

CORPORATE GUIDANCE

Citizen Engagement



December 2023

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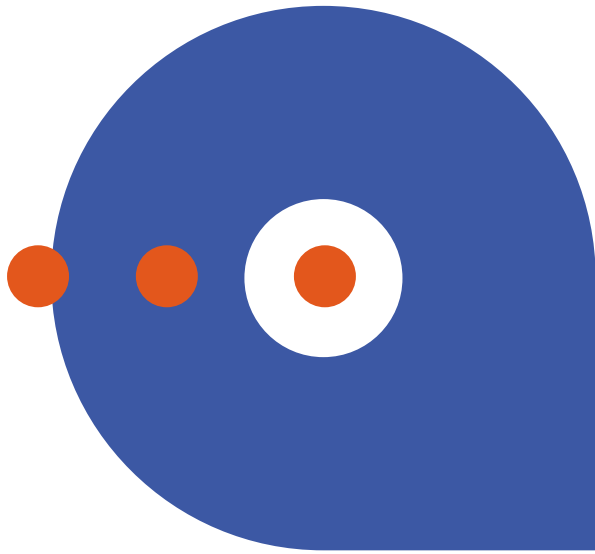
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Why this guidebook?

The European Commission is committed to citizen engagement across the different policy areas. Many DGs have developed interesting practices, for example, recently, during the European Year of Youth or as part of the Climate Pact. The practice has evolved over many years, from townhall meetings and citizens' dialogues (more than 2000 have been organised in all the EU since 2012) to more participatory and deliberative methods. These methods were then further refined and applied on a large and ambitious scale with the Conference on the Future of Europe in 2021-22.

+ [Read more on previous experiences with citizen outreach on page 44 of the Annex.](#)

After the **Conference on the Future of Europe**, an unprecedented pan-European exercise of participatory and deliberative democracy, **a new phase of citizen engagement** has started. The Commission issued the **Communication "Putting vision into concrete action"** on 17 June 2022. As formulated in the Communication, "a number of the Conference's innovations provide a guide as to how better include citizens in priority and ambition setting, as well as in designing and making policies at the European level".

Building on the Conference, and on its own existing tools, the Commission committed therefore to propose **"ways to ensure citizens are given a closer role in EU policymaking"**. The Commission explains, in particular, that Citizens' Panels will be enabled to make recommendations ahead of certain key proposals, as part of the Commission's wider policymaking and in line with **Better Regulation principles**.

+ [Read more on the relevant extracts from the Communication on page 48 of the annex.](#)

In this new context, it is necessary and useful to **provide guidance on why and how to implement citizen engagement**.

Citizen engagement reinforces the traditional consultation mechanisms. Among the three levels of how citizens are approached by governments defined by the OECD – information, consultation and engagement – citizen engagement is the most advanced and aims to associate citizens **to policymaking** in the form of collaboration, even though the responsibility for the final decision rests with the public authority.

+ [Read more on the three levels as defined by the OECD on page 48 of the Annex.](#)

In this Guidebook, citizen engagement is used in a sense that is close to the concept of **citizen participation** referring to all the various ways in which citizens are involved in democratic decision/policymaking, with a specific focus on the efforts made by public institutions to enable citizens' informed and autonomous participation and to hear their perspectives in **between elections**.

The objective of this "Guidebook" is to establish a reference toolbox that identifies and categorises different formats of citizen engagement, from the fully-fledged citizens' panels on pan-European level to other co-creation and exploratory formats. This corporate guidance aims at helping services to choose the most relevant methods of citizen engagement for their policy file and to understand better how to implement them and which added value they get from each of the citizen engagement formats described here.

The **strengths of the methods** explained in this Guidebook lay in:

- “**who** participates”: the **diversity**, allowed in particular by the setting up of randomly selected groups of citizens, brings richness and quality to the citizens’ inputs while allowing to **include people in policymaking who are not familiar with European issues or public affairs in general**, or pertain to vulnerable communities, as anybody can be potentially selected;
- “**how** citizens participate”: the design, moderation and facilitation are essential elements of the methodology; they define the conditions for a **respectful dialogue** between citizens, leading to constructive compromises and consensus – or a space for ‘informed disagreement’ –, as well as co-developed, **collectively owned recommendations**.



What can be found in the guidebook?

There is no shortage of guidebooks to implement citizen engagement in policymaking, planning, science and other political processes. But this guidebook is tailored for the context, possibilities and needs of the Commission. Its aim is to bring more consistency, visibility and corporate ownership of citizen engagement activities, as part of the Commission's policymaking process.

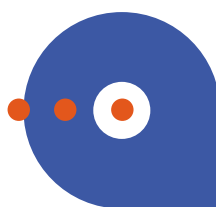
It contributes to a **new approach to citizen engagement consisting of:**

- An interservice project team on citizen engagement for coordination.
- Categorised citizen engagement formats consistent with the objectives pursued and the means available, as presented in this Guidebook.
- A revamped Have Your Say portal, putting in one place public consultations, the European Citizens' Initiative and a new interactive space for citizen engagement - Citizens' Engagement Platform.
- The procurement tools necessary for the implementation of the citizen engagement activities.
- A competence centre on participatory and deliberative democracy for consolidation of knowledge and capacity building about citizen engagement, while maintaining an international Community of Practice.

In this guidebook the reader finds:

- Reflections on the rationales and principles for citizen engagement in policymaking.
- A focus on cross-cutting issues and tools that can reinforce citizen engagement efforts such as the new Citizens' Engagement Platform.
- A step-by-step guidance to the process of citizen engagement, through archetype methods, with guidelines on what and how to outsource.
- Advice on how to use the citizen engagement outcomes in the various phases of policymaking.

This guidance does not come alone. Both at DG COMM and at DG JRC, there are **services that can advise on implementing citizen engagement exercises.**



DG COMM UNIT C3:
COMM-C3@EC.EUROPA.EU

DG JRC Competence Centre on Participatory and
 Deliberative Democracy:
EU-CITIZEN-ENGAGEMENT@EC.EUROPA.EU

Citizen engagement: why and when?

The idea of bringing citizens closer to policymaking connects to notions of open, transparent and participatory governance. Citizen participation can serve two key purposes:

- Building up democratic resilience
- Enhancing the quality of public policies

Although particularly adapted to the early phases of policymaking, many of these formats can be used also in the implementation or evaluation phases.

Why invest in citizen engagement?

A democracy fit for the future


A [2021 Eurobarometer study](#) finds that nine out of ten respondents (89%) agree that there is still work to be done to strengthen democracy in the EU and a similar proportion believes their voices should be taken more into account in decisions relating to the future direction of the EU. The perceived distance between citizens and elected representatives, as well as making citizen voices count, are among the most problematic traits in current dissatisfaction with democracy.

Clearly, there are no panaceas in what concerns institutions' strategies to involve citizens, and planning constraints need also to be factored in. Yet, **methods that promote participation of citizens beyond the study of what citizens need and think** are useful to address these dissatisfactions. The 2021 EB survey mentioned above shows that 90% of Europeans agree that EU citizens' voices should be taken more into account for decisions relating to the future of Europe.

It is also about the capacity of our democracies to adapt to our time. Undoubtedly, elections remain core to democratic participation, but other citizen participation mechanisms have become necessary to reinforce representative democracy.




For citizens who are subject to a never-ending flow of information and trapped in social media bubbles, often deprived of the tools to distinguish true from false –a lever for manipulation-, **democracy needs to become more than an episodic vote for selecting representatives.**

 [Read more on research studies in this field on page 49 of the Annex.](#)

Added value to the quality of policies

But citizen participation is not only about addressing democratic weaknesses by promoting active engagement of citizens in policymaking on a more regular basis. It is also grounded on the firm conviction that **citizens are situated knowledge-holders and experts of their own lives** (specifically, how public policies affect their lives or how they themselves can affect the objectives and effectiveness of public policies).

Engagement of citizens is therefore vital to help with delivering fit for purpose high quality policy and more credible policy initiatives and evaluations, not only by ensuring that problem framing reflects societal perspectives on what the issues are, but also because citizens contribute with their knowledge, practical experience and data.

 [Read more on OECD benefits of citizen engagement on page 50 of the Annex.](#)


This guidance will be focusing on methods and methodologies of citizen engagement, in other words, **processes that seek to engage citizens in the co-creation of and/or deliberation of actionable proposals and/or their prioritisation in order to address collective matters of concern and care.**

For the purpose of this guidance, **the meaning of citizen engagement** is not just about exploring opinions and interests, or eliciting knowledge and values, but also about “openly discussing matters of ‘concern’, care and controversy”. This definition recognises that there is not a single public with coherent and static views that can be ‘surveyed’ but that such views can only emerge through co-creation and/or deliberation.

Deliberation and co-creation

Throughout this guidance, these two concepts of co-creation and deliberation will accompany the reader. These concepts are used often to describe processes where citizens actively contribute to the shaping of processes they are engaged with.

A **deliberative process** is centred on “determining **what a group of people can agree to**, rather than what as individuals they might like or want. This process produces a set of well-informed recommendations that can form the basis of future policy decisions, rather than generating a list of top-of-mind opinions. (...) [so, it is about] **weighing different factors, exercising good judgment, and proposing a solution.**” This implies sufficient time for the deliberative process to be fruitful and a political commitment to take “citizens views seriously and to respond constructively” to their proposals and recommendations.

 [Read more on the original concept of citizen deliberation as coined by Pr. Fishkin and Luskin on page 50 of the Annex.](#)

Deliberative processes principles include inclusiveness and **representativeness of diversity** (recruitment of participants through sortition/civic lotteries), which help with ensuring that citizen engagement practices are a legitimate tool to invite and give voice to citizens in public policymaking.

The **co-creation** term designates simultaneously ‘mindset, method and tool’. Here we are interested in co-creation both as a set of **principles that ensure a respectful and equal relationship** with participants, and as a method to the extent that it provides a **collection of tools and techniques** to be used mainly during the exploration phases of the policy design.

It is a generic term to designate exercises where people are brought together to produce something as a group, the object of creation being material or immaterial such as a process or a service. In a process of co-creation, those involved take decisions in relation to what is co- created. The idea in co-creation is that **those who participate are treated on an equal foot.** So, if a community is involved in a process of co-creation, the members are treated in the same manner as technical experts, as participants are viewed as experts of their experience with the matters of concern.

When should citizen engagement happen in policymaking?

Citizen engagement in policymaking can bring different inputs to the policymaking cycle at its different stages.

For instance, the new generation of Citizens' Panels targets the preparatory phase of policymaking, i.e., when the Commission is designing and drafting a policy proposal, whether legislative or non-legislative. The same applies to other co-creation formats contained in this guidebook.

At the same time, **there is value in ensuring that the evidence provided in different steps of the policymaking cycle**, including design, implementation and evaluation, is inclusive of and open to citizens' knowledge, values and expectations.

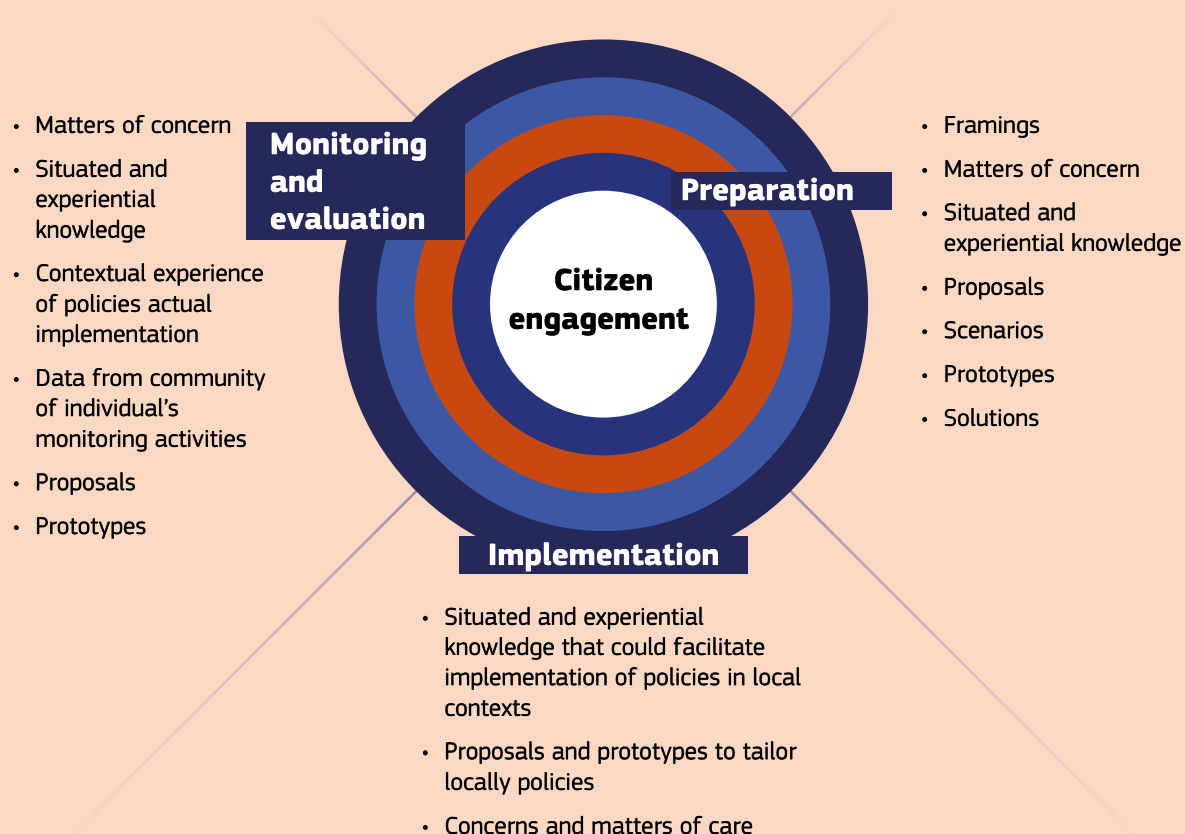
To make sure that the participation process is truly embedded in the policymaking process and has an impact on it, it is necessary to ensure that its outcome is followed up on.

It is also essential to explain how the process has influenced the policy - providing feedback to citizens during the different phases of the policy cycle is vital for the credibility of the process.

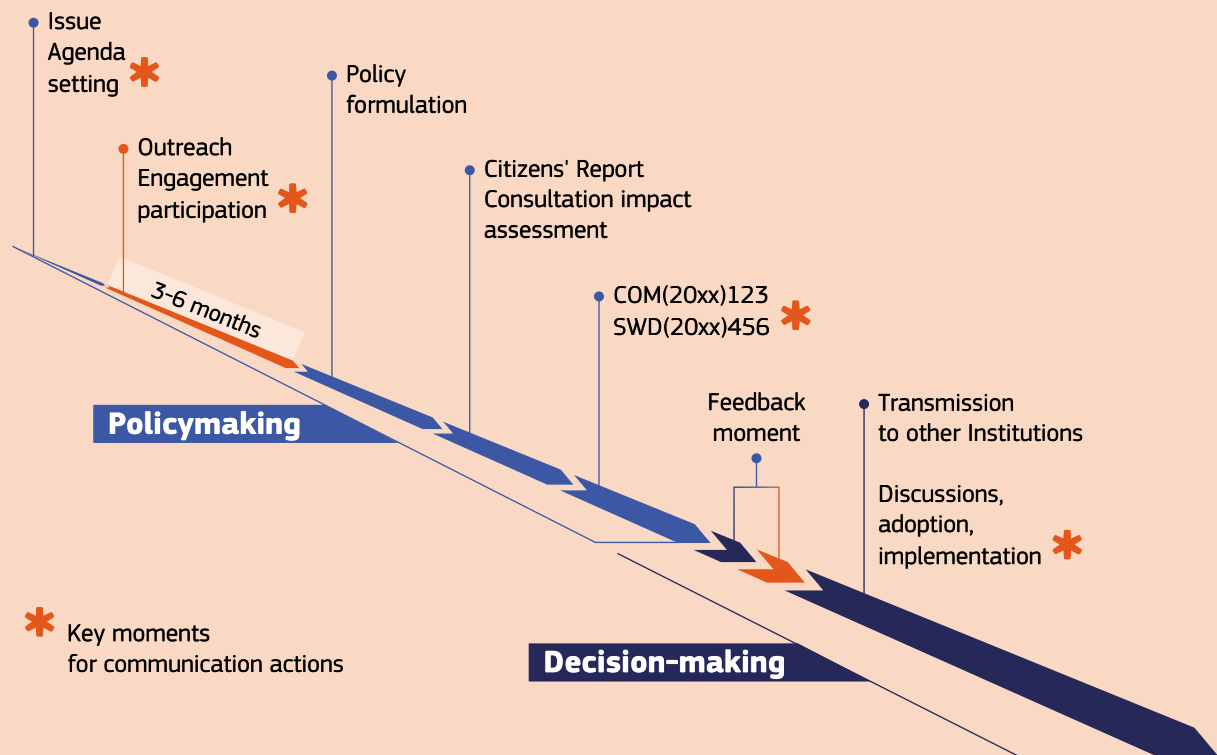
For instance, for the Citizens' Panels, citizens' recommendations are considered in the drafting of the proposal and brought to the attention of the College in the form of a Citizens' Report.

In a nutshell, citizen engagement brings another significant contribution to ensure the quality of EU policymaking, its social robustness, as well to avoid addressing the wrong societal problem. The types and formats of citizen engagement inputs are not a closed matter; they can range from collected data, experiential knowledge to structured recommendations or scenarios. The chosen archetypes reflect this diversity.

Possible timings and outputs of citizen engagement in the policymaking cycle



The ideal time-line for citizen engagement in the preparation phase



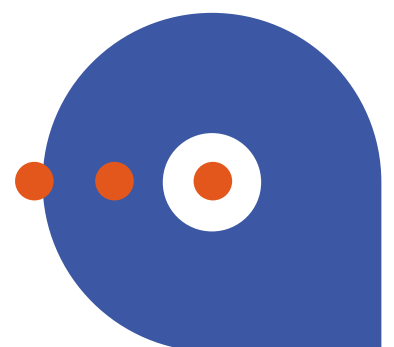
This timeline can also be considered in the evaluation and review process of existing policies.

Which kind of topics?

Citizen engagement exercises have shown that there is no topic that cannot be addressed through an appropriate process.

But there are many reasons why some files could benefit from citizen engagement upstream at each relevant phase of the policy cycle (figure 2). For example, the **following cases could be envisaged**:

- when the issue is **relevant** for citizens, notably with tangible impacts on their daily lives;
- where **opinions are diverse**, and where reaching consensus in a diversified group brings real added value, complementing in-house expertise and stakeholders' views;
- when an issue is **controversial** and there are very diverse views within the EU and across Member States.
- too many unknowns and **uncertainties** including on what to do on the specific topic;
- **known disagreement on issue framings**;
- **foresight** exercises and technology assessment studies;
- crucially needed local, traditional or indigenous **knowledge** to frame issues or design the policy options.





At which geographical level?


The level of action may be a challenging issue when deciding on a participatory format. The nature of the Commission work and its mission of representing and defending the European interest would tend to **lead us to favour the pan-European level**. Indeed, this would help the Commission not only to anticipate the differences of approaches between different EU countries but also have a strategic dimension in its dialogue with the Member States.

However, for reasons mainly linked to the nature of the subject or also budgetary constraints, citizen engagement exercises **can be carried out in all Member States, a selected few, or be carried out in specific regions/localities**, where for example most affected populations are (e.g. issues related to coastal areas, mountain areas, cities). In particular, the all-27 Member-State level would seem appropriate when there are known discrepancies on

values, expectations, and other departing conditions about the issue of concern. Other levels can be considered depending on the issue of concern and the communities affected by the policy file.

Moreover, the follow-up communication to the Conference on the Future of Europe sets out the possibility to convene Citizens' Panels composed exclusively of young people whose deliberations could serve as a **youth test**.

Since the EU democracy is drawing its legitimacy from a double source according to the Treaty, i.e., from the Member States on the one hand, and directly from the citizens on the other, **an ideal participatory process could mobilise both the pan-European and the national levels**. In that case, the online Citizens' platform could become one notable ally to connect these processes.

 Read more on how the Citizen Engagement Platform could help to connect the different levels of engagement on page 50 of the Annex.

When carrying out a participatory process with a decentralised dimension, the following actors could be associated:

- **The Representations and the EUROPE DIRECT network, comprising the EUROPE DIRECT Centres, the European Documentation Centres and Team EUROPE DIRECT:** they can be mobilised to stir the debate, organise and host participatory events or just communicate about the participatory processes.
- **The Committee of the Regions:** the CoR is running a training on citizen engagement for its members and is keen to be involved in these participatory processes.
- **The Economic and Social Committee:** could also help reach out to organised civil society in the Member States.
- **The BELC network (Building Europe with Local Councillors)** can help reach out to local councillors who are committed to do more on EU affairs. They can also mobilise their fellow constituents in participatory formats.
- **Other networks** in the Member States
Meet us, EU centres | European Union (europa.eu)

Two recent examples of Innovative citizen engagement at EU level

The European Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen has made “a new push of European Democracy” a priority. The Conference on the Future of Europe (COFE), the European Democracy Action Plan and the Defence of Democracy Package are among the notorious moves to better involve citizens in public policymaking at different scales.

