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Citizen Z

*Strengthening the participation of young citizens
in democratic and civic life*

D1.1 Methodological Guide

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METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE

From Theory to Practice:

A Step-by-Step Guide to Citizen Deliberation based on the
Citizen Z Project

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the guide: "Empowering Communities through Deliberative Methods"

Community empowerment and engagement can be a difficult task. It requires active participation and inclusion, and deliberative methods have proven to be an excellent tool for achieving these goals. Recent democratic innovations, including participatory and, even more so, deliberative methods, appear to be a powerful way to involve citizens in decision-making processes, but also, more broadly, to develop a sense of active citizenship.

Deliberative methods involve bringing together diverse individuals to engage in structured discussions on complex public issues. This can include topics such as public policy, urban planning, or environmental concerns. It combines various techniques, including small group discussions, consensus-building, and facilitation to produce informed decisions on community matters. Some examples of deliberative methods include citizens' juries, consensus conferences, citizens' assemblies, citizens' panels, and deliberative polls. These methods generally involve a structured process that takes place over several days and is divided into at least three distinct phases: knowledge injection(1), deliberation(2) and recommendations(3).

The knowledge injection phase is key, and it is fundamental that the information provided to citizens is presented from different angles and by different experts and stakeholders. At this stage, experts and stakeholders are the prime players, who must present the issue to be debated to citizens in the most neutral and accurate way possible.

Once all the issues around the topic have been presented, the deliberation phase can begin. At this point, the key players and those who will largely determine the success or failure of the deliberations are the facilitators, who must always ensure that the discussion is safe, respectful, and inclusive, and that everyone has an equal opportunity to present their views. Participants must be willing to listen to each other, feel comfortable sharing their views, and ultimately work together to find common ground.

The third stage, the development of recommendations, is as critical to the process as the previous stages, as it presents the fruits of citizens' deliberations and potential input into policy development. At this stage, the key actors are policy makers and possibly civil society activists or networks who can bring the issue to the attention of policy makers.

An authentic deliberative process must be representative of the entire community for which the issues are being deliberated. In this case, citizens' recommendations have more legitimacy as they are more likely to represent the views of the community at large. This is why one of the most valuable benefits of deliberative methods is that they facilitate the creation of an all-inclusive community. Participants are selected from various backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, and cultures, giving everyone an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. This inclusiveness helps build confidence in the community, which is essential to community empowerment.

By using deliberative methods, communities can ensure that all voices are heard and that decisions are made with the input of those who will be most affected by them. This can lead to more informed and inclusive decision-making, as well as increased trust and confidence in the democratic processes.

Another advantage of deliberative methods is the information-sharing process. Participants in such discussions are provided with relevant and reliable information, which enables them to make informed decisions. The open and transparent nature of deliberative methods ensures that citizens have access to accurate data, which helps to promote trust and accountability.

Deliberative methods also encourage meaningful communication among participants. The structured nature of these discussions ensures that everyone has an opportunity to express their opinions and provide insights on the issues at hand. By promoting open and honest dialogue, individuals can appreciate and understand diverse perspectives, which can foster unity and strengthen social fabric within communities.

The use of deliberative methods to empower communities has shown to have significant benefits. It creates an inclusive community, promotes transparency, builds trust, and encourages meaningful communication amongst participants. Communities can harness the power of deliberative methods to make informed and inclusive decisions that lead to positive and impactful results.

Empowering communities through deliberative methods is not only good for democracy, but can also lead to better outcomes for everyone involved. By involving citizens in decision-making processes, communities can access a wealth of knowledge and expertise that might otherwise remain untapped.

B. Scope of the guide: "Navigating Deliberative Processes in Complex Environments"

General considerations

Generally, deliberative processes involve a very diverse group of individuals coming together to discuss and make decisions on a particular issue. Moreover, there are multiple stakeholders with different interests and perspectives involved, which can make it difficult to reach a consensus. To navigate these processes successfully, it is important to establish clear goals and objectives at the outset. This will help to ensure that everyone is working towards the same outcome and can help to focus discussions and decision-making.

It is also important to create a safe and inclusive environment where all stakeholders feel comfortable expressing their views and opinions. This can be achieved by setting ground rules for discussions, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to speak, and actively listening to what others have to say.

Another key factor in navigating deliberative processes in complex environments is to be flexible and adaptable. As new information and perspectives emerge, it may be necessary to adjust goals and strategies to ensure that the process remains effective. Finally, it is important to have a clear communication strategy in place to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed throughout the process. This can include regular updates, feedback mechanisms, and opportunities for stakeholders to provide input and feedback.

Specific scope

The purpose of this guide is to provide an overview of the methodology used by the Citizen Z project partners (see Section I.D) to conduct local deliberations with youth aged 15–25 in Croatia, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands. It covers the methodological approach adopted, the constraints, limitations and challenges encountered, as well as the key difficulties inherent to deliberative processes, and the decisions made to facilitate the deliberation rounds given the aforementioned factors.

First, the project has a unique perspective on agenda setting that allows young people to take control of the process from the beginning. To enhance youth engagement in the deliberations, the pre-consultation phase is pivotal and will therefore be elaborated upon.

Second, the present guide addresses several crucial aspects of community engagement, including participant selection and involvement, factoring in multiple motivations, and engaging all members of the community, including those who are typically excluded. It is important to note that a genuine selection process for participation in deliberative practices can be both complex and costly, usually involving random and stratified selection. This can be especially challenging for civil society organisations with limited budgetary resources. This guide, however, offers alternative methods of participant selection that minimise bias and add value (e.g. interfaith perspective). Such alternatives can help organisations with limited resources to design and implement effective deliberative practices.

Third, in addition to the challenges associated with the participant selection process, the project consortium considers the selection of facilitators as no less critical. Given the diversity of participant profiles, facilitators face the extra task of catering to various needs and communicating effectively to ensure equitable dialogue and participation. This complexity is even greater in multicultural environments, as in Belgium, where linguistic diversity may require the use of translation or technological tools to guarantee effective communication and inclusivity. Facilitators therefore play a crucial role in the success of the deliberations, making their recruitment and training of paramount importance.

Fourth, the specific context of each country is acknowledged, allowing organisers to select and justify the methods and formats of deliberation that will be used in local deliberation rounds according to the specific characteristics and needs in the local environment.

Fifth, along with the policy makers to receive the recommendations that emerge from the deliberations, the project entrusts activists who advocate for the selected issue with a crucial role in taking the recommendations forward to policy makers. This will be done by leveraging their already established networks and knowledge on the topic.

C. Methodological approach: "Innovative Approaches to Engage Youth."

The need for innovative methods to involve young people in democratic and civic life is increasingly urgent in today's world, where trust and interest in politics and community are declining amongst younger generations. While social media and the internet have provided young people with unprecedented connectivity and access to information, effectively engaging them in discussions and decision-making remains a challenge.

The Citizen Z project partners have recognized the potential of deliberative democracy as an innovative means to enhance youth engagement in democratic and civic life. The approach holds promise in various ways, and thus, it was chosen as the core methodology for the project. Through deliberation, young people can learn how to listen actively to different perspectives, speak their minds and identify common goals. Deliberation can help young people develop skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. These skills are essential for engaged citizenship and active participation in democracy. Moreover, deliberation provides young people with the opportunity to voice their opinions and learn from others, which can increase their confidence and sense of agency. Deliberation also allows young people to consider different viewpoints and develop a more nuanced understanding of complex problems, which is an essential skill for informed decision-making.

To enhance the potential for active engagement, the project methodology involves preliminary consultations with young people, enabling them to lead the process from its very beginning. The pre-consultation sessions will be conducted to gather the opinions of young people on the topics that they consider most pressing and relevant in their local communities. This approach ensures that young people will not only be involved in the deliberations but will also have a say in setting the agenda for the discussions. As a result, they will take full ownership of the entire process and align it with their aspirations and visions.

The project's approach is inherently biased towards young people, as deliberations are exclusively focused on their perspectives. However, this is not meant to exclude other age groups, but rather to ensure that young people are actively engaged in civic and democratic life, especially on issues that are of great importance to them. The goal is to provide young people with innovative ways and platforms to participate actively in matters of public interest that are relevant to the entire community.

D. Background information: "Citizen Z project"

Citizen Z: Strengthening the participation of young citizens in democratic and civic life



Contemporary political attitudes are characterised by significant political indifference, disengagement from public life, and a decline in political participation, especially among young people, whose level of interest in politics is steadily declining in almost all EU countries. The 'Citizen Z' project, which started in November 2022, applies deliberative methods, to both stimulate interest in civic and political life among young people aged 15 to 25 and to involve them in the decision-making process. Special attention is devoted to the intersectionality principle and those groups that are often affected by low levels of participation: migrants, disadvantaged communities, girls and women.

The 'Citizen Z' project aims to respond to the European Commission priorities outlined in the European Democracy Action Plan and the EU Citizenship Report 2020 by enhancing civic engagement and democratic participation of EU citizens, particularly youth aged 15 to 25.

The project is also in line with the position supported by the European Committee of the Regions, which in 2019 encouraged a 'cultural change' towards experimenting with deliberative democracy tools as developed at the local level (European Committee of the Regions, Putting citizens at the Centre of the EU agenda), as the most authentic democratic participation originates in the context closest to the citizen.

General objectives of the project



- 1) Strengthening the democratic participation of European citizens, especially young people, by complementing a top-down form of democracy, in which people's will is delegated to its representatives, with a bottom-up form of democracy, in which decisions have to be validated and legitimated by the people themselves.
- 2) Expanding innovative forms of participation other than those provided by traditional representative democracy.
- 3) Regenerating the democratic fabric of European societies by educating citizens to practise dialogue and to distrust preconceived ideas that are not based on facts, supported by trusted data and balanced arguments.
- 4) Finding new ways of engaging young people and making the EU relevant to them.
- 5) Fostering, in the context of promoting EU citizenship rights, the inclusion of politically non-active EU citizens in civic and political participatory processes.

Project structure



The deliberative model, considered as a tool to promote informed debate and contribute to the co-design of policies, has been used mainly at the local level. More particularly, it has been deployed at the municipal level to engage citizens in the search for solutions to micro-problems. The Citizen Z project seeks to stimulate a dynamic of change, which intends to go beyond this status quo to also encompass EU-related and other macro issues.

This intention is reflected in the project through 2 rounds of deliberations:

First round of deliberations

In the first round of deliberations, the focus will be on local life and the local perception of issues that are immediately problematic for citizens. The first round will represent the process of localising European experience or issues (e.g. related to pollution, environmental problems, job insecurity, well-being, etc.).

Using different methods, such as deliberative workshops, open forums, citizens' assemblies, deliberative polling, citizens' juries, etc. A series of local deliberations will be organised to allow participants to discuss their positions (stances) on a certain topic (with input from experts) in order to reach a final consensus, which will result in the development of recommendations.

The results of each round will be presented and discussed at the annual **Deliberative Democracy Days events, the first of which was held in Brussels on 13-15 March 2023**. All countries participating in the project (Belgium, Croatia, Italy, and the Netherlands) will elaborate conclusions and provide recommendations to the relevant actors, decision-makers, and other stakeholders at the local, regional and European level.

The Citizen Z project is funded by the [CERV Program](#) of the European Commission and will last until October 31, 2024. The project consortium is composed of five partner organisations from four EU countries: [Intercultural Dialogue Platform](#) (Coordinator, Belgium), [Fedactio](#) (Belgium), [Udruga Prizma](#) (Croatia), [Istituto Tevere](#) (Italy) and [Platform INS](#) (the Netherlands).

