The Citizen Participation Guidelines is a tool for Centre for EU Transport Project (CEUTP) beneficiaries to help identify opportunities and plan for citizen participation in designing, implementing, and evaluating transport infrastructure projects. It helps beneficiaries to identify whether and when citizen participation is useful, the order in which a participation process should be designed, considerations to ensure quality and follow-up, and a variety of different methods and tools that can be used depending on the purpose and context.

The OECD developed these Guidelines in cooperation with CEUTP in the context of a co-operation project with the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) to foster citizen participation in cohesion policy. Centre for EU Transport Projects (CEUTP) is committed to ensuring effective citizen participation in cohesion policy implementation, supported by dedicated methodology and tools.
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PART 1 | CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN? WHY AND WHEN TO DO IT?

Introduction

Citizens today are more informed than ever and are demanding a say in shaping the policies and services that affect their lives. In response, public institutions at all levels of public administration are increasingly creating opportunities for citizen participation to harness citizens’ experiences and knowledge to make better public decisions. The global landscape for citizen and stakeholder participation is evolving constantly, becoming richer with new and innovative ways to involve citizens and stakeholders in projects and policy.

In the context of transport infrastructure investments, citizens and stakeholders are also of key importance. They are the ones who ultimately benefit from investment projects, hence they have a role to play in the process of developing and implementing them. The public is an invaluable resource to be tapped. If good conditions for citizens to meaningfully and constructively get involved are created, citizens can help improve the results of the investment programme.

What is citizen participation? Key terms

Participation includes “all the ways in which stakeholders can be involved in the policy cycle and in service design and delivery”. It refers to the efforts by public institutions to hear the views, perspectives, and inputs from citizens and stakeholders. In the context of infrastructure investment projects, participation allows citizens and stakeholders to influence activities and decisions of the public authorities and investors at different stages of the investment process and through different mechanisms.

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017) distinguishes between three levels of citizen and stakeholder participation, which differ according to the level of involvement:

- **Information**: an initial level of participation characterised by a one-way relationship in which the government produces and delivers information to citizens and stakeholders. It covers both on-demand provision of information and “proactive” measures by the government to disseminate information.

- **Consultation**: a more advanced level of participation that entails a two-way relationship in which citizens and stakeholders provide feedback to the government and vice-versa. It is based on the prior definition of the issue for which views are being sought and requires the provision of relevant information, in addition to feedback on the outcomes of the process.

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

The OECD recommendation mentions government as a key player, however in the context of transport infrastructure investment this can include all types of public and private investors. The policy-cycle in this context includes the investment project cycle.
These guidelines cover all three levels of participation, however it puts an emphasis on the third – citizen engagement.

What are the differences between involving stakeholders and citizens?
Another element to keep in mind is the difference among the types of participants that public authorities and investors can involve. The participation of citizens and stakeholders are both equally important, however they should not be treated equally. The OECD (2017) defines the actors that public authorities or other categories of investors can involve in their participatory mechanisms:

- **Stakeholders**: any interested and/or affected party, including institutions and organisations, whether governmental or non-governmental, from civil society, academia, the media or the private sector.

- **Citizens**: individuals, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, religious and political affiliations or special needs in the larger sense ‘an inhabitant of a particular place’, which can be in reference to a village, town, city, region, state, or country depending on the context.

No value or preference is given to citizens or stakeholders in particular, as both publics can enrich the decisions, projects, policies and services. However, investors should first decide on who to engage, then adapt the design and the expectations of the participatory process in accordance to the category of participants. Individuals and stakeholders will not require the same conditions to participate and will not produce the same type of inputs. Stakeholders can provide expertise and more specific input than citizens through mechanisms such as advisory bodies or experts’ panels, whereas citizen participation requires methods that provide the public with the time, information, and resources to produce quality inputs and develop recommendations.

<table>
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<th>Definition</th>
<th>Involving stakeholders</th>
<th>Involving citizens</th>
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<td>stakeholders - any interested and/or affected party, including</td>
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<th>Benefits of involving</th>
<th>Considerations when preparing to involve</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Brings in official stakeholder perspectives</td>
<td>• Have dedicated time and resources for getting informed about the issue and participate – threshold to participate is low</td>
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<td>• Yields expert opinion and knowledge, can point to relevant evidence and studies</td>
<td>• Often have clear interest and incentives to participate</td>
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<td>• Ensures representation of key players</td>
<td>• Often have experience interacting with public authorities and having a role in a decision making process</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Brings in public opinion/public judgement</td>
<td>• Do not have dedicated time and resources for getting informed about the issue and participate – these conditions should be built in the participation process</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Can bring a diversity of views and include rarely heard voices</td>
<td>• Often do not have personal interest or incentives to participate. Their motivation to participate should be ignited (for example, by designing an inviting participation process)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Can be representative of the broader public (if a representative group is engaged)</td>
<td>• Often do not have a strong sense that they can have an impact on decisions. This sense should be nurtured by establishing clear links to decision making, invitations from high-level figures</td>
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<td>• Helps raise awareness and facilitates public learning about an issue</td>
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<td>• Helps to deliver tailor made solutions and ensure their effectiveness</td>
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Designing participation processes that take into account these considerations will help “level the playing field” for citizen and stakeholder participation.

These guidelines focus mainly on citizen participation, since stakeholder participation is usually better developed and requires less specialised knowledge (as detailed in the table above).
Citizen participation in the context of investment in linear transport projects

The investment process in linear transport projects is complex and long-term and requires close cooperation between authorities and interaction with external stakeholders and citizens. There are two main types of citizen participation practices throughout the process – mandatory public consultations and other citizen participation processes.

**Mandatory public consultations**

Mandatory public consultations are public consultations linked to the development of a transport investment project that are required by law. They are described in the 3 October 2008 Act (as amended) on access to information on the environment and environmental protection, citizen participation in environmental protection and environmental impact assessments. Mandatory public consultations take place over at least 30 days. The established procedures guarantee the possibility of submitting comments, which are examined by the competent public institution (for instance regional director for environmental protection).

Mandatory public consultations are organised as part of stage 3 of the investment process – obtaining an environmental decision as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment procedure (EIA). Types of projects that can significantly affect the environment and therefore require obtaining an environmental decision are listed in the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of September 10, 2019. Projects that have the potential to significantly affect the environment are assigned into two groups. Projects assigned to group I are required to conduct EIA. For projects assigned to group II, the environmental authority determines whether it is necessary to conduct the EIA procedure. Only those projects that undergo EIA are required to conduct mandatory consultations as part of this procedure.

In some cases, mandatory public consultations also take place during stage 5 of the investment process – when obtaining a building permit.

**Mandatory public consultations are not organised by the investor.** During stage 3 - Environmental Impact Assessment - consultations are conducted by the competent environmental administration authority (most often the Regional Director for Environmental Protection or the Mayor of the City). During stage 5 – obtaining a building permit, in case EIA procedure is carried out, public consultations are conducted by the competent building administration authority (most often the voivode). The submitted appeals and comments are analysed by the Regional Director for Environmental Protection and included in the EIA process. Investors can be involved in the mandatory consultation process by providing comments and feedback on the inputs received during consultation.

**Citizen participation processes**

Citizen participation processes are all the ways that the investor can involve stakeholders, including and citizens, in all the steps of the investment process beyond the mandatory public consultations. **Citizen participation processes are initiated and organised by the investor.**

Even though they are not mandatory, they are strongly encouraged and very useful, in particular in the early stages of the investment process (stage 1 - defining a preliminary concept of the project, and stage 2 - preliminary choice of the project location). Investors are also encouraged to organise citizen participation processes throughout the whole length of the investment process, to complement mandatory consultations.

**These guidelines focus mainly on the diverse citizen participation processes that investors can implement beyond the mandatory public consultations.**
Why involve citizens?

1. **It is good for democracy**

Citizen participation has intrinsic benefits. It leads to a better and more democratic decision making process throughout the investment process, which becomes more transparent, inclusive, legitimate, and accountable. Citizen participation enhances public trust in investors (public or private) by giving citizens a role in decision-making when planning infrastructure investments.

2. **It is good for policies, laws, services, and projects**

Citizen participation also has instrumental benefits. It leads to better policy results that take into account and use citizens’ experience and knowledge to address citizens’ most pressing needs. The quality of policies, laws, projects and services is improved, as they were elaborated, implemented and evaluated based on better evidence and on a more informed choice. They also benefit from the innovative ideas of citizens and can be more cost-effective as a result (OECD, 2016).

3. **It is good for inclusion and diversity**

Citizen participation can make decision making of the infrastructure investment projects more inclusive by opening the door to more representative groups of people. Through participatory processes, investors can include the voice of those that would not otherwise have an opportunity to
make their voices heard and strengthen the representation of often excluded groups. Citizen participation in shaping infrastructure projects can answer the concerns of unrepresented groups by addressing inequalities of voice and access, and thus fight exclusion and marginalisation. This in turn can create better projects, policies and services, build a sense of belonging, and foster social cohesion (OECD, 2020).

4. **It is good for legitimacy and facilitates implementation**

Involving citizens in the decision-making process concerning investment projects supports the public understanding of the outcome. Citizen participation can allow the public to follow, influence, and understand the process leading to a decision to implement a specific infrastructure project, which in turn enhances the legitimacy of hard choices (for example, local community understands why a highway has to be built close to their neighbourhood and how it might affect them).

5. **It can help investors solve problems or address specific situations, such as:**
   - public problems that require careful consideration from a diversity of perspectives (for example, where the new infrastructure project should be built, so that no communities are dissatisfied);
   - when there is a vacuum of ideas and solutions (for example, when designing options for an infrastructure project);
   - addressing complex issues that require informed public judgment;
   - preparing long-term investment plans and projects;
   - tackling long-term issues (for example, taking difficult decisions linked to climate change).

6. **It can help investors in their daily activities to take better decisions and prepare and implement investment projects that respond to citizens’ needs, especially:**
   - As a way to gather information, data and public opinion.
   - As an opportunity to tap into the collective intelligence to co-create solutions or projects.
   - As a mechanism to collect public feedback on proposed solutions such as draft investment projects.
   - As a tool to adapt and design investment projects that respond the real needs of citizens.
   - As a way to involve citizens and stakeholders in the implementation of investment projects.

