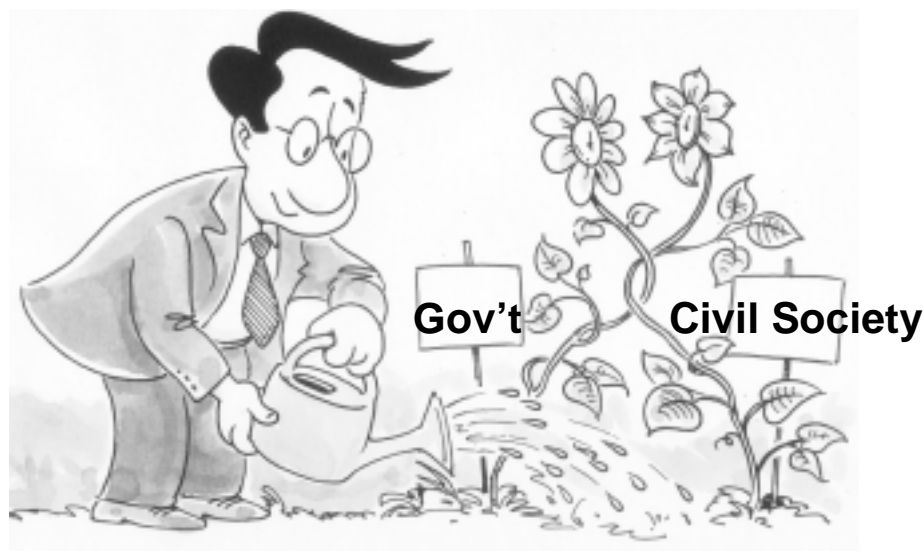


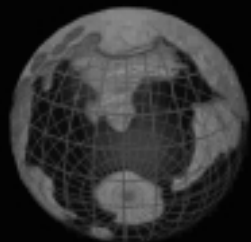
Citizens as Partners

Engaging citizens in policy-making



Public Governance and Territorial Development - OECD
Christian Vergez

Seminar on Regulatory Transparency
The Use of Public Consultation to Improve the Business Climate
21-22 November 2002 -Thessaloniki, Greece

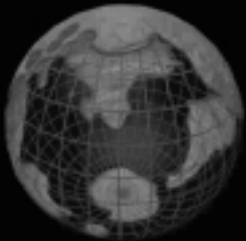


Overview

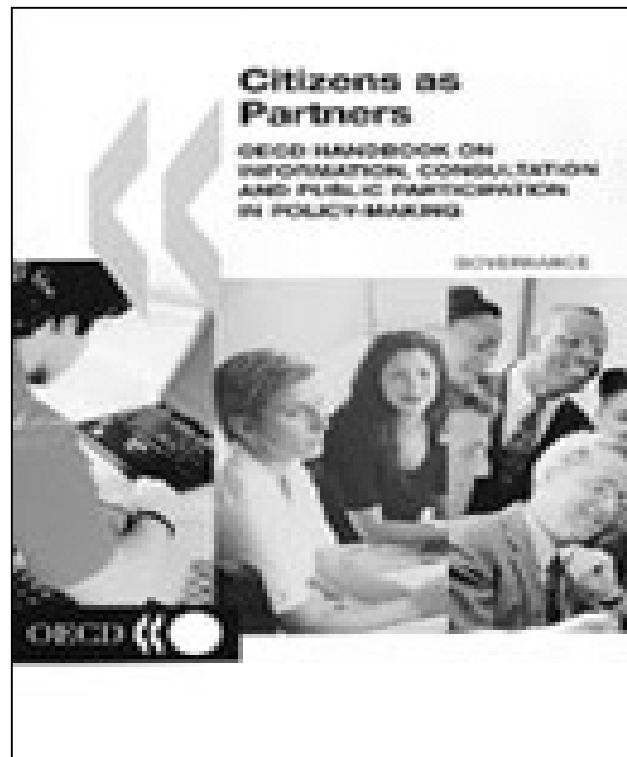
⇒ results of OECD work on engaging citizens in policy-making

