Information & Evidence, Decision Mechanism, Recording & Institutionalisation and Honour all sit at Level VI. Participation, contest, information, settlement and continuity therefore reinforce one another rather than pulling in materially different directions.

Vertical coherence

The Level VI placements are broadly supported by the capabilities beneath them: national institutions, impersonal procedure, broad participation, protected contest and durable records. Ritual sits at Level V, but this is a modest boundary rather than a structural break; symbolic and ceremonial forms remain somewhat more nationally bounded than the rest of the deliberative architecture.

7. Russia

Russia is assessed with the same nouns and the same conservative placement rule. The resulting profile is much more scattered: formal infrastructure remains at Levels V–VI in several cells, while Information & Evidence and Honour fall to Level III and several participative mechanisms sit at Level IV.

Exhibit 13.5

Deliberative noun	Level	Cell diagnosis
Place	V	Sophisticated parliamentary and committee infrastructure remains, even where effective power is concentrated elsewhere.
Membership	IV	Formal membership structures exist, but genuine opposition participation is materially constrained.
Qualification	IV	Modern formal qualifications coexist with legal and political restrictions affecting opposition participation.
Agenda	IV	Effective agenda control is substantially concentrated despite formal parliamentary mechanisms.
Chair	V	Formal chairs and procedures are sophisticated, but operate within a more constrained political environment.
Rules of engagement	V	Detailed procedural rules exist, although wider political conditions narrow their substantive effect.
Information & evidence	IV	Independent evidence, contradiction and political correction are materially restricted.
Decision mechanism	IV	Formal voting machinery remains, but outcomes are heavily shaped by concentrated executive and governing-party power.
Recording & institutionalisation	VI	Written laws, records, resolutions and bureaucratic memory are highly developed.
Honour	IV	Norms of legitimate opposition, restraint and truthful contestation are materially weaker.
Ritual	IV	Political ritual is substantial but more closely tied to hierarchy, state authority and national symbolism.