**Why it is important to engage citizens in cohesion policy?**

Around one third of the European Union’s budget (around 352 billion euros over seven years) is dedicated to cohesion policy, which promotes and supports the overall harmonious development of its Member States and regions.

The funds dedicated for cohesion policy are managed and delivered in partnership between the European Commission, Member States, and stakeholders at the local and regional levels. Success of these investments relies on robust and capable institutions, as well as effective partnerships between governments, stakeholders, and citizens. Citizens have a key role to play in shaping decisions of public investment, as well as making beneficiaries of EU Funds more transparent and accountable.

1. **Citizen participation can support the process of cohesion policy:**
• It contributes to ensuring that projects funded through EU cohesion funds take into account and use citizens’ experience and knowledge to address citizens’ most pressing needs.
• It creates opportunities to enhance the inclusion and diversity of actors who take part in the planning and implementation of programmes linked to EU cohesion policy funds.
• It increases awareness and understanding amongst the public about the implementation of EU cohesion policy in their country, region, and community.
• It can help pre-empt public conflict or stalemate situations which could arise during implementation stages of EU cohesion policy programs.
• It is good for policies, services and projects: the inclusion of citizens in the design, implementation and evaluation of the projects can support the quality of the outcomes.

2. Citizen participation can support the outcomes of cohesion policy:

For the 2021-2027 European Budget, the European Commission proposed five objectives to guide Cohesion Policy: A Smarter, Greener, Connected, Social and Democratic Europe. In this context, citizen participation in cohesion policy can also directly and indirectly support the European Commission’s policy objectives:

• **Smarter Europe**: through innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and support to small and medium-sized businesses.
• **Greener Europe**: implementing the Paris Agreement and investing in energy transition, renewables and the fight against climate change.
• **Connected Europe**: with strategic transport and digital networks.
• **Social Europe**: delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare.
• **Europe closer to citizens**: by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.

Why it is important to engage citizens in transport infrastructure projects?

1. It is a practice of good governance of infrastructure

The [2020 OECD Recommendation of the Council on the Governance of Infrastructure](https://www.oecd.org/gov/governance/infrastructure/infrastructure-governance-principles-2020.pdf) recommends to ensure transparent, systematic and effective stakeholder participation through providing and taking proactive measures to disseminate information on infrastructure projects, including their potential short and long-term effects, and allow for continuous, inclusive, social and open dialogues that are broad-based, involving relevant stakeholders in planning, decision-making and oversight. It further recommends integrating consultation processes that are proportionate to the characteristics of the project (e.g. size, political sensitivity, environmental aspects, and impacted population) and that take account of the overall public interest and of the views of the relevant stakeholders.

2. It helps to ensure social sustainability of the infrastructure projects

Infrastructure projects have a strong impact on people’s everyday lives as they alter neighbourhoods, urban and rural areas, and modify transport networks. The public, especially those directly affected, often have strong and important views regarding such projects. It is important to work with the public and the community throughout the process to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs are met. Citizen participation practices are an effective way to establish a connection with the public, and work together to set a shared vision, eliminate misunderstandings, and mitigate conflicts.

3. It can help to avoid potential conflicts in the future that could result in stopping the investment
Transport infrastructure projects due to their length and linear nature often cause conflicts with local communities. Conflicts might extend the project implementation time and might increase its costs. Timely and well implemented citizen participation processes can help avoid such conflicts (Dobrzyński and Butkiewicz, 2010).

There are different categories of social conflicts that depend on a number of factors. The most common conflicts in the process of planning linear transport infrastructure are linked to:

- **Accessibility** (affected commute to one’s home, work etc.)
- **Visual impact** (visual disturbance of the protected or historic landscape)
- **Technical issues** (such as communication difficulties due to the use of technical language, technical aspects of the project design)
- **Economic issues** (expulsions, purchase of land plots, land occupancy, including the occupancy of a part of the plot, protests over land purchase costs, decline in the value of the land, reduced access of the land and separation of communities) (Morawska and Żelazo, 2008).
- **Environmental impacts** (such as noise, air pollution, vibrations, surface and underground waters, contamination of crops and soil, threat to fauna and flora, cutting down trees/forest areas) (Morawska and Żelazo, 2008).
- **Environmental protection devices** (liked to the use/lack of acoustic screens, characteristics of animal crossings)
- **NIMBY** (Not in My Back Yard) syndrome (especially in rural areas - associated with a potential limitation of satisfying basic human needs: security, stability of life, or health due to an infrastructure project happening close to one’s home) (Michałowska, 2008).
- **Association of communities into groups with different or opposing interests that challenge and conflict one another**

Preparation and implementation of transport investments is a complex and long-term process. They impact on various elements of the environment, property rights, and land use. For these reasons, such investments are often accompanied by disputes and conflicts. Involving citizens and other stakeholders from the early stages of the investment process allows to establish a relationship between them and the investor and to work together to take into account their needs and concerns, which can help mitigate or avoid these potential conflicts.

**Myths and beliefs about citizen participation**

There are several myths and misconceptions those considering involving citizens might have:

1. **Citizens are not capable of understanding the complexity of an issue or project.**

Often people who are experts in a specific field have spent many years gaining experience and knowledge to understand a complex issue. While citizens cannot be as knowledgeable about a subject as experts, there is a large amount of evidence which shows that citizens are able to grapple with complexity if the process has been designed to give them time and resources to get acquainted to the investment project. Experts should be involved in helping select, prepare, and present clear, broad and diverse information for citizens to be able to participate in citizen participation processes linked to the investment project.

In some areas of the investment process investors need help from outside experts too. They have access to technical experts that guide them and provide assistance and expertise. This can, and should, also be the case for citizens.
2. *Citizens are unreliable and will not commit fully to the participation process.*

Another common misconception is that citizens will either not participate, or will drop out partway through a process. Sometimes there is a sense that we ask too much of people, however, more often than not we ask too little. Evidence shows that people are more than willing to participate *if they see that the process is worth their time and effort, with a clear link to impact.*

To make it worthwhile, there has to be a clear link to the decision-making process, meaning that citizens’ recommendations, ideas, and proposals will be considered by the investor or another actor in charge of making decisions within a project. It will be clear how and when the investor will use those inputs and will provide a direct response to citizens.

Citizen participation levels are also affected by the design of a participation exercise. A good design will help overcome barriers to participation by:

- giving citizens a clear task;
- being transparent about the process and its intended impact;
- providing opportunity for learning; giving enough information for people to come to an informed point of view;
- providing well-modulated dialogue and deliberation;
- providing compensation for time/travel/other costs (whenever possible and applicable);
- and providing feedback for the participants, with clear explanations how their input was taken into account. *Providing feedback is particularly important – the public should know how their input have been addressed and used in making decisions.*

It is helpful to ask yourself: *“Would I be motivated to take part in my participatory process? Is it clear what is asked of me and that my time is worth the effort?”* If your process is well designed, the answer to both questions should be yes.

3. *Citizens will develop either a wish list or a list of grievances.*

This myth is based on the negative past experiences of interacting with citizens in participatory processes. Often public servants face citizens in situations such as town hall meeting or a public consultation about a specific decision that was already taken. In such circumstances usually citizens with something negative to say show up, to express a complaint or disagree with the investment project, because the process is designed this way.

Whereas participation can be designed to elicit constructive contributions towards finding solutions. If a citizen participation process is designed to gather ideas, co-develop solutions or co-implement projects, citizens will do just that – they will work in a constructive, substantial way.

**Should I engage citizens in my project?**

Before you engage citizens in your project, you should take into account:

- To what extent the project you are responsible for has an impact on the broader public or a specific community. The higher the impact, the more important it is to involve citizens.
- There are some questions related to the investment project that citizens can help address. For example – how should the project look like?
• There is room in your project’s scope for citizens to have influence over certain decisions. You can act on the advice you receive from them. For example, these can be decisions on the potential options for the project, alternatives for how it should be implemented.
• There is a genuine commitment by the investor to take into account citizens’ inputs. This does not mean that all citizens’ suggestions and inputs should be implemented – but there should be willingness to consider them and implement those that are helpful.
• There are financial, time, and staff resources dedicated for meaningful citizen participation.
This section outlines eight steps of planning and implementing a citizen participation process.

Steps of planning and implementing a citizen participation process

1. Identifying the moment of participation and the problem to solve
2. Defining the expected outcome
3. Identifying available resources
4. Identifying the relevant public to be involved and the recruitment process
5. Choosing the participatory method
6. Tips for implementation
7. Keeping your promise
8. Evaluating the participatory process


Step 1: Identifying the problem to solve
The first step when deciding if citizen participation is most helpful is to identify if there is a genuine problem that the public can help solve or a specific task they can help accomplish. If there is, then the problem or the task needs to be defined and framed as a question. It is also important to be clear about the stage of the investment preparation process in which citizens’ inputs are most valuable and can have influence. Clarity about the problem or task and the timing will then help define the type of input that is needed, the type of participant that should be involved, and the most appropriate method to engage them.

In what stages of the investment process can citizens be involved?
The investment process follows five main stages of preparation before the construction starts. Beyond the mandatory public consultations, the public can be involved in every stage of the project planning. At each of these stages, it is worth clearly defining what types of decisions can be made and what information is available at a given moment, so that any participation processes are constructive and have a clear mandate.

The general principle is that the earlier investors start engaging the public (such as the local community), the better.
Stages 1 and 2 – preparing the preliminary concept of the project and preliminary consideration of the location

The investment process begins with preparatory work, which can take many years. In the preparation phase, the preliminary concept of the project is analysed (e.g. the proposed route of the road corridor). For road investments, a corridor study or a technical-economic-environmental study (Polish abbreviation: STEŚ) is carried out at this stage. For other projects, preliminary design assumptions are made. These are design studies of a general nature. Most elements of prospective projects are preliminarily estimated, some of them are specified in more detail (e.g. roads and engineering facilities) to better illustrate the initial concept. This stage is crucial for the public as designers develop more detailed options for future investment.