If you would like to learn more about the project, go to: www.citizenz.eu

Second round of deliberations

In the second round of deliberations, the contextualization of local issues within a European perspective will allow extending the focus of the debate to the European level and to higher policy issues. It will aim at deepening and contextualising the same macro-issues on the regional/European level.

Participants will explore whether the macro issues they have identified in their communities are also relevant on a larger scale at the regional or European level and how they are currently handled by policymakers.

2. Deliberations in Italy:

The case of Rome

A. The Italian local context: "Exploring Deliberative Democracy in Italy"

Italy has a rich and complex history of democratic participation and civic engagement, dating back to the days of the Roman Republic. Today, the country continues to grapple with questions of democratic legitimacy, accountability, and participation, as well as the challenges posed by globalisation, social inequality, and political polarisation.



Since the publication of Robert Putnam's colossal book "Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy", Italy has been at the centre of the debates over democracy.

Putnam believes that for democracy to be effective, there must be a level of mutual trust among citizens and a more horizontal system of governance, which Northern and Central Italy has enjoyed.

One way that Italian citizens and policymakers are addressing these challenges is through the practice of deliberative democracy, which emphasises the importance of open and inclusive dialogue, debate, and decision-making.

Deliberative democracy is based on the idea that citizens should have a say in the policies and decisions that affect their lives, and that this can best be achieved through a process of informed and respectful discussion. Deliberative democracy is a concept that emphasises the importance of informed and inclusive public deliberation in democratic decision-making processes. It encourages active citizen participation, reasoned debate, and the exchange of ideas to reach collective decisions that reflect the will and interests of the people.

To understand the local context of Rome in relation to deliberative democracy, we need to consider the city's historical significance, political landscape, and recent developments in civic engagement. Rome, known as the "Eternal City," holds immense historical and cultural importance as the capital of Italy and the former centre of the Roman Empire. It is a city rich in traditions of civic engagement and political discourse. Throughout history, Rome has

witnessed various forms of democratic governance, from the ancient Roman Republic to the present-day Italian democratic system.

In recent years, Rome has experienced both challenges and opportunities in promoting deliberative democracy. Italy, as a whole, is facing problems of political instability, corruption, and a perceptible disconnection between the government and its citizens. These challenges have led to a growing interest in revitalising democracy by fostering greater citizen participation and deliberation.

To address these concerns, Rome has witnessed the emergence of grassroots movements, civil society organisations, and platforms for public deliberation. These initiatives aim to involve citizens in decision-making processes, foster dialogue among diverse stakeholders, and ensure that the voices of the people are heard. Furthermore, the city has recognized the significance of digital technology in promoting deliberative democracy. Online platforms and social media channels have been utilised to facilitate public discussions, gather public input, and provide avenues for citizens to engage with their elected representatives. These digital tools have the potential to increase accessibility, broaden participation, and enhance the quality of deliberation in Rome.

Additionally, Rome has also been proactive in establishing deliberative institutions and mechanisms. These include citizens' assemblies, participatory budgeting processes, and collaborative governance models. These initiatives enable citizens to actively participate in shaping public policies, influencing decision-making, and holding elected officials accountable. However, challenges remain in fully implementing deliberative democracy in Rome. These include ensuring the inclusiveness and diversity of participants, addressing the influence of vested interests, and effectively translating the results of deliberations into concrete policy actions. Yet Rome's commitment to promoting deliberative democracy demonstrates its recognition of the importance of citizen engagement and inclusive decision-making processes. By adopting deliberative practices, Rome seeks to strengthen its democracy, increase public trust, and promote collective problem solving for the betterment of its local community and society as a whole.

B. Why use Citizens' Assemblies and Deliberative panels and forums in Rome? "Applying Deliberative Processes in Italy: Opportunities and Challenges"

The Italian context presents a number of unique challenges and opportunities for deliberative democracy. Some of the most pressing issues facing the country include high levels of political polarisation, a history of corruption and elite capture, and the ongoing effects of economic austerity and social inequality. In order to effectively address these challenges, deliberative methods must be carefully designed and implemented to ensure that they are both effective and legitimate.

One potential method that could be effective in the Italian context is citizens' assemblies. These could be used to address complex and contentious issues, such as constitutional reform or immigration policy, that require a high degree of public input and engagement. By bringing together a diverse group of citizens to deliberate on these issues, citizens' assemblies can help to ensure that a wide range of perspectives are taken into account, and that policy decisions are made in a fair and transparent manner.

Another deliberative method that can be effective in the context of Rome and Italy is that of deliberative panels and forums, for several reasons:

- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Deliberative panels and forums aim to include a diverse range of participants, ensuring that a variety of perspectives and voices are represented. This inclusivity helps to address the potential biases and inequalities that can arise in traditional decision-making processes. In Rome, with its diverse population and political landscape, deliberative panels and forums can provide a platform for citizens from different backgrounds and communities to engage in meaningful dialogue and contribute to decision-making.
- **Informed Decision Making:** Deliberative panels and forums prioritise informed deliberation by providing participants with access to relevant information and expertise. Through expert presentations, briefing materials, and discussions, participants can gain a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. In the context of Rome and Italy, where complex and pressing challenges exist, such as urban planning, infrastructure development, and environmental sustainability, deliberative panels and forums can help ensure that decisions are based on accurate information and analysis.

- **Public Engagement and Trust:** Deliberative panels and forums enhance public engagement by allowing citizens to directly participate in decision-making processes. This active involvement helps to build trust between the government and its citizens. By giving people a voice and an opportunity to shape policies, deliberative methods can mitigate the perception of a democratic deficit and increase public satisfaction with the outcomes. In Rome, where public trust in institutions and elected representatives is quite low, deliberative panels and forums can play a crucial role in rebuilding that trust and fostering a sense of ownership among citizens, and even more so among young citizens.
- **Dialogue and Exchange of Ideas:** Deliberative panels and forums create spaces for constructive dialogue and the exchange of ideas among participants. They encourage participants to engage in respectful and thoughtful discussions, challenging each other's viewpoints and exploring potential solutions collaboratively. This process can lead to the discovery of common ground, the emergence of creative solutions, and the formation of new alliances. In the context of Rome and Italy, where political polarisation and ideological divisions may exist, deliberative panels and forums can promote constructive dialogue that transcends partisan lines and focuses on shared goals and values.
- **Policy Influence and Accountability:** Deliberative panels and forums have the potential to directly influence policy decisions. The recommendations and outcomes generated through deliberative processes can be presented to policymakers, providing them with valuable insights and input from citizens. This connection between deliberative panels and the policy-making process helps to ensure that the voices and perspectives of the people are considered in decision-making. It also holds policy makers accountable by making their decisions more transparent and subject to public scrutiny.

By utilising deliberative panels and forums as deliberative methods, Rome and Italy can strengthen their democratic processes, promote citizen engagement, and foster more inclusive and informed decision-making. These methods have the potential to address the challenges of political participation, enhance public trust, and contribute to the development of policies that better reflect the needs and aspirations of the local community.

Overall, the key to selecting and implementing effective deliberative methods in the Italian context will be to ensure that they are tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the country. This will require careful consideration of issues such as representation, power imbalances, and the role of external interests, as well as strong institutional and legal frameworks to support the process.



C. Setting the deliberation agenda: pre-consultations with young people: "Empowering Young Leaders to Drive Deliberative Processes in Rome"

In order to ensure that deliberative processes in Italy are effective and legitimate, it is important to involve a diverse range of voices in setting the agenda and determining the issues that will be addressed. One group that is particularly important to engage in this process is young people, who are often underrepresented in traditional political processes and decision-making.

One way to empower young leaders and involve them in setting the deliberation agenda is through pre-consultations. This approach involves engaging with young people in advance of the deliberative process to gather their input and insights on the issues that are most important to them. This could be done through a variety of methods, such as focus groups, online surveys, or town hall meetings.

During these pre-consultations, young people could be asked to share their perspectives on a range of issues, such as education, employment, climate change, or social justice. They could also be asked to identify the barriers that they face in participating in traditional political processes, and to suggest ways to overcome these barriers.

Based on the input gathered from these pre-consultations, organisers could then develop a deliberation agenda that is tailored to the needs and interests of young people. This could involve selecting specific issues for deliberation, as well as designing the format and structure of the deliberative process itself to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to all participants.

Involving youth from the outset can help ensure that the deliberative process is more representative and reflects the needs and interests of the broader population. It can also help build trust and engagement among young people, who are often sceptical of traditional political processes and institutions. Organising pre-consultations with youth and empowering young leaders to drive deliberative processes in Rome promotes representation, inclusion, empowerment, intergenerational dialogue, social cohesion and sustainable development. Through engaging youth leaders, Rome can harness their unique perspectives, energy and commitment to build a more inclusive and forward-looking city that reflects the aspirations and needs of all its residents.

Overall, empowering youth leaders to shape deliberative processes in Italy is an important step toward building a more inclusive and participatory democracy. Through preliminary consultations and other early engagement strategies, youth can be given a meaningful role in setting the deliberative agenda and driving positive change in their communities and beyond.

D. Selection of participants: "Ensuring Inclusivity and Accessibility in the Citizens' Assemblies and the Deliberative panels and forums."

For the deliberative rounds in Italy, youth will be reached through the interfaith communities with which the local partner, Istituto Tevere, has had a long interaction. Given the limited budgetary resources that make conventional deliberative selection methods unaffordable, Istituto Tevere will primarily use an interfaith approach for participant selection. Although unorthodox or rather unusual, the interfaith perspective has great potential to ensure inclusiveness and accessibility in deliberations for several reasons:

- Representation: The inclusion of different faith communities ensures that the diverse perspectives and voices within those groups are represented in the deliberative process. By including individuals from different backgrounds, beliefs and experiences, the process becomes more comprehensive and reflects a wide range of opinions among the local

population.

- **Respect and Recognition:** As such, deliberative processes are designed to be inclusive and to respect the inherent dignity and worth of each individual within the group. They recognize that everyone's perspective is valuable and contributes to the collective decision-making process. This momentum is even more vital in an interfaith setting, as it fosters a sense of recognition and equality among participants, as well as a culture of mutual respect and understanding.
- **Enhanced Decision Making:** When a deliberative process includes a diverse range of perspectives, it enriches the quality of decision making. Different viewpoints, influenced by diverse faith traditions, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences, offer a broader understanding of complex issues. Inclusivity ensures that decisions are informed by a variety of insights and considerations, leading to more robust and well-rounded outcomes.
- **Engaged Participation:** An inclusive deliberative process encourages the active and engaged participation of all community members. When individuals feel valued, accepted, and included, and their identity and beliefs are acknowledged, they are more likely to openly express and contribute their ideas, concerns, and expertise. This engagement fosters a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for outcomes, which leads to more collaborative and effective decision-making.

In addition to the potential benefits that interfaith methods offer with regard to the representativeness of the community in deliberations, the interfaith perspective is also valuable in terms of opportunities for interfaith communication and dialogue, especially between people who do not usually interact. Such a perspective holds great promise for addressing the growing polarisation of Italian society, as dialogue and work on common issues are likely to reduce the sense of mistrust between people with different beliefs and convictions.

To ensure inclusiveness and accessibility in the deliberations rounds, Istituto Tevere will reach out to youth using the following strategies:

- **Outreach and Engagement:** Actively reach out to diverse members of the faith-based groups to ensure their participation. Use multiple communication channels and engage with community leaders to spread awareness about the deliberative practices and their importance. Provide clear information about the process, its objectives, and the expected outcomes to encourage participation.
- **Create a Safe and Respectful Environment:** Foster an inclusive and safe environment where all participants feel comfortable expressing their opinions and beliefs. Encourage open dialogue, active listening, and respect for different perspectives. Establish ground rules that promote respectful discourse and discourage discriminatory or exclusionary behaviour.
- **Accommodate Different Needs:** Take into account diverse needs and ensure accessibility for all participants. Provide facilities such as language interpretation services, sign language interpreters, accessible venues, and materials in alternative formats. Consider the specific

needs of individuals with disabilities or those who may require additional support to fully participate.

