

# National Congress Building in Valparaiso

A building contributing to the decentralisation of the country in a privileged geographical location.

The building was planned on the 25,000 square metres of government-owned land formerly occupied by the Enrique Deformes Hospital in the El Almendral neighbourhood.

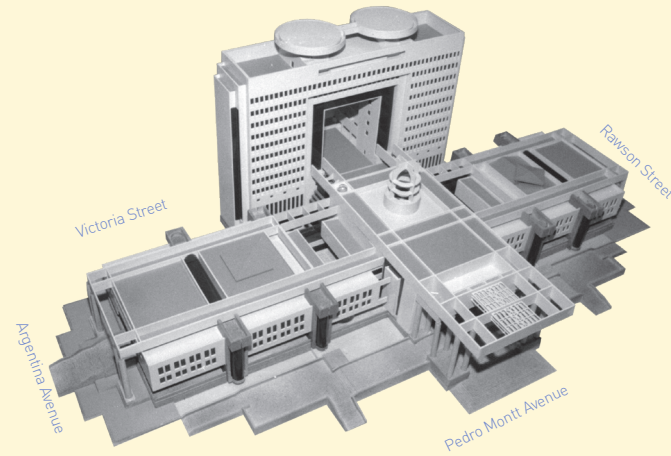


To carry it out, an architecture tender was held to which 539 projects were submitted. On 30<sup>th</sup> June 1988, the jury awarded first place to the architects Juan Cárdenas, José Covacevic, and Raúl Farrú.

The building is organised around the north-south and mountain-sea axes; at the intersection is the Plenary Congress Hall, which is accessed from Pedro Montt Avenue. Towards Rawson Street is the Senate session hall and, towards Argentina Avenue is the Chamber of Deputies. The library is behind the Plenary Hall, with public access from Victoria Street. The offices of the congressman and congresswoman are in the high-rise building.



The construction began on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1988 and was inaugurated on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1990, the day of the installation of the National Congress, after its closure due to the military coup of 1973.



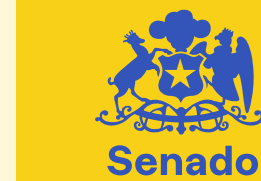
Radomiro Tomic square designed by María Matner.

On the inside, the doors called "The Seed" and "People Watch" were shaped by Félix Maruenda.

At the Chamber of Sessions, there are two raulí doors made by the sculptor Ximena Rodríguez, called "The Seed".



The total built-up area reached almost 60,000 square metres. Several works of art are outside of the National Congress, including the sculpture "Solidarity" by Mario Irrázaval in the median strip of Argentina Avenue, next to the



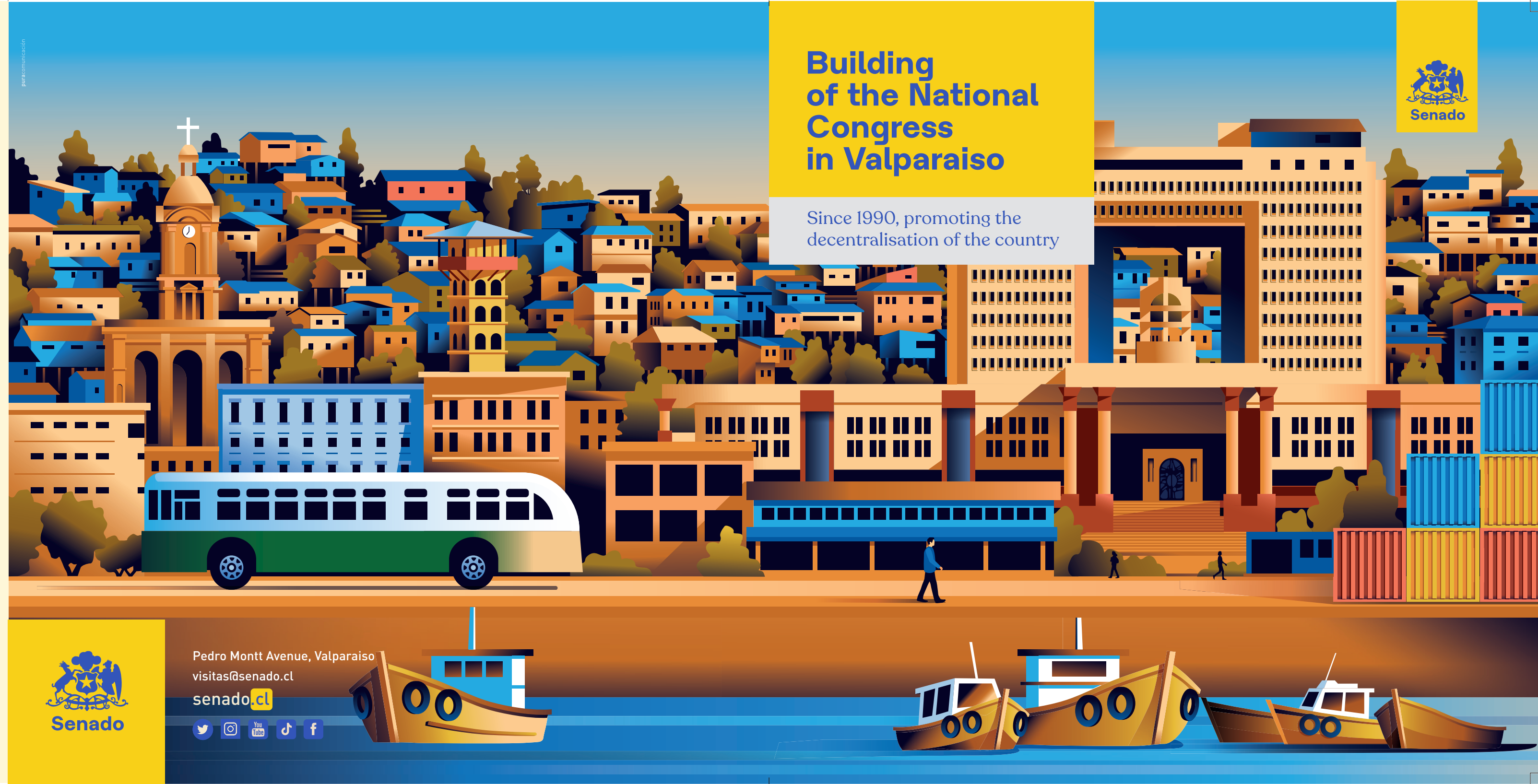
Pedro Montt Avenue, Valparaiso  
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# Building of the National Congress in Valparaiso