During stages 1 and 2, there are many ways that citizens and other stakeholders can be involved in the development of the potential options of the future investment. In these early stages of the investment preparation process, so there is both interest from the public to shape potential options for infrastructure projects, and room for citizens to have a say and shape those options. Engaging citizens at this stage has the most benefits and potential to mitigate any potential social conflicts in the future steps of the investment process.

The main aims of engaging citizens in these early stages can be the following:

- Introducing the initial idea and preliminary plans of the infrastructure project to the relevant community (such as the inhabitants living in the area where the project might be implemented). An established practice is to organise open information meetings.
- Mapping the needs of the broader public and the community (those that will be in some way benefit from or will be affected by and investment project). For example, through roundtable discussions.
- Gathering ideas and inputs from the public how the planned project can best address their needs. For example, through open innovation processes.
- Enriching a proposed project, testing it, or collaboratively drafting a project plan or several different options. For example, by organising planning workshops.
- Evaluating different investment options, their benefits and potential drawbacks. For example, by organising a Citizens’ Jury.

Inputs received from the public and the local community at this stage should serve to choose and develop the best possible investment option.

**Stage 3 – Environmental decision**

The chosen option is then recommended in the application for the environmental decision. Obtaining an environmental decision is mandatory for projects listed in the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of September 10, 2019 on projects that may significantly affect the environment (applicable to the majority of transport investments, such as the construction of roads, railroads, airports or public transport in cities). The environmental decision is issued via an administrative procedure, which might consist of an environmental impact assessment procedure, verification of the environmental impact report, and a mandatory public consultation.

Beyond the mandatory public consultation linked to the environmental impact assessment, there can be other aims of engaging citizens in this stage:

- Informing the public about the plans of the investment project and presenting it (for example, via open information meetings).
• Gathering comments and feedback from the public on the project’s plan (for example, via an online public consultation or a roundtable discussion).

Inputs received from the public and the local community at this stage should serve to detail and tailor the investment project.

Stage 4 – Planning permission/location decision

The location decision specifies the basic parameters for any change in land development. It determines conditions and detailed rules of land development (informed by a range of applicable regulations) and lines delineating the investment area, marked on the map at an appropriate scale (Moraczewski, Sługocka, and Niewiadomski, 2017). These basic parameters of the planned project, specified in the location decision, are binding.

At this stage of the process, there can be several aims of engaging citizens:

• Informing the public about the location of the investment project and presenting it (for example, via open information meetings).
• Gathering comments and feedback from the public on details of the project (for example, via an online public consultation or a roundtable discussion).

Stage 5 – Building permission

In stage 5, the project documentation is developed. This is an essential stage where the final decision about the investment project and its features is made. In close cooperation with investor, designers determine the detailed scope of investment and relevant technical solutions. It is crucial that the project documentation complies with the requirements of the environmental decision and location decision (if required), obtained in the previous step. At this point, the designers can still take into account the expectations or proposals formulated by the public at earlier phases of the investment process.

At this stage of the process, there can be several aims of engaging citizens:

• Gathering comments and feedback from the public on the detailed project (for example, via an online public consultation or a roundtable discussion).
• Inputs received from the public and the local community at this stage should serve to finalise and perfect the investment project.

In addition, at this stage, any mandatory public consultations required by Law are carried out for those projects that qualify for the second EIA procedure.

Then the building permission is issued and relevant works can start. The start of construction is the culmination point of the whole investment process and in many cases lasts far less time than the preparation phases. The works are carried out in accordance with the project design, the environmental decision and other formal arrangements made at earlier stages.

Once the permission is issued, there can be several aims of engaging citizens:

• Informing the public about the final details of the investment project and the timeline of the works (for example, via open information meetings).
• Evaluating or monitoring the implementation of the infrastructure investment project (for example, via civic monitoring practices).
At this stage citizens and other stakeholders can help ensure smooth implementation of the investment project.

**How to identify what can the public help you accomplish?**

Keeping in mind the five stages of investment preparation, answering the following questions can help identify the precise task citizens can help accomplish.

- What is the purpose of your project in general? What problem it is solving? For example, a highway project aims to increase accessibility between two cities. It solves the problem of poor accessibility via new rail connection or road.
- What are some of the smaller tasks and problems you have to address to implement your project? For example, identifying what kind of transport connection is most suitable (it’s exact location, size, whether there should be a bus stop, where crossings or acoustic screens are needed).
- What do you want to learn from participants that you don’t already know? For example, to understand the needs of the communities that live close to the future highway, to hear their concerns and propositions, to understand what potential options for the project they prefer.
- What benefits would you expect from involving citizens in your project? For example, one can expect that based on citizens’ input, it will be easier to design a successful project that will be accepted by the public and will meet its needs. It can also be expected that potential conflicts will be avoided and the project will be implemented smoothly.

Defining a precise task or problem is one of the most important elements of successfully engaging citizens, as it gives them a clear ask.

### Questions to answer during this step:

- Where in the project cycle are you?
- What task do you need to accomplish or problem do you need to solve?
- How can citizens and/or stakeholders help you accomplish this task or solve this problem?

**Step 2: Defining the expected outcome**

Before involving citizens, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the expected outcomes of the process. This means the desired type of inputs and the impact they will have in the scope of your project.

**Desired type of inputs**

Having clarity about the desired type of inputs is imperative before designing a process. Inputs can vary from broad ideas to improve a neighbourhood, experts’ opinion on a project, feedback on an existing proposal, or developing concrete solutions and recommendations to solve a problem.

**Expected impact**

The public needs to understand the impact their contribution will have. This manages the public’s expectations and enhances their trust in the process and its result. Investors and public authorities should decide and communicate in advance (before the start of the citizen participation process) how they plan to use inputs received from the public during a participation process and the level of impact they will have on the final decision. Investors should keep in mind that they need to deliver their
promise to citizens once the participation process is completed. It is essential to carefully take into account citizen input the way it was communicated in the beginning of the process, and to then communicate these results. Therefore clearly defining expected impact of citizens’ input is a key step.

The expected impact of the inputs gathered though a participatory process can vary from informative purposes (information) or a consultative exercise (consultation), to more impactful outcomes with binding results (engagement).

The table below provides examples of inputs and their expected impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of inputs gathered through a participatory process</th>
<th>Their expected impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas and proposals to improve the cycling infrastructure in a metropolitan area</td>
<td>Tap into the collective intelligence of the public to get ideas and inspiration that will help the investor develop a plan for improving cycling infrastructure (Consultation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback and broad opinion on a draft roadmap or project proposal</td>
<td>Test the proposal and gather insights from the public to adapt or enrich the proposal accordingly (Consultation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert or technical advice on the use of animal crossings in a highway project</td>
<td>Inform investors and adapt the original idea or solution based on the advice received (Consultation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed recommendations on where the new railway or tram line should be built</td>
<td>Integrate the recommendations as part of the solution and final decision (Engagement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert and technical advice on the use of particular solutions for transport accessibility</td>
<td>Inform investors and adapt the original idea or solution based on the advice received (Consultation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed feedback from transport users with special needs about which types of transport accessibility measures to use in a transport infrastructure project</td>
<td>Test different solutions and gather feedback from a specific target group to adapt the proposal (Engagement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions to answer during this step:

- What type(s) of inputs would you like to receive from participants?
- How will you use these inputs to accomplish your task or solve your problem?

Step 3: Identifying available resources

Every participatory process requires dedicated resources to be successfully implemented and result in useful outputs for decision makers. The necessary resources vary depending on the design and implementation of the process. Some elements that will impact the amount and type of resources needed can include: the scope of the process (timeframe, quantity of participants), the method used, the type of recruitment, the tools and some logistical considerations such as venues and facilitation. The resources can be human, financial, and/or technical.

- **Human resources:** Participatory processes (even when completely virtual), require sufficient staff to organise the process, recruit participants, develop information resources, facilitate
interactions, answer requests, communicate, analyse and synthesise the inputs, etc. These human resources can be available within your project, such as partners and colleagues, or through external contractors. The quantity and profiles of staff required will depend on the method used, the scope of the process, and the desired input from citizens. Some of the key competences required for any method are project management and communications. If internal capacities are insufficient, external support can be hired.

- **Financial resources**: As with every democratic process, participatory processes need dedicated financial resources to cover the cost of human resources, meeting venues and catering, digital platform licenses, public communication, honorarium payments to participants (recommended for some methods of participation), costs of participants’ childcare/transport, etc. The costs will depend on internal resources available, the scope of the process, the method, etc. A process that is truly inclusive and breaks down the common barriers to participation will require a larger investment.

- **Technical resources**: More and more processes are using digital tools for communication, receiving participants’ inputs, and/or processing/analysing the inputs received (please see PART 4 | Useful resources and links of these guidelines for recommended digital tools). Technical resources can encompass staff with digital skills, software licenses, computers, tablets, cloud services, etc.

### Questions to answer during this step:

- How many staff (internal/external) is available to support the design and implementation of the process?
- What is your estimated budget?
- Do you have additional resources available for this process (platforms, contractors, etc.)?

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### Step 4: Identifying the relevant public to be involved and recruitment

The next step is identifying the public to be involved in the process, depending on the purpose. This decision will affect how the public will be selected or recruited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of public</th>
<th>Expected input</th>
<th>Example of participation process</th>
<th>Type of recruitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative sample of citizens</td>
<td>Informed recommendations on the location of the new railway or tram line</td>
<td>Citizens’ Jury on the new tram line for the city</td>
<td>Civic lottery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts and technical profiles</td>
<td>Expertise and technical advice on the use of animal crossings in a specific project</td>
<td>Advisory group on environmental protection devises</td>
<td>Closed call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts and technical profiles</td>
<td>Expert and technical advice on the use of particular solutions for transport accessibility</td>
<td>Advisory group on transport accessibility</td>
<td>Closed call</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Users with special needs | Informed feedback from transport users with special needs about which types of transport accessibility measures to use in a transport infrastructure project | A public consultation in the form of a workshop | Closed call

Residents of an specific area | Ideas and proposals to improve the cycling infrastructure in a metropolitan area | Participatory budget | Open call

Broader public | Feedback and broad opinion on a draft roadmap or project proposal | Consultation on an infrastructure project | Open call

In the context of the transport infrastructure investment, the relevant public to involve might be:

- Citizens who will be strongly impacted by the changes in transport infrastructure. In particular:
  - those living close to locations where transport infrastructure projects take place;
  - businesses that operate near the location of the planned infrastructure project;
  - land owners which might experience changes in the value of their land due to the planned infrastructure project;
  - those who will be using services and benefiting from the projects implemented.