- Facilitate Dialogue and Collaboration: Design deliberative processes that encourage meaningful dialogue and collaboration. Use facilitation techniques that ensure equitable participation, allowing all voices to be heard. Encourage participants to engage in active listening, constructive feedback, and the exploration of shared values and common ground.

In summary, ensuring deliberations that are representative of the local population, with transparent selection methods and strategies that facilitate inclusiveness and accessibility, strengthens the legitimacy of the process and its outcomes, promoting respect, engaged participation and improved decision-making. By valuing and integrating diverse perspectives, the process becomes more comprehensive, equitable and effective in addressing the needs and concerns of the entire community.

E. Citizens' Assemblies, Deliberative panels and forums and their application in Italy

Co-creating solutions with Italian youth in Rome is an important step towards building a more inclusive and participatory democracy in Italy. It is essential to involve youth in the problem-solving and decision-making process and to ensure that their perspectives and experiences are considered using the tools and methods that resonate with them. Istituto Tevere will engage Roman youth by including them in deliberations using three different deliberative methods: citizens' assemblies, deliberative workshops, and forums. There are several innovative strategies that can be used to co-create solutions with Italian youth during these deliberations. There are some common steps to take when organising each method of deliberations.

The first step is to conceptualise the sessions.

- Define the objective: Clearly articulate the purpose and objective of the forum, citizen assembly, and deliberative panel, ensuring it is relevant to the lives and concerns of young people.
- Establish goals: Set clear goals for the deliberations, such as fostering youth participation, generating innovative ideas, and developing actionable recommendations.
- Identify the scope: Determine the specific topic or issue to be addressed, ensuring it interests young people. As explained in section C, the agenda of the deliberations will be set in pre-meetings with young people, which will ensure their interest in the topics. After the topics of interest have been identified together with the youth Istituto Tevere with the help of facilitators, will assign a topic to one of the three deliberation methods.

- Plan the timeline and logistics: Determine the duration, venue options, and logistical arrangements of the forum, citizen assemblies, and deliberative panels. In order to do this, it is important to take into account the specificities of each type of deliberative exercise.
- Identify and invite facilitators, experts, and stakeholders: Identify who are the relevant experts/scientists on the chosen topic to show a diversity of knowledge. Once they are identified, they can be invited to participate. It is also important to map who the relevant stakeholders in the field are and to invite them to the deliberations to represent a broadset of interests. Finally, it is essential to have good facilitators to mediate the process. Forums are often more flexible and less formal than citizen assemblies and deliberative panels; they tend to be shorter in duration and can be one-time events or occasional gatherings. They may last a few hours or a day.

Forums usually vary from a small group to several hundred people. Istituto Tevere will organise first a half/day one-day forum with a small-medium group. Therefore, the venue does not need to be that big. The deliberative panels, called mini-publics or citizen juries, will last 3–4 days and host about 12–24 people. The venue can be smaller but should be available for several days. Finally, the citizen assemblies will last four days and will host between 100–200 people. Therefore, Istituto Tevere will need to find a big venue that can host many people for several days. The second step is to implement the deliberations; this step will be different according to the deliberation method.

Forums are inclusive platforms where individuals gather to engage in open and structured discussions on specific topics. Through dialogue, participants share diverse perspectives, exchange ideas, and collaboratively explore solutions, fostering mutual understanding and generating insights that inform further actions and decision-making processes. The forums, like most deliberative methods, will consist of three phases: knowledge injection, deliberations, and recommendations. The more flexible nature of forums will facilitate the use of several innovative approaches to enhance youth engagement in deliberative forums. In the first phase of knowledge injection, different experts and stakeholders will provide the participants with all relevant perspectives and facts on the subject. Inviting subject matter experts, policymakers, or mentors who can share their knowledge, provide guidance, and offer support throughout the forum enhances the deliberative process.

Their insights and mentorship help participants navigate complex issues and broaden their perspectives. This phase can be complemented with digital tools like an online platform. Providing pre-forum resources like informative videos, articles, or interactive content through digital platforms helps participants comprehensively understand the issue at hand. Providing the participant with information beforehand is crucial because of the very short nature of these deliberations. In the second phase, deliberations should be structured to include facilitated small group discussions, plenary sessions, and interactive activities. These interactive activities should include innovative activities like gamification. Creating opportunities for young people to express their views, ask questions, and engage in

meaningful deliberations fosters a sense of ownership and involvement. Incorporating interactive elements like polling, brainstorming, and visualisation exercises stimulates engagement, creativity, and critical thinking. The recommendation phase of the forum will yield less exhaustive recommendations than the deliberative panels and citizen assemblies. They will identify key issues and build a common understanding of the issue at hand.

Citizens' assemblies and deliberative panels share some similarities in how they are conducted. Citizens' assemblies and deliberative panels are powerful tools for fostering inclusive and informed decision-making processes. While they share common citizen participation and deliberation goals, there are distinct differences in their design and implementation. Deliberative panels are small groups of individuals carefully selected to engage in thoughtful, focused discussions on specific topics. They provide a platform for informed dialogue, collective decision-making, and the generation of well-considered recommendations to address complex issues. The design of deliberative panels allows for deeper exploration and focused discussions, leveraging the knowledge and expertise of the participants. Similar to citizen assemblies, deliberative panels start with a knowledge injection phase. Participants are provided with comprehensive background information, research findings, and expert insights related to the issue under consideration. This phase aims to ensure that panel members have a solid foundation of knowledge before engaging in deliberative discussions. Deliberative panels focus on in-depth discussions and analysis of the issue. Participants engage in structured dialogues, evidence-based debates, and critical evaluations of different perspectives. The emphasis is on a thorough examination, detailed analysis, and the synthesis of ideas and arguments. Deliberation in panels often involves iterative rounds of discussion to refine and clarify insights. At the conclusion of the deliberation phase, deliberative panels consolidate their findings and insights into a set of recommendations. These recommendations are carefully crafted to reflect the panel's expertise, informed judgments, and nuanced understanding of the issue. The recommendations emphasise evidence-based solutions, practical considerations, and policy implications. During this phase, relevant policymakers and stakeholders will be invited as the recommendations are valuable in decision-making processes.

Citizens' assemblies are deliberative bodies composed of randomly selected citizens who come together to discuss and make recommendations on important societal issues. They ensure diverse representation, foster inclusive dialogue, and provide citizen-led insights for policymaking.

The design of citizens' assemblies focuses on ensuring diversity, inclusion, and effective deliberation. The first phase involves equipping the participants with the necessary knowledge about the issue at hand. Expert presentations, briefing materials, and interactive sessions are employed to provide a balanced understanding of the topic. This knowledge injection phase aims to promote informed deliberations among the participants. This phase will last one day, but experts will remain present in the second phase to provide clarifications and additional information when needed.

The deliberation phase is the heart of citizens' assemblies. Participants engage in facilitated discussions, small group dialogues, and plenary sessions to exchange perspectives, share experiences, and explore possible solutions. Deliberations often involve a range of activities such as debates, case studies, and role-playing exercises. The emphasis is on promoting respectful dialogue, active listening, and the search for common ground. This phase will last two days.

Following the deliberations, citizens' assemblies move into the recommendations phase, which will last one day. Participants distil their insights, experiences, and consensus into a set of recommendations that reflect their collective vision. These recommendations are often developed through a combination of voting, consensus-building exercises, and drafting sessions. The final recommendations serve as valuable input for policymakers and decision-makers.

The deliberation phase in all three methods will involve innovative elements to enhance youth participation in the deliberations. These innovative elements are the following:

- Digital platforms: Young people are often more comfortable with digital technology than older generations, and digital platforms can provide a space for youth to collaborate and share ideas. This could involve using social media platforms, online forums, or digital collaboration tools to facilitate discussions and co-creation.
- Gamification: Gamification is the use of game-like elements, such as points, badges or rewards, to encourage engagement and participation. It can involve designing a game or game-based challenge that encourages youth to collaborate and co-create solutions.
- Design thinking: Design thinking is a problem-solving approach that involves empathy, collaboration, and creativity. This approach could be used to engage youth in co-creating solutions by involving them in the process of problem definition, ideation, prototyping, and testing.
- Youth-led initiatives: Empowering young people to take the lead in co-creating solutions can be a powerful way to engage them in the process. This could involve providing funding, resources, or mentorship to youth-led initiatives that are focused on addressing specific challenges or issues.

Overall, co-creating solutions with Italian youth requires an innovative and flexible approach that is tailored to the needs and interests of young people. Using digital platforms, gamification, and design thinking, organisers can help empower youth to build a more inclusive and participatory democracy in Italy actively. The third step, dissemination of the recommendations, will be explained in more detail in the section G.

F. Facilitators in Italian deliberation: who and why? "Facilitating Productive Dialogues in Italian Deliberative Processes"

Facilitators play a crucial role in ensuring productive and inclusive dialogues in deliberative processes. The facilitator's role is to create a safe and respectful space for participants to engage in constructive dialogue, ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute, and guide the conversation towards productive outcomes.

In the Italian deliberative rounds, the facilitators will be selected from a variety of backgrounds and professions, depending on the context and the specific objectives of the deliberation.

Here are some examples:

Professional facilitators: Professional facilitators have specialised skills and experience in managing group processes and facilitating productive dialogues. They can bring a neutral perspective and ensure that the conversation stays focused and on track. Professional facilitators could be trained in specific facilitation methods such as dynamic facilitation, open space technology, or appreciative inquiry.

Community leaders: Community leaders are often trusted and respected members of the community who have experience in facilitating group processes. They can bring a deep understanding of the local context and ensure that the deliberation reflects the needs and interests of the community. Community leaders could be selected from a variety of backgrounds such as faith-based organisations, neighbourhood associations, or cultural groups.

Educators: Educators have experience in facilitating learning and discussion in a classroom setting. They can bring a pedagogical approach to the deliberation and ensure that participants have a clear understanding of the issues and are able to contribute effectively. Educators could be selected from a variety of backgrounds such as high school teachers, university professors, or adult education instructors.

Government officials: Government officials have experience in managing public processes and engaging with citizens. They can bring a deep understanding of the policy context and ensure that the deliberation is aligned with government objectives. Government officials could be selected from a variety of backgrounds such as civil servants, elected officials, or policy analysts.

The selection of the facilitators should be based on the objectives of the deliberation, the needs and preferences of the participants, and the context of the deliberation. It is important that the facilitators are seen as neutral and impartial, and that they have the skills and experience necessary to manage a productive and inclusive dialogue. Ultimately, the goal of the facilitation is to create a safe and respectful space for participants to engage in

constructive dialogue, and to guide the conversation towards productive outcomes.

G. Engaging Stakeholders and Decision-makers: “Leveraging the Power of Deliberative Democracy”

Engaging stakeholders and decision-makers is a critical component of leveraging the power of deliberative democracy in Italy.