⇒ results of recent OECD roundtable on building open government

⇒ some challenges for the future



Citizens as Partners

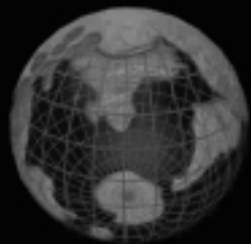


PUMA Working Group on
Strengthening Government-
Citizen Relations

Information from all 30 OECD
Member countries

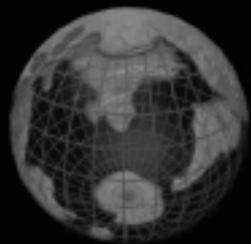
Policy lessons for member
and non-members

Practical **handbook**



Good governance principles

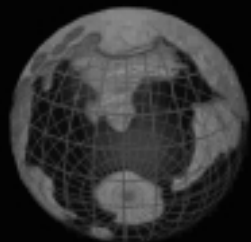
- **Accountability**, meaning that it is possible to identify and hold public officials to account for their actions
- **Transparency**, meaning that reliable, relevant and timely information about the activities of government is available to the public & business
- **Openness**, meaning governments that listen to citizens and businesses, and take their suggestions into account when designing and implementing public policies



Why engage citizens, business, civil society?

Governments recognise the need to:

- ⇒ Improve the **quality** of policy
- ⇒ Integrate **public input** into the policy process
- ⇒ Respond to calls for greater government **transparency, accountability & openness**
- ⇒ Meet the challenges of the **information society**
- ⇒ Strengthen **public trust** in government

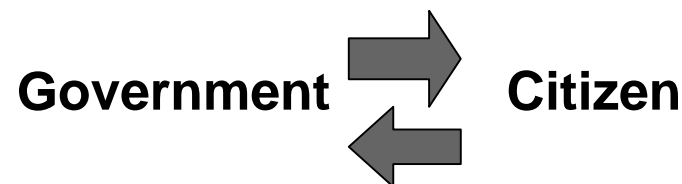


Working Definitions

Information: a **one-way relation** in which government delivers information to citizens.

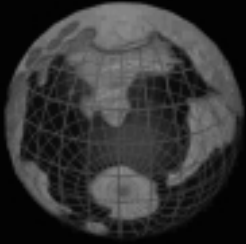


Consultation: a **two-way relation** in which citizens provide feedback on issues defined by government.



Active participation: a **partnership** in which citizens actively shape policy options, but where government retains the responsibility for final decisions.





Trends

Information ↑

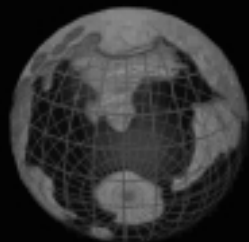
- **scope, quantity and quality** has increased greatly
- now a **shared objective** for all OECD Members

Consultation ↑

- on the rise but at a **slower rate**
- **large differences** remain between OECD Members

Active participation ↔

- efforts to engage citizens in policy-making are **rare**
- examples confined to a only a very **few countries**