Russia deliberative processes. Exhibit 13.6

	Place	Membership	Qualification	Agenda	Chair	Rules of engagement	Information & evidence	Decision mechanism	Recording & institutional-isation	Honour	Ritual
VII	UN assemblies, treaty bodies, international courts, summits and transnational forums create deliberative arenas across sovereign states.	Sovereign states are principal members; international organisations, experts and civil society gain limited or indirect voice.	State representation, treaty status, institutional office, expertise and accreditation determine standing; individuals usually participate indirectly.	States, international organisations and major coalitions place issues on agendas; great-power influence and institutional mandates constrain access.	Presidents, secretariats or appointed chairs manage procedure but depend on institutional rules, state consent and diplomatic legitimacy.	Treaties, charters, diplomatic protocol, voting rules and negotiated procedure govern engagement among formally sovereign participants.	International agencies, science, national reporting, NGOs and independent experts provide evidence, but access and verification remain uneven.	Consensus, state voting, weighted voting, vetoes, treaties and voluntary commitments convert deliberation into incomplete collective settlement.	Treaties, resolutions, minutes, judgments, reports and digital archives preserve decisions, although implementation remains state-dependent.	Reciprocity, treaty compliance, diplomatic restraint and acceptance of negotiated outcomes support cooperation, but enforcement is weak.	Summits, assemblies, diplomatic protocol, treaty signing and international ceremony reinforce continuity without creating a single global political identity.
VI	Parliament, committees, public inquiries, media, civil society, digital forums and consultation create multiple interconnected deliberative arenas.	Universal adult citizenship broadly establishes political membership, supplemented by organised interests, civil society and representative institutions.	Citizenship and universal franchise dominate; elected mandate, expertise, representation and transparent appointment provide additional qualifications.	Government, opposition, committees, citizens, media, civil society, courts and organised interests compete to place issues on the public agenda.	Speaker, president or chair is institutionally constrained, expected to apply published rules impartially and protect participation across competing positions.	Published standing orders, time limits, rights of reply, committee procedures, protections for opposition and public scrutiny structure engagement.	Independent media, science, statistics, experts, inquiries, public data, civil society and competing information sources allow claims to be challenged.	Universal elections, representative voting, majority and supermajority rules, coalition bargaining, referenda and constitutional constraints convert deliberation into decisions.	Public records, legislation, transcripts, voting records, d[redacted]rchives and ju[redacted]make decisi[redacted]isible and co[redacted]	Commitment to constitutional rules, truthful participation, legitimate opposition, peaceful transfer, restraint and acceptance of lawful defeat sustains the system.	Parliamentary and civic rituals remain, but coexist with public broadcasting, citizen participation and plural cultural forms; ritual legitimises the process rather than a ruler.
V	Parliament, committees, clubs, press and recognised [redacted] institut[redacted] formal arenas, [redacted] remains [redacted]ily elite.	Political membership expands but participation may remain restricted by property, sex, race, class, education or institutional status.	Property, education, profession, party standing or restricted franchise qualify political participants and representatives.	Government, parliamentary leaders, parties and influential elites structure the agenda, with growing press and public influence.	Speaker or committee chair becomes increasing[redacted]cedural and ru[redacted]though selecti[redacted]lite politica[redacted]ns.	Standing orders, parliamentary convention[redacted]ognised debate[redacted]ural protec[redacted]e engagem[redacted]g qualified participants.	Professional bureaucracy, newspapers, experts, statistics and parliamentary evidence expand information, though access remains socially uneven.	Representative voting and parliamentary majorities determine decisions within a restricted electorate and elite political system.	Parliamentary records, statutes, official minutes, newspapers and administrative systems create an extensive institutional memory.	Parliamentary honour, gentlemanly conventions, acceptance of electoral outcomes and restraint supplement formal institutional rules.	Parliamentary dress, formal language, openings, divisions, ceremonies and conventions give continuity to representative institutions.
IV	Royal court, council chamber, estates, religious institutions or authorised local forums. Access to place reflects hierarchy.	Subjects belong to the kingdom, but participation in deliber[redacted] restrict[redacted]ign, nobles[redacted]als or invited r[redacted]tives.	Birth, title, land, religious office, royal appointment or bureau[redacted]osition determ[redacted]tion to partici[redacted]	Sovereign, ministers, court or privileged estates substanti[redacted]ntrol what can be consid[redacted]	Sovereign, minister, noble or appointed officer controls proceedings; chairing and substantive authority frequently overlap.	Court etiquette, royal procedure, religious convention and formal hierarchy determine who may speak and how.	Officials, advisers, clergy, military commanders and court netw[redacted]provide informa[redacted] rulers co[redacted]ntial informa[redacted]	Sovereign authority ultimately decides, even where co[redacted]estates or advis[redacted]e befor[redacted]	Royal decrees, statutes, court records and bureaucratic documentation preserve authoritative decisions.	Loyalty to sovereign, religion, rank and inherited [redacted]of honour sustain [redacted]ive hierarch[redacted]	Royal ceremony, dress, titles, precedence, religious [redacted] court protoco[redacted] hierarch[redacted]macy.
III	Recognised communal meeting place: council circle, fire, elders' place or ceremonial ground. Place carries customary authority.	Kinship, clan, age, status or accepted affiliation determines who belongs and who may enter collective discussion.	Age, lineage, initiation, reputation, warrior status, spiritual authority or recognised wisdom qualify participants.	Chiefs, elders, custom or urgent communal problems determine what the group considers.	Chief, elder or respected intermediary manages speaking and settlement according to custom; legitimacy comes from standing.	Custom governs speaking order, respect for elders, forms of argument, taboo and acceptable conduct.	Collective memory, elders, witnesses, oral history, practical experience and spiritual or customary knowledge inform decisions.	Consensus, elder judgement, chief's authority, acclamation or customary settlement determines the outcome.	Oral memory, custom, elders and ritual preserve settlements across time.	Personal honour, reputation, courage, loyalty and respect for elders or custom support compliance with collective settlements.	Ceremony, speaking objects, council forms, dress, initiation, storytelling and sacred practices mark collective deliberation.
II	Household or informal family setting. Deliberation occurs wherever members gather and remains private, immediate and relational.	Membership follows family relationship; those affected are normally known personally. Entry and exit occur through birth, marriage, separation or adoption.	Age, parental role, experience or family standing informally determine whose voice carries weight.	Usually set by immediate need or by the dominant family member; issues arise directly from shared life.	Parent, elder or dominant member guides discussion; neutrality is secondary to responsibility and authority.	Implicit norms govern interruption, respect, authority and acceptable behaviour; enforcement is personal.	Personal observation, memory and trusted family knowledge dominate; evidence is direct but narrow.	Authority, negotiation, compromise or informal consensus converts discussion into action; formal voting is unusual.	Memory, habit and family expectation preserve decisions; little formal documentation is required.	Trust, loyalty, care and willingness to preserve relationships encourage acceptance of decisions despite disagreement.	Family habits, seating, meals, celebrations and repeated conversational practices frame important discussions.