To ensure that the outcomes of deliberative processes are taken seriously and implemented effectively, it is essential to engage with key stakeholders and decision-makers at all stages of the process. Here are some strategies for engaging stakeholders and decision-makers in the deliberations rounds to be conducted in Italy:

- Identify key stakeholders and decision makers: It is important to identify the key stakeholders and decision-makers who have the power to influence the outcome of the deliberations, considering the issues being deliberated. This could include elected officials, civil servants, business leaders, community organisations, and other influential groups.
- Build relationships and coalitions: Building relationships and coalitions with key stakeholders and decision-makers is critical to ensure that the outcomes of the deliberations are taken seriously. This could involve meeting with stakeholders and decision-makers in advance of the deliberation to build trust and rapport, and to ensure that they are aware of the goals and objectives of the deliberations.
- Provide opportunities for input and feedback: Providing opportunities for key stakeholders and decision-makers to provide input and feedback on the deliberation can help to build buy-in and ensure that the outcomes of the deliberation are aligned with their interests and priorities. This could include inviting key stakeholders and decision-makers to participate in pre-consultations and all phases of deliberations, or giving them the opportunity to review and feedback on the results of deliberations. Use evidence-based arguments: Using evidence-based arguments to support the results of deliberations can help build credibility and persuade key stakeholders and decision makers to take action. This can include presenting data and research that support the results of the deliberations, and using case studies and examples to illustrate the potential benefits of implementing the recommendations. Leveraging the media: Leveraging the media can help raise awareness, increase the reach of the deliberations and build support for the outcomes among the general public, key stakeholders, and decision makers. This can include issuing press releases, arranging media interviews, and using social media to promote the deliberations and their outcomes.

In all, engaging stakeholders and decision makers is essential to ensure that the outcomes of deliberative rounds in Italy are taken seriously and implemented effectively. By identifying key stakeholders and decision makers, building relationships and coalitions, providing

opportunities for input and feedback, using evidence-based arguments, and relying on the media, organisers can increase the likelihood that the outcomes of deliberative processes will lead to meaningful change. Finally, it is of utmost importance that participants be informed about what will happen to the recommendations made during the deliberative rounds, so this aspect must be wellthought out and clearly articulated. Only when participants are certain of the outcome will they be truly willing to contribute time and energy to the process.

III. Deliberations in Croatia:

The case of Zadar, Zagreb, Osijek and Rijeka

A. The Croatian local context: "Building a Democratic and Deliberative Culture: The EU accession"

Deliberative democracy is an evolving concept in Croatia, and while it is not yet fully entrenched in the country's political landscape, there are signs of progress and of concerted effort by various stakeholders to advance this practice in the interest of a more robust and participatory democratic system.



One factor contributing to the increased interest in deliberative democracy in Croatia is the country's accession to the European Union in 2013. As an EU member state, Croatia is encouraged to adopt and implement various policies and practices that promote citizen participation, transparency, and balanced decision-making. This has provided additional impetus for the adoption of deliberative democracy practices in Croatia. Furthermore, Croatia has witnessed the growth of a vibrant civil society that organises and supports initiatives promoting active citizenship and engaging in policy debates. Many civil society organisations (CSOs) in Croatia are dedicated to fostering dialogue and participation in decision-making processes.

They engage in activities such as organising public debates, offering training programs on deliberation and communication skills, and advocating for systemic changes aimed at greater civic involvement, including in the issues related to transparency, environmental protection, and human rights. Notable example is “Democratic Vaccination – Debate Clubs and Deliberative Democracy as a Model for the Development of Democratic Competences and Participatory Decision Making“, a project implemented by The Croatian Debate Society. However, despite these ongoing efforts, the practice of deliberative democracy in Croatia faces several challenges. For instance, political culture in Croatia is heavily influenced by historical experiences under socialist non-democratic regimes, which might hinder the development of an open and inclusive democratic culture. Moreover, there still remains a lack of political

will to fully embrace deliberative processes and involve citizens in decision-making, as well as a lack of expertise, funding, and resources required for designing and implementing participatory procedures.

Overall, the adoption of deliberative democracy practices in Croatia is an ongoing process. Further improvements will require not only a change in political culture and mindset but also strong support from civil society, international organisations, local communities, and individual citizens – all working together to promote greater public participation and a vibrant deliberative culture in Croatia.

B. Why use Dialogue Method, Fishbowl Conversations, Citizens' Jury in Zadar, Zagreb, Osijek and Rijeka? "Establishing an open and democratic culture"

The situation in Croatia is unique due to its historical, socialist non-democratic regime and current circumstances. The limited decentralisation and comparatively weak political legitimacy and trust pose significant challenges to establishing an open and inclusive democratic culture that aligns with European standards. Data from the European Social Survey (ESS 10) show that Croatians have extremely low trust in their parliament and politicians and are not very satisfied with the way democracy works. This project is needed to enhance political trust and a satisfactory democratic culture.

One of the explicit aims of deliberative democracy projects is to overcome the gap between policymakers, stakeholders, and citizens. Several deliberative methods have proven successful in overcoming low democratic legitimacy and political trust. Udruga Prizma aims to implement the Dialogue method, Fishbowl Conversations and Citizens' Jury in different places in Croatia, namely: Zadar, Zagreb, Osijek, and Rijeka. The first method, Dialogue, has proven very effective to help overcome low trust between the parties involved. Additionally, Dialogue remains one of the few practicable participative options once a conflict has reached a certain point.

The dialogue method could help enhance the trust between the youth, stakeholders, and politicians. Another advantage when implementing the Dialogue method is its relatively low cost. The dialogue method is a structured approach for fostering open and constructive conversations among participants. It provides a space for respectful engagement, active listening, and shared understanding. Participants come together to explore diverse perspectives, exchange ideas, and collaboratively address complex issues. Through dialogue, participants gain insights, build relationships, and contribute to collective learning and problem-solving for the benefit of all the members of the community. This method will be used to deliberate on complex issues where tensions within the communities run high and trust is broken. The way the issues to be deliberated will be decided upon will be explained in the next section.

Secondly, Udruga Prizma will organise Fishbowl conversations. Fishbowl conversations are a discussion format that involves a small group of participants sitting in a circle in the centre of the room, while the remaining participants form an outer circle and observe. The inner circle engages in a focused conversation, sharing their perspectives, insights, and experiences on a specific topic. The outer circle participants listen attentively, gaining new insights and understanding from the discussion. The fishbowl format encourages active listening, deepens dialogue, and allows for the exchange of ideas in a structured and inclusive manner.

In contexts where trust is broken, and a low democratic culture exists, fishbowl conversations can have positive effects. They provide a safe space for respectful dialogue, allowing participants to share their perspectives and rebuild trust. The format exposes participants to diverse viewpoints, challenging preconceived notions and fostering empathy. Fishbowl conversations serve as a model for constructive engagement, encouraging a shift towards a more democratic mindset. They facilitate relationship-building among participants and contribute to incremental change. Additionally, they provide an opportunity for citizens with low trust who do not wish to be engaged with a passive, low threshold solution as they can just sit and listen. But at the same time, it reduces the distinction between ‘invited speakers’ and the audience. This possibility for passive observation and low engagement is often mentioned as a weakness of the fishbowl conversation. But in a context with low trust and low democratic culture, this could be a low-threshold way to involve people. Therefore, while not a sole solution, fishbowl conversations are part of a broader effort from the Citizen Z project to address underlying issues through expanded opportunities for participation.

Finally, Udruga Prizma will implement the method of Citizens’ Jury. A citizens’ jury is a deliberative method that involves a representative group of citizens who come together to deliberate on a specific issue or policy question. It typically consists of a randomly selected group of individuals who reflect the diversity of the larger population. The citizens’ jury engages in a structured process of learning, deliberation, and decision-making, often with the support of expert information and facilitation. The aim is to provide a balanced and informed discussion that leads to recommendations or verdicts on the issue at hand. Citizens’ juries enhance public participation, promote deliberative democracy, and contribute to more informed and inclusive decision-making processes. Citizens’ juries offer opportunities for participants to access relevant information, hear expert opinions, and engage in thoughtful deliberation. This process can foster a greater understanding of complex issues, encourage critical thinking, challenge preconceived notions, and cultivate democratic values. In turn, this can contribute to a more informed and engaged citizenry. Furthermore, when the recommendations or verdicts of citizen assemblies are taken into account by policymakers, it can increase the democratic legitimacy of the policies. Which can, in turn, increase the political trust of the participants. But if the recommendations just lie on a shelf taking dust,

it can have the opposite effect on participants' political trust. This is why ensuring the link between the deliberative process and policymakers is of utmost importance. This point will be developed in a further section.

C. Engaging Young People in the pre-consultations: “Determining Key Issues for Deliberation”

In a first step, Udruga Prizma will widely disseminate an online survey asking a broad and representative group of young people to determine the top five issues, either a general theme or a specific issue, that matter in their lives and communities. The answers could, for example, include youth policies, environmental crises, and migration. It is very important in this step to widely disseminate the survey to gather the answers of a big, diverse, and representative group of young people of different ethnicities, gender, education, and socio-economic backgrounds. This first step will help determine which general, broader issues matter to the young people in the community but also give the opportunity to the youth to narrow down the broader issue to a specific topic. For instance, the broader theme of youth policies could be specified as a question on the importance of a youth centre in Zadar.

The environmental question, for instance, could be focused on the issue of biodiversity loss and habitat fragmentation affecting local species, like the Eurasian lynx and brown bear.

In the second step, Udruga Prizma, with the eventual help of facilitators, will assign the identified deliberation questions to one of the deliberation forms; the dialogue method, the fishbowl conversations, and the citizen jury. Each question will be assigned to the best-suited method. As discussed earlier, the dialogue method is especially well-suited for topics and problems where tensions run high. On the other hand, the citizen jury method is well-suited to discuss value-laden and controversial questions with ethical and social repercussions. This method also yields highly specified outcome policy recommendations from the citizens, which makes it a suitable method for topics on which policymakers are already working.

D. Selection of participants: "Ensuring Diversity and Representation in the dialogue, the fishbowl conversations and citizens' jury"

Participant selection is essential to foster meaningful deliberation, enhance the representativeness and legitimacy of the process, and ensure that diverse perspectives are heard and considered. By selecting participants thoughtfully, deliberative processes can generate outcomes that are more informed, inclusive, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the wider community. In the first step, Udruga Prizma will map the relevant experts and stakeholders to the issues and invite them to participate in the deliberations. These experts and stakeholders are important and have slightly different roles in each of the

selected methods.

Dialogue aims to involve all stakeholders who have the potential to influence or be impacted by the outcome. This group includes decision-makers, individuals directly affected by decisions, and those who may either support or hinder the implementation of decisions. The size of dialogue deliberations depends on the complexity of the issue and the number of stakeholders involved. The fishbowl conversations will start with a core of 5 experts and stakeholders and another 3 young participants. Finally, experts and stakeholders in Citizen Jury hold a more traditional role in deliberations. In the first injection phase, they will provide the participants with an expert presentation with the knowledge needed to conduct the deliberations and recommendations in the next phase.

In the second step, Udruga Prizma will select the young participants that will contribute to the deliberations. It is important to ensure diversity in terms of demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic background). This helps capture a range of perspectives and experiences, promoting a more comprehensive and inclusive discussion.

Special efforts will be made to include individuals from marginalised or underrepresented groups to ensure their perspectives are heard and considered. This will be done in two ways. First, by reaching out to marginalised youth through youth centres and schools working with disadvantaged youth and through community leaders. Secondly, by ensuring enough diverse participants are selected to participate in the deliberations through quotas.

In order to select young participants, Udruga Prizma will collaborate with local (disadvantaged) youth centres, clubs, and NGOs, and will provide access to their networks and expertise in mobilising young people. Engaging with schools and universities through presentations and workshops will raise awareness about the importance of youth voices in decision-making. Also, Udruga Prizma will collaborate with local leaders and influencers to garner their support and endorsement. Furthermore, an online presence and targeted social media strategies will be employed to disseminate information, share success stories, and encourage young individuals to volunteer. Young people will be given the opportunity to volunteer for the deliberations through forms. Udruga Prizma has already done much work encouraging young people's volunteering. By collaborating with many different organisations and educational institutions, Udruga Prizma will ensure a diverse set of volunteering participants. However, to ensure representativeness and diversity, gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic background, age, and other relevant quotas will be used to select the final participants in the deliberations.