- The broader public.

How to recruit participants?

There are different possible strategies for recruiting citizens depending on the targeted public and the participation method.

1) Open call

In many traditional participation processes, such as public consultations, there is often an “open call” to recruit participants, either to an in-person meeting or to participate in an online consultation or forum. Participation is usually encouraged through advertising the opportunity via a variety of channels (online, social media, post, posters). Participation is open, so anyone who wants to is able to come in person or contribute online. In other instances, participants may be chosen by an institution through an application or selection process, such as before a committee hearing. However, there is a wealth of research that demonstrates that certain demographics tend to disproportionately participate, notably those who are older, male, well-educated, affluent, white, and urban (Dalton, 2008; Olsen, Ruth and Galloway, 2018; Smith, Schlozman, Verbe and Brady, 2009).

2) Closed call

Public authorities may also conduct consultations through a “closed call” for participants, meaning that politicians and/or civil servants might choose specific members of a community who have a particular expertise or experience needed to address a policy issue. In these instances, participation
could be based on merit, experience, affiliation with an interest group, or because of their role in the community (see MASS LBP, 2017).

For example, an advisory group on environmental protection devises linked to a large highway investment project which is set up to advise on the use of animal crossings in a specific project will require a closed call and targeted recruitment of experts. Recruitment of participants to this group can take place via environmental organisations or via tailored online communication campaigns that catch the attention of a desired audience (environmental experts).

3) Civic lottery

Civic lottery, or sortition, is used as a shorthand to refer to recruitment processes that involve random sampling from which a representative selection is made to ensure that the group broadly matches the demographic profile of the community (based on census or other similar data) (2020 OECD).

Civic lottery attempts to overcome the shortcomings and distortions of “open” and “closed” calls for participation described earlier. It ensures that nearly every person has an equal chance of being invited to participate in a participation process and that the final group is a microcosm of society. The golden standard is the two-stage random selection. During the first stage, 2,000-30,000 invitations are sent out to a random sample of the population. From those who respond positively, a second invitation to participate is sent out, stratified based on criteria such as age, gender, location, and socio-economic criteria. Invitations are usually signed by a figure of authority – for example, the Mayor or the head of a company.

Civic lottery is most often used when conducting a representative deliberative process. Although it is not its exclusive use. A randomly selected group of citizens can also be formed for a participatory budget or a public consultation – in any circumstance, when a participatory process requires maximum representativeness.
Recruiting participants via civic lotteries offers a range of benefits to the participation process. Most importantly, the final group of participants is representative of the broader public, which creates an opportunity to hear from a very broad range of people with different life experiences and opinions.

Some limitations of the civic lottery to keep in mind are its rather lengthy and expensive process, and limited breadth of participation.

More information on random selection: How to run a civic lottery, MASS LBP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to answer during this step:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Given the task or issue(s) at stake, what groups should be reflected among the participants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How many people should be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How will participants be selected?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to ensure transparency in the process?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 5: Choosing a participatory method

Once the problem to solve, the expected inputs, and the public you are working with have been identified, it is time to choose the method of participation. There are many different methods that can be used to engage citizens in any given context. The summary of methods detailed below compares their key characteristics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation method</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>To use when you are looking for...</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
<th>Type of input it yields</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and communication</td>
<td>Publishing of information both in a proactive and reactive manner.</td>
<td>• Ways to raise awareness about an issue or an investment project&lt;br&gt;• Ways to keep the public informed about investment projects and public decisions</td>
<td>• It is the very minimum that can be done&lt;br&gt;• Should be used in situations where there is no room for citizens to have a say or as a first step to a series of participation processes</td>
<td>Creates awareness about public issues, provides necessary information and creates conditions for more advanced methods of participation</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Most often can be done using existing resources, but will require more extensive investment to be effective at reaching wider audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open meetings/town hall meetings</td>
<td>Gathering the public in face-to-face meetings with public authorities, in order to provide information and openly discuss topics of interest chosen beforehand.</td>
<td>• Ways to inform the public about an investment project&lt;br&gt;• Space to have a loosely structured exchange and receive broad initial feedback&lt;br&gt;“Test the water”, or better understand, initial reception of ideas and projects by the public</td>
<td>• Allows for an exchange between investors or public authorities and the public/citizens&lt;br&gt;• Does not yield representative judgement or well informed solutions</td>
<td>Information sharing and broad feedback from citizens</td>
<td>Usually one-off events lasting 1-3 hours</td>
<td>Often done using existing resources. Approx. 1.000-5.000 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic monitoring</td>
<td>Involving the public in the evaluation and monitoring of public decisions, policies, and services.</td>
<td>• Create an oversight and evaluation mechanism for public projects, decisions and actions&lt;br&gt;• Benefit from an ongoing monitoring of and feedback on a policy or a project</td>
<td>• It is an ongoing process which requires sustained participation&lt;br&gt;• It is geared towards receiving feedback from individuals on implementation, rather than working with them to improve projects, services or policies</td>
<td>Citizen feedback, opinions, suggestions</td>
<td>Can be continuous or one-off</td>
<td>Depending on the method chosen. Approx. 15.000-50.000 €</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Public Consultation
A two-way relationship in which citizens provide feedback to a public institution or an investor (such as comments, perceptions, information, advice, experiences, and ideas)
- Gather aggregated individual opinions and feedback from the public
- Discuss policies and solutions with the public
- Adaptable to the needs - can be done in a range of different methods, ranging from surveys to in-person discussions
- Not statistically representative of the population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aggregation of individual citizens preferences</th>
<th>Usually a one-off occurrence, but can be a series of consultations</th>
<th>Depending on the method chosen. Online submissions usually done with existing resources, whereas focus groups or roundtable discussions up to 30,000 €</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Open Innovation
Tapping into the collective intelligence of the public to co-create solutions to specific public challenges via crowdsourcing or hackathons.
- Ideate and co-create collectively
- Involve the public in developing solutions or prototypes – for example, how transport user data can be used to estimate user needs for transport infrastructure
- Allows to create the conditions and provide necessary resources for citizens and stakeholders to work on and develop solutions to public problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collective ideation, co-creation of solutions, prototypes</th>
<th>1 day to 1 week</th>
<th>Depending on the method chosen. Online crowdfunding efforts often done with existing resources, hackathons cost approx. 100,000 €</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Citizen Science
Involving citizens in one or many stages of a scientific investigation, including the identification of research questions, conducting observations, analysing data, and using the resulting knowledge.
- Help collecting or analysing scientific data
- Feedback or guidance on research questions and research design
- Collaboration to implement science related projects
- Is suited for scientific endeavours rather than policy questions and dilemmas
- Adaptable to the needs - covers a range of participation opportunities in science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varies from data collected to guidance on research questions and decisions to implemented citizen projects</th>
<th>A few months to a few years</th>
<th>Depending on the method chosen. Approx. 5,000-50,000 €</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Participatory Budgeting
Mechanisms that allow citizens and help from the public to identify budget or
- Creates conditions for the public to participate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varies from ideas, projects, to binding</th>
<th>Usually a continuous process</th>
<th>Depending on the scale and level of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders to influence public decisions through the direct allocation of public resources to priorities or projects.</td>
<td>Resource allocation preferences</td>
<td>in decisions linked to public spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ideas and projects from the public to be funded</td>
<td>- Increased awareness and understanding by the public on public spending</td>
<td>- Can yield either an aggregation of participants’ individual preferences (if it takes the form of a voting), or their collective judgements (if it has a deliberative element)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative deliberative process</td>
<td>A randomly selected group of people who are broadly representative of a community spending significant time learning and collaborating through facilitated deliberation to form collective recommendations for policy makers</td>
<td>- Informed, collective public judgements about a complex policy issue or investment project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Recommendations that take into account a broad diversity of views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Legitimacy to take tough decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collective citizen recommendations/position/judgement</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>government, approx. 50,000 - 1,000,000 €</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

As explained in the introduction, the first level of participation is information. Public authorities are usually obliged by legislation to publish information both in a proactive and reactive manner (i.e. access to information or open data legislation). However, in these guidelines information is seen both as an enabler for more impactful levels of participation and as a prerequisite for an informed participation.

- **Information as a prerequisite for informed participation**: public information and data (in an open format) can promote informed public debate and increase the quality of participatory processes. In this regard, public authorities can publish different types of information and data:
  - **Legal framework and official information**: all the laws, regulations, decrees in different formats (text as well as machine readable) that are relevant to the infrastructure investment process
  - **Investment project information**: all the information about the investment project, such as project proposals, relevant studies, press releases, benchmarks, external advice, impact assessments, audits etc.
  - **Decision-making procedure linked to the investment project**, including: agendas, actors involved, timeframe of debates and expected milestones to reach a decision, moments where the public can interact and influence the process, legal framework, stakeholders involved (especially interests groups), etc.

- **Information as an enabler for more impactful participation**: public information and data (in an open format) can empower citizens to understand and act upon the decisions that affect their lives, enable citizens to co-create solutions and support an effective monitoring of investor’s or government’s actions.
  - **Investment project information**: descriptions of the project and any other available public information about it.
  - **Budget information**: all budget related documents and data, projected budget, actual income and expenditure and other financial information and audit reports. Investors should also publish the relevant formulas and algorithms when using projections and machine-based calculations. This also applies to the use of European funds.
  - **Implementation and evaluation**, including: information about the results of projects, annual reports, audits and all necessary data and information to allow for public monitoring and evaluation.