● **Russia**

Horizontal coherence

Russia is markedly incoherent across the X-axis. Recording & Institutionalisation reaches Level VI, and Place, Chair and Rules of Engagement reach Level V, while Information & Evidence and Honour sit at Level IV. Sophisticated machinery therefore surrounds materially weaker channels for independent challenge, reciprocity and correction.

Vertical coherence

The principal vertical issue is that some high-level forms are not fully supported by equally high-level operating behaviour. A modern parliament, chair, rule book or documentary system does not by itself create high-level deliberation if participation, agenda contestability and counter-evidence remain dependent on permission from the centre. The vertical test prevents formal architecture from being mistaken for substantive operating level.

8. Denmark and Russia Together

The two-country comparison uses one ball per country per noun. There are no ranges. Where evidence supports two adjacent levels, the lower defensible level is used. This gives the visual the same discipline as the earlier country exhibits: levels on the Y-axis, nouns on the X-axis, and the pattern visible at a glance.

Deliberative-process periodic table applied to Denmark and Russia. Exhibit 13.7

	Place	Membership	Qualification	Agenda	Chair	Rules of engagement	Information & evidence	Decision mechanism	Recording & institutional-isation	Honour	Ritual
VII	UN assemblies, treaty bodies, international courts, summits and transnational forums create deliberative arenas across sovereign states.	Sovereign states are principal members; international organisations, experts and civil society gain limited or indirect voice.	State representation, treaty status, institutional office, expertise and accreditation determine standing; individuals usually participate indirectly.	States, international organisations and major coalitions place issues on agendas; great-power influence and institutional mandates constrain access.	Presidents, secretariats or appointed chairs manage procedure but depend on institutional rules, state consent and diplomatic legitimacy.	Treaties, charters, diplomatic protocol, voting rules and negotiated procedure govern engagement among formally sovereign participants.	International agencies, science, national reporting, NGOs and independent experts provide evidence, but access and verification remain uneven.	Consensus, state voting, weighted voting, vetoes, treaties and voluntary commitments convert deliberation into incomplete collective settlement.	Treaties, resolutions, minutes, judgments, reports and digital archives preserve decisions, although implementation remains state-dependent.	Reciprocity, treaty compliance, diplomatic restraint and acceptance of negotiated outcomes support cooperation, but enforcement is weak.	Summits, assemblies, diplomatic protocol, treaty signing and international ceremony reinforce continuity without creating a single global political identity.
VI	Parliament, committees, public inquiries, media, civil society forums and co… multipl… deliberat…	Universal adult citizenship broadly establishes political m… suppler… organis… civil society a… institutions.	Citizenship and universal franchise dominate; elected m… expertis… and tra… appointe… additional qualifications.	Government, opposition, committees, citizens, media, civil society, courts and or… compe… on the p…	Speaker, president or chair is institutionally constrain… to apply … impar… partici… competing positions.	Published standing orders, time limits, rights of reply, committee procedures, protect… and pu… structu…	Independent media, science, statistics, experts, inquiries, public data, civil society a… informa… claims to…	Universal elections, representative voting, majorit… super… coalit… referen… constitutional constraints convert deliberation into decisions.	Public records, legislation, transcripts, voting reco… capital a… ar… d… an…	Commitment to constitutional rules, truthful par… legitima… peaceful… restraint… of lawful defeat sustains the system.	Parliamentary and civic rituals remain, but coexist with public broadcasting, citizen participation and plural cultural forms; ritual legitimises the process rather than a ruler.