Analytical Framework

Laws Policy Institutions Tools

Information

FOI

Charging

Information
offices

Registers,
brochures

Consultation

RIA

Special
groups

Advisory
bodies

Public
hearings

Active participation

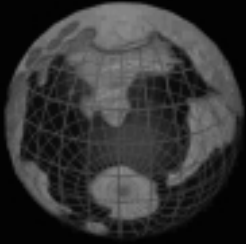
Popular
legislative
initiative

Co-operative
agreements

Central
policy
units

Citizens'
Juries

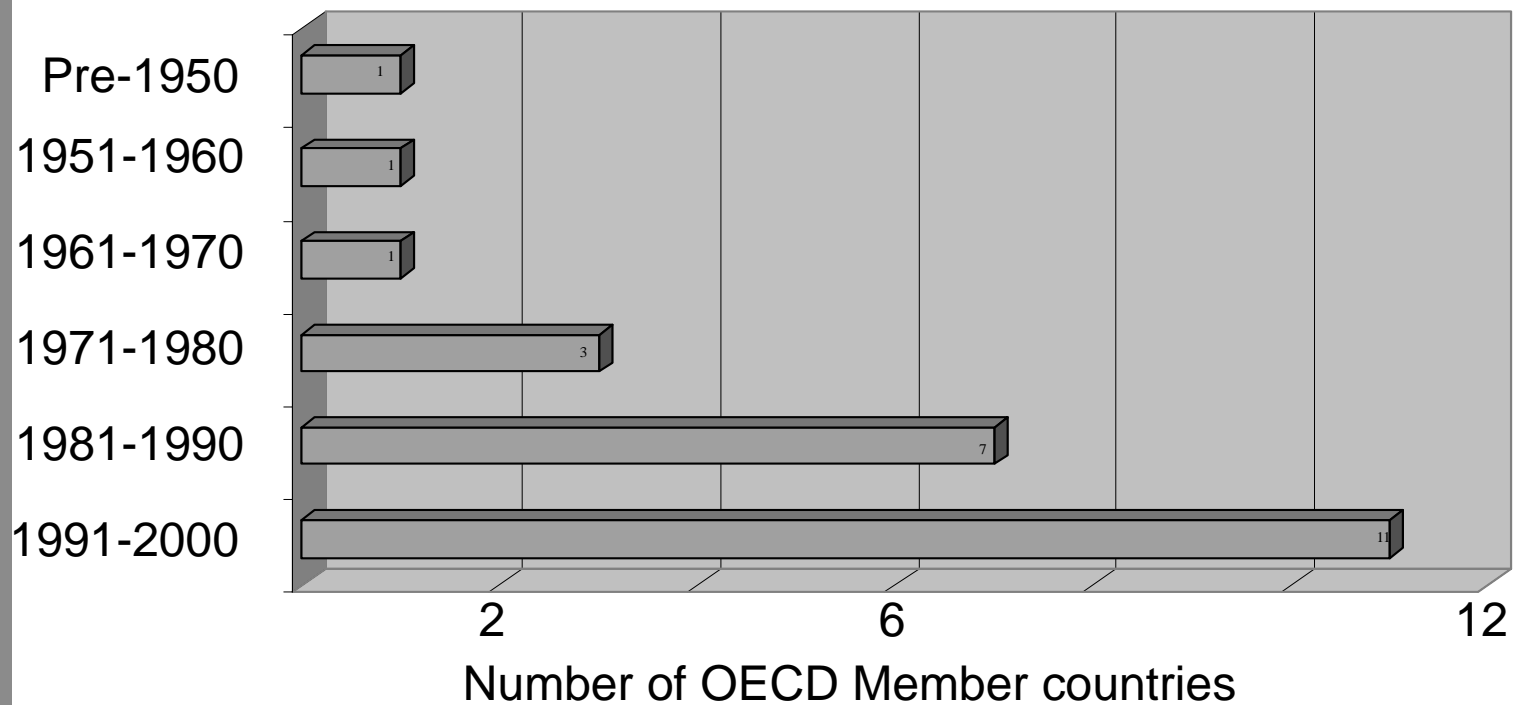
Information	FOI	Charging	Information offices	Registers, brochures
Consultation	RIA	Special groups	Advisory bodies	Public hearings
Active participation	Popular legislative initiative	Co-operative agreements	Central policy units	Citizens' Juries

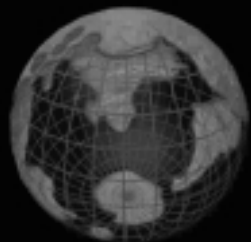


Laws on Information

Access to information

Table 1 - Date of first introduction of FOI laws





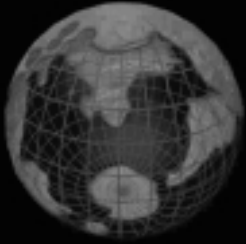
Tools for Information

Passive

- **catalogues, indexes, registers** (e.g. **Finland**: register on legislation, projects and budgets under preparation)

Active

- **Products: annual reports, brochures, leaflets**
- **Delivery mechanisms:**
 - **Direct:** mailing, information centres, toll-free phone nos.
 - **Indirect:** media coverage, advertising, NGOs



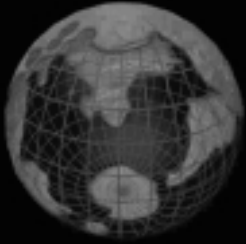
Tools for Consultation

Feedback

- **Opinion polls and surveys** (e.g. **Denmark**: 1998 Gallup poll on trust in the public sector)
- **Comment and notice periods**

Consultation

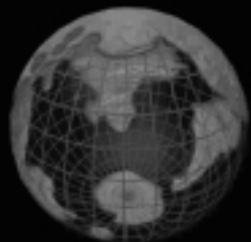
- **Public hearings**
- **Focus groups and citizen panels** (e.g. **UK**: People's Panel)
- **Workshops and seminars** (e.g. **Ireland**: seminars for White Paper on Rural Development)