**Examples**

**Effective information campaign and public consultations on the extension of the regional road no. 747 in Poland**

A new, high-class road connection was planned, with a bridge over the Vistula River. Part of the road under consideration ran through the territory of the Masovian Voivodeship. It was a section of approximately 40 km built in a completely new location. Information campaign and consultations were organized when preparing the conceptual study for this project. Due to the complexity of the project, the investor was particularly interested in early analysis and diagnosis of the potential occurrence of
social discontent. Investor decided to work on providing reliable information about the project (including its potential options) and to present the local community the possibility to participate in the decision-making process.

The process started by an information campaign, which consisted of a number of activities aimed at informing local communities and authorities about the planned undertaking and examining the public reactions to the investment. Information about the investment was sent to city and commune offices: basic data on the planned project (including a map with the location of individual variants) and a correspondence address with the possibility of submitting comments and applications. A request was made to make these materials available to interested residents and the broader public. Information on the dates and places of planned consultations was sent to the offices with a request to disseminate them. The announcements appeared on notice boards, information poles and on the websites of the communes and the investor.

Three open meetings were held, attended by representatives of the investor, local authorities and the local community. At each meeting, the characteristics of the investment were presented, including road parameters and three possible expansion variants. The second part of the meeting was an open discussion with the residents. The comments and opinions obtained were used in the road design process and taken into account when selecting the most favourable variant.


Resources and tools

- **Proactive Transparency: The future of the right to information?** (Helen Darbishire; 2010): This paper provides an extensive overview of the benefits of the proactive disclosure of information, based on best practices from around the world.
- **The International Open Data Charter** (ODC; 2015): Provides guidelines and definitions on the release of data by public authorities. Governments can adopt the Open Data Charter to commit to deliver open data policies that make data accessible and freely available while protecting the rights of people and communities.
- **The Open Contracting Partnership’s Guide on Open Contracting** (OPG; 2016): provides useful practical information on the use of open government data for open contracting.
- **The Open Data Handbook** (Open Knowledge Foundation; ongoing): A collaborative resource by the Open Knowledge Foundation with guides, case studies and resources for government & civil society on the "what, why & how" of open data.

OPEN MEETINGS / TOWN HALL MEETINGS

What are open meetings and town hall meetings?

Open meetings and town hall meetings are participatory tools that can be traced all the way back to 17th-century New England meetings or colonial traditions in Latin America (cabildos). Nowadays, these processes are used worldwide, most often at local or legislative level, to foster information about public action, encourage citizen participation and to build a relationship based on accountability and trust.

What is it used for? Who takes part?

Open meetings and town hall meetings aim to gather the public in face-to-face meetings with public authorities and investors in order to provide information and openly discuss topics of interest chosen
beforehand, contrary to public consultation, which aim specifically to gather citizens’ inputs on a particular topic. This discussion may include informative presentations about public works, citizens’ proposals and monitoring of already-in-place public work. These processes are based on dialogue and debate rather than deliberation (OECD, 2020), and are more often used as an information or consultation tool without a specific output or impact in the final decision.

Its main objectives are to inform about public authorities’ or investors decisions and discuss them, such as about the start of planning an infrastructure project, and to get citizens closer to public decision making and to satisfy the ever-growing need of public transparency; therefore, open meetings and town hall meetings can be complemented with other participatory methodologies. For example, a participatory budget can be supported by open meetings to present the methodology, enhance participation and the sharing of the results.

Usually, these meetings are open to any resident in a designated area to participate or to the broad public without a geographical condition. However, they are usually not designed to be specifically inclusive: traditional means of communications are used (street posters for instance), therefore engaging already-interested citizens rather than pursuing a representative or inclusive participation.

**Who organizes?**

Town hall or open meetings are usually organized by public authorities or investors at the local level, to support information sharing and discussions about new or ongoing transport infrastructure projects. However, these meetings can be organized by other levels of government, including the national level or the legislative.

**How does it work?**

Contrary to a public consultation, an open meeting or town hall meeting does not seek to gather inputs on a particular issue. These processes are rather a mean for investors or public authorities to start a discussion with the public, whether to understand their needs, present upcoming decisions or share advances of implemented actions. They also help maintain a direct channel for communication and be accountable to the public on certain actions or mandates. As open meetings and town hall meetings are not designed to be representative, they can be organized fairly easily in three steps:

1) **Define the topic:** Because investors or public authorities are not in principle bound by any of what may come out of those discussions, the topic and framing of the meeting can be rather loose. The objective is to find a purpose precise enough to enable discussion, present evidence and provide information, in order for the public to be able to participate in the debate. Sometimes, public authorities allow the public to propose topics to the agenda or present initiatives and projects.

2) **Communicate:** Investors or public authorities should announce the date, time, and location of the meeting with sufficient time to allow citizens and stakeholders to participate. The publicity for these meetings is generally done both in-person and digital means, in order to reach a broader audience. As mentioned above, it is to be noted that although the very nature of open meetings and town hall meetings involve non-representative attendants, efforts should be made to make them the most inclusive as possible.
3) **Hold the meeting:** These meetings can be any physical space available, often in places linked to public authorities (town halls, public amphitheaters, schools, libraries, squares, etc.) or other spaces available to investors. More recently, and especially during the COVID19 pandemic, these meetings have been also organized in virtual spaces, a trend that may continue after the end of the in-person restrictions. Regarding the agenda of the meeting, usually the meeting starts with and opening remark presenting the agenda and topics to be discussed, followed by a discussion with participants. A written record should be published to allow for more transparency, accountability and to engage with a broader public.

**Examples**

**Open meeting on the local plan of Nowy Janków district in the commune of Radzymin (Poland)**

An open meeting on changing the Local Spatial Development Plan took place in January 2017 at the primary school in Ciemne. The purpose of the meeting was to create a space for discussion and exchange of opinions between citizens, stakeholders and the public authority, as well as to open a call that seeks solutions by individuals and entities interested in spatial planning. The open meeting marked a start of a consultation process to come - Mayor of Radzymin encouraged the participants to take part in the scheduled consultations emphasizing the importance of each voice. Participants of the meeting were provided information about the legal basis for preparing the local plan, the steps of this process, and the scope of it. A significant part of the meeting was devoted to the discussion on the directions of development of Nowy Janków. The basis for the discussion was the preliminary concept of the local spatial development plan presented to the residents. The residents were also provided printouts of planning maps and an orthophoto map of the area to have a chance to apply their ideas and proposed changes to the project with the help of the experts from the municipality.


**Resources and tools**

- **Guide to 21st Century Town Meeting (Involve; 2019):** This resource provides practical information to support public authorities in organizing public meetings using digital and in-person mechanisms.
- **Guide to Public Participation (United States Environmental Protection Agency; 2019):** This resource provides guidance to organize successful public participation, with specific elements on open meetings.
- **Civicus** published a [fact-sheet on Public Forums](https://civicus.org/factsheets/index.php?pid=82) and on [Town Hall Meetings](https://civicus.org/factsheets/index.php?pid=83) providing guidance and important information for public authorities interested in organizing public and open meetings.

**CIVIC MONITORING**

**What is civic monitoring?**

In the context of these guidelines, civic monitoring refers to the idea of involving the public in the evaluation and monitoring of public decisions, policies and services. This participatory method can also be considered as vertical or social accountability tool, as it allows citizens and stakeholders to directly participate in making public authorities accountable for their decisions or actions.
Characteristics: what is it used for? Who takes part?

Public institutions and investors can largely benefit from creating feedback channels for the public to provide inputs, comments and complaints to improve the decisions, actions and services provided. When involving citizens and stakeholders in the oversight and evaluation of its decisions and actions, virtuous circles are created and healthier relationships that can contribute to the overall trust in government or in a specific project. Civic monitoring can allow the public to monitor key areas of the project, such as:

- **Budget**: Opening up budgets and public financial management, and providing spaces for direct citizen participation and collaboration, can reduce corruption and waste, and increase the odds of taxes being used to deliver quality public projects or services and to achieve real improvements in living standards and in social, economic and environmental outcomes (OECD, 2017). Investors should also be accountable for the management and execution of the project budget. Concretely, citizens and stakeholders can monitor and evaluate the budget by reviewing the information and data published by the investor, or ensuring that the money was indeed spent in the way it was intended.

- **Project progress**: Civic monitoring of the project implementation is focused on the implementation and evaluation stages of the investment project. Concretely, it is about ensuring that the project achieves their expected outcome, benefit the desired communities and is efficient vis à vis the public resources involved. The public can gather evidence and inform about the real outcomes of the project to be able to assess the impact in comparison to the expected results.

Who can participate?

There are different approaches regarding who can participate in civic monitoring mechanisms.

- **Universal access**: the process is open to all interested citizens and stakeholders without requiring a specific skill, expertise or profile.

- **Specific audiences**: some mechanisms can be aimed at more targeted audiences or public with specific skills or expertise such as technical communities, scientists, designers, etc. It can also target users of specific public services, or residents of limited geographical areas, etc.

How does it work?

Civic monitoring can be implemented using a diverse set of tools such as:

- **Citizen Report Cards (CRC)** can be used to solicit user feedback on service provider performance and should be openly available and user-friendly so citizens can understand to what extent public service delivery meets users’ needs and satisfy their expectations and priorities (OECD, 2020). During a CRC process, quantitative and perception-based information from statistically representative surveys is gathered, which means that the findings reflect the opinions and perceptions of the citizen group from which input and information is being sought. As such, it is a useful tool for establishing sound baseline information and benchmarking service coverage and performance, as well as identifying inequities in service delivery.

- **Social audits** can also play a critical role in keeping the community informed about investment projects and allow citizens to hold investors to account. These audits are formal reviews of the objectives, decision making processes, and codes of conduct. Social audit processes can help focus on bad performance and/or behaviour and also
by denouncing corrupt practices. Social audit activities can take place at any stage of the project and can help measure the consistency between expected and actual outcomes of the investment project.

- **Citizen complaints mechanisms**: can often be lodged on-site or in public hearings, although most institutions also offer various channels, such as hotlines, mailboxes, and online submission forms to enable diversity and accessibility. Registering complaints is the most common way through which any citizen can alert about possible fraud, corruption or mismanagement of public funds, or alleged irregularities.