But these developments have not happened in a vacuum. There is some history of deliberative practices at local level, and increasingly at national level, happening in Member States. The OECD has studied the trend and recorded around 600 citizens’ assemblies all over the world.

+ Read more on networks of experts in the field and find links to resources on page 50 of the Annex.

The following two stories illustrate different scales of engagement launched in the EU by the European Commission, as well as a trajectory of institutionalisation of meaningful participation of citizens in policymaking.



THE CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The Conference on the Future of Europe was the largest ever exercise of deliberative democracy around the world. The Conference was conceived as a new public forum for a bottom-up, open, inclusive, transparent and structured debate with citizens around 9+1 key topics. It allowed the three European institutions to test – jointly and on an unprecedented scale – **innovative democratic tools, which have proven successful and useful.**

All three pillars of the Conference – the multilingual digital platform, the European Citizens’ Panels and the Conference plenary – have allowed to test new interesting methods of citizen engagement. The Conference on the Future of Europe also brought **a new level of accountability and commitment when it comes to citizen participation.**

+ Read more on the three pillars of the Conference on page 51 of the Annex.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN COHESION POLICY

From July 2020-December 2021, the European Commission and the OECD partnered to explore how five authorities across Europe could place citizens at the centre of their investment decisions. These five selected authorities are the regional government of Cantabria in Spain; the Emilia-Romagna region in Italy; the Centre for EU Transport Projects in Poland; the Interreg V-A Flanders – The Netherlands Programme; and the Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme. In the region of Cantabria in Spain a citizens’ jury that brought together a group of citizens broadly representative of the Besaya’s basin was implemented.

+ Read more on the citizen engagement initiatives in cohesion policy on page 52 of the Annex.





KEY PRINCIPLES

Key principles

Services should follow the following key principles (see also [OECD Guidelines for Citizens Participation Processes](#)):

- No ‘rubber stamping’
- Anticipate
- Clarity of mandate and of scope
- Inclusiveness and representativeness
- Integrity
- Respectful Dialogue
- Transparency
- Evaluate
- Follow-up
- Multilingualism

No ‘rubber stamping’. There should be a disposition to work with the inputs from citizens, view them as an added value to the policymaking process and be accountable. These processes are ultimately paid by taxpayers and are to be understood as **genuine ways to have citizens influencing and bringing value to the policymaking process** through their situated knowledge, values and framings. In other words, the service must genuinely want to conduct citizen engagement in its policy file and have the resources to do so and should not view the process as a way of “rubber stamping” foregone conclusions.

Anticipate. A good engagement process requires **anticipating the time needed** to conduct it in an appropriate way. This guidance suggests and supports the engagement of citizens at design, implementation and evaluation phase, beyond the already existing consultation process and without aiming to replace it. As it focusses mainly on processes that encourage the co-design of policies, it is meant to be **used as early as possible in the policy planning stage**. A deliberative process in particular needs time to mature, generally and depending on the topic ⁽¹⁾.

Clear mandate and scope. The topic of deliberation, the framing of the issue, the commissioning public authority, and the process of citizen engagement should be **clearly defined from the outset**. The **ambition and scope** of the participatory process should be in line with the context, time and resources available to conduct the process.

Inclusiveness and representativeness. In the great majority of cases, citizens must be **recruited randomly in a manner that is representative of both demographic and geographic diversity** ⁽²⁾, from the publics of concern, even if the citizen engagement process concerns a specific community affected by or affecting the policy issue. The recruitment must ensure that all citizens are **equally likely to be selected**, no matter their walks of life. Citizen engagement is about giving voice to “ordinary” citizens that do not have means to channel their matters of concern into the policymaking process. The recruitment of participants needs to be done through professional agencies on the basis of clear criteria that are communicated in a transparent manner to the general public.

Expectations (in other words, the “contract” with citizens). Citizens must know up front why they were selected for the process, and how their input will be used, as well as the envisaged follow-up process on the outcomes and the next steps beyond the specific ‘event’ in which they have participated, including an identified “**feedback moment**”. We remind the reader that this guidebook is not about ‘consultation’. It is about meaningful dialogic ways to engage citizens in a conversation about their matters of concern. This does not mean that the Commission will be in a position to follow-up on everything but it needs to be transparent on what could lead to actions and what is more difficult to follow up on.

⁽¹⁾ Formats like Citizens’ Panels require a minimum of 3 two-day sessions.

⁽²⁾ The sortition of a small group of around 100 citizens does not allow pure representativeness, this is why we use the phrase “representative of diversity”.



Integrity. The whole **process needs to be carried out professionally** to ensure its rigueur, quality and integrity. This includes the planning, implementation -with specific attention to knowledge management- and evaluation phases. Experts of co-design and deliberative processes and experienced facilitatorsshould be involved.



Respectful dialogue. Participants should be able to safely engage in respectful conversations, while examining where they dissent and where they find common ground in order to develop trade-offs and deliver collective recommendations on the topic of concern. This entails **professional facilitation** which ensures that, every participant has opportunity to speak, through appropriate group layouts that secure dialogue, co-creation and deliberation.



Multilingualism. All participants should be **able to speak and be listened to in their own language.** This is essential to pan-European citizen engagement exercises. When citizen engagement is carried out in Member States, the local language is to be used.



Transparency. Information on the **process and results need to be made available** online and regular communication with the participants need to take place in their native language.



Evaluation. Evaluation is a key element in citizen engagement; **assessing the quality and the effectiveness** of the chosen approach helps with accountability and institutional reflexivity.



Follow-up. A badly conducted citizen engagement process frustrates expectations of both citizens and the service ending up in institutional distrust. Hence, engagement of citizens needs to be accompanied from the outset with respectful mechanisms, both to listen, make sense and channel the engagements' outputs into the policymaking activities. Any failure to channel those outcomes may compromise subsequent attempts to engage citizens in policymaking in any of its phases. It is better not to carry out any process of citizen engagement than a bad citizen engagement process.







CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND TOOLS

Cross-cutting issues and tools

Digital Platform

The online “one-stop-shop” for the involvement of citizens in policymaking (the Have Your Say Portal) **includes a new interactive space (Citizens’ Engagement Platform) designed to support citizen participation and deliberative processes.** It is based on the open source civic tech software DECIDIM which was already used for the multilingual digital platform of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

The digital platform responds to a growing demand for digital democracy tools and can contribute to bringing European Institutions closer to EU citizens. Going beyond the provision of relevant information, the Citizens’ Engagement Platform allows the Commission’s services to **host participatory and deliberative processes, on a variety of topics, either as:**

1. A purely online tool, or as
2. Support to in person participatory formats to provide a place for exchange either as a private space between the participants and/or a public space to reach out to a **wider audience.**

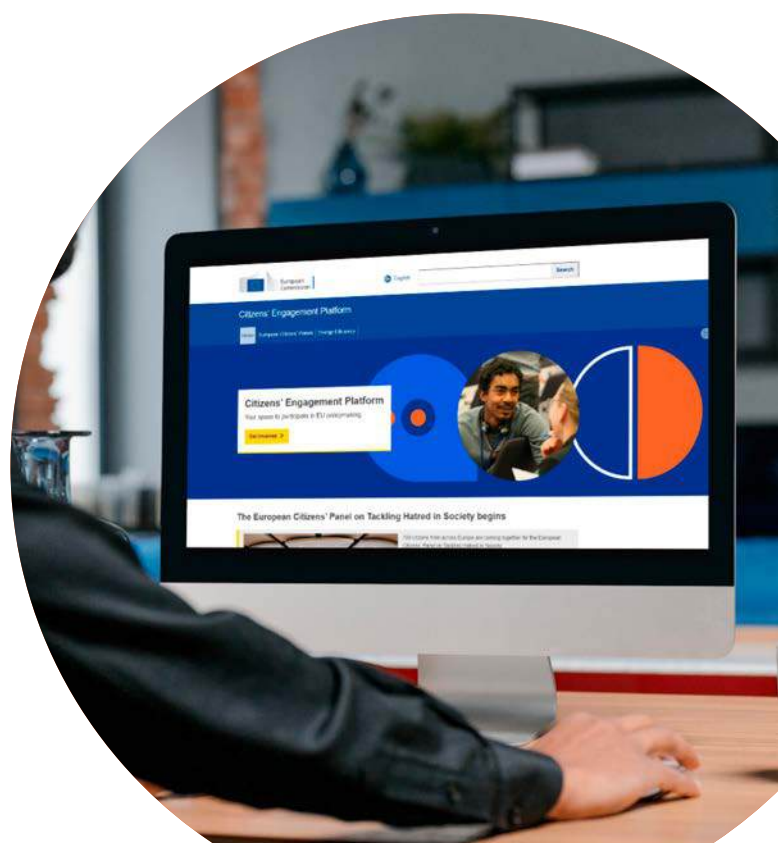
Depending on the issue, these either can be pan-European or smaller targeted exercises to address specific policy issues. It does so by providing various spaces for participation that can be configured and enrich through **multiple available components** (e.g., proposals, comments, voting, follow-up of results), **depending on the requirements of the participatory processes.**

This provides a valuable level of flexibility and customisation to the Citizens’ Engagement Platform in the sense that the platform can be adapted to

different types of citizen engagement; in other words, it is possible to set up and configure various spaces for participation depending on the service’s needs.

Moreover, it is possible to create online or hybrid participatory and deliberative processes that are structured in different phases, and where each phase can have different components incorporated (e.g., a debate phase, a proposals creation phase, a voting phase, among others). It is up to the service to decide on which components make sense to their citizen engagement process.

All content is available in the **24 EU official languages**, using a mixed approach based on the manual creation of multi-language official content (e.g., per topics factsheets) and **automatic (contextual) translation for participant’s contributions.**



Communication

It is crucial to communicate on whenever engaging with citizens in order to inform on the issues at stake and call for action, where appropriate, the largest possible audience, and be as inclusive as possible. This comprises a set of external and internal actions that allow to maximise both public and corporate mobilisation.

AIMS

The communication strategy is based on **4 combined general objectives**:

- Underlining the growing role of citizens' involvement in the preparation of European public policies. Showing that the **European Commission is at the forefront of democratic innovation**, embedding participatory and deliberative formats in its policymaking process.
- Raising awareness and **inform general and target audiences about the issues at stake**, with a particular emphasis on youth and people who are the least aware of the European dimension on subjects that concern them directly.
- **Calling on citizens from all Member States to express their opinions and proposals for action** in the various forums made available online or on the ground by the Commission's services.
- **Raising awareness inside the EU institutions about** the added value of the participatory exercise in the preparation of policies by strengthening citizens' voice in the draft proposals.

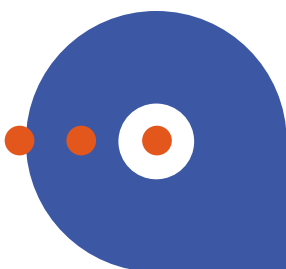
As usual, target audiences and messages need to be adapted to national and local realities.

TOOLS

To be effective, communication must combine organic actions, using the human and technical resources available to the services, and contracted actions with specialist companies. It must be capable of being accurately evaluated in terms of impact and cost effectiveness, which presupposes the prior definition of KPIs.

Following on from experience with the new generation of citizens' panels, the external communication strategy should **rely essentially on media and social networks**, based on appropriate multimedia products, in order to optimise the outreach:

- The production of **creative content** (static and animated visuals, reels, short video) is therefore key to attract attention on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (Twitter). Longer video format may be considered to post on EUTube. All content must be provided in an editable format in order to enable their adaptation and use in 24 or more languages.
- **Paid promotion** of content on social networks and press sites has become inevitable in order to increase visibility. It will have to be carefully programmed according to the territories and audiences targeted, taking into account the costs involved, and the Commission's political and media in order to avoid any overlap of messages.
- **Inviting journalists and influencers** from all over across the EU to observe the debates and deliberations (e.g., at the panel's closing session) is another action to be financed. It ensures media coverage and social network traffic beyond the Brussels sphere. A press briefing may be organised on that occasion for them and the accredited press. A handful of journalists very interested in the process and wishing to adopt a documentary approach could be offered to be embarked in the full experience. In general relations with the media need to find the right balance between the need for the citizens to feel in a "safe place" to express themselves freely and the need for visibility and impact.
- **A dedicated communication budget** is recommended to cover the costs of these actions. Tailored-made national communication via Representations, Europe Direct Centres, agencies... possibly based on interviews of citizens ready to talk with the media or parallel events involving citizens and/or other actors on the subjects of the participatory process.
- **Build up on specific networks of stakeholders** at pan-European or national and local levels, such as local authorities.



ACTORS

- **DG COMM headquarters:** some possible communication on the corporate accounts, including those of Commissioners, depending on political priorities and possible guidance + use of procurement tools or framework contracts for the purchase of specialized services.
- **Representations in Member States and Europe Direct Centres:** Representations can act as multipliers of citizen engagement activities. In line with their mandate of bringing EU institutions closer to the citizens, they can reach citizens through online and in person activities and ensure that messages resonate with their audiences by implementing country-specific communication strategies. They can also contact national and local media to inform them about the on-going processes. At the same time, Representations can continue implementing their own activities of citizen engagement. They can also mobilise the Europe Direct Network to localise the messages even more and make a connection to the citizens.
- **Policy DGs:** policy DGs can activate their stakeholders and networks, thus reaching citizens who are already interested in the topic of the engagement activity and enhance its visibility. They can also help with the communication-side by delivering citizens-friendly materials and mobilising their network of experts. Policy DGs can also use their social media presence/accounts and links with specialised media to reach out to their target audience and extend the outreach.
- **Organised civil society and stakeholders:** members of civil society organisations and stakeholders can be invited to the citizen engagement events as observers or knowledge providers, both ensuring full transparency of the process and spreading the message.
- **Citizens themselves:** those who give their consent to talk with the media can be contacted while their social media accounts could also support the communication.

Organised Civil Society

The more direct participation of citizens should not be viewed as competing with the dialogue with civil society organisations or other traditional stakeholders in a policy field. Civil dialogue and consultation with stakeholders are complementary and it is important to create the conditions for the best synergies possible between CSOs and the group of citizens involved. The Economic and Social Committee could be a useful partner to stir this process of dialogue with CSOs.

For this purpose, the **following options could be considered**, in an order of increased commitment:

- **Informing** network of stakeholders and relying on them to support the communication around the participatory exercises.
- Inviting some CSOs to contribute as **experts/resource persons** in citizens' panels or other formats of participation.
- Involving some CSOs in the **knowledge committee** accompanying citizens' panels or other formats of citizen engagement.
- Using a **mixed participatory format** where citizens and CSOs work together.
- **Creating a group** of "friends of the panels", in case of the European Citizens' Panels, among CSOs to involve them regularly, explain methodological choices, share communication tools, list of citizens to invite to events, etc.
- Organising a **"marketplace"** of CSOs at the end of the event as an opportunity for the citizens who took part to see what other forms of engagement they could pursue in civil society.
- Organise a **feedback moment** mixing citizens and CSOs and create a dialogue among them.
- Accompany the whole participatory format with an **online consultation** on the platform, in which stakeholders could participate and use the analytical reports from this consultation as an input into the citizen engagement process.

N.B. The mixed participatory approach described in the Annex is an example of a hybrid process that involves citizens and civil society organisations.



Read more on page 68 of the Annex.

Multilingualism

Whichever format you choose for your citizen engagement activities, you need to think of how you will communicate. Not everyone speaks English, and even if they do, we are all more comfortable expressing ourselves in our native language. A **citizen engagement process cannot claim to be truly inclusive if citizens do not have the possibility to express themselves in their native language**. But before the question on translation and interpretation comes up, you need to make sure that your written documentation follows clear writing principles.

PLAIN LANGUAGE

Clearly written documents that people can easily understand improve the public image of the EU. Your message will be so much more effective if it is presented in an interesting way and engages the reader, for example by using real examples to illustrate the issue.

Give people only the information they need and avoid being unnecessarily formal.



Read more on clear writing on page 53 of the Annex.

MULTILINGUALISM

To paraphrase Nelson Mandela: “If you talk to a person in a language they understand, that goes to their head. If you talk to them in their own language, that goes to their heart.” You cannot assume that your audience will be comfortable using English. To be truly inclusive, you must make sure that your audience can express themselves in their own language and that they can understand any supporting document you will be using during the events.

Translation: While the European Commission has a translation directorate, it is not possible to use it for this type of events. Your budget will need to cover translation costs for your written material. When writing texts for your project, remember that it will be translated. For example, using visuals referring to idiomatic expressions in English should be avoided.

The digital Citizens’ Engagement Platform uses **eTranslation**, the Commission’s own machine translation system already used for the onference on the Future of Europe platform. The eTranslation widget can be used for standard webpages. There are other useful language tools, like speech-to-text or **eSummary**. Contact the DGT **eTranslation Advisory** for further support and advice.

INTERPRETATION

For interpretation and technical support related to multilingual events, **DG SCIC, the Commission’s interpretation Directorate – General, is your first port of call**. In the 2022/23 edition of Citizens’ Panels, SCIC covered the majority of plenary sessions of the panels, as well as a large number of working groups organised either in-presence or on-line. As a rule, the plenary sessions took place with interpretation in all official languages of the EU, whereas the working groups used smaller language regimes based on the real needs of the participants. SCIC can provide interpretation in the **24 EU official languages plus 20 non-EU languages**.

On top of interpretation and technical support, SCIC’s services **can help you to prepare your event** by providing advice on how to make the best out of your meeting with interpretation, be it in-person or on-line. For more information, visit **DG SCIC’s website**.

When planning your event, please bear in mind that multilingual events require extensive preparation in advance and mobilise considerable human resources in terms of interpreters and technical support staff. It is thus imperative that you submit requests on time for them to be considered in the interpretation attribution process which takes place **8 weeks in advance of the meeting date**. In case SCIC does not have sufficient resources to satisfy your request, you can turn to an external provider via, for instance, existing framework contracts.

PUBLIC SPEAKING IN A MULTILINGUAL ENVIRONMENT

In order to ensure that your message gets across in a multilingual meeting, it is important to pay attention to a number of things.

Please find **some useful** tips below.

- Speak your mother tongue if possible.
- Speak naturally, at a reasonable pace.
- Speaking is better than reading. If you have to read, choose a moderate pace and make regular pauses.
- Make sure the interpreters have the text if you read a speech.
- When using slides, avoid text to favour images or infographics.

For more on public speaking, see the [Tips for speakers](#) and watch the [Tips for speakers](#) video.

Participants connecting remotely to a multilingual event with interpretation need to meet certain **additional criteria in terms of location, sound equipment and setup:**

- They must connect from an office-like environment.
- When speaking, they should always have their camera on.
- They should use an external desktop microphone.

For examples of microphones appropriate for hybrid multilingual meetings and other tips for distant speakers, check out our [Code of Conduct](#).





METHODS

Methods

Participatory formats

This part of the Guidance describes different methods, according to a grid of very practical operational elements.

The envisaged citizen engagement process and the choice of method are strongly interlinked.

Each method implies a different degree of citizen agency (or empowerment). The choice of a method has many dependencies including the context and the policymaking phase in which citizens are meant to be engaged. The desirable process may encompass a combination of different methods.

We have chosen **5 formats** as citizen engagement methods and enlist for each, possible variations:

- Citizens' Panels
- Focus groups & in-depth groups
- Co-design workshops
- Scenario workshops
- Citizen science.

In addition, a mixed participatory approach, based on exchanges between citizens and organised civil society is also described on page 68 of the Annex.

They deliver different outputs, they have different purposes across the policy cycle, can be used at different scales, they can be run on-line and/or in person, they require different recruitment strategies, and require the involvement of different actors inside and outside the Commission.

It is important to note that the process of citizen engagement is not just the 'engagement event' planning but also includes the preparatory phases to frame the questions and design the methodology, the follow-up process and the evaluation of the whole process.