Tools for Active Participation

Partnership

- **Citizen' Fora** (e.g. **Norway**: Youth Forum for Democracy)
- **Consensus conferences** (**Denmark**: Board of Technology)
- **Citizens' Juries** (**France**: 1998 General Review of the Health System)



Policy lessons for Government

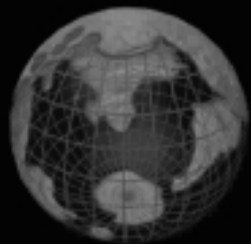
Governments must ensure that:

- **Information** is complete, objective, reliable, relevant, easy to find and understand.
- **Consultation** has clear goals and rules defining the limits of the exercise and government's obligation to account for its use of the input.
- **Participation** provides sufficient time and flexibility to allow for the emergence of new ideas and proposals by citizens as well as mechanisms for their integration into the government's policy-making process.



Ten guiding principles

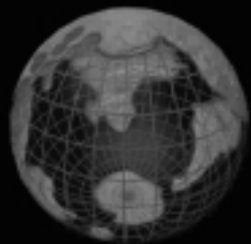
- **Commitment**
- **Rights**
- **Clarity**
- **Time**
- **Objectivity**
- **Resources**
- **Co-ordination**
- **Accountability**
- **Evaluation**
- **Active citizenship**



OECD Handbook: principles into practice

Ten tips for action

- Tip # 1*** ***Take it seriously***
- Tip # 2*** ***Start from the citizen's perspective***
- Tip # 3*** ***Deliver what you promise***
- Tip # 4*** ***Watch timing***
- Tip # 5*** ***Be creative***
- Tip # 6*** ***Balance different interests***
- Tip # 7*** ***Be prepared for criticism***
- Tip # 8*** ***Involve your staff***
- Tip # 9*** ***Develop a coherent policy***
- Tip # 10*** ***Act now***

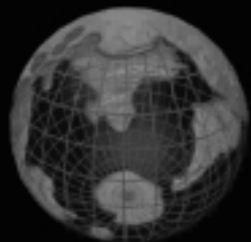


International Roundtable on Building Open Government

Slovenia, 23-24 May 2002

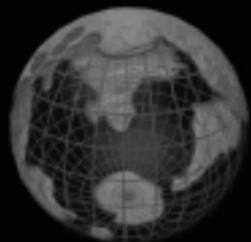
Practicing what we preach:

- **Foster policy dialogue between OECD member and non-member countries**
- **Encourage exchange among practitioners from both government and civil society**
- **Focus on both policy and practice in building open government**



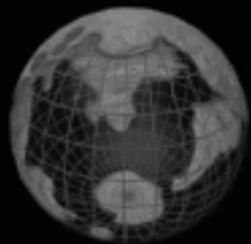
Priorities for action #1: Access to information

- Ensuring **consistent legal frameworks** for access to government information (freedom of information, privacy, and data protection)
- Developing **user-friendly information resources** (multilingual, low cost, easy to use, fast)
- **Co-operation** between governments, NGOs, international organisations in adopting international standards
- **Awareness-raising** (NGOs, media, citizens, government)



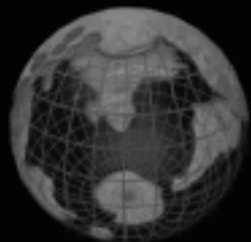
Priorities for action #2: Consultation & participation

- Building **capacity** for effective consultation among government and civil society
- Finding a **common language** with the population
- Providing **feedback** and follow-up on results of consultation
- **Legal framework**: do we need it? in what form?
- **Criteria** for the selection of NGOs for consultation



Priorities for action #3: Building effective partnerships

- Building **mutual respect** and understanding
- Setting **rules** for government engagement with civil society
- Enhancing the **transparency of the NGO sector**
- Ensuring a **legal framework** for partnerships, with a clear enforcement mechanism



For more information

Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-making

- a **sourcebook** of legislation, policy, institutions and tools in OECD countries

Citizens as Partners: OECD Handbook

- a **practical guide** for government officials (FREE! online)

Engaging Citizens in Policy-making

- a PUMA **policy brief** (no. 10) designed for policy-makers

see: <http://www.oecd.org/puma/citizens/>

contact: joanne.caddy@oecd.org

christian.vergez@oecd.org