Self-selection is a common practice for participant selection in fishbowl conversation and dialogue. However, it is an unusual participant selection method for citizen juries. Citizen juries usually apply stratified random selection to have representative and diverse participants. Due to the high cost of this selection method, it is unfeasible. However, by setting selection criteria which are representative of the local population, representativeness

and diversity in the deliberations can be ensured. Given the small size of participants in citizen juries, Udruga Prizma and facilitators will be able to select the most suitable candidates to respect the quotas.

E. Fishbowl conversation, Dialogue and Citizens' Jury and Their Application in Croatian Cities: "Empowering Youth and Promoting Inclusive Decision-Making"

Udruga Prizma will organise two-day events in each city with young people, so in total there will be 12 days of program in Croatia. The program of the first day of the event will consist of deliberative workshops on forms of democratic and civic participation, media literacy, and critical thinking with the aim of informing local young people about the available forms of democratic and civic participation (youth councils, volunteering, EU youth dialogue, local, national and European elections, citizens' initiative...) and providing them with opportunities to express their opinions and political priorities.

The activities will also promote media literacy and critical thinking among young people as a prerequisite for informed democratic participation. Moreover, during the first day, youth will be informed about the project and its objective. The program of the second day will consist of the deliberation question and chosen deliberation methodology, either fishbowl conversations or dialogue method.

Typically, Fishbowl conversation only lasts two hours. In that time participants build a shared, deeper understanding of a topic rather than develop policy recommendations. The first step when organising fishbowl conversations is to get the arrangement of the room right so that the speakers asked to start the conversation are seated in the centre of the room 'in the fishbowl', with the other participants seated around them in a circle to listen to their conversation. So seven chairs + three empty chairs will be set up in the centre as the fishbowl. The remaining chairs will be arranged in concentric circles around it for the remaining participants. The fishbowl will start with a short introduction of the core group by the facilitator. This is followed by an opening statement by the core group of experts who share insights on the topic at hand. These statements set the stage for the conversation and help frame the subsequent discussion. Then follows a dialogue or facilitated discussion within the fishbowl. The core group exchanges ideas, asks questions and challenges each other respectfully. This can be seen as the knowledge injection phase of the fishbowl deliberation method. Then the facilitator will open the second phase of the fishbowl conversation, rotating participation. A key aspect of the fishbowl conversation is the ability for participants from the outer circle to join the inner circle and actively participate in the discussion.

This can be done in different ways, such as individuals tapping a participant from the inner circle to take their place or designated time intervals for rotation. To promote inclusivity the facilitator will tap on the shoulders of the participants to leave and enter the inner circle. The rotation allows for a broader range of perspectives to be included in the conversation.

Participants in the outer circle have the opportunity to observe and listen to the discussions taking place in the fishbowl. They are encouraged to take notes, reflect on the dialogue, and prepare questions or comments for when they join the inner circle during rotations. At certain points during the fishbowl conversation, the facilitator may pause the discussion to allow participants in the outer circle to share their observations, insights, or questions. This creates opportunities for engagement and ensures that the voices of all participants are heard. Finally, towards the end of the conversation, the facilitator guides a closing phase where the main points, agreements, disagreements, or emerging themes are summarised. Participants are given a chance to provide final remarks or reflections on the discussion.

Deliberative dialogue is a structured and inclusive process designed to promote constructive and respectful exchanges among all stakeholders, defined as people who can influence or be impacted by the outcome. On the second day of the programme Udruga Prizma will organise Dialogue with young people and stakeholders on a relevant topic, defined in the pre-consultations.

This Dialogue session will be structured as follows. The dialogue will begin with an introduction by a facilitator who sets the discussion's purpose, goals, and ground rules. The topic or issue at hand is framed to provide context and ensure a shared understanding among participants. Then the participants will be divided into small groups, typically consisting of 5-8 individuals, to facilitate more intimate and focused conversations. Each group will consist of one expert, one stakeholder, and 5-6 young participants. In dialogue the knowledge-injection phase is blended with the deliberation phase as experts and stakeholders take part in the whole deliberations together with citizens.

Each group is given a specific discussion prompt or question-related to the topic. The facilitators may provide guidelines or structure to guide the discussions. Participants share their perspectives, experiences, concerns, and ideas related to the discussion prompt within their small groups. Active listening is encouraged, and participants are expected to engage in constructive dialogue, asking questions, seeking clarification, and building on each other's contributions. After the small group discussions, participants will come together as a whole group to share the key points, insights, and themes that emerged from their smaller conversations. A designated representative from each small group may present a summary or report on their group's discussion. This stage allows for cross-pollination of ideas and the identification of commonalities or differences among the groups. After this, the whole group will engage in a facilitated deliberation session, where participants have the opportunity to explore further and discuss the shared insights and perspectives.

As the deliberation progresses, the facilitator may guide the group toward identifying areas of consensus or common ground. Participants work together to distil the key insights, values, and potential solutions that have emerged from the dialogue. This process may involve voting, ranking, or other consensus-building techniques to identify shared priorities or

recommendations. Udruga Prizma will hold meetings with the policy-makers of the cities to talk about the organisation of citizens' juries and possible topics. Udruga Prizma will certainly organise a citizen jury in Zadar on the question of the running of the youth Center. This subject is of importance to the youth and policymakers in the city.

Udruga Prizma has given a conference announcing the citizens. In total the citizen juries will last four days. These four days will be divided into twice two days in one week intervals, in order to ensure quality reflection and informed decisions. On the first two days there will be the introduction and initial knowledge injection phase that involves equipping participants with the necessary knowledge of the issue through expert presentations, briefing materials, and interactive sessions.

The participants will then have one week to read about the issue and reflect which will lead to higher quality deliberations. Then two more days of deliberation and recommendations. During this phase, participants engage in facilitated discussions, small group dialogues, and plenary sessions to exchange perspectives, share experiences, and explore potential solutions. Various activities like debates and case studies are employed to encourage respectful dialogue, active listening, and the pursuit of common ground. Following the deliberations, citizen assemblies enter the recommendations phase. The participants gather their unique insights, experiences, and areas of agreement to create a shared vision or a verdict. This is achieved through a combination of voting, exercises to build consensus and drafting sessions. Policy-makers and various stakeholders will be invited to the recommendation phase.

The final verdict/recommendations serve as valuable input for policymakers and decision-makers, drawing from the citizen-led insights generated through the inclusive and deliberative process of the assemblies. In total the citizens' jury will last 4 days and gather between 12 and 24 participants.

F. Facilitators in Croatian deliberation: who and why? "The Role of Facilitators in Empowering Youth through Deliberative Processes"

The role of a facilitator in the deliberation process with youth is crucial and can have a significant impact on the outcomes and overall experience. Facilitators play a supportive and guiding role, creating a conducive environment for meaningful dialogue, active participation, and the exploration of different perspectives.

During the selection and preparation of facilitators for deliberation, Udruga Prizma will take special care to fulfil the following:

- Establishing a Safe and Inclusive Space: Facilitators will be responsible for creating a safe and inclusive space where young participants feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and

opinions. By setting ground rules, encouraging respectful communication, and managing any conflicts or power imbalances that may arise, facilitators will have to ensure that all voices are heard and valued.

- Encouraging Active Participation: Youth engagement is vital in the deliberation process, and facilitators play a crucial role in encouraging active participation. They will use various techniques to involve all participants, such as asking open-ended questions, use ice breakers or energisers, and employ interactive methods like small group discussions or brainstorming sessions. Facilitators will provide equal opportunities for quieter participants to contribute and prevent dominant individuals from monopolising the conversation.
- Fostering Critical Thinking and Analysis: Facilitators will stimulate critical thinking among youth by posing thought-provoking questions, encouraging evidence-based reasoning, and challenging assumptions. They will guide participants to analyse complex issues from multiple perspectives, consider long-term consequences, and weigh the pros and cons of different options. Through this process, facilitators will enhance the participants' ability to think critically, make informed decisions, and develop their own perspectives.
- Building Consensus and Collaboration: Facilitators will assist participants in finding common ground and building consensus. They will help identify areas of agreement and encourage collaboration by highlighting shared goals or interests. Facilitators will guide the group towards finding practical solutions or making informed recommendations by synthesising different viewpoints and encouraging dialogue that promotes mutual understanding and cooperation.
- Skill Development and Empowerment: The deliberation process provides an opportunity for youth to develop valuable skills such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Facilitators will support this skill development by offering constructive feedback, coaching participants on effective communication techniques, and providing resources or information to expand their knowledge. By empowering youth through the deliberation process, facilitators will help build their confidence, leadership abilities, and capacity for active citizenship.
- Amplifying Youth Voices: Facilitators will ensure that youth voices are amplified and given due importance throughout the deliberation process. They will act as advocates for youth participants, creating a platform where their perspectives are valued and taken into account. Facilitators will also help bridge the gap between youth and decision-makers, facilitating opportunities for their recommendations or ideas to be shared with relevant stakeholders.

When selecting facilitators Udruga Prizma will consider the following factors before taking decisions:

- look for facilitators who have the necessary knowledge, expertise and experience in facilitating

- deliberative processes and working with youth,
- Look for facilitators who will be neutral and impartial, ensuring that they do not have a vested interest in the outcome of the deliberation,
 - Look for facilitators who are skilled communicators who can clearly articulate instructions, questions, and concepts to participants, and are active listeners,
 - Look for facilitators who have strong conflict management skills, are able to handle disagreements, defuse tensions, and create a respectful and inclusive environment where all voices are heard,
 - Look for facilitators who can design and structure the deliberation process effectively, develop a clear agenda, select appropriate deliberative techniques, and manage time efficiently to ensure a well-organised and productive discussion,
 - Look for facilitators who are flexible and adaptable, capable of adjusting the process to meet the specific needs and dynamics of the participants and the topic at hand.

G. Driving Change through Collaboration: “Amplifying Youth Recommendations to Policy Makers and Stakeholders”

Engaging with decision-makers from the beginning of the deliberation process will be the cornerstone for ensuring decision-makers consider recommendations.

Udruga Prizma will organise a meeting with decision-makers before deliberating in each city to discuss needs, opportunities, and potential topics that could be addressed with citizens, especially youth. This will give valuable information to facilitators for designing the quality deliberation process, and will not affect in any way to the citizen's (youth) selection of topics to be discussed. To ensure quality deliberation in each activity Udruga Prizma will involve decision-makers, regarding the selected methods, which will enable open dialogue of citizens (youth) with decision-makers and ensure a stronger impact of deliberation of all involved in the process. Recommendations that resulted from the deliberation will be passed on to the decision-makers in written form at an organised meeting and the outcomes will be presented with wider implications if the recommendations will be taken into consideration and implemented.

To ensure impact Udruga Prizma will:

- Identify target audiences and determine the key stakeholders who need to be aware of and act upon the recommendations;
- Develop a communication strategy and use different communication channels and platforms for sharing key messages among different stakeholders, such as youth, decision-makers, community leaders, youth workers, etc;
- Develop visually appealing and engaging content to present the recommendations;
- Collaborate with local media, prepare press releases, and organise radio interviews to share recommendations;

- Monitor and evaluate by assessing the extent to which the recommendations are being implemented and by making adjustments to the dissemination strategies as needed, and by organising follow-up meetings with relevant stakeholders.