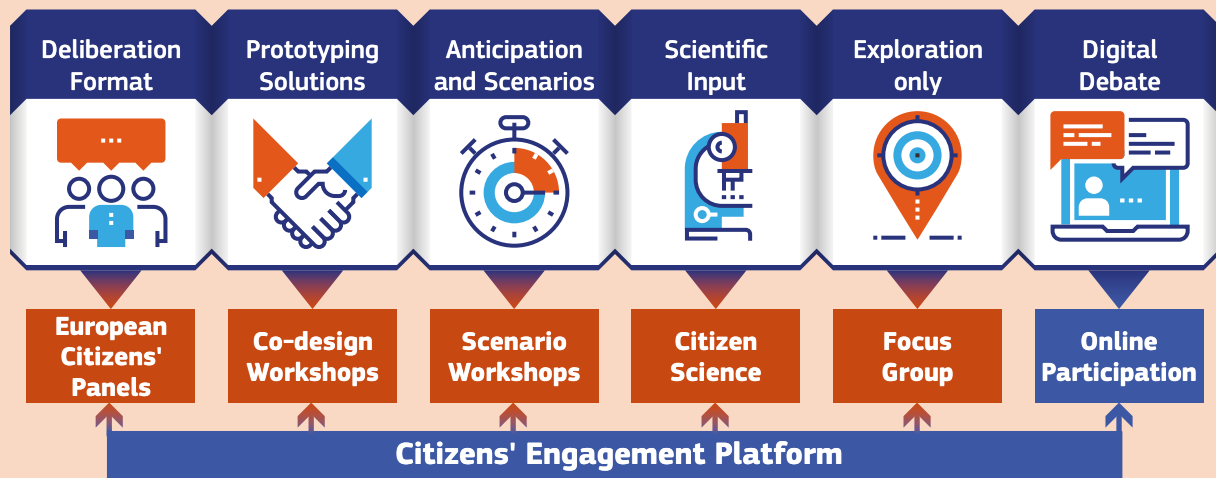
The methods are described using the following elements:

- Definition
- Possible Variations
- Strengths and points of vigilance
- Who the participants are
- How the method is implemented and strategies to guarantee the integrity of the whole process
- What the process looks like
- Expected outputs
- Evaluation.

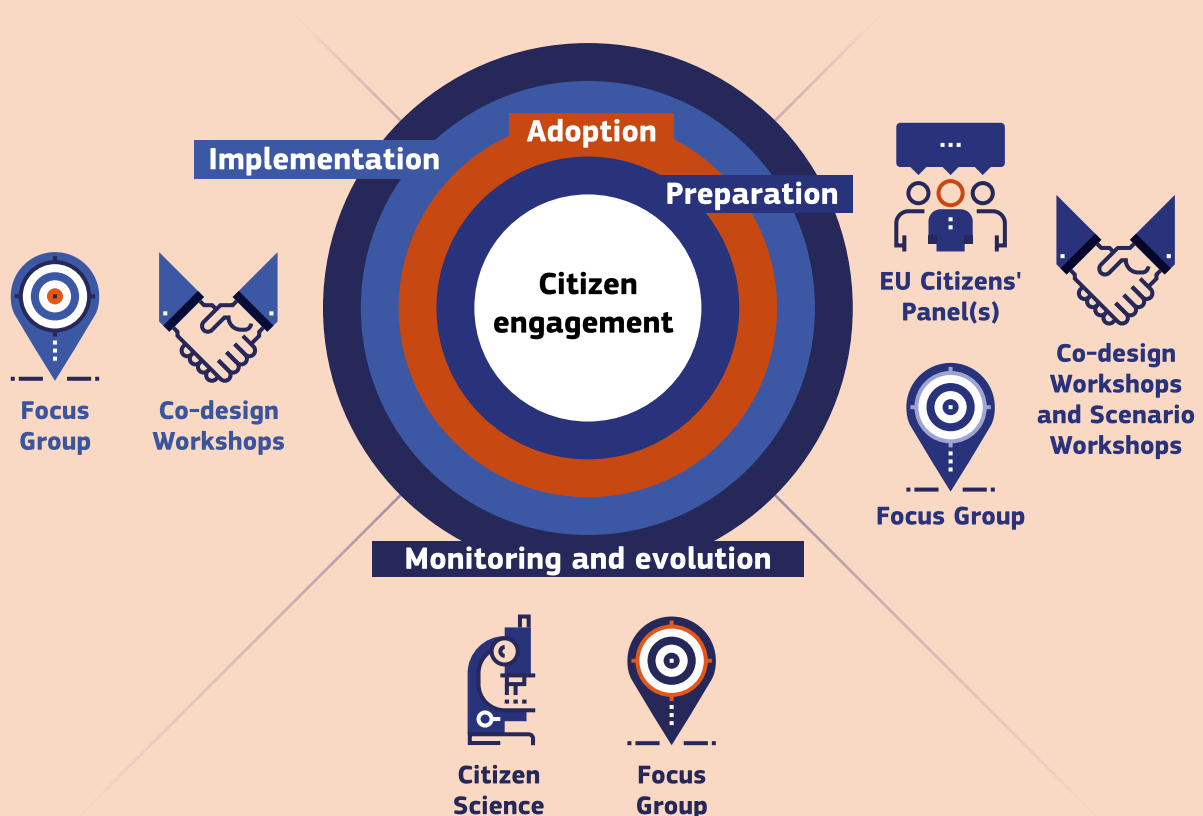
The figure below attempts to outline the unique focus of each archetype, in other words the distinguishing key process and to some extent the outcome of the citizen engagement through the chosen method.

It also highlights the possibility of online debates on the citizens' engagement platform.

Unique focus of each format



Method archetypes and their relevance for the policy cycle



This figure attempts to ascribe the methods to the policymaking cycle. Citizens Panels are typically a type of citizen engagement that is to be used at early stages of the policy design phase.

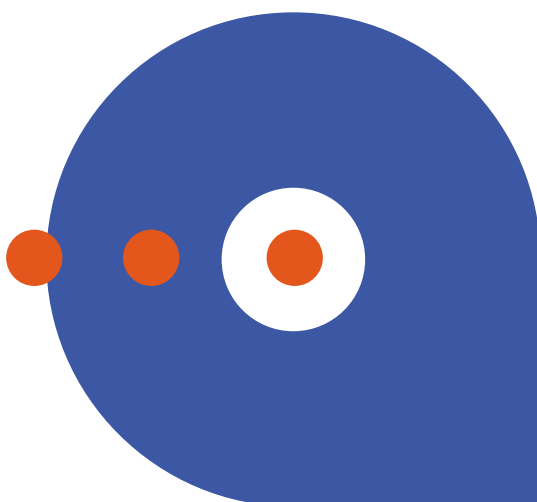
Citizens' panels

What is a citizens' panel?

A Citizens' Panel is a **deliberative format** enabling a sample of randomly selected citizens, representative of diversity, to work on collective recommendations contributing to early phases of the policymaking process. Tested on a large scale during the Conference on the Future of Europe, the pan-European Citizens' Panels are now embedded in the Commission's policymaking process, and **lead to the adoption of a Citizens' Report** annexed to the (legislative) proposal, explaining how the Panels' recommendations are taken into account in this process ⁽³⁾.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Around 150 randomly selected citizens, representative of EU diversity.
- Three weekends of deliberations (e.g., 2 in Brussels, one online).
- Methodology designed to appropriately address the policy topic and the framing question.
- Professional facilitators and moderators to manage plenary and working groups' meetings.
- Possibility for participants to speak/work in their language (24 in plenaries/5 in groups).
- Knowledge management: help of a Knowledge Committee and inputs from experts.



STRENGTHS

1. **Improve the quality of policy**
 - Long-term quality deliberations based on diversity.
 - Compromises on collective recommendations leading to higher understanding of the stakes and ownership of the proposal.
 - Recommendations based on citizens' life experience and collective "wisdom".
2. **Increase the visibility of the initiative**
 - Opportunity to communicate process and results to media and the wider public.
 - Enrich the public debate and the legislative process.
3. **Has larger democratic benefits**
 - Decrease distance between EU institutions and citizens.
 - Create a sense of belonging to the EU.
 - Inform on the ways to be an active European citizen.

POINTS OF VIGILANCE

1. **Link with Commission Work Programme (CWP), time and resources**
 - Panels are linked to key policy proposals.
 - Needs enough time and resources available in the policymaking process so that the outcome can be meaningfully considered.
2. **Framing the issue**
 - A too broad scope may make it more difficult to focus on situated and specific issues, allowing more actionable recommendations.
 - Need to manage expectations by framing the issue in a way that will be meaningful and useful for policymaking.
3. **Knowledge management**
 - Knowledge Committee needs to be at arm's length from institutions and integrate different viewpoints.
 - Attention needs to be paid to quality/objectivity of information provision.

⁽³⁾ See, for example, the Citizens' Report of the European Citizens' Panel on Virtual Worlds: download [here](#).

Who are the participants?

A total number of **around 150 participants** (100 to 200 is generally the number necessary to achieve a good diversity) either working in plenary or split into working groups of about 8 to 12 participants.

Randomly selected participants from all EU Member States in the pan-EU format.

Target quotas. The **most common criteria** are gender, age, place of residence (rural/urban), level of education and socio-economic background.

- + [Read more on the recruitment method and process on page 54 of the Annex.](#)
- + [Read more on communication to participants on page 54 of the Annex.](#)

How is the panel organised?

How to structure the governance?

- Organisation, expertise and financing are split between DG COMM and the relevant policy DG.
- A **Steering Committee** meets weekly to decide on conceptual and organisational matters. It is composed of representatives of the Commission (DG COMM, policy DGs and SG) and of contractors (experts on methodology and logistics support).
- Coordinated efforts on external and internal **communication** and cooperation with the different services involved is necessary to make the Panel visible.
- The role of the Commission representatives is to ensure that the deliberative processes are rigorous and lead to relevant, high-quality outputs for the policymaking process, as well as providing substance on the topic.

- + [Read more on staff, budget and procurement needs on page 54 and 55 of the Annex.](#)

How to ensure the integrity of the process?

- **Quality moderation** (plenaries) and **facilitation** (working groups) is key and needs to be performed by professionals with long standing and proven experience in the field.
- **Knowledge management** (information Kit, expert input, structuring of the deliberations etc.) is also an essential part and needs to be done at arm's length from the Commission to ensure its completeness and diversity.

- A **Knowledge Committee** composed of experts acts as a guarantor of the quality, sincerity, diversity, and intelligibility of the information provided to citizens. Their role is to support the steering board in providing and structuring the knowledge on the topic, as well as identifying the needs for expertise and the experts.

- + [Read more on moderation and facilitation on page 55 of the Annex.](#)

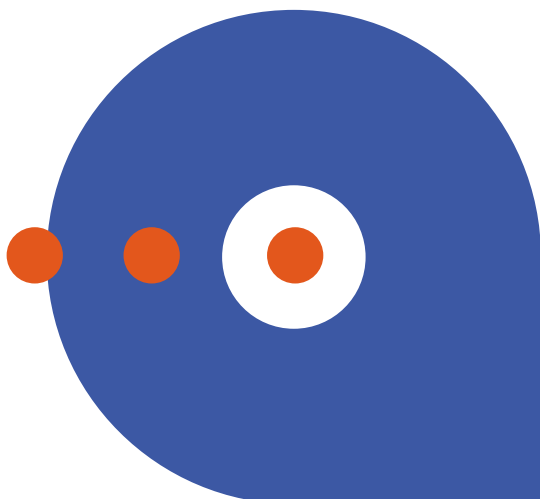
How does the process look like?

- **3 separate deliberative events** over a weekend (so around 6 to 12 weeks for the deliberation); this could be increased in case of very complex of deliberations or when the scope is broad and subject to financial and organizational capacity.
- Events are broken down into **plenary sessions and smaller working groups**, feedback mechanisms between working groups are important to avoid silos.
- Over the three sessions, participants' ideas are initially developed and then structured in **topic blocks**. In the third session ideas are then transformed into concrete recommendations and actions.
- The final plenary is an important moment as it allows the Panel to claim ownership of the results: this is done through a presentation of the recommendations and a **final vote**, generally through a scaling/rating system.

- + [Read more on the organisation of the sessions on page 55 of the Annex.](#)

What are the outputs

- The list of recommendations with a first short analysis will be shared with the College in the form of a **Citizens' Report** either as an Annex to the impact assessment process or as Staff Working Document.
- The Citizen's Report is a condensed version of a longer **Final Report**. The Final Report recalls the main features of the Panel, the methodological framework, the evolution of the deliberations as well as the outputs of the sessions. The "next steps" as the first "take away" from the recommendations are outlined as well. The Citizens' Report concentrates on basic information on the Panel and the "next steps" part of the Final Report.



- There will be a **feedback moment** for panellists, either in the form of an event (ad hoc or part of an already planned event, in presence, hybrid or online) or of a written communication (e.g. newsletter on the digital platform).
- Visibility of the Panel and of the policy proposal: (social) media review.



Read more on communication with the participants after the event on page 55 of the Annex.

How to evaluate?

It is important to anticipate the evaluation needs. The following elements could be used:

- Participants' experience and reflections based on pre- and post-surveys.
- Criteria to assess the quality and integrity of the implementation of the process, such as the depth and inclusiveness of deliberations, quality of the moderation and outputs.



Read more on evaluation on page 56 of the Annex.

Example: the European Citizens' Panel on virtual worlds

Following the commitment expressed by the Communication of 17 June 2022 'Putting Vision into Concrete Action' and by Presidents' von der Leyen 2022 State of the Union speech, the Commission organised three European Citizens' Panels in 2023, one of which discussed the topic of 'virtual worlds'. The panel was organised in collaboration with DG CNECT (policy service), DG COMM and the SG.

The Remit: Participants were invited to answer the following question: *"What vision, principles, and actions should guide the development of desirable and fair virtual worlds?"*. More specifically, citizens were requested to develop a set of guiding principles and actions for the development of virtual worlds in the EU.

Recruitment: The target was to have a sample of 150 citizens representing EU diversity from each Member State. The set-up phase for the citizens' recruitment took place between December 2022 and January 2023, with recruitment starting on January 17, 2023, and lasting until February 21, 2023. Overall, out of the 150 targeted participants, 140 citizens took part in at least one of the sessions.

Governance: A Steering Committee composed of Commission services and contractors (experts on methodology and logistics support) as well as a Knowledge Committee.

Process: The European Citizens' Panel on Virtual Worlds followed a unique process, which not only allowed rich deliberations between citizens, but also a possibility to experience virtual and augmented reality at first hand. The panel consisted of three sessions with different goals:





Session 1 (24-26 February 2023, Brussels)

In a first session, participants were introduced to the issue at hand, were able to get to know each other and build a sense of community and trust. They received initial experts' inputs and had the opportunity to experience the topic of the Panel through an exhibition on Virtual Worlds. They reflected on their experience with "the digital world" and created utopias and dystopias as their vision of the future.

Session 2 (10-12 March 2023, Online)

The second session was an online session and focused on a deeper understanding of the issue. The main goal of the session was to encourage the exchange of ideas and perspectives among participants, identify areas of consensus and disagreement, and formulate the first ideas for action points in four separate topic blocks. A particularly innovative element of this session was that it was itself conducted through a virtual platform (Hyperfair).

Session 3 (21-23 April 2023, Brussels)

The third and final session was dedicated to shaping the recommendations based on the ideas and insights gained in the first two sessions and was supported by further expert inputs. The third session ensured that the Citizens' Panel produced a final set of values and principles, and concrete recommendations that can be handed over to the Commission and shared with relevant stakeholders.



Session 1

Creating visions of fair and desirable virtual worlds

Session 2

Identifying core values and key actions

Session 3

Formulation of citizens' recommendations

Outcome: Citizens came up with **23 concrete recommendations**, which were annexed to the Citizens' Report and presented to the College as part of the proposal for the Communication "An EU initiative on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds: a head start in the next technological transition" as a Staff Working Document. The outcome of the panel will support the overarching work of the Commission and can also serve as a guide to help Member States in developing policy actions related to virtual worlds.

Regarding the European Commission's policymaking, the recommendations complement the results of the public consultation carried out by the Commission and provide a reference point for the Commission's overall approach and future action. The work carried out by citizens is a precious source of inspiration and relevant input for the years to come and will feed into its work and policy proposals related to emerging virtual worlds.

Find more information on:

https://citizens.ec.europa.eu/virtual-worlds-panel_en

Focus groups and in-depth groups

What are focus groups and in-depth groups?

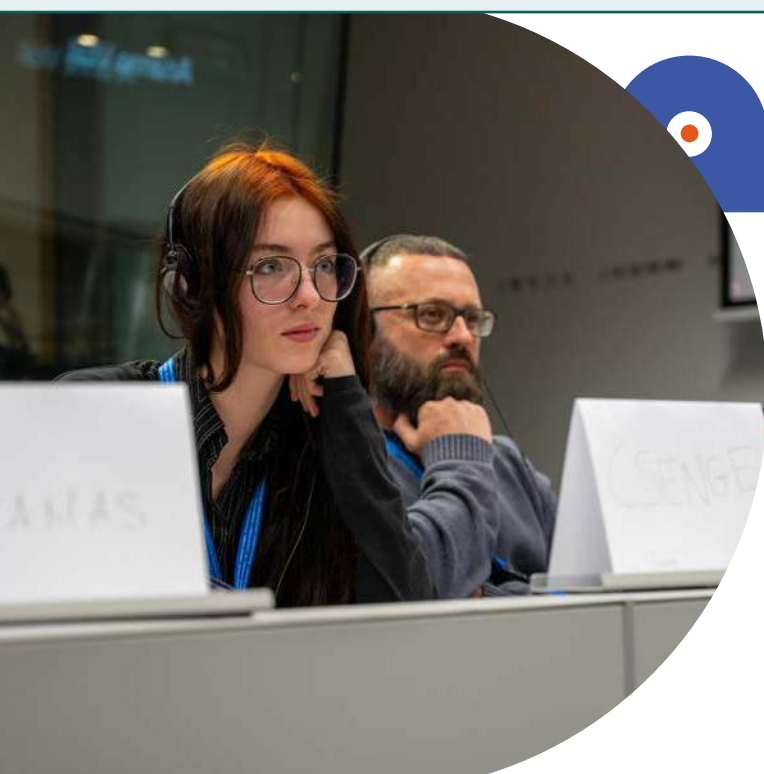
Focus groups enable moderated semi-structured discussion and interaction among a small group of pre-selected participants.

+ Read more on definition on page 56 of the Annex.

This type of method aims at exploring collective experiences over a topic or object of interest and also at observing the interactions among the participants, which together, can improve understanding of a problem and its underlying issues.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Around 6-10 randomly selected citizens, representative of population diversity in a population/community.
- Focus groups meet once during 3-4 hours; in-depth groups can meet more times (typically up to 4 times for 3-4 hours or for an entire day).
- Professional facilitators and the facilitation team can include experts in the topic being discussed.
- Method best used when the aim is to explore a pre-defined perspective into an issue, or as an early exploration of possible framings of an issue.
- Best for national or local levels.



STRENGTHS

1. **Improves the quality of policy**
 - Improves the framing of policy problems reflecting participants' experience with the issues of concern.
 - Emphasises diversity of perspectives over seeking consensus – rich insights into controversies and different positions.
 - In-depth variation strongly increases the quality of the conversations and outcomes.
2. **Easy to organise**
 - Relatively quick to organise, little logistics.
 - Easy to adapt in order to develop more complex methodological designs.
 - It is suitable to any policy file at any stage of the policy cycle.
3. **Has larger democratic benefits**
 - Create a sense of ownership about the policy issue of concern.
 - Reinforce ideas of civic engagement beyond casting votes during elections.

POINTS OF VIGILANCE

1. **It is not a deliberative method. It is a social research/exploratory method.**
 - Can be used in different ways and does not automatically guarantee an empowering involvement of the participants.
 - FGs are not meant for collective decision-making, for observing behavioural responses, or for negotiating over conflicts.
2. **Representativeness**
 - Cannot be expected to be representative of the population, unless many are conducted over the same population; the diversity of the participants helps with attaining deeper understanding on the topic of interest.
 - Focus group outputs should not be considered representative of opinions/knowledge of the targeted population, even if participants were randomly selected. Insights generated during a focus group are considered illustrative of issues out there about the topic.

+ Read more on possible variations on page 56 of the Annex.

Who are the participants?

Ideally groups have between **6-10 participants**. A group should not have less than 4, and more than 12.

If more than 12 participants are needed, it may be better to split them into two groups and hold two focus groups, combining the output for further analytical processing.

+ Read more on the recruitment method and communication to participants on page 56 and 57 of the Annex.

How are focus groups organised?

How to structure the governance?

- Organisation of focus groups can be coached by the Commission's Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy in collaboration with the relevant policy DG.
- Coaching corners are held to work on the conceptual and organisational matters, including methodology, logistics and procurement questions (including the technical annex to contract the necessary services) and the digital platform where relevant. During the implementation and reporting phase the Competence Centre will support the policy DG with advice and review of the proposal of the contractor, as well as the piloting and reports.

How to ensure the integrity of the process?

- Quality facilitation is key and needs to be performed by professionals with long standing and proven experience in the field.
- Reporting needs to reflect the diversity of positions and spell out dissent.
- Focus groups need to be informed by experts on the topic.