- **Public opinion surveys and citizen report cards**: Participatory surveys are powerful tools that seek citizen feedback on the quality and performance of public services or investment projects, such as linked to public transportation. A citizen report card on public transport services is not just one more opinion poll. Report cards reflect the actual experience of people with a wide range of public services. Surveys and report cards directly engage citizens in assessing the quality of public services in terms of quality, access, and availability. Governments can systematically gather this feedback, periodically publish the responses on their website, and then use this information to benchmark citizen satisfaction with public services over time.

- **Online tools**: Citizens can also monitor investment projects and report to a wider community through the use of apps, virtual forums, social media or dedicated websites. It is more and more common that citizens take on social media to complain about the degradation of a public space, or to evaluate publicly their experience when using a public service (in a positive or negative way). More and more local governments are also putting in place dedicated mobile applications or digital solutions to allow the public to alert when a public service is malfunctioning (such as the public transport system) or when the streets are not clean, the public lighting is not working, etc.

**Examples**

The State Audit Office of Georgia created the [Budget Monitor](#), a digital platform that enables citizens to oversee and monitor the use of public resources.

Citizens can monitor and track the activity and decisions of the United States Congress through a [digital tool](#) which includes information on the proposed bills, record of votes and activity of legislators.

**Resources and tools**

*For more information on Citizen Report Cards*

**Crowd Law Guide** *(New York University; 2019)*: This resource includes a section on how to include citizens and stakeholders in the evaluation of policies and legislations, including through social auditing and online tools.

**Civicus** published a series of fact-sheets providing guidance and important information for public authorities interested in implementing participatory processes in the evaluation of policies and services:

- [Fact-sheet on Social Audits](#)
- [Fact-sheet on Community Based Monitoring System](#)
- [Fact-sheet on Public Expenditure Tracking](#)
PUBLIC CONSULTATION

What is a public consultation?

A consultation is a two-way relationship in which citizens provide feedback to a public institution or an investor (such as comments, perceptions, information, advice, experiences, and ideas) (OECD, 2016). Usually governments (or investors) define the issues for consultation, set the questions, and manage the process, while citizens are invited to contribute their views and opinions (OECD, 2003).

What is it used for? Who takes part?

Public consultations are used to either gather ideas/feedback/input/opinions to help design and shape projects or policies, or to identify ways that an already defined project or policy can be implemented.

Public consultations can be used to involve the broader public as well as stakeholders. Most of the time they are open to all to participate. The organisers need to prepare a robust communication strategy to ensure high levels of participation and reach a range of different groups.

Public consultations can be done in many different ways, either in-person or online. Most common types are listed below, Adapted from OECD (2001), *Citizens as Partners: OECD Handbook on Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-Making* and *Action Catalogue*.

**Comment periods** are a type of public consultation where citizens and stakeholders are invited to submit their ideas to help solve a public challenge, or their feedback to a proposed policy or project. These are open to all and simple to set up online, however they work better if there are roundtable discussions or other types of consultations set up in addition to it, where ideas can be developed and discussed. Calls for proposals favour participation of established stakeholders and actors over citizens, as they require time and resources to prepare ideas and suggestions to be submitted, which everyday citizens do not necessarily have.

**Focus groups** are a consultation tool used to determine peoples’ preferences or to evaluate proposals and ideas. Usually they involve a group of citizens who are testing or experiencing services, products or solutions and provide their in-depth feedback. They are usually comprised of around 8-10 people, gathered for a day or less.

**Surveys** are used to identify individual citizens’ opinions and preferences based on a series of questions posed to citizens by investors. They can take place online or in person (i.e. to reach groups that do not have easy access to internet). One way to reach citizens that might be difficult to contact online is to survey them where they commute or spend their time (for example, by putting up a tent in a frequented square in the city). Surveys are often open to any respondent and hence are not representative.

**Public Opinion Polls** are established instruments for portraying opinions held by a population on a given issue at a certain moment in time. They are a useful tool to gather the opinions of a random sample of the public, which ensures statistical representativeness of their responses.
Workshops/seminars/conferences/round-table discussions can be used to gather more detailed stakeholder or expert opinions and create opportunities for exchange of ideas. They happen online or in person, and involve around 20 to 150 participants. It is important to keep in mind that smaller group discussions are better suited for developing ideas and exchanging opinions, whereas bigger events can help frame the debate and raise awareness about the project or policy issue.

Stakeholder interviews: stakeholder interviews are individual conversations with experts and stakeholders to gather their feedback and opinion regarding a project element, policy solution or a service. They can be structured (a list of predetermined questions are asked), semi-structured (a few prepared questions and a further natural development of the conversation), or unstructured (starts with the open question and develops further based on the answer).

How does it work?

The process starts by determining the purpose of involving citizens in your project and the target audience. Is it to gather ideas and help shape your project or a part of it? Or is the project already set, and help is needed to find ways to best implement it? Is there a clear target audience you would like to involve and hear from? Based on the answers to these questions, a method of a public consultation is chosen. Small group face-to-face methods, such as roundtable discussions, can be useful for brainstorming and generating ideas, whereas a call for proposals or a survey can be useful to gather detailed feedback on a concrete idea or document from a large amount of people. The method chosen should also be adapted to the group you would like to reach – for example, involving elderly people would be more efficient via interviews or in person surveys and discussions, whereas policy makers might prefer high level forums and comment periods.

The next step is setting up a clear plan how citizens will be consulted. Steps include recruiting participants, conducting the consultation method chosen, taking into account and communicating the results.

Providing clear and accessible information about the process and the question of the public consultation is essential to recruitment, meaningful participation, as well as growth and learning of the participants.

Examples

Public consultations on bicycle routes in Warsaw: "Bielany by bike"

In September-October 2010, the City Hall of the Capital City of Warsaw started consultations on bicycle transport in Bielany. The aim of the consultations was to identify the difficulties on the bicycle routes in Bielany district and to develop guidelines for the further development of the network of bicycle paths and routes. The residents could submit their comments and suggestions sending a photo by e-mail showing the problem on the bicycle path, e.g. uneven surface, narrow, dangerous bend, high curb, etc. It was also possible to briefly describe the perceived problem, indicate the place of occurrence and put such information in a specially prepared box set up in the Bielany City Hall. Cyclists could take part in bicycle trips organized on four consecutive Saturdays along four different bicycle routes ("Workshops in motion"). During the ride, the participants identified problems that were discussed and marked on the map after the ride. Comments could also be submitted during two "Meetings by the map" - workshops organized during two outdoor events: the opening of the Rope Park and the "Goodbye Summer" event. Within over a month, the organizers received over 100 emails with suggestions and opinions, which received responses from municipal units responsible for transport, i.e. the Municipal Roads Authority, the Road and Transport Office and the City Hall.

In June 2014, the Mayor of London published its first ever long-term infrastructure plan, setting out London’s infrastructure needs, its costs, possible financing methods, and ways to deliver the projects in an inclusive way. A three-month consultation period ensued in which seminars, workshops and meetings with businesses, government, infrastructure providers, and Londoners were organised. Citizens were also invited to respond directly at London.gov, and the government received 270 written responses. In March 2015, they published an update to the plan, taking into account the results of the consultation.

More information available here: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/better-infrastructure/infrastructure-policies/london-infrastructure-plan-2050#acc-i-43211

Resources and tools

- More on focus groups
- More on online consultations
- Guidelines on Stakeholder Consultation (European Commission; 2015): Chapter VII on their series on regulation guidelines; provides definitions of key terms, motivations for consultation and a method for doing so.
- Background Document on Public Consultation (OECD): provides definitions, methods and examples from OECD countries, along with good practices.
- Citizenlab published two short e-books on public consultations, with special emphasis on digital engagement: The FAQs of Digital Consulting and 6 Methods for Online Consultation.
- Code of Practice on Consultation (BRE UK, 2008): Includes seven criteria to guide policy makers on when and how to conduct stakeholder consultation.
- Consultation Principles & Guidance (Irish Government, 2016): Provides principles and also advice on practical issues that may arise throughout a consultation procedure.

OPEN INNOVATION: CROWDSOURCING AND HACKATHONS

What are open innovation practices?

Open innovation practices, such as crowdsourcing, hackathons or public challenges, are a way for investors and public authorities to tap into the collective intelligence to co-create solutions to specific public challenges. Open innovation is regularly inspired from business development strategies or technological development, and it can be defined as “the cooperative creation of ideas and applications outside of the boundaries of any single organisation” (Seltzer and Mahmoudi, 2012).

What is it used for? Who takes part?

Open innovation methods are usually used to convene expertise from citizens and stakeholders to find ideas or inspiration, prototype and test solutions or to improve services or methods (GovLab, 2019).

Crowdsourcing refers to the idea of using the expertise and ideas coming from the crowd (in this case broader citizens and stakeholders), can be used to gather inputs throughout the investment project.
Through digital platforms or in-person activities, investors can gather inputs from expert groups, targeted stakeholders (such as scientists or developers) or the wider public to answer specific public problems.

**Hackathons** (from hack and marathons) are in-person or virtual events bringing together investors, public authorities and stakeholders to collaboratively work on ideas, prototype solutions to complete various tasks of the investment project or solve any challenges that arise. The idea is to take advantage of the diversity of skills, expertise and profiles to find new approaches or innovative solutions. Usually, hackathons involve technical communities (developers, coders, designers, data scientists, etc.) to make use of data priory published (in an open data format) by the convener of the event. Hackathons are organized during a short period time (24 to 72 hours), where participants can work in sprint to solve a challenge, design or code digital solutions such as dashboards, applications, websites, etc.

**Who can participate?**

There are different approaches regarding who can participate in open innovation methodologies such as crowdsourcing, hackathons or public challenges.

- **Universal access:** the process is open to all interested citizens and stakeholders without requiring a specific skill, expertise or profile.
- **Specific audiences:** some processes can be aimed at more targeted audiences or public with specific skills or expertise such as technical communities, scientists, designers, etc.