V	Parliament, committees, clubs, press and recognised … institut… formal arenas, … remains … elite.	Political membership expands but participation may remain restricted by property, sex, race, class, education or institutional status.	Property, education, profession, party standing or restricted franchise qualify political participants and representatives.	Government, parliamentary leaders, parties and influential elites structure the agenda, with growing press and public influence.	Speaker or committee chair becomes increasingly procedural and ru… though select… elite politica… ns.	Standing orders, parliamentary convention… cognised debate… ural protec… e engagem… g qualified participants.	Professional bureaucracy, newspapers, experts, statistics and parliamentary evidence expand information, though access remains socially uneven.	Representative voting and parliamentary majorities determine decisions within a restricted electorate and elite political system.	Parliamentary records, statutes, official minutes, newspapers and administrative systems create an extensive institutional memory.	Parliamentary honour, gentlemanly conventions, acceptance of electoral outcomes and restraint supplement formal institutional rules.	Parliamentary dress, formal language, openings, ceremo… convent… continuity … representative institutions.
IV	Royal court, council chamber, estates, religious institutions or authorised local forums. Access to place reflects hierarchy.	Subjects belong to the kingdom, but participation in deliber… restrict… ign, nobles … als or invited r… tives.	Birth, title, land, religious office, royal appointment or bureau… position determ… tion to partici…	Sovereign, ministers, court or privileged estates substantial… ntrol what can be consid…	Sovereign, minister, noble or appointed officer controls proceedings; chairing and substantive authority frequently overlap.	Court etiquette, royal procedure, religious convention and formal hierarchy determine who may speak and how.	Officials, advisers, clergy, military commanders and court netw… rovide informat… rulers c… tial informati…	Sovereign authority ultimately decides, even where c… estates or advise… e befor…	Royal decrees, statutes, court records and bureaucratic documentation preserve authoritative decisions.	Loyalty to sovereign, religion, rank and inherited r… f honour sustain… tive hierarc…	Royal ceremony, dress, titles, precedence, religious … court protoc… hierarch… acy.
III	Recognised communal meeting place: council circle, fire, elders' place or ceremonial ground. Place carries customary authority.	Kinship, clan, age, status or accepted affiliation determines who belongs and who may enter collective discussion.	Age, lineage, initiation, reputation, warrior status, spiritual authority or recognised wisdom qualify participants.	Chiefs, elders, custom or urgent communal problems determine what the group considers.	Chief, elder or respected intermediary manages speaking and settlement according to custom; legitimacy comes from standing.	Custom governs speaking order, respect for elders, forms of argument, taboo and acceptable conduct.	Collective memory, elders, witnesses, oral history, practical experience and spiritual or customary knowledge inform decisions.	Consensus, elder judgement, chief's authority, acclamation or customary settlement determines the outcome.	Oral memory, custom, elders and ritual preserve settlements across time.	Personal honour, reputation, courage, loyalty and respect for elders or custom support compliance with collective settlements.	Ceremony, speaking objects, council forms, dress, initiation, storytelling and sacred practices mark collective deliberation.
II	Household or informal family setting. Deliberation occurs wherever members gather and remains private, immediate and relational.	Membership follows family relationship; those affected are normally known personally. Entry and exit occur through birth, marriage, separation or adoption.	Age, parental role, experience or family standing informally determine whose voice carries weight.	Usually set by immediate need or by the dominant family member; issues arise directly from shared life.	Parent, elder or dominant member guides discussion; neutrality is secondary to responsibility and authority.	Implicit norms govern interruption, respect, authority and acceptable behaviour; enforcement is personal.	Personal observation, memory and trusted family knowledge dominate; evidence is direct but narrow.	Authority, negotiation, compromise or informal consensus converts discussion into action; formal voting is unusual.	Memory, habit and family expectation preserve decisions; little formal documentation is required.	Trust, loyalty, care and willingness to preserve relationships encourage acceptance of decisions despite disagreement.	Family habits, seating, meals, celebrations and repeated conversational practices frame important discussions.

