Next level EU citizen participation

Citizens' Dialogues: Inclusive, Deliberative, Effective

Anna Renkamp, Christian Huesmann
The added value of innovative deliberative citizens' dialogues for politics and citizens

Politicians can implement citizen-centred policies

- Knowing what is collectively important to citizens reflecting the diversity of society
- Better preparation of political decisions through input from citizens and new perspectives
- Greater understanding, more acceptance for politicians and politics

Citizens can have their say

- Bringing interests and ideas into political processes and being heard by politics
- Helping to shape and influence politics
- More trust in politics and democracy
Example 1: Workshop on the future of the EU with Polish, French and German citizens - in cooperation with the German Federal Foreign Office
Example 2: Numerous local digital Citizens' Dialogues in German municipalities on Covid-19
Example 4: Green, Digital, Democratic. Transnational Dialogue with citizens from Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy & Lithuania - with Margrethe Vestager and Virginijus Sinkevičius
Impressions on EU Citizens' Dialogue in The Hague
**Example: Digital Citizens Dialogue in a municipality**

*What can we learn in Eltville from the Covid experience?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Program – 180 min – 50 citizens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Plenary</td>
<td>Welcoming and onboarding of citizens; First digital surveys on the topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Work in small groups | Exchange in small groups  
Get to know each other - Exchange of personal experiences |
| 3. Plenary  | Reports from the small groups; Room for discussion  
Information input for the following work in small groups on sustainability & Covid |
| 4. Work in small groups | Development of first ideas for improvement  
Working and agreeing on a limited number of ideas |
| 5. Plenary  | Reports from the small groups, discussion, feedback  
Digital survey: ideas from the groups were prioritised by the plenary  
Mayor responded directly to the ideas and outlined the follow-up |
| 6. Closure  | Evaluation and end of the event  
Last words from the politicians and organisers |
Example: Digital Citizens Dialogue in Eltville

Making Eltville crisis-proof. What can we learn from the Covid experience?

The Outcome

- Concrete ideas, such as: development of a “youth taxi”; increase of bicycle stations; more green areas in the city, more gas stations for electric cars
- All ideas were documented
-Certain ideas were translated into specific implementation projects

What was special?

- Kick-off to initiate a sustainability strategy
- Topics from this format were integrated into the overall process
- Including the results to a participation platform
- All the respective offices involved in the sustainability strategy played a role
Example: Digital Cross-border Citizens' Dialogue (FR, GER, CH)
*Covid and living together in the trinational border region of Basel*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Programm – 240 min – 60 citizens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Plenary</td>
<td>Welcoming and onboarding of Citizens; Testing the translation tool</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First digital surveys on the topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Plenary</td>
<td>Statements and Information from German, French and Swiss politicians</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information input for the following work in small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Getting to know each other - Exchange of personal experiences with Covid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Development of first ideas for improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working and agreeing on a limited number of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Plenary</td>
<td>Reports from the small groups; Communitisation of table group results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Plenary</td>
<td>Discussion, feedback, political representatives responded directly to the ideas and outlined the follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Closure</td>
<td>Evaluation and end of the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last words from the politicians and organisers</td>
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</table>
Example: Digital Cross-border Citizens' Dialogue (FR, GER, CH)
Covid and living together in the trinational border region of Basel

The Outcome

- Concrete ideas, such as:
  - development of a “trinational information platform”;
  - increase of cooperation between hospitals;
  - the demand to keep the borders open
- All ideas were documented
- Certain ideas were feed into the political process; others could be adapted uniliteral

What was special?

- Online Dialogue with translation
- Working in small groups with all three nationalities
- Politicians from three countries participated
- Bilingual report on results publicised
### Example: On-site EU Citizens' Dialogue with FR, PL, GER citizens

**The future of the European Union**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Programm – two days – 75 citizens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Plenary</td>
<td>Introduction and explanation of working methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Brainstorming about the biggest challenges, exchange of experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Plenary</td>
<td>Reflection of results of brainstorming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Information and fact sheet on one subtopic in the table group, e. g. Europe in the world, experts present at the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Identification of greatest challenges presented by the subtopic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Development of ideas on handling of challenges, Possibility to contact experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Plenary</td>
<td>Communitisation of table group results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Concretisation of ideas and proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Work in small groups</td>
<td>Selection of proposals and table representatives, who discuss with politicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Plenary</td>
<td>Preparation for discussion with politicians; Discussion with politicians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example: EU Citizens' Dialogue with FR, PL, GER citizens

The future of the European Union

**The Outcome**

- Concrete ideas, such as **more** space for EU topics in the **media**; **extension** of the **Erasmus** project or more **funding for ecological start ups**
- All **ideas** were **documented**
- **Politicians responded** to the ideas and explained the concrete implementation possibilities

**What was special?**

- On-site Dialogue with **translation into three languages**
- Working in **small groups** with all three nationalities
- Deliberation on **two successive days**
- **Intensive** and **public** discussion with politicians
Citizens' Dialogues lead to better results and more legitimacy – if done inclusively, deliberatively, and effectively.

**Inclusive:** citizens represent the plurality and diversity of society.

**Deliberative:** structured exchanges of different views and experiences lead to joint proposals.

**Effective:** commitment from politicians, dialogue with policy-makers and follow-up process for results ensure acceptance and impact.
Joint project of CoR and Bertelsmann Stiftung: supporting local, regional, transnational dialogues in the context of the Conference

! Citizens' Dialogues all over Europe!

Enabling partners: conducting local, regional, cross-border, city-to-city dialogues – on-site or digital, citizens input into the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Methods based on inclusiveness, deliberation, effectiveness: random selection, interactive formats, simultaneous interpretation, involvement of policymakers.

Enhance legitimacy, vitalising local, regional and European democracy: innovative forms of engagement and participation.
Joint project of CoR and Bertelsmann Stiftung: our support

Local and regional partners organise dialogues. The Committee of the Regions and the Bertelsmann Stiftung support initiators of the dialogues:

- Expertise (e.g. random selection of participants)
- Guidelines / Handbook
- Trainings: planning workshops for responsible personnel from administration and politics, seminars for process facilitators and moderators
Thank you!

Please visit us at www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de