**How does it work?**

**Crowdsourcing** usually involves a digital platform where participants can publish ideas or contributions to answer the organizing authority’s request or question. In-person alternatives can be put in place, such as workshops or ideas boxes.

**Key steps:**

1. Decide and set the problem to solve or task to accomplish by participants;
2. Decide on the conditions to participate and the expected outcome of the inputs;
3. Communicate clearly on the problem, the conditions to participate and the expected goal of the process;
4. The process can be temporary to solve a specific problem (decide on the length of the process) or permanent as a continuous brainstorm tool;
5. Set up the digital or in-person mechanisms and communicate regularly to ensure your target audiences are aware of the process;
6. Once the process is finalized, communicate about the results.

**Hackathons** are usually in-person events organized during a weekend, in one common space where all participants can work and share ideas. Hackathons are sprint-oriented events, so the goal is to allow for a collaborative work environment with technical facilities and usually involve a setting the scene moment and a pitch session where participants present their ideas and solutions. Participants work in teams to solve one or several problems and mentors with strong expertise on the policy problem or the type of solution expected can be assign to each team. In some occasions, investors might consider rewarding the winner(s) with a prize or the recognition that comes with the implementation of their idea as a solution. For a hackathon to be productive, organisers should put at disposal of participants data and information regarding the problem to solve.
Key steps:

1. Decide and set the problem(s) to solve or a task to accomplish by participants;
2. Decide on the conditions to participate and the profiles of stakeholders you will require;
3. Communicate clearly on the problem or the task, the conditions to participate and the expected goal of the process;
4. Ensure you have a space set up with tables, co-working stations, stable internet and pitch corner;
5. Gather (and share with participants) as much data and information as possible regarding the task or the problem you are aiming to solve;
6. Allow for sufficient time (assign teams, present the problem, allow for breaks, work on the solution and pitch ideas or prototypes);
7. Once the process is finalized, communicate about the results.

Examples

In 2020 the Polish government launched virtual hackathon to fight coronavirus

On April 3-5 2020, almost 2000 programmers have joined the online hackathon organised by a private company OK Sp. z o.o. and GovTech Polska (a team in the Prime Minister’s Office). The idea of the hackathon was to develop technologies and implement projects to address five key challenges: supporting businesses, science, and technology during the crisis; facilitating e-commerce and logistics; addressing challenges to education and leisure; and an open category for other ideas.


Resources and tools

- **A Framework of Open Practices** (Mozilla Foundation, 2017): This blog article describes and provides guidance on how to use open and collaborative innovation methods based on the experience of Mozilla and other innovative organisations.
- **Open Policy Making Toolkit** (UK Government; 2016): This manual includes information about Open Policy Making as well as the tools and techniques policy makers can use to create more open and user led policy.
- **The Power of Hackathons: a roadmap for sustainable open innovation** (Bastian, Zachary; 2013): This brief provides an overview of hackathons and offers practical guidance as well as good practices from successful experiences.
- **21st-Century Public Servants: Using Prizes and Challenges to Spur Innovation** (White House; 2015): This blog article presents results and experiences from the Obama Administration approach of using public challenges to solve complex public problems and other innovative methodologies. Better
- **The Open Policy Making Playbook** (GovLab, 2019): This playbook offers case studies and guidance for policy-makers to include collaborative and innovative approaches to policy-making.
Citizen science has a long history, as amateur enthusiasts of science, astronomy, biology, and other sciences have been exploring and observing the world around them for thousands of years. With the advance of online technologies it has become much more prominent and efficient, and is now employed by researchers, advocates, and communities all over the world.

The essence of citizen science is that citizens are involved in one or many stages of a scientific investigation, including the identification of research questions, conducting observations, analysing data, and using the resulting knowledge (Craglia and Granell, 2014). It is a way to democratise a scientific process, opening it up to everyday people, and tapping into their motivation and curiosity to co-create and further research goals.

**What is it used for? Who takes part?**

Citizen science methods can be used for several different purposes (Veeckman et al., 2019):

- **An opportunity for citizens to learn more about a specific field or issue.** Such objectives can be achieved by citizen science projects that open access to the results of scientific research to citizens for free (such as open access journals) or organising informal learning workshops. Such efforts would be considered as an initial step of citizen participation: information.

- **As a research approach, where citizens contribute by gathering or analysing data.** The key strength of recruiting citizen scientists to contribute to research by collecting and analysing data is the large amount of data citizens are able to collect, the diversity of data when citizens are dispersed across different geographical locations which would not be possible to gather otherwise, and the opportunity to process and analyse data on a larger scale. The data collection can be done via observation, such as counting a specific kind of birds in one’s neighbourhood, or using technical devices, such as air quality meters. Such efforts would be considered as citizen consultation or engagement, depending on the mandate given to citizens.

- **As a method to give citizens a voice in shaping research questions, designing a project, determining a focus of a study.** Citizens can be valuable and active agents in shaping the research process for some research projects. Their personal experience of living in a specific location, interacting with a specific environment, and being part of a particular community can yield important insights and helpful suggestions when identifying research questions or determining a focus of the study. In addition, involving citizens in the co-design of the research project contributes to raising awareness around the issue the study aims to analyse, and can further help influence policy decisions and demonstrate the importance of the issue. Such efforts would be considered as citizen consultation or engagement, depending on the mandate given to citizens.

Both everyday people and stakeholders can be involved in citizen science projects, depending on the purpose of the project and technical requirements. They usually play different roles: while citizens are at the heart of the process, stakeholders provide support, inputs, access to data or tools.

Citizen science projects could be used in the early stage of developing infrastructure projects – for example, by measuring CO2 data or traffic in different neighbourhoods, which would then help determine, where the best location for a new road would be.

**How does it work?**

The process starts by determining the purpose of involving citizens in your research or a scientific project. Based on the answer, it is then important to define the role citizens will have.
The next step is to establish a clear plan, which outlines the steps and how citizens will be engaged. A good practice is to keep the citizens’ participation journey in mind. For example, if citizens are collecting and analysing data, they should be kept informed how the data is used, and the final research results. If citizens have a more active role of determining the research questions or co-creating the research design, they should be kept up to date about the following steps that the project takes.

Providing clear and accessible information about the process and the research is ensures citizens’ engagement and learning.

Participants in citizen science are usually volunteers recruited via an open call. Depending on the type of projects, a recruitment strategy might target specific groups, such as schools or students, people with particular interests or living in specific locations, or the general public at large. To recruit a sufficient number of motivated participants, a communication plan is essential.

Examples

**Curieuze Neuzen Vlaanderen: Air quality and citizen participation**

Curieuze Neuzen Vlaanderen is a collaborative scientific study in which the population helps and participates by collecting data about air quality. The aim is to map air quality throughout Flanders, both in the city and in the countryside. Around 20,000 families, associations, companies and schools will be involved in this processes and will collect data by using simple measuring set-up on a window of their home, apartment or building. This is an example of how to involve citizens in data collection for scientific purposes.

More information: [https://www.projectzuiverelucht.eu/](https://www.projectzuiverelucht.eu/)

**Resources and tools**

- **Guides and manuals** (SCivil, 2020): This includes a guide to getting started with citizen science, explaining all the most basic details and also a manual on communication around a citizen science project.
- **Citizen science for all** (GEWISS Programme, 2016): This short book presents a guide for citizen science, both its practical and theoretical aspects in fields ranging from education to arts and humanities.
- **Digital Tools** (Rees, Dylan, 2021): A compilation of useful resources, including software, academic literature, links to conferences, among many other practical tools.

**PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING**

**What is participatory budgeting?**

Participatory budgeting is a democratic way for people to have a direct say on how public money is spent. It began in 1989 in Porto Alegre in southern Brazil. In Brazil alone, this participatory mechanism spread to more than 436 municipalities, and today we can count more than 11,000 participatory budgeting experiences around the world.

**What is it used for? Who takes part?**

A participatory budget refers to mechanisms that allow citizens and stakeholders to influence public decisions through the direct allocation of public resources to priorities or projects. Those resources
are usually pre-defined by the public authorities, meaning that a dedicated budget is decided prior to the process. The amount depends on each authority, and it can go up to 100 million euros per year as in Paris (France), where the biggest amount of budget is put up to citizen vote (Véron, 2016[1]).

The Participatory Budgeting World Atlas defines a participatory budget as a “process that involves a specific portion or the entire amount of an institution’s budget, so that can be freely and independent decided by all the citizens participating in the initiative.”

Who organizes?

An overwhelming majority of processes are organized by local governments, however it’s important to take into consideration those experiences organized by other levels of government such as regional, state and national. For example, in Portugal, where a national participatory budget is in place as of April 2021.

Who can participate?

There are different approaches regarding who can participate in a participatory budget:

- Universal access: the process is open to individuals of a certain territory or institution.
- Targeted audiences: some processes can be aimed at more targeted audiences or specific social sectors such as young people, residents of a specific area, elderly, immigrants, women, LGBTQ+ communities, etc.

The goal of a participatory budget should be to make fiscal public decisions more open, meaning more transparent, accountable and participatory. It also helps citizens better understand the functioning of public budgeting. Some processes can have targeted policy objectives through the allocation of resources, such as including citizens in urban planning, education priorities or the 2030 Agenda.

How does it work?

There is not a one-fits-all solution for participatory budgets, as each public institution can accommodate the process to fit its desired purpose, timeline or legal requirements. However, there are certain stages that all participatory budgets should include:

0) Communication: Before the process is open for participation, public authorities should communicate about the opportunity to participate, the expected outcomes of the participatory process, the stages of the process as well as the conditions for the projects to be eligible.

To be able to communicate about the process, public authorities should have decided the following elements:

- Budget allocated for the process
- Public that will be able to participate
- Criteria for eligibility of proposals
- Stages of the process
- Timings for the different stages

1) First stage of decision making: proposals

In this initial stage, the public authorities should make the rules of the game clear:
• **Who can present proposals?** It can be open to all citizens and stakeholders, to only a certain category of citizens (target groups) or stakeholders (NGOs, associations, etc.), or it can be the government that makes the proposals.