● Denmark ● Russia

Reading the two-country pattern through horizontal coherence

Denmark forms an almost unbroken Level VI band, with Ritual one level lower. Russia forms a much wider vertical scatter, demonstrating that formal procedural capability and substantive political correction do not sit at the same level.

Reading the two-country pattern through vertical coherence

Denmark's high-level cells are generally supported by the lower-level capabilities required to make them work: impersonal rules, national institutional reach, protected opposition and evidence, and accepted procedures for closure. Russia's higher-level cells are less vertically coherent because formal mechanisms are not consistently supported by equally open participation, evidence and correction.

The two-country comparison therefore reveals two different developmental problems. Denmark's challenge is to preserve openness and weak-signal challenge inside a highly coherent system. Russia's challenge is to reconnect sophisticated formal machinery with safe political counterclaim and correction. The Periodic Table makes those differences visible without forcing the countries into one averaged ranking.

9. Making Deliberation Visible

Like the Governance Periodic Table, the Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes should be regarded as a minimum viable product — an MVP. The eleven nouns need to be tested, the descriptions of the levels refined, and every placement challenged against evidence. The purpose at this stage is not to claim that we have produced a finished taxonomy. It is to demonstrate that deliberation can be made visible as an institutional architecture, examined cell by cell rather than hidden behind a single label such as “democracy.”

Once that architecture becomes visible, the practical possibility becomes much more interesting. Imagine that every citizen could carry this table on a phone. Instead of being told simply that a country is democratic, authoritarian, liberal or illiberal, the citizen could look inside the deliberative machinery itself: who is allowed to participate, who sets the agenda, how the chair operates, what information is allowed into the process, what the rules of engagement are, how decisions are made, how they are recorded, and whether honour and ritual sustain the legitimacy of the process.

The citizen could then see not only where each component currently sits, but why it has been placed there. Each cell could ultimately expose the evidence behind the judgement, contradictory evidence, confidence in the placement, comparison with other countries and movement through time. The Periodic Table would therefore cease to be simply an analytical exhibit. It would become a feedback instrument.

That changes the nature of voting. Citizens would no longer have to vote only on personalities, parties, slogans or broad ideological labels. They could increasingly vote

with an understanding of the institutional architecture beneath them. They could see which parts of the deliberative system they wanted to preserve, which they wanted to strengthen, and which they wanted to move in a different direction.

Just as important, leaders would know that they were being seen at this level of granularity. A change in agenda control, membership, access to information, rules of engagement or voting procedure would no longer disappear inside the general language of politics. It could become visible as a movement in a particular cell. Visibility creates feedback; feedback creates the possibility of reflection and correction. Leaders behave differently when the institutional consequences of their actions can be seen.

The consequence could be a different kind of society without our having to begin by giving that society another ideological label. The emphasis shifts from arguing about what the whole system should be called to seeing how its component processes actually work and deciding, component by component, whether we want them to move.

This is also another example of the recursive nature of the Periodic Table method. We began with governance. Within governance we identified deliberation as one invariant noun. We then opened that single cell and discovered another institutional architecture containing eleven nouns of its own. Those nouns can themselves be examined, evidenced, compared and, where useful, opened again. AI makes this increasing granularity practically manageable while allowing us to retain the relationship between each part and the larger whole.

There is an important implication that should only be flagged here. If we fully understand the Governance Periodic Table, fully understand the Periodic Table of Deliberative Processes, and then cross-integrate the two, we begin to acquire a much more precise way of examining why institutions at the global level — particularly the United Nations — have such difficulty functioning effectively. That is a substantial subject in its own right and should not be pursued here. For the moment, it is enough to note that the two tables give us the architecture with which to ask the question.

Finally, this table is not an end in itself. It is another carriage in the larger train. Values, institutional settlements, governance architecture, deliberative processes, policy and economic arrangements ultimately express themselves in the kind of society people experience. The larger destination remains More Mores for More: more physical abundance, more relational abundance, for more people, over more time.