IV. Deliberations in Belgium: the case of Brussels

A. The Belgian local context: "Belgium's Multicultural Landscape and Deliberative Processes"

Belgium is a country well known for its multicultural landscape, with three regional communities, each with its own language (Dutch, French and German) and culture. This diversity extends beyond language and culture to include ethnicity and religion, making Belgium an ideal place to implement deliberative practices. Moreover, Brussels fully and harmoniously embodies this diversity, making the Belgian capital a truly cosmopolitan city with multiple citizen initiatives from very different groups.



Belgium is at the forefront of deliberative practices, with a strong commitment to institutionalising citizen deliberations and making these practices permanent. The country has taken significant steps towards creating forums for deliberative democracy methods in decision-making processes, with the German-speaking community leading the way at the political level.

Indeed, the German-speaking Community of Belgium, known as Ostbelgien, is the first in Belgium to use deliberative democracy as a tool at the political level by adopting permanent forms of deliberative democracy in its Parliament. The Brussels Region has followed suit by establishing a permanent procedure to engage randomly selected citizens in policy making alongside parliamentarians (via Deliberative Committees) creating significant opportunities for popular influence on policy.

According to Professor Min Reuchamps, "Belgian Regions and Communities have taken a crucial step in experimenting with an innovative institutionalisation of direct citizen participation in policy deliberation and formulation complementing regular political institutions. Belgian cities are also increasingly using sortition to compose local councils

orenact budgets through participatory processes. This institutional-turn seems to be only at its beginning, as other regions, such as Wallonia, could also follow this democratic path. At the federal level, there is a call for the transformation of the upper chamber, the Senate, from a chamber representing the interests of the Regions and the Communities into a chamber for citizen participation. Having a permanent body composed of randomly selected citizens directly participate in constitutional deliberative democracy would be revolutionary in Belgium, and beyond.”

The use of deliberative democracy in decision-making processes has the potential to enhance the quality of democracy in Belgium by promoting greater citizen participation and engagement. Moreover, the multicultural landscape of Belgium presents a unique opportunity for deliberative formats to be implemented in a way that is inclusive and representative of all communities. Furthermore, by engaging citizens from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, deliberative processes can help to bridge cultural divides and promote greater understanding and cooperation among different groups.

In sum, the Belgian local context provides an ideal environment for the implementation of deliberative methods. With its diverse linguistic communities and multicultural landscape, Belgium has the potential to serve as a model for other countries seeking to enhance citizen participation and engagement in decision-making processes.

B. Why use Open Space Technology and Citizens’ Assemblies in Belgium? "Fostering Citizen and Youth Empowerment and Engagement in Belgian regions”

The use of the Open Space Technology method for the pre-consultations with young people in Belgium

During the pre-consultation phase with young people and other local stakeholders, the Open Space Technology method will be employed. This method is highly valuable as it allows participants to take ownership of the process from the outset, which is something the organisers are very keen to achieve. The idea is not for organisers to lead the way, but to allow young people to steer and design the agenda according to their vision, from the first to the last stage. Open Space Technology is a method of facilitating meetings and events that allows participants to create their own agenda and discussion topics. It is a self-organising approach that encourages participants to take responsibility for their own learning and engagement. The method is based on the idea that people are most engaged and productive when they are working on topics that they are passionate about. Open Space Technology creates an environment where participants can share their ideas, collaborate, and learn from each other in a dynamic and interactive way. The method is particularly useful for large groups, complex issues, and diverse perspectives.

The use of the Citizens' Assembly method for the deliberation rounds

The Citizens' Assembly method, which is widely used in Belgium and for which considerable expertise is already available, will be used for the deliberation rounds. This method has shown excellent results in terms of citizen engagement and feedback from participants. Given its success, it is even more important to multiply and promote its use in different Belgian regions.

Typically, the Citizens' Assembly method is a deliberative process that involves a randomly selected group of citizens who come together to discuss and make recommendations on a particular issue. The aim is to provide a representative sample of the population with the opportunity to engage in informed and respectful dialogue, leading to more inclusive and effective decision-making.

Recent examples of Citizens' Assemblies in Belgium include the Brussels Citizens' Assembly on Climate (2020), which brought together 72 randomly selected citizens to discuss and make recommendations on climate policy in the city. Another example is the Citizens' Assembly on the Future of Wallonia (2019), which involved 28 randomly selected citizens who discussed and made recommendations on the future of the region. The Flemish Parliament also organised a Citizens' Assembly on the Future of Flanders (2019), which involved 100 randomly selected citizens who discussed and made recommendations on various issues related to the future of the region.

The geographical scope

As part of the project, events will be organised not only in Brussels, but also in Charleroi and Antwerp, all of which have a particularly rich and multicultural landscape. The aim is to offer young citizens from different regions the opportunity to take part in the project activities and share their perspective relevant to their regional context. The pre-consultations will take place in Charleroi and Antwerp, ensuring linguistic diversity, while the deliberative rounds will most likely be held in Brussels. By involving citizens from different regions and linguistic communities, the project can benefit from a range of perspectives and ideas, leading to more inclusive and relevant policy recommendations.

C. Setting the deliberation agenda: pre-consultations with young people: "Harnessing the Power of Youth Participation in Deliberative Democracy"

Young people are often under-represented in traditional forms of democracy, such as voting and political parties, despite being an essential part of society with unique perspectives and experiences that can contribute to the decision-making process. To encourage youth

participation, it is crucial for them to see that their contributions are valued, listened to, and ultimately proposed for implementation. Young people need to feel that their voice counts and that they can shape the process according to their vision.

Pre-consultations are an effective way of achieving this, as they enable young people to set an agenda that reflects their priorities and vision. By discussing with their peers and deciding which topics to include on the deliberative agenda, young people feel empowered and are more likely to participate actively. This approach is more effective than a framework where the agenda is pre-established and young people only have to contribute to a given topic that could just as well be outside their field of interest. Therefore, following the pre-consultations, the selected topics will be those deemed crucial to the youth, which may encompass mental health, climate change, and education. The goal of these consultations is to ensure that the project is relevant and engaging for the target audience, and that it addresses the issues that matter most to them.

In Belgium, pre-consultations will be conducted in at least two schools, located in Charleroi and Antwerp such as Lucerna College and Collège des Étoiles. These schools have a significant number of students from migrant backgrounds, making it crucial to engage with them and ensure that they are not excluded from democratic processes due to potentially higher barriers to participation.

It is essential to engage with young people from diverse backgrounds and ensure that their voices are heard in decision-making processes. By conducting pre-consultations in schools with a high proportion of students from migrant backgrounds, policymakers can gain valuable insights into the needs and concerns of these communities. This approach can help to create more inclusive policies that reflect the diversity of society. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that young people with a migrant background do not remain on the periphery of democratic processes, as they may face additional barriers to participation, such as language barriers or lack of familiarity with democratic processes. By involving them in pre-consultations, these barriers can be broken down, creating a more inclusive and participatory democracy.

Pre-consultations will be led by skilled facilitators who will ensure that everyone feels safe and has the space to express their views. Particular attention will be devoted to inviting local decision-makers so that stakeholders are informed of the forthcoming deliberations and the subjects being considered. This will facilitate communication between young people and decision-makers, and enable each group to be aware of the other's priorities.

D. Selection of participants: "Ensuring Representative Deliberations"

For a deliberative process to be truly effective and reflect the views of the entire community, representativeness is crucial. The more representative the selected participants are of the community, the more legitimacy and power there is in the recommendations they provide. Therefore, the participant selection method is vital to preserve the authenticity and legitimacy of the entire process.

Traditionally, participants in Citizens' Assemblies are selected randomly among citizens. However, due to budgetary constraints, the organisers will use an alternative method, always bearing in mind that selecting a representative group from the local community is crucial. Furthermore, our intention is to provide an opportunity for very different young people to come together and discuss common issues, with the aim of bridging cultural divides and promoting greater understanding and cooperation between different groups of young people, particularly through an intercultural and interfaith perspective. This approach involves bringing together young people from different religious and non-religious backgrounds, including Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and non-confessionals. Initially, Fedactio will work with Lucerna College and Collège des Étoiles, which are non-confessional public schools, while trying to also include some other public and Catholic schools. The aim is to ensure that the students involved come from different religious backgrounds.

In Belgium, Fedactio will use a two-step process to select participants for deliberation rounds. Firstly, an open call of interest will be open for young people aged 15–25. The open call for interest will be circulated in schools and universities, via teachers, principals and youth school leaders. Simultaneously, targeted online dissemination campaigns will be carried out using local partners' social media network and other digital platforms.

Secondly, the working group responsible for organising the deliberations will select a maximum of 60 participants from all applications, using a stratified selection method. This approach ensures that the profile of participants is varied and representative of the local youth community.

By using an open call of interest, the organisers can attract a diverse range of young people who are interested in participating in deliberative processes. The stratified selection process ensures that the final group of participants is representative of the local youth community, considering factors such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and geographic location. This approach prioritises inclusion and ensures that the deliberative process reflects the views and perspectives of a wide range of young people. Despite often being seen as a homogenous group, young people come from diverse backgrounds and experiences, and it is of the utmost importance to consider the heterogeneity of young people in order to capture their point of view in all its complexity.

E. Citizens' Assembly and its application in Brussels: "Innovative Solutions for Citizen-Led Deliberative Processes in Brussels"

Brussels is a multicultural and cosmopolitan city that perfectly embodies the Belgian context, with a significant population of people with migrant backgrounds, expatriates, and European citizens due to the presence of EU institutions. This makes it an ideal environment for conducting deliberations that reflect the diversity of society.

Within the framework of the Citizen Z project, two Citizens' Assemblies will be conducted in Brussels. The first round of deliberations will take place in Autumn 2023, while the second round will take place towards Spring 2024. Each round will last for a maximum of 3 to 5 days. The participants will include three main groups: young people aged 15–25, facilitators and experts, and policymakers. The majority of participants (75%) will be young people, with a maximum of 50 participants. Facilitators and experts will make up 15% of the participants (12–15 participants), while policymakers will make up 10% of the participants (7–8 participants). The first day will be dedicated to a knowledge injection phase, with presentations from multiple experts on the selected issue(s). This information will be presented in a way that is accessible and understandable to all participants, regardless of their background or level of expertise. It is possible that this phase will be organised in a venue related to the topic itself, to better familiarise young people with the issue.

During the second and third days of the Citizens' Assemblies, the young participants will engage in deliberation sessions where they will discuss and exchange ideas on the selected topic(s). Facilitators will guide the discussions to ensure that all participants have an opportunity to express their views and that the discussions remain respectful and constructive. To further promote inclusivity, a gender expert will be present throughout the process. The expert will observe and intervene as necessary to ensure that all girls and women are empowered to contribute to the discussions. This approach recognizes the importance of gender equality in decision-making processes and ensures that all participants have an equal opportunity to contribute their perspectives and ideas.

On the final day, participants will work together to develop concrete recommendations for policymakers and to present them to policymakers and other stakeholders. These recommendations will be based on the discussions and debates that took place during the deliberations phase. Policymakers will be invited to attend this phase to hear directly from young people and to engage in a dialogue with them. The final day will be an opportunity for young people to share their ideas and proposals with those who have the power to implement them.

During the second round of deliberations, young people will have the opportunity to

contextualise and connect local issues to EU-level policies. This will enable them to connect their local realities to those of their neighbours and to a more global level, while also gaining a clearer understanding of the impact of EU policies on their daily lives.

This round of deliberations will provide young people with a chance to explore whether the problems relevant to their community are also relevant to other countries or regions. They will be able to learn about what is being done on these issues and identify potential solutions that could be implemented at the EU level.

By connecting local issues to EU-level policies, young people can gain a better understanding of how decisions made at the EU level can impact their daily lives. This approach can help to create more informed and engaged citizens who are better equipped to participate in democratic processes. Thus, the second round of deliberations provides an important opportunity for young people to engage in meaningful dialogue and decision-making processes that connect their local realities to a more global context.