+ Read more on staff, budget and procurement needs on page 57 of the Annex.

+ Read more on moderation and facilitation on page 57 of the Annex.

How does the process look like?

- Focus groups meet once, for 3 to 4 hours. In-depth groups, require that the same group meets more than once (typically 4 times) for the same amount of time.
- This method requires professional facilitation and it requires expert input on the issue of concern.

+ Read more on the organisation of the focus groups on page 58 of the Annex.

What are the outputs?

- Key messages from the discussions, grouped by theme/perspective into the topic, using the questions as guidance for structuring the summary.
- If the group was asked to also engage in a material activity (i.e., drawing, creating an object), which was part of the discussion, this should also be part of the final report.
- A report must be produced by the contractor, with the analysis of the participants' inputs to the questions asked. There should be pictures as well as, an annex with the full transcripts. The report should also include an evaluation of the process.

+ Read more on making sense of outputs on page 58 of the Annex.

+ Read more on communication with the participants after the event on page 58 of the Annex.

How to evaluate?

Evaluation should be an intrinsic part of the process itself and should look at least at the following aspects:

- Participants' experience and reflections based on pre- and post-surveys.
- Process implementation, quality and integrity.
- Uptake of the information gathered in the policy file of concern.

+ Read more on evaluation on page 58 of the Annex.

Example: focus group on food contact materials

In 2022-23, 10 focus groups were organised for the citizen engagement exercise on food contact materials, each in a different EU Member State representing demographic and geographical diversity. These focus groups took the form of half day “co-creation workshops” and provided insights into the way citizens use food contact materials, their preferences and experiences with them and their concerns, including on information and labelling.

Participants were also asked to suggest a label that could capture the desirable information which anyone should know before choosing, re-using or disposing of food contact materials. The FWC contract used was COMM/2020/ OP/0017. The Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy coached the design of the process, including the choreography of the workshops, the procurement, and the implementation, as well as supporting DG SANTE by reviewing the reports.

The results of this citizen engagement exercise will contribute to the revision of EU rules on food contact materials. A study funded by the European Commission on citizen engagement is currently carried out by a contractor to support the revision process, as part of the citizens and stakeholders consultation activities. Source: Co-creation workshops on food contact materials. Final report. June 2023. Prepared by KANTAR for DG SANTE. Accessed through [here](#).

Participatory workshop with a diary as a home task

Experience of citizens



Home diaries
(3-5 days before the workshop)



Introduction
(5 minutes)



Exploring habits, experiences and attitudes towards FCMs
(15 minutes)



Case studies
(20 minutes)

Citizen's needs and concerns



First coffee break with Expert Cards
(20 minutes)



Thematic Deep-Dive (Boots)
(70 minutes) Citizen's needs and concerns

Co-creating a label



Second coffee break
(10 minutes)



Co-creation
(35 minutes)



Wrap-up
(5 minutes)

Co-design workshops

What is a co-design workshop?

IN A NUTSHELL

- Between 4-6 to 30 participants depending on the format. Diversity is key.
- Generally, a series of fast-paced workshops of around 3 hours each. Professional facilitation is needed and is key.
- End result is a report with proposed solutions/strategies and the artefacts produced during the workshops.

Co-design workshops for policymaking or within policy advice contexts is a container of methods that deploys design methods and tools to actively engage ordinary citizens (or specific stakeholders) in the **collaborative production of solutions in the form of artefacts**, projects, programs and other policy-related outputs.

In co-design workshops, design practitioners employ fast-paced activities to generate ideas and construct rough concepts through the creation of prototypes or scenarios.

Co-design workshops are **mostly used for discovery and problem solving**, best suited for early phases of the policy process. The emphasis is on involving citizens from the start and designing with them possible visions and solutions to the policy topic. For the purpose of this guidance, artefacts and other types of prototypes fall all on ideas of co-design.



[Read more on definition on page 58 of the Annex.](#)



STRENGTHS

1. **Collaborative thinking beyond discursive approaches. Material co-creation and deliberation.**
 - Process of collaborative thinking: participants are able to share their experiences and their concerns to discuss, jointly explore and frame the problem(s), and cooperatively develop and evaluate solutions.
 - Ownership: participants are responsible for jointly proposing solutions and visions.
 - Material engagement of citizens with the matters of concern, enable other forms of expression that go beyond verbal intervention.
2. **Co-creation methods can be associated to deliberative formats of citizen participation.**
 - These methods can be a part or be the basis of the activities that are conducive to deliberative outcomes.
 - These methods can improve deliberation, precisely by creating space for citizens to express themselves through means other than verbal.

POINTS OF VIGILANCE

- Approach for discovery and exploring opportunities and pathways, rather than producing final solutions.
- Group dynamics can have an enormous effect on the outcomes of the workshops. The role of the facilitator is critical in guiding the conversation and maintaining respectful dialogue.
- Multiple workshops with various participants from different backgrounds are necessary to achieve meaningful outcomes.
- **Co-design workshops** are not typically suited for online implementation. This does not mean that online co-creation workshops cannot be done and led to relevant results. It is however essential that the online platform used has the necessary tools (e.g., whiteboard) for the planned activities.
- **Sampling: diversity is key** Participants are not necessarily demographically representative, but DIVERSITY is key. Other types of sampling can be used: opportunistic and purposive.



[Read more on possible variations on page 59 of the Annex.](#)

Who are the participants?

- Participants may be from all walks of life, but preferably affected by the issue of concern, and it is key to have diversity. Quality interaction requires at least 4-6 participants. The number of participants in each co-creation workshop should be limited to a maximum of 12 people (6-8 ideally).

+ [Read more on the recruitment method and communication to participants on page 59 of the Annex.](#)

- The aim is to involve those that are relevant to the process, namely anyone that is or might be affected by the issue(s) under discussion, including those who feel themselves they have something at stake. The selected participants must have different backgrounds and represent different perspectives on the issue(s) being addressed. The relevant participants will vary with the issue, as their interest and capability to contribute to the workshop will depend upon the topic of concern.

How is the co-design workshop organised?

How to structure the governance?

- Organisation of co-design workshops can be coached by the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy in collaboration with the relevant policy DG. In addition, the JRC Makerspace can be used to pilot or even implement co-design workshops.

+ [Read more on staff, budget, and procurement needs on page 60 of the Annex.](#)

- Coaching corners are held to work on the conceptual and organisational matters, including methodology, logistics and procurement questions (including the technical annex to contract the necessary services). During the implementation and reporting phase the Competence Centre will support the policy DG with advice and review of the proposal of the contractor, as well as the piloting and reports.

How does the process look like?

- Co-design workshops require matured time to meet over the topics of concern; in many cases, this can be few hours over several weeks, but they are generally fast paced, normally lasting around 3 hours, where participants being pushed to generate a high number of diverse ideas, well beyond what one individual alone can produce.

- Ideally, the process is organised as a series of workshops with different participants. Each individual workshop typically comprises the following phases: Warm up; Introduction to the topic and 'building question'; Issue mapping; idea generation; Prototyping; Presentation + Feedback; Conclusion and Evaluation.

+ [Read more on the organisation on page 60 of the Annex.](#)

How to guarantee the integrity of the process?

- An experienced facilitator with knowledge of codesign methodologies or is required to conduct the workshops.
- A very diverse group of participants.

+ [Read more on moderation and facilitation on page 60 of the Annex\]](#)

What are the outputs?

- Co-design workshops can provide powerful policy insights through the contribution of participants. The information, ideas and artefacts from these workshops can be analysed to make policy and planning recommendations or to find a direction to move forward in the policy process.
- Physical prototypes must be properly kept and/or photographed for later reference.

+ [Read more on outputs on page 60 of the Annex\]](#)

+ [Read more on communication with the participants after the event on page 61 of the Annex.](#)

How to evaluate?

Evaluation should be an intrinsic part of the process itself and should look at least at the following aspects:

- Participants' experience and reflections based on pre- and post-surveys.
- Process implementation, quality and integrity.
- Uptake of the information gathered in the policy file of concern.

+ [Read more on evaluation on page 61 of the Annex.](#)

Example: The Social & Ethical Issues of Connected and Automated Vehicles

A series of co-creation workshops were conducted by the JRC from May to October 2019 in 3 different Member States, concerning the future of mobility and in particular the issue of connected and self-driving vehicles. The participants of the workshops explored various mobility narratives, ethical considerations, expectations and matters of concern toward this new type of mobility.

These workshops were conducted to examine the policy narratives in [COM\(2018\) 283](#) “On the road to automated mobility: An EU strategy for mobility of the future” and the concerns as well as imaginaries of citizens in relation to desirable mobilities. The work was carried out under the framing of the NewHorizon project ([newhorizon.eu](#)), funded by the Horizon 2020, which explored Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) inspired governance modalities through a number of Social Lab experiments.

The JRC conducted a pilot project on the topic of the future of mobility and the place of Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAVs) in those visions. The JRC employed institutional resources to conduct itself all the co-creation workshops in different makerspaces including the JRC makerspace.

Results available [here](#).

+ Read more about this example on pages 61 and 62 of the Annex.

Scenario workshops

What are scenario workshops?

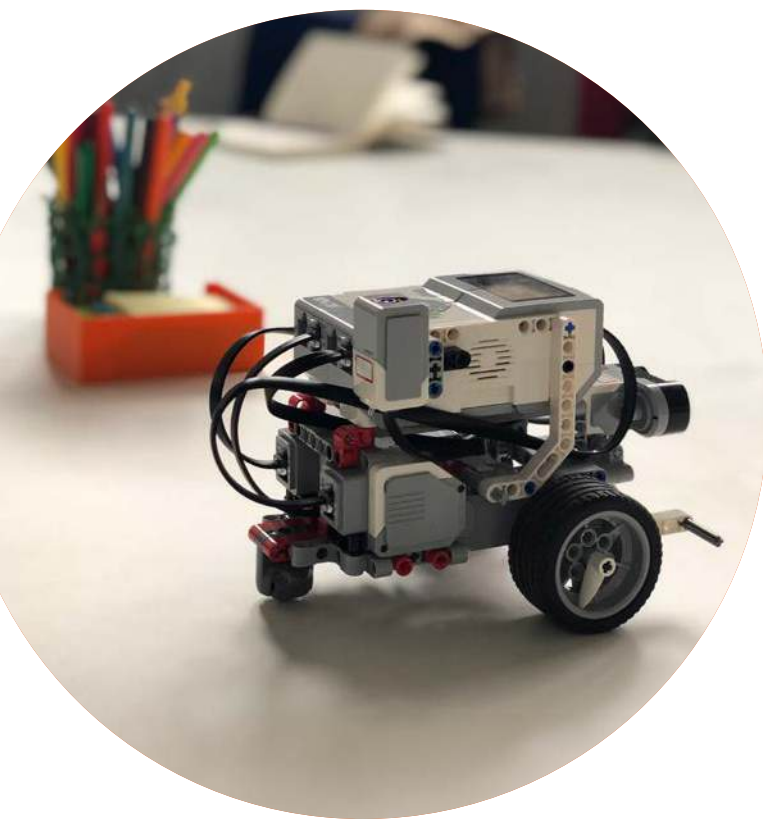
When engaging with citizens, the future is often a recurrent theme of interest. It is therefore necessary to have the possibility of using methods which allow to build and explore potential futures and corresponding pathways. To make this experience concrete, it is often useful to apply them in relation to a specific policy topic, a technology or other particular action. Often, these methods generate reflections on drivers of change, the creation or exploration of scenarios or the development of visions of desirable futures.

These methods are **well suited to be part of foresight or other anticipatory studies, including technology assessment**. The emphasis is on involving diverse groups of citizens from the start to be able to build a solid collective intelligence. Imagining possible futures with them helps deepen reflections on possible solutions to specific issues or policy topics and to generate proposals for desirable futures.

+ Read more on definition on page 62 of the Annex.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Quality interaction requires at least 10 participants. The maximum size of the group depends on the number of moderators but is rarely above 100.
- Future oriented methods can call on a rich toolbox (sense-making, drivers of change, development of scenarios, visions, etc.).
- Often requires from days to months but short formats are available ad hoc (e.g., serious games).
- Method is best suited to inform foresight or anticipatory studies, as it typically delivers drivers, scenarios and visions, reflections on key uncertainties.



STRENGTHS

1. Improve the quality of anticipation and foresight

- Drivers and visions reflect broad societal perspectives in line with what participants experience as their “present”.
- Provides rich insights into present and future concerns.
- Groups are not necessarily demographically representative; the diversity of the participants is what helps with attaining deeper understanding on the topic of interest.

2. Future-thinking through a structured exercise

- Raises awareness of present while developing visions for the future through a highly structured process.
- The method creates a safe space for open discussion, enabling learning from speculative ‘what if’ questions. This helps to reflect on plausible and unexpected challenges that might emerge in the future.

POINTS OF VIGILANCE

1. Scenario workshops link to other processes

- Scenario workshops are linked to foresight, anticipation studies and other futuring exercises.
- Needs to be carried out timely in order to ensure that the outcomes help framing the foresight process.

2. Role of facilitators

- As the exercise is more than just a conversation and weigh of argument, the role of the facilitator is critical to guide participants into the structured way of thinking about the future and the often expected output in form of scenarios.



Who are the participants?

- Usually the size of the group is around 20-30 persons. It should not be smaller than 10 participants.
- The maximum size of the group depends on the number of facilitators and the type of the workshop, but is rarely above 100.
- For larger groups, many facilitators are needed, so that participants can be split in multiple smaller groups (with not more than 10-15 participants per breakout) - with at least one facilitator.



Read more on the recruitment method and communication to participants on page 63 of the Annex.

How are scenario workshops organised?

How to structure the governance?

- Organisation of scenario workshops and its variations can be coached by the EU Policy Lab/Competence Centre on Foresight (CCF) and the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy (CC-DEMOS) in collaboration with the relevant policy DG.
- Coaching corners are held to work on the conceptual and organisational matters, including methodology, logistics and procurement questions (including the technical annex to contract the necessary services). During the implementation and reporting phase the CC-DEMOS and CCF will support the policy DG with advice and review of the proposal of the contractor, as well as the piloting and reports.



Read more on staff, budget and procurement needs on page 64 of the Annex.

How to ensure the integrity of the process?

- Experienced facilitators with knowledge of foresight or other future oriented methodologies are required to conduct the workshops.
- Each facilitator needs to ensure that all participants equally participate in the activities of the workshop, and no one remains silent.
- Participants do not necessarily need to be sampled to ensure demographic representativeness; other types of sampling can be used: opportunistic and purposive. But DIVERSITY is key.



Read more on moderation and facilitation on page 64 of the Annex.




Citizen science

What is citizen science?

Citizen Science is a container for a number of approaches focused on the involvement of citizens in science, as contributors, where 'contribution' may mean very different commitments to the scientific process and advance of scientific research.

Citizen science refers to the involvement of non-expert volunteers in the scientific process – commonly in data collection, but also in other phases, such as quality assurance, data analysis and interpretation, scientific problem definition and the dissemination of results. The concept has been under constant evolution and provides a rich set of opportunities to engage people from many different backgrounds and demographics for multiple purposes.

 [Read more on definition on page 66 of the Annex.](#)

IN A NUTSHELL

- Involvement of citizens as contributors in science.
- A variable number of citizens meet the number of times necessary to accomplish a task proposed by the organisers.
- No tokens or per diem envisaged to participants.
- A rather localised approach.
- Professional facilitators are needed.
- Experts on the scientific topic need to be present.
- Best used where data needs to be widely collected by citizens to inform policymaking at all stages, but especially on the monitoring stage of the policymaking cycle.

STRENGTHS

1. Help with enhancing scientific knowledge production

- Citizen Science can contribute new scientific knowledge (incl. science for policymaking) and provide research capacities that would not be available otherwise.
- It also builds trustworthy relationships between the participants (notably not only the volunteering citizen scientists) and provides mutual learning to all.

2. Increase trust in research institutions


- It is a way to open up scientific processes to citizens, to increase trust in research and scientific institutions, gain access to local knowledge and research capacity, increase scientific literacy, and empower people to conduct research in their own interest.

POINTS OF VIGILANCE

- Any specific application of Citizen Science methods should adhere to well defined and acknowledged underlying principles.
- Citizen science approaches are for the most part contributory; they are project oriented.

Who are the participants

- The one kind of participant that is required in any Citizen Science activity is citizens who are unpaid volunteers (Citizen Scientists). Their profiles may vary strongly depending on the subject matter and form of recruitment.
- Usually, one or more professional scientists participate in the events; for example, to provide specific capacities in the domain of research or related to the envisaged engagement process. Additional participants might be facilitators, observers reporting on the activity, and stakeholders linked to the subject matter, e.g., policy officers from any level of administration.
- The numbers of participants can be adapted to the needs of the research process. For example, regular monitoring of indicator species of birds over the entire territory of the EU requires a different set-up than noise monitoring in a given street or square.

 [Read more on recruitment method on page 66 of the Annex.](#)

How is citizen science organised?

How to structure the governance?

- Organisation of citizen science across all its variations can be coached by Unit JRC.XX in collaboration with the relevant scientific Unit of the JRC or when relevant the policy DG.

+ [Read more on budget, staff and logistics on page 67 of the Annex.](#)

How to guarantee the integrity of the process?

- At first the original initiator might direct the process, but (s)he should take particular care about the objectives and dynamics. If the Citizen Science method should be carried out over a longer time, the one operating it in the mid-term might get more involved. Citizen Science projects might also be subject to surprises, according to which direction might need to be re-discussed.
- The initiator should be very clear and communicate well about the responsibilities, constraints and flexibility within a given Citizen Science activity.
- It is highly recommended to inform the participants up front about where and how their contribution might be used, and if they might be further involved in the process or not. Expectation management is key towards the volunteers, and all other people participating (which might include, professional researchers, facilitators, communication experts, policy officers, etc.).

How does the process look like?

- The event's design depends on the extent to which Citizen Science process and outcomes are used within the overall research process (for entire coverage, or in some of its parts).
- The best approach is to learn from existing practices, i.e., to identify one or more specific cases that are similar to the envisioned process and then project the detailed choreography.

+ [Read more about Citizen science activities on page 67 of the Annex.](#)

What are the outputs?

The outputs are research outputs, such as new methods, data, processing tools, new scientific insights, lab notebooks, scientific papers and articles, etc. In addition, due to transparency needs, the process documentation might include, video recordings, images, etc.

+ [Read more on outputs and communication with the participants after the event on page 67 of the Annex.](#)

How to evaluate?

Evaluation should be an intrinsic part of the process and should look at least at the following aspects:

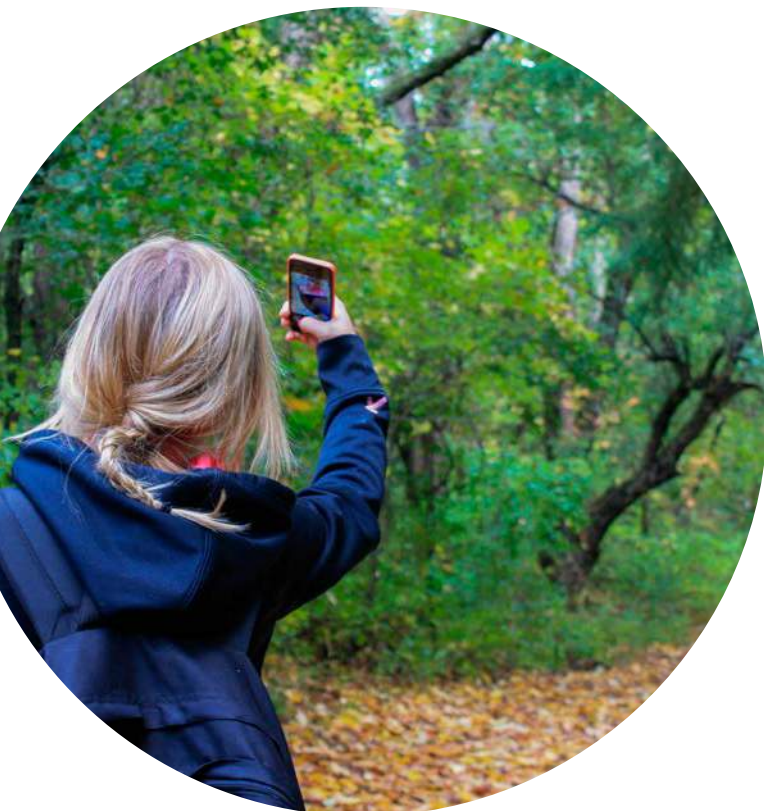
- Participants' experience and reflections based on pre- and post-surveys.
- Process implementation, quality and integrity.
- Process implementation, quality and integrity.
- Uptake of the information gathered in the policy file of concern.