The immediate task, however, is much simpler: make the architecture visible, make the evidence behind it visible, put it into citizens' hands, and see what happens when both citizens and leaders can see the system at a level of granularity that was previously almost impossible.

The chapter began with one cell inside governance: deliberative processes. Opening that cell revealed eleven invariant nouns. Holding those nouns fixed and changing their operating verbs across levels produced a Periodic Table. Backsighting then turned the table from a conceptual architecture into a contestable diagnostic.

Denmark and Russia show why the cell-first method and the two coherence tests matter. Denmark is horizontally coherent at a high level and broadly vertically supported by the capabilities beneath those placements. Russia contains sophisticated formal mechanisms but sharp horizontal scatter and important vertical gaps between institutional form and political operation.

The Periodic Table is therefore not valuable because this first version is final. It is valuable because it makes deliberation visible enough to test, compare, challenge and improve. The immediate task is simple: make the architecture visible, make the evidence behind it visible, and let citizens and leaders see not merely what a political system is called, but how its deliberative machinery actually works.

10. What This Means for Humans

For humans, the central implication is that better collective judgement depends less on finding a perfect political label than on maintaining the components that allow disagreement to be processed legitimately. Citizens can ask practical questions: Who is included? Who can place an issue on the agenda? Is the chair constrained? Can inconvenient evidence enter? Are the rules applied consistently? How is a decision made and recorded? Will participants accept lawful defeat?

The Periodic Table also turns deterioration into something more diagnosable. A citizen may feel that public discussion is becoming less open or that decisions are increasingly predetermined. The table allows that intuition to be broken into propositions about Membership, Agenda, Information & Evidence, Chair, Honour or another cell. Each proposition can then be backsighted against evidence, challenged and tracked through time.

Horizontal and vertical coherence add an important discipline. Citizens can see whether the parts of the system are moving together or separating from one another, and whether impressive high-level institutional forms are actually supported by the operating behaviours that make them real. The instrument does not tell citizens what level they must prefer. It makes the architecture and its movement visible so that citizens and leaders can judge the direction for themselves.

11. What This Means for AI

For AI, the most useful role is not to become the sovereign voice inside deliberation. Its greater contribution is instrumentation. AI can gather and compare large bodies of evidence, distinguish formal rules from observed operation, expose contradictory

information, maintain the history of cell placements, track movement through time and recurse into a broad noun when the surface diagnosis is too coarse.

AI can also test coherence. Horizontally, it can identify when one component of deliberation is operating at a materially different level from its neighbours. Vertically, it can test whether a high-level formal institution is supported by the lower-level capabilities and actual operating verbs required for that placement. This is particularly useful because humans can be impressed by institutional titles and miss the fact that the underlying mechanism is still permission-bound, personalised or weakly protected.

AI can support particular nouns as well: widening access to deliberative places across distance; helping participants navigate qualifications and procedure; surfacing neglected issues for agenda consideration; comparing sources and evidence; preserving reasons and records; and making previous commitments easier to inspect. Used well, these capabilities can strengthen visibility, institutional memory and correction.

The same capabilities create corresponding risks. AI can centralise agenda control, privilege some voices, overwhelm attention, synthesise disagreement so aggressively that genuine minority positions disappear, or become an opaque filter between evidence and judgement. Efficiency is therefore not the governing test. The question is whether AI strengthens the operating quality and coherence of the eleven nouns without collapsing them into one machine-controlled process.

AI itself should remain visible, bounded and contestable. Its sources, framing choices and uncertainty should be open to review. Human participants should be able to challenge the evidence, change the agenda, reject the synthesis and retain legitimate authority over the final decision. Apparent competence does not confer democratic standing.

Used in this way, AI can help turn the Periodic Table from a static exhibit into a continuing diagnostic instrument: one that maintains backsighted positions, exposes confidence and contradictory evidence, shows trajectory, compares countries, tests horizontal and vertical coherence, and helps users open a broad finding into the lower-level mechanisms that explain it.