F. Facilitators in Belgian deliberations: who and why? "Empowering Communities through Skilled and Diverse Facilitation"

Having a diverse team of facilitators is crucial for the success of the Citizen Z project's deliberation rounds. The complexity of the issues that might arise during the deliberations requires facilitators with different skills and backgrounds to address them effectively.

Given the multiculturalism and international environment that Brussels represents as well as the interfaith and intercultural approach adopted, it is even more important to have facilitators who have training in intercultural dialogue and cultural awareness. This ensures that all participants feel comfortable expressing their views and that their perspectives are respected and valued.

Facilitators with diverse backgrounds can also bring different perspectives and experiences to the deliberations, enriching the discussions and promoting inclusivity.

In addition to their diverse backgrounds, facilitators will also receive training on how to guide discussions effectively, ensure that all participants have an opportunity to express their views, and maintain a respectful and constructive atmosphere. This training will help to ensure that the deliberations are productive and lead to meaningful recommendations.

The facilitators will be responsible for leading group discussions composed of 6 to 9 members. Additionally, youth workers and observers from civil society organisations will be invited to assist in the deliberations.

G. From Recommendations to Policy: Mechanisms for follow-up on the results of deliberations

Deliberative processes are becoming increasingly attractive to citizens due to the tangible outputs they produce, namely recommendations that can reach policy-makers and constitute a true involvement of citizens in public decision-making. However, since participants put their time and effort into the process, it is fundamental that they are aware of what will be done with the resulting recommendations from the deliberations and that there will be a follow-up.

To ensure that participants are aware of the impact of their recommendations, the local organisers will provide clear information on how the recommendations will be used and what follow-up actions will be taken. This approach recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability in decision-making processes and ensures that participants feel valued and engaged throughout the process. In addition to providing information on the use of recommendations, Fedactio will also establish mechanisms for follow-up and evaluation. This approach ensures that the recommendations are not only heard but also acted upon.

In addition to the role of policy-makers in the follow-up of recommendations, the organisers recognises the importance of reaching out to vocal activists and influencers to ensure that the recommendations reach a wider range of stakeholders through established channels and networks. This ensures that the recommendations are heard and acted upon by a diverse range of stakeholders, including those who may not have been directly involved in the deliberative process.

The involvement of activists is particularly important, as they can provide valuable insights and perspectives on the issues at hand. Their expertise and interest in the issue can also lead to improvements in the recommendations. For example, for recommendations related to climate, the organisers will strive to reach out to youth activists who are highly visible and followed by both young people and policy-makers. These activists can act as a bridge between the different actors, ensuring that the recommendations are acted upon.

V. Deliberations in The Netherlands: the case of Amsterdam

A. The Dutch local context: "The Netherlands' Landscape for Deliberative Processes"

The Netherlands is a country that places a great emphasis on the use of deliberative processes in democratic decision-making. This approach is rooted in a deep-seated belief that involving citizens in the policy-making process is the best way to ensure that decisions are informed, constructive and in linewith public needs and aspirations.

There are a range of methods, actors, and venues for public engagement in the Netherlands, with some of the most common forms of deliberative processes being citizens' panels, assemblies, participatory budgeting, consensus conferences and online consultations. These initiatives are organised by a variety of actors, including government agencies, NGOs, and citizen-ledgroups, illustrating the diverse nature of the Dutch deliberative landscape.

The Dutch government has made a significant commitment to promoting deliberative processes as a way to strengthen democratic institutions and build public trust in government decision-making.



The Netherlands first experimented with deliberative democracy with the Citizens' Forum on the Electoral System in 2006. The forum was established to provide a platform for citizens to deliberate on issues related to the Dutch electoral system and make recommendations for improvement. Recent initiatives have focused on increasing public participation in the democratic process, such as the National Think Tank and the National Citizen Consultation. One of the notable milestones in the evolution of deliberative democracy in the Netherlands was the establishment of the National Think Tank in 2007. This initiative brought together young professionals from diverse backgrounds to deliberate on societal challenges and propose innovative solutions. The Think Tank served as a platform for fostering deliberation, collaboration, and consensus-building among participants.

In 2014 and 2015, numerous deliberative citizen summits took place at the local level, whether under the name G1000. Not all participants were selected by lottery, but usually, there was a reference to the Belgian example. All G1000 initiatives explicitly focused on democratic renewal. G1000 events took place in Amersfoort, Kruiskamp (a neighbourhood in Amersfoort), Uden, and Groningen. Similar citizen summits were held in Amsterdam, Maastricht (on healthcare), and Utrecht (on sustainability), among others. And new examples are constantly emerging, including a G1000 in Nijmegen, Schiedam, and Eindhoven and a second G1000 in Amersfoort. The use of deliberative processes in the Netherlands reflects a strong commitment to democratic values and the involvement of citizens in the democratic process. The Dutch believe that citizen participation is essential to ensure that policy decisions meet the needs and aspirations of the public. By involving citizens in policy making, the country aims to create a more representative and inclusive political system that is more responsive to citizens' expectations.

The deliberations rounds of Citizen Z project in the Netherlands will be held in Amsterdam. Known for its vibrant and youthful atmosphere, Amsterdam is considered the most youth-friendly and culturally diverse city in the Netherlands. With a large number of youth organisations based in Amsterdam, the city boasts a dynamic landscape for young people to thrive in. In addition, Amsterdam is home to two prestigious universities and a plethora of diverse youth organisations.

Amsterdam's inclusive environment provides a welcoming atmosphere for young people to engage and participate in deliberations. The office of the Platform INS, the main organiser of the deliberations, is located in Amsterdam, making it an ideal place to access trusted partners and a large part of its network. All of these factors make the city of Amsterdam a convenient location to effectively and successfully organise deliberation rounds with youth.

B. Why use Citizens' assemblies and Deliberative workshops methods in Amsterdam: "Harnessing the Power of Collective Decision-Making in The Netherlands"

In the Netherlands, a variety of participatory and deliberative methods have been introduced to enable collective decision-making at the local and regional levels. ThePlatform INS, the main partner responsible for local deliberations in the Citizen Z project, decided to use the Citizens' assemblies and the deliberative workshops methods for both of the two rounds in Netherlands, which have proven effective in encouraging active participation, especially in a context where young people may feel disengaged from the political process. These methods are based on the principle of deliberative democracy, where informed and inclusive public discussion plays a vital role in policy and decision making. Given the Dutch context, which has a strong history of democratic participation and a growing desire for more inclusive decision-making processes, the Citizens' assemblies and deliberative workshops are suitable for involving youth and allow for a deep exploration of issues and topics that are relevant to the participants and can lead to informed decision-making based on diverse perspectives.

Citizens' assemblies bring together a broad representative sample of citizens, between 50–250 participants, to deliberate on a specific issue or set of issues. The aim is to enable informed and inclusive deliberation, where participants can learn from each other, exchange ideas, and arrive at collective decisions or recommendations. The rationale behind Citizens' assemblies is to ensure that diverse voices are heard, overcome the limitations of traditional decision-making processes, and generate more legitimate and informed outcomes. Citizens' assemblies offer individuals the chance to thoroughly educate themselves about a subject (phase 1: knowledge injection by various experts) and engage in meaningful discussions (phase 2: deliberations) before making informed decisions. Participants are tasked with weighing options and arriving at practical recommendations (phase 3: policy recommendations).

Deliberative Workshops are a form of facilitated group discussions that allow a group of about 8–12 participants to consider an issue in depth, challenge each other's opinions and develop their views/arguments to reach an informed position. A defining feature is that the facilitators will support participants to communicate in productive and respectful ways. The rationale behind deliberative workshops is to enable in-depth discussions, create opportunities for mutual learning, and promote consensus-building among participants. Deliberative workshops often focus on producing shared understandings, common principles, or specific recommendations. In the first phase, participants can share information drawn from their experiences and views.

This information can be supplemented with experts' perspectives. In the second phase, participants enter a facilitated dialogue to discuss in depth the implications of their new knowledge in terms of their existing attitudes, values and experience and to develop mutual understanding. The participant may obtain a shared understanding, common principles, and recommendations through deliberation in the third phase.

Citizens' assemblies and deliberative workshops provide an opportunity for young people to learn about important issues and engage in productive dialogue with their peers and experts. Expert presentations and additional learning materials provide participants with a strong foundation for understanding the topic at hand. This approach ensures that everyone has a common understanding of the issues being discussed and can contribute to the deliberation phase in a meaningful way.

The second phase of deliberation is designed to give participants the opportunity to explore their own opinions while also gaining a wider understanding of the opinions of others. Facilitated discussions can help ensure that minority views are heard and that discussions are not dominated by any particular faction or individual.

The final phase of decision-making involves participants coming to some conclusions on what they have learned through the assembly process. It is important that this phase does not create a false sense of consensus, and that individual voting is used to collect the views of all participants. This ensures that minority voices are heard as well as the majority.

Deliberative workshops can provide valuable insights into the views and opinions of young people in the Netherlands, and can help organisations conducting events to better understand what lies behind group opinions and how people's views change as they are given new information or deliberate on an issue.

The project intends to use the chosen methods in meaningful ways to ensure that the deliberative process is inclusive and representative of the local community. Deliberation rounds will be designed to promote respectful dialogue and empathy, which are essential for fostering trust and yielding effective decision-making.



C. Setting the deliberation agenda: pre-consultations with young people: "Empowering Youth Voices in Shaping Amsterdam Future"

Platform INS will conduct pre-consultations with young people in the youth-friendly city of Amsterdam to identify the topics of their interest and concern before designing and launching the deliberative processes as such. The Youth Committee in place at Platform INS will facilitate these consultations, with support from the organisation's network and local partners, to ensure diversity and inclusivity in youth participation. The Youth Committee will have the freedom to select the most effective approach for organising and conducting the pre-consultations. Meanwhile, Platform INS will provide guidance and coordination to support the Youth Committee in its efforts.

Pre-consultations are important in empowering youth voices and ensuring that their perspectives are included in the deliberation agenda. Platform INS will ensure that pre-consultations are inclusive and accessible to all youth, regardless of background, social status, gender or any other criteria, by reaching out to a wide range of youth organisations and community groups.

Platform INS is also planning to involve local policymakers in the pre-consultations to facilitate an exchange of views between policymakers and young people on the most relevant issues in their communities. This will help identify commonalities and potentially focus on them to ensure fruitful cooperation and a vivid interest in further steps of the process.

Platform INS aims to create a space for dialogue and collaboration between decision-makers and young people by involving policymakers in the pre-consultations. This will help ensure that the deliberative process is informed by the perspectives of both groups and that the outcomes are relevant and actionable. Policymakers' involvement in the pre-consultations will also help build trust and understanding between decision-makers and young people, which is essential for effective collaboration and decision-making.

The advantage of involving political decision-makers at an early stage is that they will have more confidence in the process and the outcome of the deliberations, and will be more likely to take account of the recommendations. The drawback, however, is that policy-makers might take too much control of the deliberations and the subject of the deliberations. This is why, facilitators will guide the discussions to make sure that young people and policymakers can talk on an equal footing, managing the power-imbalance. It is important that policymakers do not impose their views and their problems upon young voices. But merely offer guidance. Therefore, the facilitator will have a crucial role in the pre-consultations.

The pre-consultations will be structured to encourage open and honest dialogue between young people and decision-makers. This may involve using small group discussions, facilitated workshops, or other means to encourage active engagement and exchange of ideas between the two parties.