Since 1990, promoting the decentralisation of the country



## Entrance Hall

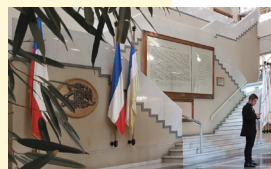
The entrance hall of the National Congress Building is the entrance from Victoria Street. This space is a common area between the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, from where you can access both institutions.

In this area, there is a copy of the Act of Independence of Chile, the document which the

autonomy of our country was solemnly declared from the Spanish monarchy with. It was drafted at the beginning of 1818 and approved by the Supreme Director on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1818, in the city of Talca, although it was dated in Concepcion on 1st January 1818.

Moreover, in this place, you can see the flags

that represent every region of Chile, an initiative carried out by the former Senator Sergio Diez, during his Senate Presidency between 1996 and 1997.



## Chamber of Sessions

The chamber is the space where different political forces of the country converge and dialogue with the representation of popular sovereignty.

On the ground floor of this hall, the senators' chairs are located, and distributed in a semicircle in accordance with the structure of political parties. In the

middle of the chamber, there is the dais, from where the plenary session is conducted. On the second floor, there are galleries from where the public can observe the sessions.

Behind the dais is an extensive copper plate, a characteristic mineral of Chile, treated and polished as a symbol of a more refined stage in



Chamber of Sessions

## Hall of Honour



the legislative process and parliamentary discussion.

At the entrance door is carved "The Seed and Senate" by the artist Ximena Rodríguez, made of rauli wood. The carving represents a seed inspiring the essence and hope of the legislative work of the Senate.

Also known as the Plenary Hall, here political acts of greater importance for the country are performed, such as Presidential Inaugurations, the Public Account of the President of the Republic, and the Public Account of the National Congress.

In this hall, Patricio Aylwin Azócar, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, Ricardo Lagos Escobar, Michelle Bachelet Jería, the first woman president of Chile, Sebastián Piñera Echeñique, and Gabriel Boric Font, the current President of our country, have successively taken office here.

This place has received illustrious dignitaries such as Helmut Kohl, King Juan Carlos of Spain, Mijail Gorbachov, Bill Clinton, and Carlos Menem.



Hall of Honour

## Areas of convergence

### Committee Offices

The committee offices are located on the third floor of the building, where the members of different committees study the bills that are being processed in the Senate.

The committee of the Senate is made up of five senators, one of whom is chosen to lead it.



### Cafeteria

The Senate Cafeteria is a meeting place for the public authorities who attend legislative activities held in the Corporation.

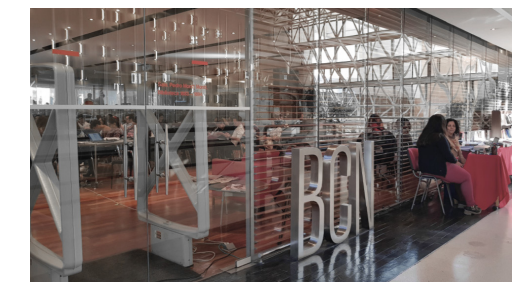
### Corridor Hall Access to the Chamber of Sessions

The corridor hall access corresponds to the entrance to the Senate Chamber from Rawson Street. This is usually where senators' press conferences are held, as well as other institutional activities of the corporation.



### Reading Room of the National Congress Library

In the main corridor on the third floor, which leads to the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, is the Reading Room of the National Congress Library. In this place, both parliamentarians and the general public can access the entire documentary and research material available at the National Congress Library (NCL).



Act of Independence