+ [Read more on evaluation on page 68 of the Annex.](#)

Examples: invasive alien species and environmental monitoring

The [EU Regulation 1143/2014](#) on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) acknowledges the important role public awareness and active involvement of the citizens have in contributing to the successful implementation of the Regulation. In this context, the European [Alien Species Information Network \(EASIN\)](#) aims at bringing together citizens, scientists and policymakers in an effort to monitor and control alien invasive species that cause damage to native species, ecosystems and even to people. Timely reporting helps to prevent the spread of invasive alien species; thus the contribution of citizens is really important. Knowing the distribution of these species will facilitate the official surveillance, the adoption of efficient measures for prevention, early detection and control, reducing the ecological and economical damages that they may cause.

Everyone can contribute to increase scientific knowledge and spatial distribution about Invasive Alien Species in Europe by [reporting observations](#) of species listed as of Union concern using the App or the dedicated Web Application. The collected data is validated by recognised experts in the field and becomes integrated in the EASIN knowledge base – which is the central source



for related policymaking in the EU. Supporting training material has been developed and widely shared so that every citizen can engage with this important data collection activity.

Systemic integration of citizen science in environmental monitoring:

Hundreds of initiatives exist to apply citizen science approaches for the monitoring of environmental issues (such as air quality, noise, biodiversity, light pollution and many more). The JRC together with policy DGs of the Commission (incl. DG Environment and DG Research and Innovation) developed Best Practices in Citizen Science for Environmental Monitoring.

In addition to a series of leading examples that show how citizen science approaches can be applied across the policy cycle, this Staff Working Document also comes with recommendations on how to integrate high quality citizen science contribution in a systemic and sustainable approach. Following its publication in 2020, the network of Environmental Protection Agencies in Europe provided their response to their recommendations in 2022. This work provides important stepping stones to empower citizens to contribute to environmental policy and its implementation.



Read more on examples on page 68 of the Annex.





Annexes

Annexes

Read more: **Examples from previous experiences with citizen outreach**

Citizens' dialogues: a long lasting tool for outreach

Organised as open-doors town hall style debates, often with MEPs, national and local politicians, Citizens' Dialogues was a signature initiative of the European Commission and remains a valuable tool for Commissioners and other senior Commission officials to reach out directly to citizens without any filters or intermediaries.

The Dialogues are listening-exercises that allow the political leaders and senior civil servants to better understand the issues, problems and expectations of people in a given area. Moreover, they are a prime communication tool that multiply the message that the Commission is there to take people's concerns seriously when devising new policies.

Since 2012 to this day, more than 2,000 dialogues have been organised across all EU Member States teaming up with the Commission Representations and Europe Direct Centres. Over 200 000 people of all ages and from all backgrounds have taken part and directly shared their feedback about different EU policies and issues they are facing in their respective Member States and regions. Participants are self-selected, answering to an open invitation through the Commission's websites, social media channels and – in some cases – paid advertising in media.

Citizens' Dialogues have evolved throughout these years, accompanying the debates on the future of



Europe triggered by the White Paper of March 2017 ⁽⁴⁾ and complementing the Citizens' Consultations carried out in the Member States. They have expanded to embrace new formats, such as thematic bottom-up participatory workshops with citizens, online discussions and transnational Dialogues about issues in border regions. Citizens' Dialogues have been implemented through many formats.

Currently, most Citizens' Dialogues are organised by Commission Representations at the occasion of Commissioners' visits to their Member States. They are a low threshold, rather easy-to-do format that do not require a lot of resources to implement. Basic feature

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/white-paper-future-europe_en

is a discussion that starts with a very short welcome by a moderator (Commission staff or journalist), a 1-2 minutes intro by the Commissioner and an open exchange of Q&A in 2 or 3 rounds. These can (but do not have to) focus on specific themes linked to the Commissioner's portfolio or a theme that is relevant for the region.

To know more about Citizens' Dialogues:

https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/get-involved/past-initiatives/citizens-dialogues_en

Youth Policy Dialogues:

https://youth.europa.eu/year-of-youth/policy-dialogues_en

Civic initiatives under the Erasmus+ programme

CIVIS alliance

The alliance is a network of 11 leading higher education institutions who organise open labs where citizens and universities can discuss local challenges. Additionally, the annual Global CIVIS day gathers students, universities, policymakers, civil society, and local representatives from across Europe to enter a dialogue on societal developments.

CIVICA alliance

The CIVICA alliance reaches out to schools, minorities, and people with disadvantages to promote access to higher education. It targets e.g. first generation and refugee students, creating spaces to share experiences and success stories. Furthermore, the alliance regularly shares findings on contemporary issues with non-expert audiences, for example on the impact of fake news on democracy and climate change.

Additionally, DG EAC focused on making young people's voices heard during the **European Year of Youth**. For example, the "Voice Your Vision" portal was launched, creating a digital platform that empowered young people by collecting voice message submissions in which participants laid out their opinions and views.

Citizen outreach in the field of environment and climate

EU Green Week partner Events

Based on the insight that environmental messages must be conveyed without being perceived as top down, DG ENV has been partnering in "EU Green Week" events since 2011. Since then, every year saw between 100 and 576 Partner Events taking place throughout and even beyond Europe.

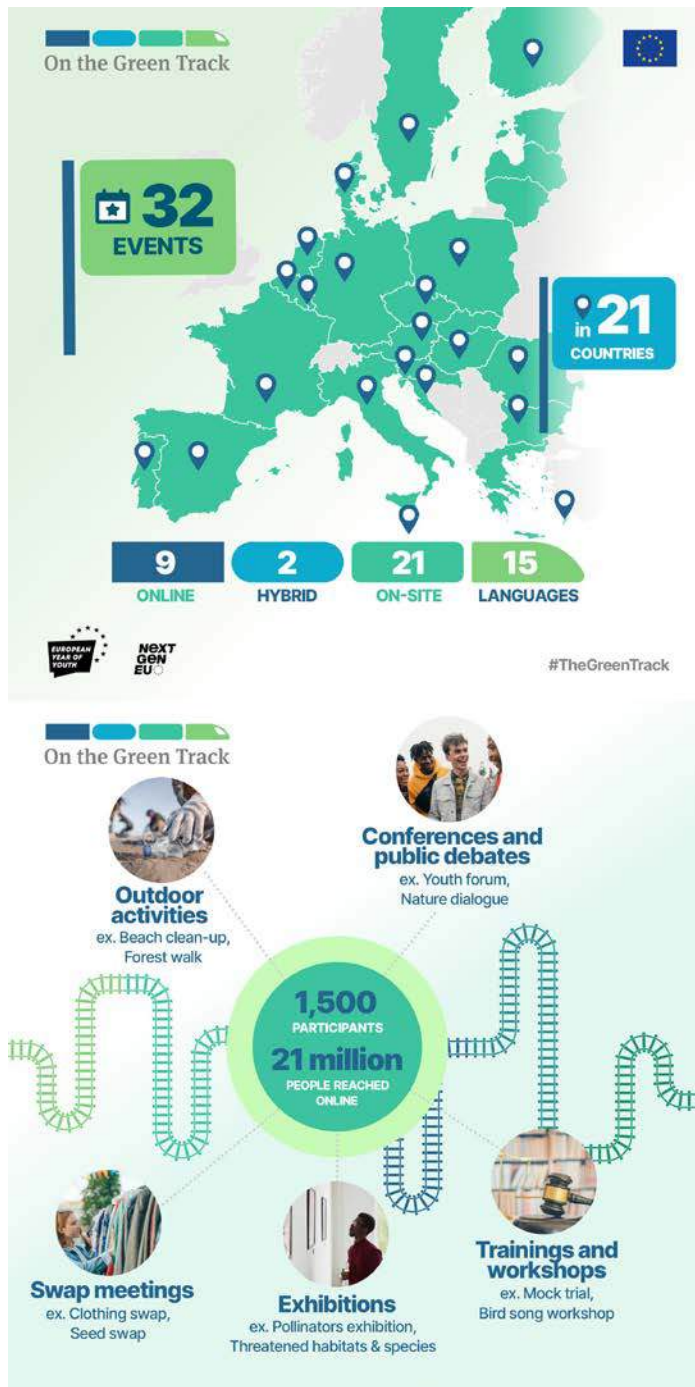
Since any organisation, like businesses, NGOs or schools can propose a partner event, they help localise environmental debates and reach audiences that are usually difficult to address from Brussels.

While the style of partner events is flexible and they are paid for by the partnering organisation, accepted events received support from the Commission in form of promotion on the Green Week website and social media accounts as well as a communication package and gadgets.



Green Track Campaign

In the context of the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) the Green Track Campaign was launched by the European Commission in collaboration with the Global Youth Biodiversity Network and Biodiversity Action Europe. Between March and June 2022, 32 events took place in 21 countries, giving specifically young people a voice in key topics such as biodiversity, nature, circular economy, and climate change.



Events took various shapes from public debates to exhibitions. Additionally, the accompanying online campaign reached over 21 million people, making the Green Track campaign a success story of citizen engagement.

The European Climate Pact is a climate action movement managed by DG CLIMA. It brings together individuals, communities, and organisations to achieve the European Green Deal's sustainability goals. Various citizen engagement methods have been used to translate climate change challenges into specific contexts.

The Pact in numbers:



4 377 420

pledges made by EU citizens.

All across Europe individuals have pledged to take action and help shape a climate-friendly society



16 603 080 kg

delivered in CO2e reduction.

These practical actions in everyday life, both big and small, add up to make a real difference



628

committed Ambassadors.

As passionate climate activists, Pact Ambassadors are driving change in their communities

1. Peer Parliaments

Rather than creating one big debate like during the plenary of a citizens' panel, Peer Parliaments follow a decentralised approach. Bringing together small deliberative groups of 5-10 participants, anyone can organise them, bringing together friends, family, or constituents. Overall, they are therefore capable of reaching a larger number of people with fewer resources. Next to the outputs complementing other forms of consultations, like surveys, these small-scale discussions can create a sense of ownership and strengthen belief in democracy amongst participants.

Peer parliaments held between November 2021 to March 2022. The outputs fed into the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Peer parliaments in numbers



461

The total number of Peer Parliaments that were held across **26 EU countries**



78

The largest number of Peer Parliaments held in one country (**Poland**)

2. Climate Pact Ambassadors

Community and organisation leaders can make a pledge on behalf of their organisation and become climate pact ambassadors. These volunteers engage with other citizens and spread information on climate change as well as debunk myths on the topic. Such ambassadors are important because they localise knowledge and reach target groups that may usually be out of reach for Brussels.

3. Local Collective Narratives and Prototyping for Action

This new tool targets cities and towns in particular. As a problem-solving approach it aims at developing solutions based on local citizens' needs. Up to 25 citizens are asked to define their own local climate challenges, and, after a being briefed about the latest climate science, are asked to identify the most relevant challenges (LCN part). Following this, they discuss solutions (PfA) part. Like this, participants move from understanding climate change in their own context to understanding the concrete actions that can be taken by citizens and local authorities.

4. Climate Fresk and En-ROADS Climate Solution Simulator

These methodologies have been developed to transmit knowledge about climate science and policymaking in interactive ways. En-ROADS is a free online simulator exploring the effects of 30 policies, such as electrifying transport and pricing carbon emissions on factors like energy prices, air quality and sea level rise.

While the tool can be used as an individual, it is most often used in group learning projects such as group role-plays leading to an understanding of different stakeholders' perspectives.



Group attending an En-ROADS event

The European Climate Pact celebrating 2 years of existence in February 2023



Climate Fresk is a climate change education tool that can be used by anyone. Being developed by NGOs and brought by them into the Climate Pact community, it facilitates workshops, enabling groups of 6-20 participants to reflect by interactively linking causes and effects of climate change.

For more information see [here](#).

Example of projects funded by the Commission

EACEA manages key parts of the [CERV programme](#) on behalf of DG JUST. The programme supports projects and organisations that use a great variety of creative, innovative and inclusive tools and concepts to engage with their target audiences on specific topics (e.g. European Elections 2024, decolonisation, combating hate speech, EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, Networks of Towns, EU Values, Defining moments in European History).

One of the projects funded under this framework is an e-democracy tool for citizen engagement – [DigiDEM](#). It applies collaborative methods to crowdsource legislation on the subject of air quality in four EU countries: Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Montenegro.

Gathering ideas from thousands of citizens from 10 cities, on 14th of February 2023 the event “Love is in the Air! Improving air quality in Europe through citizen action”, organised by ECAS, presented the main challenges identified by citizens as well as their proposals for solutions. The project further aimed to establish a community of policymakers, academics, NGOs and citizens that continuously advocate the use of new technologies and collaborative decision making.

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Read more: Extracts from the Communication

“Building on the Conference, and on its own existing tools, the Commission will propose ways to ensure citizens are given this closer role in EU policymaking.”

“The Commission will enable Citizens' Panels to deliberate and make recommendations ahead of certain key proposals, as part of its wider policymaking and in line with Better Regulation principles. Depending on the issue, these can either be pan- European or smaller targeted panels to address specific policy issues. As was the case in the Conference, participants should be randomly selected. But they should also reflect Europe's diversity and demography. Young people should form a third of the participants. Where appropriate, a ‘citizen report’ will be integrated in the impact assessment, summarising the outcomes of these participatory and deliberative processes. When all participants are young people, this would be dubbed a ‘youth test’. The first of this new generation of Citizens' Panels will be launched in the context of the 2022 State of the Union address.”

“Responding to the calls of the Conference participants for the setting up of online consultation platforms, the Commission's **Have Your Say portal will become a one-stop-shop for online citizen engagement**, bringing together all information on citizen engagement mechanisms running in the Commission. This new online hub will integrate key features of the Conference's multilingual digital platform: direct exchanges between citizens, commenting – in all EU official languages thanks to eTranslation – but also online polls and hosting online participatory events. It will form the basis for a new ecosystem of democratic engagement and innovation.”

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Read more: Three levels of the OECD

Following a gradation logic, the OECD distinguishes between three levels of how citizens are approached by governments:

1. **Information:** is a one-way relationship in which the government produces and delivers information to citizens and stakeholders. It covers both on-demand provision of information and “proactive” measures by the government to disseminate information.
2. **Consultation:** a level of participation that entails a two-way relationship in which citizens and stakeholders provide feedback to the government and vice-versa. It is based on the prior definition

of the issue for which views are being sought and requires the provision of relevant information, in addition to feedback on the outcomes of the process.

3. **Engagement:** when citizens and stakeholders are given the opportunity and the necessary resources (e.g., information, data and digital tools) to collaborate during all phases of the policy cycle and in the service design and delivery. It acknowledges equal standing for citizens in setting the agenda, proposing project or policy options and shaping the dialogue – although the responsibility for the final decision or policy formulation in many case rests with the investor or other authorities.


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Read more: Research studies in this field

There is a burgeoning field of study and ad-hoc inventory of the implementation of participatory processes at national, regional and local levels – which is also supported by the European Commission through Horizon Europe, pointing to participatory processes as an avenue for strengthening EU democracies.

The following projects are ongoing:

- [\[PROJECT\] For trustful, participatory and inclusive public policies](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Citizen Assemblies in Europe: window dressing or transformative instruments?](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Augmenting participation, co-creation, trust and transparency in Deliberative Democracy at all scales](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Innovative and Inclusive Democratic Spaces for Deliberation and Participation](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Facing Inequalities and democratic challenges through Co-production in Cities](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] pathways for CO-creation between local authorities and collective actions for a SUSTAINable transition](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Intersectional Spaces of Participation: Inclusive, Resilient, Embedded](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] CO-CREATING INCLUSIVE INTERSECTIONAL DEMOCRATIC SPACES ACROSS EUROPE](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Institutional Changes for Democratic Dialogue](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Designing Democracy on 'Mars' and 'Earth': Exploring Citizens' Democratic Preferences in a Deliberative and Co-Creative Design](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Education for Responsible Democratic Citizenship](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] INCITE-DEM – Inclusive Citizenship in a world in Transformation: Co-Designing for Democracy](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Transforming Education for Democracy through Aesthetic and Embodied Learning, Responsive Pedagogies and Democracy-as-becoming](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Democracy meets arts: critical change labs for building democratic cultures through creative and narrative practices](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Trust in European Democracies](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Network of Networks 4 Democracy](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Mapping Media for Future Democracies](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] CLIMate change citizens engagement toolbox for dealing with Societal resilience](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Re-Engaging with Neighbours in a State of War and Geopolitical Tensions](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Democratic Governance, Environmental and Climate Challenges, and Societal Transformation: Deliberation, Inclusiveness, and Citizen Empowerment for Sustainable Food Systems](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] INcrease Corporate political responsibility and Accountability \(INCA\)](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Politics of Grievance and Democratic Governance](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Increasing responsiveness to citizen voice in social services across Europe](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Latin American women activists' practices of resistance to transnational repression in host societies](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Strengthening democratic governance for climate transitions](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Democratising jUst Sustainability Transitions](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] A Gathering place to co-design and co-create Adaptation](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Climate, Inequality, and Democratic Action: The Force of Political Emotions](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Respond to Emerging Dissensus: Subnational Instruments and Norms of European democracy](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Transforming and Defending Multilateralism: European Union Support for more Robust, Effective and Democratic Global Governance](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] REconfiguring EU DEMOcracy Support? Towards a sustained demos in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Preparing the Research & Innovation Core for Mission Ocean, Seas & Waters](#)
- [\[PROJECT\] Gender Empowerment through Politics In Classrooms](#)

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Read more: On OECD benefits of citizen engagement

The OECD (2022) sums up the importance of citizen engagement as follows:

- It is good for democracy.
- It is good for policies, services, projects. It is good for inclusion and diversity.
- It is good for legitimacy and facilitates implementation of the policy.
- It helps public authorities with problem solving and take more fit for purpose decisions.

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Read more: How the original concept of citizen deliberation as coined by Pr. Fishkin and Luskin

The term deliberation has been brought to the fore in particular by Professors Fishkin and Luskin ⁽⁵⁾ who invented the method of deliberative polling. This is how they define it:

“For present purposes, we take deliberation to be a weighing of competing considerations through discussion that is:

- Informed (and thus informative). Arguments should be supported by appropriate and reasonably accurate factual claims.
- Balanced. Arguments should be met by contrary arguments.
- Conscientious. The participants should be willing to talk and listen, with civility and respect.
- Substantive. Arguments should be considered sincerely on their merits, not how they are made or who is making them.
- Comprehensive. All points of view held by significant portions of the population should receive attention.”

[↑ To go back to the original page click here.](#)

⁽⁵⁾ Fishkin, J.S. & Luskin, R. C. (2005). Experimenting with a democratic ideal: deliberative polling and public opinion. *Acta Politica*, 40, 284-298

Read more: How the Citizens' Engagement Platform could help to connect the different levels of engagement

The platform opens a participatory space to address a wider audience around the topic of a participatory format. The connection could be made mainly in three ways:

- With distinct phases in a clear timeline: a first phase of contribution could be opened at local/national level (online contribution and/or events) leading to a report that would then feed into a pan-European process.
- With concomitant phases and a clear guidance on how the two processes feed into each other: the pan-European format could be organised in parallel to the national processes. Regular reports from the platform (the COFE model) could feed into the pan-European format.
- Extend to a wider audience the processes carried out in the Member States, in other words by either starting the process on-line and gathering those insights as part of the knowledge basis of national/regional citizen engagement or by sharing the results of the citizen engagement exercises and seeking through the platform wider engagement of the population concerned.

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Read more: Networks of experts in the field and find links to resources

Beyond institutional actors, there are also many networks of experts and organised civil society in the field of participatory and deliberative democracy.

1. The biggest international network is: [Helping make hard decisions and build public trust. | Democracy R&D \(democracyrd.org\)](#)
2. The OECD on democratic innovation: [Innovative Citizen Participation – OECD](#)
3. FIDE – the European network and “good” lobby: [FIDE – Federation for Innovation in Democracy Europe](#)
4. At EU level as well, the forum on democratic participation of the EU: [EUI-STG Democracy Forum](#)

5. New Democracy Foundation (based in Australia but the most active internationally and a reference on these subjects): [newDemocracy Foundation](#)
6. MASS LBP in Canada is certainly also a good reference: [MASS LBP](#)
7. Finally, the specific network on climate assemblies is also a good place to find resources: [KNOCA – Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies](#).

To be noted also: the network of institutions launched by the Bertelsmann Foundation and FIDE, two important actors in the field of deliberative democracy, have joined to create a network of the main institutions at the forefront of participatory and deliberative processes. This includes a mix of international, national and regional authorities.