D. Selection of participants: "Ensuring Diversity and Representation in Dutch Citizens' Assemblies and Deliberative workshops"

Usually, Citizens' Assemblies recruit participants through random stratified sampling to ensure diversity and representativeness. But this is a very cost-intensive exercise. Therefore, other techniques will be employed to ensure diversity and representation. The selection of participants for the deliberative rounds (Citizens' assemblies and Deliberative workshops) in the Netherlands will employ an intercultural approach and engage with intercultural communities. The network of Platform INS, with its extensive expertise, experience, and connections in this area, becomes a key tool in achieving this objective. By actively involving intercultural communities, the selection process can encompass a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and cultural backgrounds. This approach promotes inclusivity and ensures that underrepresented voices speak up and contribute to the deliberative process. In this way, the intercultural approach and engagement with intercultural communities become instrumental in fostering diversity and meaningful representation among the selected participants.

The ultimate aim is to ensure that the deliberations are as inclusive and representative as possible by engaging a diverse range of young people and providing them with the resources and support they need to participate fully in the democratic process. To motivate participation, it is essential to emphasise the importance of young people's voices in shaping the future of the Netherlands and its cities. The opportunity for participants to engage in meaningful dialogue with decision-makers and the potential impact of their contributions on policy decisions are also highlighted. The primary aim is to encompass a variety of motivations by showcasing the wide range of topics that will be addressed. The emphasis will be on the opportunity for participants to have a significant impact on their community. In order to involve people who are not usually involved, Platform INS will work with trusted youth organisations, local partners and student clubs to engage diverse groups of young people. Through a rigorous selection process, young individuals will be chosen based on their voluntary commitment, aiming to stimulate their participation in the event.

The selection process will consider the local context at various levels, ensuring representation that aligns with the community. Facilitators will emphasise intercultural perspectives, ensuring that multiculturalism is comprehensively addressed throughout all aspects of the program. Moreover, special attention will be given to fostering gender diversity, with a deliberate focus on achieving a balanced representation of men, women and non-binary genders during the selection process.

In a sequential manner, the approaches will be employed to effectively engage a sufficient number of participants from the target group. Each round of deliberations will involve over 100 participants, with the majority being young people aged 15–28, but also experts, facilitators, policy-makers, activists. The Deliberative workshops will be organised per round of deliberations, each with groups of 8 to 12 participants. This ensures that diverse perspectives and voices within these groups are duly represented throughout the deliberative process. By including individuals with diverse backgrounds, and experiences, the process becomes more inclusive, encompassing a broad spectrum of opinions from the local population.

E. The Citizens' Assemblies Method and Deliberative Workshops and their application in the Netherlands:

"Innovative Approaches for Participatory and Inclusive Deliberative Processes"

Citizens' Assemblies and Deliberative Workshops are innovative approaches for participatory and inclusive deliberative processes that will be applied in the Netherlands. The Citizen Assembly Method involves selecting a representative group of citizens who come together to deliberate on a specific topic or issue. Deliberative Workshops, on the other hand, are smaller, more focused groups that engage in facilitated discussions and activities to share their perspectives and develop recommendations.

To apply these methods in the Dutch context, a series of steps will be followed from the conceptualization of the topic to the evaluation of the process. These steps include identifying the issue(s) or topic(s) for deliberation, selecting participants through a transparent and representative process, implementing the deliberative process through trained moderators and inclusive methods, and learning and recommendation/decision-making through participant engagement and dissemination of recommendations to relevant decision-makers and stakeholders.

Selection:

To ensure that the Citizens' Assemblies and Deliberative Workshops are inclusive and representative, a strategy combining open calls and stratified selection using an intercultural perspective will be employed to select participants. Open calls will be actively promoted to encourage a wide range of candidates to apply. The stratified selection process will take into account factors such as age, gender, ethnic origin, socio-economic status, etc.

Selected participants will be invited to attend both the Citizens' Assemblies and the Deliberative Workshops. With this two-tiered approach, we recognize the importance of engaging participants in both large-scale deliberation and smaller, more focused discussions, to ensure that their voices are heard and valued throughout the process.

Implementation:

The implementation of the Citizens' Assembly and the Deliberative Workshops will include expert presentations on the chosen topic, group discussions and deliberations, and individual voting to ensure that all participants' views are heard. The Deliberative Workshops will include smaller groups of participants discussing the topic in more depth, facilitated by trained moderators. These workshops will also include expert presentations and time for group deliberations and discussions.

The Citizens' Assembly and Deliberative Workshops will consist of three phases:

1. *Knowledge injection*: Participants will learn about the chosen topic through a combination of expert presentations and learning materials provided prior to the event. Experts will be available to answer questions from participants to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic.
2. *Deliberations*: Participants will explore their own opinions on the topic and develop a wider understanding of the opinions of others through facilitated discussions and deliberations. Experts will participate in this phase to provide additional information and clarification.
3. *Recommendations*: The final phase will involve participants coming to some conclusions on the topic based on what they have learned through the deliberative process. It is important to note that this phase will not manufacture a false sense of consensus and individual voting will be used to collect the views of all participants to ensure that minority voices are heard as well as the majority.

Venue and duration

The potential venue for the deliberative rounds in the Netherlands will be a conference centre or community centre in Amsterdam. Each round is intended as a 3 or 4-day event, providing new opportunities for young people to engage in a meaningful and inclusive deliberative process, ultimately leading to recommendations for addressing important youth issues in the Netherlands.

Evaluation:

The final step is the evaluation of the Citizens' Assembly and Deliberative Workshops. This will include both process and outcome evaluations to assess the effectiveness of the methods used and the impact of the project. The evaluation will be conducted through surveys, focus groups, and individual interviews with participants to gather feedback on their experience and the effectiveness of the process.

F. Facilitators in Dutch deliberation: who and why? "Enabling collaborative and inclusive deliberative processes in the Netherlands"

When choosing facilitators, Platform INS will prioritise individuals with a proven track record of facilitating participatory processes and effectively engaging with diverse groups of people. It is key that facilitators come from a range of backgrounds, with a focus on ensuring diversity and representation in the facilitation team. This will help to ensure that all participants feel comfortable and able to contribute to the deliberations.

Facilitators in the deliberation process are crucial for ensuring balanced and active participation. They create a safe and inclusive environment, guide the process to stay on track, balance power dynamics, encourage active participation, manage conflicts, and maintain a neutral stance. Their role is to foster constructive dialogue, empower all participants to contribute, and ensure that diverse perspectives are heard and respected. Their facilitation skills help create an inclusive space where true representation can be achieved in deliberative processes, where participants feel empowered to contribute and where diverse voices are genuinely represented.

In Citizens' Assemblies, facilitators manage larger-scale deliberations, ensuring diverse perspectives are heard from a randomly selected or stratified representative sample of citizens. They guide decision-making, manage conflicts, and foster consensus among participants. On the other hand, facilitators in Deliberative Workshops work with smaller groups. They facilitate in-depth discussions, promote shared understanding, and foster collaboration. Facilitators will thus be crucial both in the Citizens' Assemblies and the Deliberative Workshops. Additionally, facilitators will be used in the agenda-setting pre-consultation, given the possible power imbalances generated by the participation of both young participants and policymakers.

Given the key role facilitators play in deliberation, they will be further trained to ensure respectful and inclusive deliberations, with a focus on creating a safe and supportive environment for all participants. During the training, facilitators will further develop essential skills, including active listening, conflict resolution, and inclusive communication techniques. Additional training on how to engage with young people, including best practices for involving them in the decision-making process, will be provided to the facilitators.

Platform INS will provide ongoing support and supervision throughout the deliberation process to ensure that facilitators are effective in their roles. Regular debriefing sessions will be conducted, providing opportunities for facilitators to share their experiences and challenges. They will also receive feedback and guidance from their peers and supervisors.

In sum, the main goal is to ensure that the facilitation team is equipped with the necessary skills and experience to create a safe and inclusive space for all participants. By prioritising diversity and representation within the facilitation team, all voices are heard and respected, and young people are empowered to participate fully in the democratic process.

G. Follow-up Strategies: “Leveraging Deliberative Outcomes for Policy Change in the Netherlands”

An essential step following the deliberation rounds consists in disseminating the information to relevant stakeholders and above all to policymakers. This will enhance the legitimacy of the process and has also been shown to increase trust in politics from the participants. Harnessing the results of the deliberations for policy change in the Netherlands requires a clear and effective plan for following up the recommendations generated by the deliberative process. Several steps will be taken by the Platform INS to follow up on the recommendation resulting from the deliberation.

First of all, Platform INS will work to build momentum around the recommendations by engaging with local media outlets and community organisations to highlight the importance of citizen deliberations, the issues raised and the impact of the recommendations. By mobilising public support for the recommendations through grassroots campaigns, public events, or online platforms and by creating a groundswell of public opinion in favour of the recommendations, policymakers may feel increased pressure to act. This important dissemination work needs to start before the deliberation, and the recommendations end but already during and before the deliberations.

Secondly, by forming partnerships with relevant organisations, institutions, or individuals who have a stake in the issue or the power to influence policy change. By working together, Platform INS can amplify the impact of the recommendations and leverage collective resources and expertise.

Thirdly, Platform INS will forward the recommendations to relevant decision-makers, including local government officials, community leaders, and other stakeholders. The aim is to present the recommendations clearly and concisely, emphasising the significant insights and actionable steps that can be implemented. As mentioned above, Platform INS will invite policymakers to the agenda-setting pre-consultations with youth. This should increase early recognition and trust in the process from policymakers, which will increase interest when they finally receive the recommendations.

Finally, to make sure the recommendations don't, so to speak, collect dust on a shelf, Platform INS will ensure that progress is consistently monitored and reported to guarantee accountability and transparency in the process of policy change. This will allow policymakers and stakeholders to monitor progress and identify any areas that require improvement. Equally importantly, it will allow the participants to follow up on their recommendations.

By following these steps, the significance and visibility of the discussions will be heightened, potentially motivating policymakers to take action. It is essential to acknowledge that Platform INS, a civil society organisation, can potentially influence policy decisions and create meaningful policy change that reflects the voices and perspectives of young people in the Netherlands. However, it is important to keep in mind that the outcomes cannot be guaranteed.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations



The Citizen Z project introduces a novel methodological framework to deliberations and targets a specific audience, making it unique in its approach.

Firstly, the project recognises that deliberations serve not only as a means to collect recommendations for policy-makers but also as a way to actively engage young people in civic and democratic life. While recommendations are still important, the project emphasises the significance of the deliberative process itself as a means of fostering youth participation.

Secondly, the project partners believe that democratic innovations such as deliberative democracy are essential to revitalising European democracies and reconnecting citizens, particularly young people, with policy-makers. To achieve this, the Citizen Z approach encourages the multiplication of deliberative practices at local level, with the involvement of several stakeholders.



Thirdly, the project places great importance on the experimental aspect of deliberative practices for the young participants. Deliberations enable young citizens to immerse themselves in the intricacies of the political process, to understand its complexity and to experience first-hand the different factors involved in analysing and making decisions on specific issues. Deliberative practices offer citizens a glimpse behind the scenes of policy-making, allowing them to discover and master the process.

Fourthly, a fundamental phase of the deliberative processes in the Citizen Z project involves injecting knowledge through expert interventions on the subjects being deliberated. This approach safeguards against misinformation that could distort the democratic process. By incorporating expert knowledge, the project aims to foster critical thinking skills and resilience to misinformation, fake news and propaganda among young people.

Lastly, central to the project's approach is placing youth at the core of the deliberative exercises. The project partners firmly believe that young people can only make a significant contribution if they are taken seriously and given the opportunity to take ownership of the process and play a leading role in it. Fostering a sense of ownership is essential to motivate young people to get involved and participate actively.



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