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Read more: Innovative Citizen Engagement at EU level

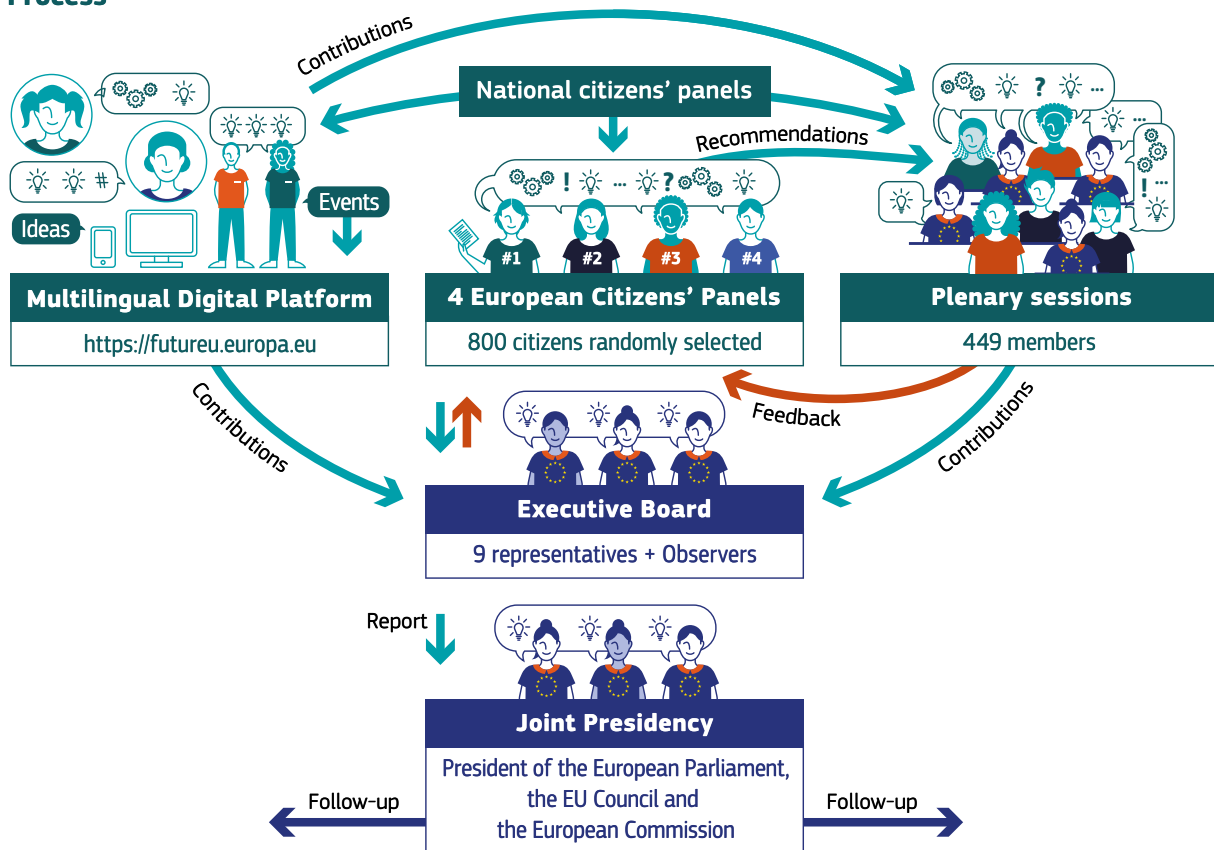
The conference on the future of Europe

All three pillars of the Conference have brought new interesting methodologies. Firstly, the **multilingual digital platform** has allowed to integrate Decidim – an open-source Civic Tech software – in the Europa Web environment. The software had been tested at local and national level but not at transnational level. It represents a significant step in terms of citizen engagement and online deliberations.



Conference on the Future of Europe

Process



Conference
on the Future
of Europe

In particular, the use of a “comment function” combined with automatic translation has opened the possibility for multilingual **direct exchanges between citizens**. Since it was connected with a system of **data analysis and text mining**, relying on the support of a team of researchers and artificial intelligence, it has also been a means to test the capacity of the Commission to study and draw meaningful conclusions from a large-scale consultation of this type. The **open source and open data** characteristics of the platform also provide access to a larger community of researchers and practitioners.

The Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe ⁽⁶⁾ set out an important feature of this unprecedented exercise: European citizens from all walks of life and corners of the Union should be able to participate, with Young Europeans playing a central role in shaping the future of the European project. Citizens’ participation in all Conference events was to aim at mirroring Europe’s diversity. Guidelines on how to organise inclusive and participatory events were available on the platform. Most importantly, the Conference opened the way to the random selection of citizens at European level.

The **four European Citizens’ Panels**, each composed of a group of randomly selected citizens who represented the EU’s diversity from socio-economic and geographical criteria (nationality and urban/rural), were very successful in bringing people who were not at all acquainted with EU affairs, and even with public debate in general to the European stage.

Beyond the well documented richness of opening a dialogue between people of diverse age, gender, place of living, level of education or socio-economic background, **the Conference successfully added the dimensions of cultural and language diversity, with an efficient interpretation set up**. Interpreters not only managed to support the deliberations very smoothly but also created a rhythm and a mindset that fostered respectful and peaceful dialogue.

Last but not least, the third pillar of the Conference, the Plenary, was also unique, as its composition was a mix of elected representatives from all levels of governance, organised civil society and ambassadors from the European Citizens’ Panels and the National Panels/Events. The dynamic of the Plenary was unique and led to the final consensual adoption of 49 proposals.

The Conference on the Future of Europe also brought a **new level of accountability and commitment when it comes to citizens’ participation**. As stated in the Joint Declaration, the Panels were to formulate a set of recommendations for the Union to follow


up on. The final report of the Conference delivered on 9 May to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission was to be examined swiftly by the three institutions, to decide on how to follow up, each within their own sphere of competence and in accordance with the Treaties. The improvement was not only the commitment to follow-up but also the clear and deliberate feedback aimed at ensuring visibility and accountability on this follow-up. The feedback event was organized in Brussels on 2 December 2022.

Did you know?

Proposal nr. 36 of the Conference on the Future of Europe concerns citizens’ information, participation and youth, with the objective to increase citizens’ participation and youth involvement in the democracy at the European Union level to develop a ‘full civic experience’ for Europeans, ensure that their voice is heard also in between elections, and that the participation is effective.

To know more: **Conference on the Future of Europe. Report on the Final Outcome.**

Available at: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/12090/20230216155928/https://futureu.europa.eu>

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Read more: Citizen engagement initiatives in Cohesion Policy

The managing authorities and intermediate bodies participating in the pilot project were selected by DG REGIO on the basis of a call for expression of interest and benefited from technical support from the OECD to analyse and address their citizen engagement needs and efforts.

The selected authorities represented a range of different cohesion policy programmes: regional programmes, cross-border cooperation programmes, and a national sectorial programme.

⁽⁶⁾ EUR-Lex - 32021C0318(01) - EN - EUR-Lex ([europa.eu](https://eur-lex.europa.eu))



In the region of Cantabria in Spain a citizens' jury that brought together a group of citizens broadly representative of the Besaya's basin was implemented. The citizens identified measures to help Cantabria move towards a low-carbon economy, taking into account the context of a ruralurban divide that this initiative aims to overcome.

The Besaya's Citizens' Jury deliberated on the question of "How to take advantage of European green funds in the Besaya basin to create and/or maintain jobs that respect the criteria of a just and inclusive ecological transition?". The jury produced 26 final recommendations. All of them received at least 80% approval among the members. On 1 October 2021, the jury members were present at the Torrelavega chamber of commerce, where they heard from Economy Minister María Sánchez Ruiz, the Cantabrian government's reactions to the recommendations and its plans for implementation.

To know more: [Engaging citizens in cohesion policy. DG REGIO and OECD pilot project final report.](#)

Available [here](#).

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Read more: Clear writing – Multilingualism – Plain language

Clear writing starts with clear thinking. Before you start writing, be clear in your own mind::

- Why are you writing?
- What is your main message?
- What are you trying to achieve?
- Who is your audience?

Use natural, straightforward language that keeps your text human, and keep it short and simple. Follow the 10 clear writing principles:

1. Think before you write, think of your reader
2. Structure your document

3. Keep it short and simple (KISS)
4. Use verbs instead of nouns
5. Prefer active verbs to passive ones
6. Be precise, not vague
7. Know your false friend
8. Beware of jargon
9. Avoid using abbreviations and foreign expressions
10. Revise and check

For more on clear writing, see the [Clear Writing Guide](#).

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Read more: Methods

Citizens' panels

Possible Variations:

- **European Citizens Panels.** Panels' participants come from all 27 Member States and need to have be able to work in the 24 official languages. The length of the Panel can vary. Three weekends is the minimum for quality deliberations. Other subjects or moments of the policymaking cycle could require a longer time span.
- **Distributed (national or regional) Citizens Panels.** Organised in each EU Member State and/or across borders of two or more Member States. Panels only have citizens from the specific Member State(s) or region(s). May be organised with the Representations, national administrations or other actors.
- **Some sessions of Citizens' Panels can happen online but fully online panels are not recommended.** Online sessions require specific moderation skills to stimulate a fruitful conversation. Participants have less opportunity to interact and the human dimension which is a strong asset of the Panels is weaker online. Online sessions should not open or close the deliberations of a Panel, as these two sessions are important for teambuilding purposes.

Recruitment method:

- The selection of participants needs to be purely random (no pre-existing lists): the recruitment can be done by telephone using Random Digital Dialling (RDD). In some cases, face-to-face methods (CAPI) or the sending of letters (using official registers) can also be used.
- The goal is to recruit 150 participants and 50 people for the reserve list. An organisation such as a polling institute (EAD team in Brussels) is responsible for proposing and implementing a methodology for the recruitment. Participants and reserve lists are then provided to the European Commission. Participants who drop out before the Panel has started to work or after the 1st session are replaced by reserve persons with the same profile.
- As an incentive, a certain amount needs to be paid to participants in order to allow them to pay for services during their absence (e.g., house/baby or pet sitting) or for food during the travel. The incentive for participants of the 3 EU Citizens' Panels 2022/23 was 90 €/day.

Recruitment process:

- Project set up: taking place a few months before the beginning of the Panel (the shortest being 2 months, e.g., for the Food Waste Panel whose first session was held on 16-18 December, the set-up phase took place between October and November & recruitment started on November 24 and lasted until December 14)
- Polling institute is centrally managing the project ensuring coordination with the national agencies. The selection process needs to be closely monitored by the Commission services to ensure its rigour and quality.
- A recruitment screener is prepared to help the recruitment process and allow national agencies to identify suitable participants consistently, always adhering to the quotas. The screener is written in a way that is as inclusive as possible, making the citizens feel that they are welcome even if they know nothing about the EU, the subject, are not digitally skilled or need to be accompanied for a handicap or health reasons.

Communication to participants:

Invitation:

- The first contact with citizens is done by national agencies, to ensure commitment. This is followed by a formal invitation to citizens, providing information on the Panels, explaining what is expected from them.
- The sending of this follow-up invitation is generally in the hands of the logistics service provider, which has set up a multi-lingual secretariat to ensure the permanent communication of the citizens during the Panel. They therefore receive the lists of participants from the Commission, which as the data controller, makes the link between the recruiter and the logistics service provider.
- As the Panels are still not widely known, the Commission must ensure that potential candidates for a Panel have a trustworthy address, if they wish to verify that the invitation is legitimate (contact address with telephone number in HQ and in the Commission REPs).

Communication:

Provide information on context, format and practicalities (e.g. travel costs covered, assistance for minors and persons with disabilities). This is done in two ways:

- An initial Information Kit in the languages of the participants. It provides information on the European Citizens' Panels, the topic and the remit citizens are called to work on, as well as useful contacts and practical information.
- Regular emailing decided by the Steering Board and done by the logistics service provider in charge of the communication with the participants via a multilingual secretariat.

Resources needed:

Staff involved:

- Multilingual secretariat and logistics team for participants' management (contracted).
- Experts of deliberative processes to help design the methodology.
- 2 moderators for plenary, facilitators and assistants for each working group.
- Interpreters and technicians.
- Hostesses to guide the group.
- 6 to 10 members in the Knowledge Committee.
- Around 5 to 10 people from the policy DG and same from DG COMM.

Resources needed:

Costs and procurement:

- **Cost of citizens' Panels:**
The costs around 2 to 2.5 million cover: recruitment, design of methodology, moderation and facilitation, communication with the participants through a multilingual secretariat, participants' incentives, participants travel and accommodation (if needed), logistics (such as room rent if needed), technical support and catering/consumables, translation/interpretation if it cannot be covered by DGT/SCIC and possible support to communication strategy.
- **What needs to be procured?**
 - Participant recruitment, methodology's design as well as moderation and logistics are outsourced.
 - In case of transnational or European panels, interpretation is needed and may be outsourced as well in those cases when DG SCIC cannot provide interpreters and/or the infrastructure.
 - Communication (e.g., invitation to journalists and influencers to attend the Panels and paid promotion on social media) can be outsourced as well, translation/interpretation if it cannot be covered by DGT/SCIC and possible support to communication strategy.

Moderation and facilitation:

- Two main moderators - ideally a woman and a man - steer the discussion in the plenary. Their role is to provide information on the general goal of the Panel and the methodology of the individual sessions as well as on logistical aspects. They also facilitate the debate between the expert speakers, ensure that knowledge is provided fairly and impartially during the discussions and facilitate the Q&A between experts and citizens.
- In the final plenary of each session, the two main moderators bring together all the results.
- Working groups are facilitated by two team members: a skilled and experienced facilitator and one assistant and note-taker.
- Facilitators are impartial and trained in creating an inclusive dialogue. They ensure that all participants have an equal say and nobody stays silent. They introduce the purpose of the meetings, ensure that all citizens are informed about the overall process, and make sure that the objectives of the discussion are reached.

- Facilitators have also the role of timekeeping, note-taking and consolidating deliberation output in multilingual and interlinked working documents. They send requests and questions posed by the citizens in the working groups to the support team or the experts and they participate in debriefing sessions with the methodology experts.
- A limited number of observers are allowed to follow the Panels thus ensuring the transparency of the process and promoting its visibility. Internal observers come from the organising partners and institutions while external observers comprise researchers (from universities or think tanks) or civil society actors and stakeholders.

Organisation of the sessions:

- 2 sessions in presence at the beginning and the end of the Panel and one session fully online in between. This can be changed to fully in presence, subject to financial and organizational capacity.
- All in person sessions take place in Commission premises (CHAR building and CCAB). Subject to financial and organizational capacity, a session in a Member State (e.g. during a Council Presidency or linked to a relevant event) could be considered.
- For online sessions, the use of a virtual Conference Center can be considered to make the session more attractive.


Communication with the participants after the event:

- Participants receive a thank you letter with a certificate of participation.
- The Final and the Citizens' Reports, which must be available in the languages of the participants.
- Feedback surveys after events must be conducted and the results shared.
- Expected timeline of the policy proposal and were to find the updated information.
- Information about follow-up or specific other actions, in particular, about the organisation of a feedback moment.

Evaluation:


These elements could be usefully used/considered in the evaluation process:

- **Participants' experience and reflections**
Participants should be handed a short feedback survey to fill in, answering questions covering the entire process of their engagement (i.e. invitation, communication, participation and interactions, clarity of purpose and follow-up, moderation and facilitation). Ideally a survey at the beginning and at the end to see the evolution should be done. Questions allowing to assess the evolution of the participants are interesting (Did they participate in a meeting like that before? Have they changed their view on EU? On the subject? What have they learnt?).

 [See example of survey on page 42 of the Annex](#)

- **Criteria for quality and integrity**

- Quality, focus and depth of discussions, quality of deliberations
- Quality and diversity of knowledge management and experts' input
- Moderator interventions and facilitators' skills
- Participants' feedback before, during and after
- Clarity of communication with participants
- Multilingualism is a key aspect of the process, especially when citizens' panels are trans-European, starting from the random selection to the panel debates that are multilingual and interpreted in the 24 EU languages
- Quality and "actionability" of the outputs

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Focus groups and in-depth groups

Definition:

Originating in social science research, a focus group helps collect insights on a topic ('focus') that reflect the participants' own experience and awareness. Focus groups are a foundational method that enables a multitude of more complex processes involving combinations, repetitions or interactions among several groups as part of a coherent methodology.

Therefore it is helpful to gain knowledge into how people may respond to a policy option, solution, challenge. Learn from an added layer of interaction between participants that elicits deeper insights and creates a richer discourse.

Possible Variations:

- **In-depth groups:** A variation which requires more time for engaging the same group of citizens through several sessions or a lengthy exercise (for example, a full day); it enables a more thorough exploration of the topic of interest, especially when the topic is emerging and largely unknown in the public sphere, as well as, rather complex. It is also useful to explore how participants relate to the topic of concern over time.
- **Distributed (national or regional) Citizens Panels.** Organised in each EU Member State and/or across borders of two or more Member States. Panels only have citizens from the specific Member State(s) or region(s). May be organised with the Representations, national administrations or other actors.
- **Multiple more complex designs:** Participants meet in a virtual room that offers the means for an online informed debate. Easier to organise but requires technical knowledge to choose and operate the most suitable digital platform (such as those in use by the Commission). Requires moderation skills to stimulate an ongoing conversation. Participants have less opportunity to interact.

Recruitment method:

- Defining the participants' profile depends on the problem and context. Participants must be randomly selected from a target population to ensure representation of demographic characteristics of the population (such as gender, age, socio-economic status). However, purposeful sampling is also possible to ensure specific targeted characteristics, traits or experiences are present around the table.
- Unless specifically targeting a peculiar group (e.g. old male immigrants from Africa), participants should be selected to ensure diversity.
- Sometimes, focus groups can also be done with known, purposefully targeted groups (e.g. traditional knowledge-holders, students, etc.), but nonetheless, the participants should be randomly selected from these groups.
- An incentive needs to be planned to compensate participants for their time.

Communication to participants:

- Participants should receive a letter of invitation 1 to 3 months in advance, explaining the purpose of the process, the time commitment required, the details of the participatory procedure, how they will get involved, and how their input will be used. Invitees need to formally confirm their commitment to participate before being considered as participants.

Staff and Logistics:

- Staff of the policy service interested in implementing this method and staff from the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy.
- One lead moderator, with a second supporting one optional.
- Note-takers who do not take part in any of the discussions but can observe participants' interactions.
- Flipchart to harvest discussion. Questions for the focus group need to be clearly visible at all times.
- Notebooks and colour pens for the participants in case they wish to take notes or scribble during the discussions.
- Food and beverages for the participants throughout the duration of the focus group.

What needs to be procured?

Participant recruitment, moderation and logistics are outsourced. Reporting is also outsourced.

Cost of a focus group includes recruitment, moderators' fees, participants' tokens, participants' travel and accommodation (if needed), logistics (such as room rent) and consumables.

European Commission's Directorate-General for Communication (COMM) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

In 2023, two FWCs have direct provisions for focus group organisation: COMM/2020/OP/0017 "Standard Eurobarometer Surveys", lot 2 "Eurobarometer Studies"; and COM/2020/OP/0020 "Impact Assessment, Evaluations and Evaluation-Related Studies and Services in the Field of Communications", Lot 2 "Development and/or implementation of monitoring and evaluation tools and services".

Moderation and facilitation:

- Focus group requires a skilled moderator to direct and facilitate the dialogue among the participants. A second moderator can act as support, e.g., to take notes on a flipchart for participants to always have key messages visible.
- The moderator needs to ensure participant have an equal say and no one remains silent. Moderator needs to define and communicate ground rules to establish an atmosphere of dialogue and respect. It is the moderator who needs to introduce the purpose of the meeting, present the questions, and explain how participants inputs will be used.

Moderation and facilitation:

- Facilitators need not to steer the group towards agreement, but should encourage respect of differences, demonstrating sensitivity and acknowledgement.
- The moderator does not take sides. He or she is not an interviewer either, and must encourage dialogue rather than just direct individual responses. Hence, moderators guide the discussion, challenge participants to address the questions from various perspectives, and observe how differences are being handled.
- Moderators must not intervene to question statements made by the participants regardless of their own personal stances or opinions on the matters under discussion.
- Group rules can be elaborated by the moderator at the beginning and written for all participants to agree to on a piece of paper.

Organisation of the sessions:

- Choreography is based on an expanded agenda, broken down into detailed activities and questions to be addressed to participants and clearly specifying the roles and responsibilities of all involved.
- The choreography enables the moderators to know how to steer the process.
- The moderator needs to explain to the participants why they were invited and what is expected from them. He or she should then give them the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions. Any process instructions, including typical alternative cues for the moderator to follow, need to be clearly written down. Moderators can be given suggestions and cues for prompting questions, as well as advice on how to proceed in certain unexpected situations (e.g., when fewer than expected participants show up, if a participant decides to leave before the formal end, if there is a sensitive situation, etc.)

How to make sense of the outputs? What analytics can be used?


- Verbatim transcripts could be sufficient to work with. No additional post-processing would be needed besides an overall clean-up, especially if automated text-to-speech technology was used.
- More complex analytics can be done by using text processing/analysis software, including NVivo, MaxQDA for qualitative analysis, or text mining for a more quantitative perspective. This can also be helpful in cases when participants' inputs need to be grouped by a particular characteristic (either demographic, geographic or identity- or position-related, if known).

Communication with the participants after the event:

- Within a week of a focus group's end, all participants need to receive a formal Thank You letter, reiterating appreciation for their time and input, and detailing how results will be used. If other type of involvement is needed, it should be described, including a timeline. An email for any questions should be included.

Evaluation

- Participants should be handed a short feedback survey to fill in, answering questions covering the entire process of their engagement (i.e., invitations, communication, participation, discussions, interactions, clarity on purpose and follow-up, moderator role and involvement). This can be done either immediately before participants left the room (maximising number of submissions) or online up to two days after the focus group took place (at the risk of reduced response rate).
- The following criteria of evaluation of the process should be taken into account:
 - Quality, focus and depth of discussions
 - Moderator interventions
 - Participants feedback during and
 - immediately after the focus group
 - Any communication with participants

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Co-design workshops

Definition:

The main goal is to get results that are closer to the needs and requirements of those who might be impacted by the policy decisions in discussion, and ultimately reach conclusions which represent as many perspectives as possible, while also ensuring any outcomes generated become more than the sum of its original inputs ⁽⁷⁾.

Co-design workshops are particularly suitable for when exploring possible innovative and future solutions (e.g., policies and technologies) to a problem. It is a process of collaborative thinking that pushes participants to discover other peoples' perspectives, to jointly explore the issues and to jointly develop and define solutions. The overall participatory process is ideally organised as a series of workshops or 'sprints' with different participants from different backgrounds. The workshops require active exchange among the participants, sometimes guided by a moderator who supports, but does not intervene with inputs. Participants are often split in small groups of 5-10 persons (depending on the size of group as well as, if the exercise is organised offline or online).

⁽⁷⁾ Want to know more: Stappers and Sanders, 2012; Bson, 2016; Nascimento and Pólora, 2016; Nascimento et al., 2016.

Visual prompts and tangible elements are also used, such as cards presenting different events with which participants need to engage, or the use of post-its and canvas designed for this purpose.

Participants can question each other and further elaborate upon their answers, leading to a more indepth conversation. This creates an environment favourable for the exploration of drivers, and generation of creative ideas and scenarios, as well as reaching common ground on specific topics.

Possible variations

Co-design includes a variety of approaches, ranging from research-oriented to design-oriented ones. Normally, the workshops are fast paced, lasting from 2 to 3 hours, with participants being pushed to generate a high number of diverse ideas, well beyond what one individual alone can produce. In the context of citizen engagement, the focus is on approaches in which citizens are involved as designers of policies.

Prototyping using LEGO® bricks, plasticine or any other tool, is one of the most common approaches. Participants may be called into trial prototypes through role playing, user journeys, contextual mappings towards fine-tuning and possible iterations and a search for the best possible evidence on how to move from plausible proofs-ofconcept into working solutions to inform or support policy.

Other approaches include the creation of fictional artefacts as a way to trigger forward-looking discussions into the possibilities of yet to be fully-fledged realities. The outputs function as learning devices that provide imaginative insights into potential policy realities to come.

Originating in social science research and more specifically futures studies, a **future-oriented workshop** helps collect knowledge as well as, hopes, fears, and expectations on a topic and enables development of new ideas and solutions. Probing into collective experiences can improve understanding of a problem and its underlying issues. It further enables observing the interactions among the participants, adding useful context and detail to the contents of the conversation.

Gaining insights based on “collective intelligence”, especially to overcome biases that a participant might have. Provides strategic conversations among participants over a futureoriented topic of interest. Helpful to gain knowledge into how people may respond to a policy option, solution, challenge.

- **Hackathon** is a method that involves fast idea generation, decision-making, and prototyping. In hackathons, participants typically have a short period of time, such as one day or one weekend, to collaborate in teams to create novel solutions (and ideally a functioning prototype) to problems and challenges. Hackathons can be competitive in nature, with teams competing for a prize (see for instance, the annual datathon organised by the Publications Office of the European Union ⁽⁸⁾).

Recruitment method

What is the recruitment strategy?

The recruitment of participants should be done following the identification of the relevant communities and groups concerned or affected by the issue of concern. Participants can also be chosen because they have knowledge or experience on the topic, to get an insight into how different perspectives interplay. Knowing the different actors and their relationship to each other and with the issues under discussion is relevant and beneficial in understanding their background, their knowledge and their potential contribution.

Communication to participants

Should be notified (e.g., by letter or email) in advance (1 to 3 months) of the time and place of the workshop. Preparatory documents explaining the purpose of the workshop and the issue(s) being addressed must be sent as well in advance. Invitees need to formally confirm their commitment to participate before being considered as participants (e.g., via email).

⁽⁸⁾ <https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eudatathon>

Staff and logistics

- Staff of the policy service interested in implementing this method and staff from the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy.
- One facilitator, which can be supported by one note taker (who does not interact with participants).
- When relevant, experts on the topic need to be part of the moderation team.
- Funding is typically required for recruitment of participants, facilitator, venue, workshop materials (see next point), coffee break or light meal, participants' travels and tokens.
- Co-design workshops are often supported by various types of materials such as (but not limited to): drawing supplies (e.g., pens, pencils and markers of various colours) and large format paper sheets (e.g., A1 size); post-it notes of various colours and sizes; LEGO® bricks or other building blocks; foam building blocks; pipe cleaners / chenille stems; plasticine; clay; game-pieces.
- Specific pre-designed support materials such as: ideation canvas; storyboard canvas; trigger cards; paper mock-ups.

Cost of co-design workshops includes: recruitment, facilitation, communication with the participants, participants travel and accommodation (if needed), logistics (such as room rent), technical support and catering/ consumables, as well as materials for prototyping.

What needs to be procured?

Participant recruitment, facilitation, prototyping materials and logistics are outsourced: Funding is typically required for recruitment of participants, facilitator, venue, workshop materials, catering, participants' travels and tokens.

European Commission's Directorate-General for Communication (COMM) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

Moderation and facilitation

- The facilitator needs to ensure that all participants equally participate in the activities of the workshop, and no one remains silent or manipulates the discussion.

- Overall, the facilitator should support the participants' work but avoid leading the participants in a certain direction and refrain from ideating on their behalf.
- Experienced facilitators with knowledge of the methodology is required to conduct the workshops.

Organisation of the sessions

- Co-design workshops are usually divided in three distinct phases:
 1. Exploration phase, where the problem at stake is clarified and defined based on the combined perspectives of the different participants;
 2. Creation phase, where prototypes of potential solutions are developed by the participants, and;
 3. Evaluation phase, where the prototypes developed are tested and, if successful, implemented in practice.
- In the beginning of the co-design workshops, the facilitator needs to introduce the purpose of the workshop, present the issues under discussion, and explain how participants' inputs will be used.
- Likewise, the facilitator must explain the different phases (and inherent activities) of the workshop and what is expected from participants in each phase as well as what material will be used. He or she should then give participants the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions.

Outputs

- The outputs consist of both the conversations and the artifacts. As such, both need to be analysed. Whilst the artifacts encapsulate particular ideas about the issue of concern (which can be concerns, ethical issues, desired functionality, etc.), the conversations concern reasoning and motivation. Standard coding of transcriptions is used.
- The end result of the workshop (and of the overall participatory process) is communicated through a report, which should also be sent to the participants.

- At the end of the workshop, participants should propose two or three possible policy recommendations/proposals, considering the issue addressed.
- The collaborative aspect adopted in co-design workshops can support the better formulation of policies by facilitating: Identification of issues, benefits and drawbacks; Shared assessment of alternatives; Identification of shared ground and potential consensus points.

How to make sense of the outputs? What analytics can be used?

- Summary of key messages during the discussions, grouped by theme/perspective into the topic, using the questions as guidance for structuring the summary.
- Comparison of outputs produced by different groups if there are several workshops running in parallel.
- Communication with the participants after the event: Within a week of co-design workshop end, all participants need to receive a formal Thank You letter, reiterating appreciation for their time and input, and detailing how results will be used. If other type of involvement is needed, it should be described, including timeline. An email address for any questions should be included.

Evaluation

Participants should be handed a short feedback survey to fill in, answering questions covering the entire process of their engagement (i.e., invitations, communication, participation, discussions, interactions, clarity on purpose and follow-up, moderator role and involvement). This can be done either immediately before participants left the room (maximising number of submissions) or online up to two days after the co-design workshop (at the risk of reduced response rate).

In relation to Process implementation, quality, integrity:

- Quality and depth of solutions presented/prototyped.
- Facilitator's work.
- Participants feedback during and immediately after the co-design group.
- The communication with participants.

Example expanded: Co-creation workshops on “The Social & Ethical Issues of Connected and Automated Vehicles”

Series of co-creation workshops conducted by the JRC from May to October 2019, concerning the future of mobility and in particular the issue of connected and self-driving vehicles. The participants of the workshops explored various mobility narratives, ethical considerations, expectations and matters of concern toward this new type of mobility.

The work was carried out under the framing of the NewHorizon project (newhorizon.eu), funded by the Horizon 2020, which explores Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) inspired governance modalities through a number of Social Lab experiments. The JRC conducted a pilot project on the topic of the future of mobility and the place of Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAVs) in those visions.

Methodology:

The workshops' length was approximately of three hours and it consisted of four main momenta, articulated and guided by an experienced facilitator:

- Momentum 1: Participants were invited to build a vehicle of the future, with LEGO® bricks, that addressed a mobility issue or challenge in their neighbourhood. They were then asked to introduce and explain their vehicle.
- Momentum 2: Guided talk / discussion about the current state of the CAV field, followed by a demonstration by JRC staff of a LEGO® miniature robotic vehicle, purposefully programmed to illustrate how algorithms work so that automatised decisions are made in view of obstacles.
- Momentum 3: Participants were exposed to the narratives of mobility promoted by the CAVs sector and the European Commission's COM(2018) 283. Cards that reflected the main promises, technological challenges, and critical questions raised within the field of CAVs and the future of mobility were created and distributed to the participants. These were curated based on the narrative analysis work on academic and policy documents that was conducted beforehand, and the visual-based medium allowed for a wide variety of interpretations that could be discussed within the groups.
- Momentum 4: Group activity in which participants were asked to think about their neighbourhood in more than a decade ahead, and place their vehicles in that imagined vision as well as, indicating drivers forces that could foster or hinder such visions.

Participants could make use of posters and stickers that contained mobility options or using LEGO® bricks to create their own vehicles. The process of visualising and negotiating these imaginary futures created an environment in which citizens felt empowered to raise points which may not have been considered a priority within other discussion formats.

Series of co-creation workshops conducted by the JRC from May to October 2019, concerning the future of mobility and in particular the issue of connected and self-driving vehicles. The participants of the workshops explored various mobility narratives, ethical considerations, expectations and matters of concern toward this new type of mobility.

In total, seven co-creation workshops, with 6 to 12 participants, were held in three European Union countries: Italy, Portugal and Belgium. The participants themselves were nationals from countries such as Italy, Portugal, Greece, Austria, Poland, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and the United Kingdom. The workshops were held in local languages or in the common language of the participants.

The workshop setting allowed participants from different demographics and backgrounds to engage with what can be considered challenging technical and socioeconomic issues related to CAVs—such as young adults, children and families.

Main Outcomes:

The workshops helped identify alternative imaginaries of mobility to those promoted by the technology and automobile industries. Overall, 26 different types of mobility options were specifically mentioned throughout the workshops, in contrast with the 8 mobility options initially identified in interviews with industry professionals. The alternative imaginaries that citizens put forth mostly prioritised active modes of transport in cities such as biking and walking and put an emphasis on multi-modality and inter-operability.

The workshops also helped showing that there is enthusiasm for CAVs, but that citizens are aware that there is a variety of social and ethical concerns needed to be solved through urban planning, clear implementation plans, and regulatory frameworks. They additionally questioned the plausibility of several claims; such as that CAVs will necessarily reduce emissions, or contribute to safety.

Citizens tended to focus on the environment and on the lifestyles of mobility users, with an emphasis on sustainability, accessibility and livability. There was a re-centring on people when it came to discussions about the future of mobility within cities.

Scenario workshops

Definition:

A participatory foresight process or other future oriented process is a co-creative learning phase for all the participants. Through it, there is an opportunity to achieve a deeper understanding of the nature of a policy problem of concern. A safe space for open discussion enables learning from speculative ‘what if’ questions. This helps to be prepared for new and unexpected challenges that might emerge in the future.

Scenario workshops are particularly suitable for exploring possible innovative and future solutions (e.g., policies and technologies) to a problem. It is a process of collaborative thinking that pushes participants to discover other peoples’ perspectives, to jointly explore the issues and to jointly develop and define solutions.

Visual prompts and tangible elements are also used, such as cards presenting different events with which participants need to engage, or the use of post-its and canvas designed for this purpose. Participants can question each other and further elaborate upon their answers, leading to a more in-depth conversation.

This creates an environment favourable for the exploration of drivers, and generation of creative ideas and scenarios, as well as reaching common ground on specific topics.

Originating in social science research and more specifically futures studies, a future-oriented workshop helps collect knowledge as well as, hopes, fears, and expectations on a topic and enables development of new ideas and solutions. Probing into collective experiences can improve understanding of a problem and its underlying issues and drivers. It further enables observing the interactions among the participants, adding useful context and detail to the contents of the conversation. Gaining insights based on “collective intelligence”, especially to overcome biases that a participant might have. Provides strategic conversations among participants over a future-oriented topic of interest. Helpful to gain knowledge into how people may respond to a policy option, solution, challenge.

Possible variations

There are many variations of scenario workshops tailored to specific objectives, e.g. foresight workshops, future workshops, Horizon scanning workshops, scenario workshops, visioning workshops, Causal Layered Analysis workshops, futuring tours, speculative future ateliers.

Overall, the method aims at enabling to a certain degree moderated and structured discussion about the future by a group of pre-selected participants within a shared physical or online space. All variations require skilled facilitators and a thorough preparation.

- **Horizon scanning workshops:** they aim at the identification of weak signals of change and their prioritisation through a participatory approach. Signals can be collected via participants and complemented through data mining (e.g., Scopus, PatStat).
- **Scenario workshops:** they focus on building plausible scenarios of the future, in a participatory way through one or a series of workshops, exploring assumptions, uncertainties, factors and drivers. There are various scenario development methods.
- **Visioning workshops:** they focus on building a joint vision of the future.
- **Causal Layered Analysis workshops:** they identify underlying driving forces and worldviews leading to current problems to be able to generate new images of the future that lead to solving the current issues.
- **Serious foresight games:** there, participants explore and discuss different futures through a serious game settings. It is often a role-playing game. Some games require little or no facilitation at all, but most require skilled facilitators. This method is especially suitable for engaging young people in future-oriented discussions. Some types can be used as educational tools. Another advantage of serious games is their short duration (mostly less than 3 hours).
- **Future workshops:** they can help develop new ideas and solutions to complex and multifaceted problems. Developed in 1970s by Jungk, Lutz and Muellert. It requires trained moderators. Can be suitable to engage children and youth.

- **Futuring tours:** a variation to foresight workshops, in which citizens are involved in a process where first they explore the issues of concern through a 'tour' of the material (physical) space where possible futures of those issues develop (for example, technology in the city; an exhibition about the future of food; etc.). This helps identify futures narratives (i.e., how the future is conceived by others or is materialising in practice). Subsequently, citizens unpack those narratives, explore their drivers and eventually through a backcasting exercise may develop their own visions and the drivers of those visions (i.e. what needs to happen now in order to attain a specific vision). It is based on ideas of Davies et al. on material deliberation. Other variations include future making ateliers on technology development (ref.).

Recruitment method

What is the recruitment strategy?

- Diversity is key. Depending on the topic and type of exercise, participants can be experts from multi-stakeholder groups, a group of citizens with diverse demographic characteristics (age, gender, employment status, etc.), students, or any other group of people. The sampling method can therefore be purposive.
- Define the target group from which to recruit. It is helpful to establish the degree of relevance/familiarity of the participants to the topic of interest and whether they need to be knowledgeable of or experienced with it.

The recruitment strategy should preferably be centred on having citizens randomly selected from the population or communities of concern, based on profiles and relevant attitudinal criteria.

Communication to participants

Participants should receive a letter of invitation explaining the purpose of the process, the time commitment required, the details of the participatory procedure and how they will get involved, and how their input will be used.

Staff and logistics

Staff of the policy service interested in implementing this method and staff from JRC.S1 in case of future-oriented participatory workshops.

Variable numbers of experienced facilitators (one by sub-group), whose tasks can be supported by note takers.

Funding is typically required for recruitment of participants, facilitator, venue, workshop materials (see next point), coffee break or light meal, participants' travels and tokens.

Specific pre-designed support materials such as: ideation canvas; storyboard canvas; trigger cards; paper mock-ups.

Cost of future-oriented workshops includes: recruitment, facilitators fees, participants tokens, participants travel and accommodation (if needed), logistics (such as room rent) and consumables.

What needs to be procured?

Participant recruitment, facilitation, prototyping materials and logistics are outsourced.

European Commission's Directorate-General for Communication (COMM) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

Moderation and facilitation

- The facilitator needs to ensure that all participants equally participate in the activities of the workshop, and no one remains silent.
- Overall, the facilitator should support the participants' work but avoid leading the participants in a certain direction and refrain from ideating on their behalf.
- Experienced facilitators with knowledge of scenario building is required to conduct the workshops.

Outputs

- Typically, a workshop report, containing main points of the discussions, supplemented by any notes on interactions among the participants.
- Canvases with post-its and reflections of participants, written down during the workshop. If the group was asked to also engage in a material activity (i.e. drawing, creating an object), which was part of the discussion, it needs to be properly kept and/or photographed for later reference.
- Drivers, scenarios and visions of desirable or plausible futures.

How to make sense of the outputs?

What analytics can be used?

- Summary of key messages during the discussions, grouped by theme/perspective into the topic, using the questions as guidance for structuring the summary.
- Comparison of outputs produced by different groups if there are several workshops running in parallel.
- Depending on the type of workshop, the analysis can lead to writing up scenarios or visions.
- It can help mapping key factors and rivers of the future, key stakeholders, key topics that need to be taken into consideration when developing work further.

Communication with the participants after the event:

Within a week of the co-design workshop ending, all participants need to receive a formal Thank You letter, reiterating appreciation for the time and input, and detailing how results will be used. If other type of involvement is needed, it should be described, including a timeline. An email address for any questions should be included.

Evaluation

Participants should be handed a short feedback survey to fill in, answering questions covering the entire process of their engagement (i.e., invitations, communication, participation, discussions, interactions, clarity on purpose and follow-up, moderator role and involvement). This can be done either immediately before participants left the room (maximising number of submissions) or online up to two days after the co-design workshop (at the risk of reduced response rate).

In relation to process implementation, quality, integrity:

- Quality and depth of solutions presented/prototyped.
- Facilitator's work.
- Participants feedback during and immediately after the workshops.
- The communication with participants.

Example expanded: Future of Government 2030+

A Citizen Centric Perspective on New Governance Models ran from October 2017 until November 2019. The overall aim of the project was to better understand changing relations in society, with the growing role and pervasiveness of digital technologies in our lives and to stimulate discussion about them.

The project put EU citizens and their hopes and fears about the future at its core. Participatory foresight workshops with citizens were held in Austria, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Spain and Sweden. An additional one was organised in Brussels with representatives of civil society, academia and businesses. Based on the diversity of expectations and uncertainties about how things could develop, which was discussed and imagined in these workshops, four scenarios were created: DIY (Do It Yourself) Democracy, Private Algocracy, Super Collaborative Government, Over-Regulocracy.

To enable creative speculations and out of the box thinking on possible alternative models of government, the EU Policy Lab started a collaboration with six top design schools throughout Europe. More than 100 students and staff from six European design schools were involved in exploring and developing concepts about how government might work, in response to the scenarios presented above. Students' work was exhibited in many different locations in Brussels and Luxembourg, inside of the European Commission buildings as well as outside, between March and December 2019. It was also posted online, thus allowing broad engagement with these concepts.

Together, these scenarios and a set of design concepts that bring them to life offer a starting point for discussing the positive and negative implications of these changes.

In the final phase of the project, a serious foresight game, FuturGov game, was developed as an engagement tool that can live beyond the duration of the project and serve at the same time as a tool to increase futures and political literacies among people. We have used it in a number of sessions throughout Europe with students, civil society organisations, think tanks, foresight experts, civil servants, to discuss possible, plausible and desirable future government models and strategic implications for today.

Shaping and securing the EU's Open Strategic Autonomy by 2040 and beyond

The foresight process 2 ran between November 2020 and June 2021. In this period, several participatory foresight methods were employed to build collective intelligence on possible future developments. These included foresight workshops with different stakeholders, scenario building workshops and an assessment of future policy options via a Delphi survey. In total, we engaged with more than 100 persons and stakeholders from the EU institutions, academia, think tanks, NGOs and businesses.



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Citizen science

Definition:

As per its definition, Citizen Science is used if the intended participants can make a meaningful contribution to scientific processes. Depending on the need, those contributions may be provided at a single moment (event), occasionally or regularly. In any case, it is important to clearly communicate the opportunities and constraints of possible contributions to the participants.

Citizen Science provides methods to gain scientific insights and knowledge, while building scientific literacy and also educating all participants about the subject matter. In addition to creating a positive experience, Citizen Science can also help to build trust between the participants and organisations (and as part of this between citizens and public institutions).

The Commission already uses Citizen Science to support policymaking, e.g., in the environmental domain. It is considered as one of many sources of scientific knowledge that supports European Commission policymaking. As such, it is also considered by several JRC policy support activities, under its mandate of the Commission in house scientific and knowledge management service. Like with other methods, Citizen Science for policymaking also helps to identify what matters to people and how topics that are discussed at EU level are experienced 'on the ground'. Citizen Science also helps identify what matters to people and how topics that are discussed at EU level are experienced 'on the ground'.

Possible variations

Citizen Science methods are rich and diverse, they range from short activities (such as BioBlitzes), occasional gamified participation (as, for example, enabled by digital platforms, such as Zooniverse) to the sophisticated use of knowledge gathering and sharing over decades (as, for example, applied in bird watching or meteorology).

In our elaborations here, we provide general descriptions of Citizen Science methods, but also hint to specifics of selected (frequently used) practices.

A solid introduction to the variety of citizen science is provided here <https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsos.202108>

For an elaboration on the use of citizen science for policy, see <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC123500>

The 10 principles are available in many languages at <https://ecsa.citizen-science.net/2016/05/17/10-principles-of-citizen-science>

For a comprehensive explanation, see <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-58278-4>

For an introduction to BioBlitz methodologies, see <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1573359>

The official platform is available at <https://www.zooniverse.org>

More examples can be found here: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fclim.2022.943534/full>

Recruitment method

What is the recruitment strategy?

- The requirements of the research also determine the governance set-up and invitation process. In some cases, intermediaries in countries might support the recruitment process – e.g. in the case of bird monitoring. Leaflets and direct visits to the houses on a smaller location might be appropriate when addressing noise pollution in a street or square. Notably, invitation will not be a guarantee for success, because participation remains voluntary for Citizen Scientists, i.e. citizens need to be motivated to engage.
- As a Citizen Science exercise might be initiated by any of the participants, the person (or organisation) to invite might vary, too. In the context of the Commission, it should not be assumed that the Commission has to invite participants. Commission representatives might also decide to participate following the invitation of any other party.
- The objectives, the desired impact of the engagement in a Citizen Science exercise, the expectations from the participation of citizens,
- The objectives, the desired impact of the engagement in a Citizen Science exercise, the expectations from the participation of citizens, and planned follow-up (e.g. additional engagements) should be communicated before initiating the activity (i.e. they require communication before the kick-off event).

Staff and logistics

Staff of the policy service or scientific service interested in implementing this method and staff from the JRC.

- Researchers on the topic about which citizen science is being implemented need to be considered as part of the design and implementation of the process.
- The logistics will depend a lot on the exact method to be applied, so does the management of supporting event(s). Good examples for single-events Citizen Science methods are the aforementioned BioBlitzes.
- Overall, unless digital platforms are the central tool to engage with the research (e.g. Zooniverse) – and if the geographic extent allows – the event should be organised where the participants (Citizen Scientists) are. At the stages where data is processed, interpreted, or used by a particular institution, it might host an event. At the kick-off of the citizen science ‘project’, participants might also be consulted on their preferred way of getting together. This is necessary because citizens invest their free time in attending the event, and might have to pay for their travel.

Staff and logistics

Cost of citizen science exercises includes: facilitators' fees, participants' tokens, participants' travel and accommodation (if needed), logistics (such as room rent) and consumables.

What needs to be procured?

Procurement needs are case specific and depend on the available in-house capacities. A main distinction might be made between:

- Procuring an entire knowledge gathering exercise (i.e., asking a contractor to design, implement and report the entire citizen science process).
- A partial outsourcing (e.g. asking a contractor to facilitate the overall process – or parts of it – while retaining the scientific direction and responsibility within the organisation).
- From experience, the JRC follows the latter (if outsourcing at all). There are no FWCs that cover many of the requirements to run a Citizen Science project, i.e. particular competence in dealing with volunteering citizen scientists and intermediaries might be considered as a future need.

Citizen science activities

Read more: A solid starting point for such guidance is the European Citizen Science Platform, see [here](#).

Outputs

- There is no constraint about the format in which results should be communicated. However, the entire process needs to be explained transparently, and also data governance should be clarified from the onset.
- Results should be communicated as open as possible, and without changes.
- Report should be accessible to all participants.

How to make sense of the outputs? What analytics can be used?

When applying a Citizen Science method, different kinds of processing might be applied. First, depending on the characteristic of the activity, the gathered scientific knowledge might be further processed e.g. into research articles, or integration into a wider scientific knowledge base.

Second, the engagement of the participants might be analysed to learn for the future. Third, the actual impact of the activity might be subject to further action. In any of these cases the source should be cited and the participants acknowledged.

Communication with the participants after the event

All participants should receive a direct follow-up communication to thank them for their participation. They should also be acknowledged (by name, if consent is given) as contributors to the related research and its further use, and at times they can be authors of the reports and papers.

Evaluation

Participants' experience, reflections

As any scientific knowledge gathering, the application of Citizen Science methods needs to be clearly documented, including participants details. The owner of the entire research process, in which Citizen Science is applied, is ultimately accountable for the results. The overall governance approach depends on the exact method that is applied, i.e., this owner might be an individual researcher, a public institution, a community of citizen scientists, etc.

Process implementation, quality, integrity

The underlying process in citizen science is the research process, i.e., general research integrity applies to any Citizen Science methods as to any other research. However, three facets might need particular attention when it comes to Citizen Science. First, there is a re-occurring misperception that Citizen Science might not be of appropriate quality. Second, the actual participants need to be considered as a potential source of bias. Third, when applying Citizen Science, particular care should be taken to treat the volunteering participants respectfully.

Uptake

The main subject matter when applying Citizen Science is scientific knowledge. Accordingly, this knowledge should be considered (with scientific knowledge of other relevant sources) when providing scientific advice to policymaking. For example, in the area of biodiversity, inputs from Citizen Scientists are often treated together with the work of professional researchers in an integrated knowledge base that is then used to inform policies on biodiversity, sustainability, agriculture, etc. Here, it is important to apply the same scrutiny to all sources - i.e. applying the same criteria to all incoming knowledge, no matter the source.

More examples:

Additional resources from the European Commission might be drawn from:

- The result pack compiled from a rich set of EU funded projects: [Publication](#)
- The material compiled under the Mutual Learning Exercise on Citizen Science Initiatives: [Mutual Learning Exercise](#)

More inspiration might be drawn from:

- Citizen Science for Research Libraries – A Guide: [Citizen Science Guide](#)
- Quality Assurance Handbook and Toolkit for Participatory Science Projects: [Handbook](#)
- The European Citizen Science Platform: [Platform](#)



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Read more: Mixed Participatory Formats Process

Mixed participatory formats process

Here is a process idea already tested by DG RTD: mixed participatory formats approach as process to engage citizens and other actors. This allows participation from different kinds of actors: citizens, CSOs, academic experts, and policymakers at the local, regional, or national levels. Each of these actors have a different level of expertise (personal, or professional) and a unique way of approaching the topic (as a lived experience, as a lobbying topic, etc.). All of their views can valuably inform EU policymaking and can have their place in a participatory process.

Care, however, must be shown regarding the different levels of expertise, the different vocabulary, and the different assumptions about the topic from each of these groups of actors: it can be difficult for them to deliberate together on an equal footing.

This can be turned into an asset, however, in a multistage process where each group can deliberate with their own peers, while building on the input of other groups: for example, citizen deliberations are followed by policy roundtables, where CSOs, local policymakers, and/or academic experts can turn citizens' needs and wishes into policy-ready recommendations, based on their expert knowledge of existing initiatives, legislative barriers, etc. A multistage process thus has the further benefit of ending with recommendations pitched at expert level, which can be directly understood and turned into policy proposals by Commission staff. This increases the chance of the process having real policy impact.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Participation from citizens, but also from groups with professional knowledge of the topic, such as CSOs, academic experts, or local policymakers.
- Because of different levels of expertise and approaches to the topic, it can be best for each group to deliberate with their own peers, with CSOs and other experts building on citizen deliberation.
- Such a process can translate citizens' priorities into policy-ready recommendations.

STRENGTHS

- Policymaking is informed by input from a variety of actors.
- The final output is pitched at expert level and can be directly turned into policy outputs by policymakers: it is focused and practical, rather than a wish-list.
- This enhances the potential policy impact of the exercise: citizens' input is less likely to be discounted, if it speaks to policymakers in their own language.
- Civil society is included and does not need to see direct participation by citizens as competition.

POINTS OF VIGILANCE

- This method can be longer than others, as it involves different kinds of actors who must all be catered to at their own level of expertise. If each group is invited to participate consecutively in a multi-stage process, enough time must be allowed.
- More time and more groups participating can also mean that a significant budget is required.
- Also mean that a significant budget is required.
- Groups with more expertise could be tempted to over-ride input from citizens: the process must be designed so that they build on, and do not replace, citizens' input. Their role is to turn citizens' input into policy-ready recommendations.

A mixed participatory format can be seen as an add-on, or variation, to any of the methods described in this guidebook: co-design workshops can gather different kinds of participants, while citizens' panels and future-oriented workshops with only citizens can then be followed by policy roundtables, where expert-level participants turn citizens' priorities and needs into policy-ready recommendations, using their knowledge of existing policy frameworks.

A possible multi-stage process, for example, could be:

- Begin with future-oriented workshops, where citizens outline their desires, their needs, and their limits regarding the policy topic.
- Follow-up with policy roundtables, where CSOs, local policymakers, or other relevant actors examine what would be needed in national and EU policy terms for citizens' needs to be turned into policy.
- This process could conclude with an expert-drafted roadmap, based on citizens' needs, and putting forward a timeline and set of actions based on the known EU policy framework, which could directly be used by Commission staff holding the pen on that policy.

Who are the participants:

- Citizens: citizens are the principal participants of a mixed process: their needs and views are sought. The process is augmented by other actors, such as CSOs, in order to refine and translate citizens' needs into policy-ready recommendations. Since the basis of your mixed participatory process will be a citizens' panel, co-creation workshop, or future-oriented workshop, recruit participating citizens according to the prescribed method.
- Civil society organisations: It can be important to make these organisations part of a participatory process, in addition to the direct participation of citizens. They could be recruited at the national level if policy roundtables are held at a national level first, and/or at the international level.
- Other stakeholders: In addition to CSOs, depending on the policy topic, it can be relevant to include other stakeholders. If organisations with vested or financial interests are to be included in the process, make sure that this is made clear to participating citizens when the whole process is presented to them, from the invitation stage onwards. Transparency is essential in any process involving citizens, in order to strengthen trust in governance.
- Academic experts: They can be valuable hires for the drafting of a final output document with recommendations or roadmap, which can be shared with all participants in the process, and with policymakers to whom the policy recommendations are destined.

Recruitment method

- What is the recruitment strategy?
It will be up to you to determine which groups, in addition to citizens, will make your process fit the needs of your policy file: perhaps you only need to combine CSOs and citizens in a single format, or perhaps you want a multi-stage process where other experts, including local policy-makers or other stakeholders, can weigh in with their expertise to help turn citizens' recommendations into targeted and policy-ready proposals.
- Communication with participants
Participants should receive a letter of invitation explaining the purpose of the process, the time commitment required, the details of the participatory procedure, how they will get involved, and how their input will be used.

Staff and logistics:

Staff involved:

- 1 or 2 colleagues from the commissioning unit, to design the process, liaise with the project manager from the contracted company, and ensure policy follow-up.
- Depending on the policy file, it is also good practice to raise awareness of the participatory process with all colleagues – even from other DGs – who could use the results of the participatory process in their work. A good way to raise awareness is by giving such policy officers a small role: for example in welcoming participants to a workshop held in their home language, thereby giving a face to the Commission, and a sense of ownership to the policy colleague who was thus involved.

A mixed participatory format can be a vast undertaking, and outsourcing to a contractor who can oversee all aspects of the process, and sub-contract where appropriate, is recommended.

Procurement:

What needs to be procured?

- Recruitment of participants
- Recruitment of expert roadmap-drafters
- Contracting of facilitators
- Renting of a venue
- Coffee-breaks / light meals / per diems
- Academic experts: They can be valuable hires for the drafting of a final output document with recommendations or roadmap, which can be shared with all participants in the process, and with policymakers to whom the policy recommendations are destined.

How to guarantee the integrity of the process?

Quality moderation is key

- Experienced facilitators with knowledge of the methodology (whether futuring, deliberation, etc) are required to conduct the citizens' workshops.
- Each facilitator needs to ensure that all participants equally participate in the activities of the workshop, and no one remains silent.
- For the events gathering expert-level participants, the same facilitators should be used, in order to ensure continuity with the citizens' deliberations.

Choreography of the event or events

- It is very likely that mixed participatory process will require several events, most likely one event or set of events per group (citizens' panels or workshops with only citizens, and policy roundtables with expert-level participants).
- The design of the process should be the best to suit the needs of the policy file, but the basic idea is to start from citizens' input, and to use expert-level participants to turn this input into policy-ready recommendations.

What are the outputs resulting from this method?

- Reports from the citizens' deliberation(s).
- Reports of the policy roundtable discussions, containing the participants' analysis of the drivers and obstacles to turn citizens' recommendations into reality.
- An expert-drafted roadmap setting out EU policy action needed to facilitate the realisation of the citizens' recommendations.

How to make sense of the outputs?

- The beauty of this process is that the process itself turns citizens' expressed wishes into policy-ready recommendations, by using the additional input from CSO's and other expert-level participants, who have
- knowledge of the policy and legislative context, to
- present what is required in policy terms to turn the
- citizens' recommendations into reality.

What to share with participants after the event?

- Within a week of a final (if multiple) workshop's end, all participants need to receive a formal Thank You letter, reiterating appreciation for their time and input, and detailing how results will be used. If other type of involvement is needed, it should be described, including a timeline. An email address for any questions should be included.

Evaluation:

Participants' experience, reflections

Participants should be handed a short feedback survey to fill in, answering questions covering the entire process of their engagement (i.e., invitations, communication, participation, discussions, interactions, clarity on purpose and follow-up, moderator role and involvement).

This can be done either immediately before participants left the room (maximising number of submissions) or online up to two days after the focus group took place (at the risk of reduced response rate).

Example: citizen voices for climate transition

Citizen Voices for Climate Transition is an initiative funded through the Horizon 2020 Green Deal Call. Its goal is to analyse the environmental, social and economic transitions needed to achieve the European Green Deal objectives in different domains:

- Smart and sustainable mobility
- Energy-efficient buildings
- Sustainable food production

The project kicked off in September 2021, and ended with an EU roadmap for the climate transition with the active participation of citizens. The roadmap itself was drafted by selected experts, but the actions in the roadmap were identified on the basis of priorities expressed by citizens. These priorities were then examined by civil society organisations, research and education communities as well as national and local authorities, through a series of workshops in all 27 Member States.

For more information: [Citizen Voices for the EU Climate Transition | Research and Innovation \(europa.eu\)](https://citizen-voices.europa.eu/)



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*Feedback survey

European Citizens' Panel on Tackling Hatred in Society

Introduction

You have participated in the European Commission's Citizens' Panel on food waste. We are curious about your experience in the Citizens' Panel and how satisfied you are with different aspects. Please take 15 minutes of your time to complete the following survey. It will help us to improve such Citizens' Panels in the future.

General questions

1. To start with, if you could describe your participation in this European Citizens' Panel in one word, what would it be?

2. Overall, are you satisfied with your experience on the Citizens' Panel?

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5	
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3. Are you satisfied with the final recommendations?

(1 = not at all and 5 = yes absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5	
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4. Do you think that the Citizens' Panel represented the diversity of the EU population well? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5	
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5. Do you think that you had enough time across the three sessions to discuss the topic and develop ideas? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5	
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6. Do you think that the Citizens' Panel included the perspectives of all panel members in its final recommendations? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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7. Do you think that the recommendations of the Citizens' Panel will have an impact? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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8. Do you think that the European Commission will take your recommendations into account? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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9. Do you think your travel was well organised? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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10. Are you satisfied with the logistical arrangements for the Panel weekends (hotel, venue, food)? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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11. Are you satisfied with the communication via emails and phone before, between and after the sessions? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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12. During the online session, was the online platform easy to use for you? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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13. Did you receive enough help during this session to cope with the difficulties related to online participation? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

14. Please list one or more aspects of the Panel that you really liked:

15. Please list one or more aspects of the Panel that might be improved:

Knowledge

1. Overall, do you think you have received enough information on the topic of tackling hatred in society during the Citizens' Panel?

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

2. The Information Kit received before the first session was easy to understand

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

3. The Information Kit received before the first session was well-balanced

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

4. The Information Kit received before the first session was useful to help me engage in the discussions (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

5. The input of the speakers during the three sessions was easy to understand

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

6. The input of the speakers during the three sessions was well-balanced

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

7. The input of the speakers during the three sessions was useful for progressing in the discussions (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

8. The written answers to the fact-checking questions during working groups were easy to understand (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

9. The written answers to the fact-checking questions during working groups were well-balanced (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

10. The written answers to the fact-checking questions during working groups were useful for progressing in the discussions (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

11. Did you find the contributions from the Citizens' Engagement Platform useful for your discussions?" (1 = Not at all, 5 Yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

Working groups and discussions

1. Overall, do you feel your voice mattered in your working group? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

2. In working group discussions, I felt very respected (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

3. In working group discussions, I learned a lot (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

4. In working group discussions, I had an influence on the recommendations (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

5. The facilitator of my working group was fair (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

6. The facilitator of my working group was unbiased (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

7. The facilitator of my working group ensured that everyone had a say

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

8. The other citizens in my working group expressed views that were different from mine. (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

9. The other citizens in my working group provided good arguments.

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

10. The other citizens in my working group searched to compromise.

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

11. The other citizens in my working group equally influenced the recommendations.

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

12. Regarding the balance between time spent in plenaries and in working groups:

I would have preferred more time in Plenary.

I would have preferred more time in working groups.

It was the right balance.

General takeaways**1. Has your knowledge about hatred increased over the European Citizens' Panel?**

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
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2. Has your opinion towards the topic of tackling hatred in society changed over the Citizens' Panel? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

3. Has your opinion towards the European Union changed over the Citizens' Panel?

Yes, it became more positive.

Yes, it became more negative.

No, it remained the same.

I don't know.

4. How did participation at the European citizens' panels affect your level of trust towards the EU and its institutions?

(1= substantially decreased, 5= substantially increased)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

5. Following this Panel, do you feel like you have a better understanding of the European Union and of the different European institutions? (1 = 'I don't understand anything at all' and 5 = 'I could easily explain how the EU works to a friend')

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

6. To what extent do you agree that European Citizens' Panels can bring new knowledge and expertise into the policymaking process?

(1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

7. To what extent do you agree that European Citizens' Panels can make policies better? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

8. To what extent do you agree that European Citizens' Panels can make our democracies more resilient? (1 = not at all, 5 = yes, absolutely)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

9. Did your participation to the European citizens' panel enhance your feeling of belonging to the European Union? (1= not at all, 5= yes, substantially increased)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

About You

1. Have you ever participated in a citizen participation process before?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

2. What is your gender?

- A woman
- A man
- Other/diverse

3. How old are you?

- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- Above 65

4. What is your highest education diploma?

- Without diploma / Primary Education
- Middle School diploma / Intermediary Education
- High-school diploma, or equivalent / Secondary Education
- Bachelor degree, or equivalent / Higher education - Graduate level
- Master degree, or equivalent / Higher education – Postgraduate level
- Doctorate or PhD / Higher education – Advanced Postgraduate level

5. Would you like to remain in contact with the European Commission to keep up-to-date and promote ongoing and future citizen engagement activities?

- Yes
- No

6. Lastly, we would like to ask you if you would accept to be contacted by researchers, who have been observing the Panel, and who would like to conduct follow-up interviews with participants. If yes, please contact us at the address info@futureu.events

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