• **Which proposals are accepted?** This is important for participants to know in advance the specificities to take into account when submitting a proposal. Public authorities can define prior to the process certain conditions such as budget constraints, feasibility, locality of proposal, duration of implementation, etc.

It is also important to decide on the **methodology and format to submit the proposals**:

• **In-person:** Some processes require citizens and stakeholders to co-create the proposals through in-person mechanisms such as workshops, hackathons, town hall meetings, makerspaces, etc.

• **Online:** The vast majority of participatory budgets put in place a digital platform where the public can submit their proposals.

• **Hybrid:** To maximise inclusion and fairness, some processes put in place a hybrid system where citizens and stakeholders can submit their proposals both though a digital platform or an in-person mechanism.

2) **Intermediate stage: evaluation of proposals and feasibility**

In some participatory budgets, public authorities decide to include an intermediate stage between the submission and the vote, to review the proposals and decide on their feasibility. This analysis has to be transparent, meaning that the public authority should communicate about the conditions for proposals to be accepted. Once the submissions are reviewed, the authority can publish the proposals that are accepted and put to vote.

3) **Second stage of decision making: vote**

In this stage, the proposals that have been accepted by the public authorities are submitted to a vote in order to select the ones that will be implemented. Once again, the rules of who can participate should be clear as well as the mechanisms available for the public to vote.

• **Who can vote?** Public authorities should decide and communicate the individuals that are eligible to participate in the vote. It can go from all residents of a geographical area, to targeted groups.

• **How can the public vote?** Public authorities can implement different methodologies: digital platforms, physical booths, SMS voting, mail ballots, or hybrid systems. The ultimate goal should be to ensure that all the eligible participants have the capacity to vote.

Once the vote stage is finalized, public authorities should communicate widely about the results.

4) **Implementation and evaluation:** In some cases, citizens and stakeholders are also involved in the execution of the selected projects or proposals, and in the monitoring and evaluation phases.

It is highly recommended that participatory budgets become a continuous practice, meaning a process that repeats itself in a continuous basis (yearly, bi-annually, etc.) for citizens to be able to follow up the implementation of the projects and create a culture of participation.

**Examples**

**Participatory budgeting in Poland**
Participatory budgeting has been one of the most often used participation methods in Poland in recent years. The first participatory budget was implemented in Sopot in 2011. Sopot municipality dedicated that roughly 1% (i.e. 5 million PLN) of the municipal budget to be allocated in this way. In 2020, Sopot has already launched the ninth edition of the participatory budget. Over these eight years, more than 160 investments and projects have been implemented in the city for a total amount of over 30 million PLN. Implemented projects include investments such as bike paths, sport areas, and building reconstructions.

According to the data of the Association of Polish Cities, out of 2,479 Polish municipalities, in 2012 only 5 municipalities have implemented participatory budgets, in 2013 there were 53 such municipalities, in 2014 - 146 municipalities, and in 2015 - 136 municipalities. In 2018, participatory budgets were implemented in cities in all sixteen voivodeships. Residents could decide how to allocate over 261 million PLN. The largest amount was allocated by Warsaw: 61.5 million PLN.

More information can be found here:
https://participedia.net/case/4237

Resources and tools

- **72 Frequently Asked Questions about Participatory Budgeting** (UN HABITAT; 2014): This resource provides guidance on how to define a participatory budget, how to implement it, how to decide on the allocation of budget and the participatory aspects.
- **Participatory Budgeting Toolkit** (East, North and South Ayrshire Councils; 2020): A toolkit developed in Scotland for community groups and organizations who are planning to organise a participatory budget.
- **Another city is possible with participatory budgeting** (Cabannes, Yves; 2017): This book discusses the background and challenges of PB processes. It highlights 13 cases of PB around the world, in various contexts and institutions. It also includes recommendations to address challenges with participation.
- **Participatory Budgeting in Schools: A Toolkit for Youth Democratic Action** (Great Cities Institute; 2020): This toolkit, developed based on participatory budgeting experiences in Chicago schools, aims to make PB easier to implement with teachers and youth in schools across a wide variety of models and contexts.
- **Participatory Budgeting (PB) Blueprint Guidebook** (Empaci; 2021): This e-book presents best practices based on case studies.
- **How Cities can use Participatory Budgeting to address Climate Change** (People Powered): A short information sheet giving useful recommendations.

**REPRESENTATIVE DELIBERATIVE PROCESSES**

**What is a representative deliberative process?**

A representative deliberative process refers to a randomly selected group of people who are broadly representative of a community spending significant time learning and collaborating through facilitated deliberation to form collective recommendations for policy makers (or investors) (OECD, 2020). There are twelve models of deliberative processes, but the most well-known are Citizens’ Assemblies and Citizens’ Juries.
What is it used for? Who takes part?

A representative deliberative process is most suited to address the following types of problems and tasks:

- values-based dilemmas;
- complex problems that require trade-offs and affect a range of groups in different ways;
- long-term questions that go beyond electoral cycles.

How does it work?

There are two elements that make representative deliberative processes quite different from other methods of citizen participation.

The first element is the random selection of participants through a civic lottery. To be able to organise deep and substantial deliberation, the group of citizens participating in it has to be relatively small, usually ranging from 15 to 100 participants. See more details about the civic lottery in the participant recruitment section of the guidelines. Randomly selecting citizens, stratified based on the criteria such as age, gender, location, and socio-economic background, has the benefit of capturing the diversity of society. Even though it is a smaller group of participants than some other processes, it is designed to ensure inclusiveness and capture the views of those harder to reach communities and voices.

The second element is deliberation. Deliberation involves dialogue, debate, but also implies a careful consideration of a range of different arguments and opinions in a respectful way. It requires accurate and relevant information and adequate time, so that those deliberating can go into the core of the issue and find common ground.

Overall, because of these properties, representative deliberative processes focus on the depth of deliberation and all parts of society being represented within a smaller group of participants, whereas the majority of other methods of citizen participation place the focus on the breadth of participation – aiming to ideally involve everyone affected by a specific issue (Carson and Elstub, 2019) (OECD 2020).
Steps of a representative deliberative process

1) Preparing for a representative deliberative process

- **Securing buy-in** from all relevant decision makers – not only the investor, but also relevant public authorities. This is a crucial step of the process, which helps to ensure that a citizens’ jury or panel is meaningful and will have impact on decision making linked to the investment project. It is important to factor in enough time to establish this.

- **Designing the process.** The complexity of the question citizens will be asked to address will affect how many participants will be required, how much time they will need, which experts and stakeholders should provide information, and what online tools could be helpful.

- **Civic lottery to select participants.** More details about it can be found in a dedicated section above.

- **Preparing information, the stakeholder line-up, briefing facilitators.** Identifying broad and diverse information from experts and stakeholders is needed for citizens’ to be able to deliberate and reach public judgement. Successful deliberation requires skilled facilitation.

2) Phases of a representative deliberative process

1. **A team/community building phase**, when the members of the process meet one another and establish the values that will guide their deliberation. In some cases they also receive training on understanding biases and critical thinking. This phase creates the conditions for their deliberation to be possible in the latter stages.

2. **A learning phase**, where citizens become familiar with the policy question and consider a range of perspectives presented by experts, stakeholders, and affected groups, a diverse mix of whom present to the participants in person or in writing and answer their questions. It is also common for citizens to be able to request additional information, experts, or stakeholders if they feel they are missing information or need additional clarifications. For bigger processes, it is common to conduct other participation methods, such as public consultations or crowdsourcing ideas, before a representative deliberative process starts, to gather inputs from the broader public.

3. Learning and consultation is followed by **citizen deliberation**, when evidence is discussed, options and trade-offs are assessed, and recommendations are collectively developed. The process is carefully designed to maximise opportunities for every participant to exercise public judgement and requires impartial trained facilitators.

4. The final step is **reaching a “rough consensus”** – finding (as much as possible) a proposal or range of options that a large proportion of participants can strongly agree on. When voting is used, it is either an intermediate step on the way to rough consensus, or a “fall back” mechanism when consensus cannot be reached. Final recommendations are made publicly available and receive a response from the public authorities.

**Examples**

**Infrastructure Victoria’ Citizens’ Juries (2016)**

A Regional and a Metropolitan Citizens’ Jury, made up of 43 randomly selected citizens each, developed recommendations for Infrastructure Victoria’s 30-year plan. These touched upon planning and investment decisions, which projects should be priorities for Victoria, and how these projects
should be paid for. Infrastructure Victoria then published the unedited recommendations and a response was delivered by its Chairperson.

More information can be found here: https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/2016/02/01/infrastructure-victoria-meeting-victorias-infrastructure-needs/

**Poznań Citizens’ Panel**

Poznań City Council brought together 65 randomly selected citizens from February to May 2021 to deliberate over four weekends and provide recommendations on how the Poznań authorities should act to counteract and adapt to climate change and the climate crisis.

More information can be found here: https://www.poznan.pl/panelobywatelski/

**Metrolinx Standing Panel on Transportation, (2018-2020)**

The Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) transport authority, Metrolinx, has established a Regional Reference Panel to give 32 randomly selected residents the mandate to provide informed advice on managing the growing transport demand over the next 25 years and achieving Metrolinx’s goals in a manner that reflects the values and priorities of all residents. The Regional Reference Panel met for 11 full-day meetings between October 2018 and May 2020.

Metrolinx’s Planning and Development Department is seeking the Panel’s recommendations on issues such as:

- improving seamless connections between regional transportation services;
- setting high standards for traveller experience and design excellence;
- managing congestion and demand during peak hours;
- expanding access to cycling infrastructure;
- and preparing for new transportation modes and shared mobility services.

More information can be found here: https://www.metrolinx.com/en/aboutus/inthecommunity/theplan/default.aspx

**Resources and tools**

- The OECD Trello board with a range of further resources for representative deliberative processes.
- MASS LBP’s Guide on How to run a civic lottery
- OECD has two forthcoming publications on the matter: Bringing public judgement to democracy: Eight models of representative public deliberation implemented across OECD Member countries and Evaluation Guidelines for representative deliberative processes.
- How to Start a Climate Assembly (People Powered): a short information sheet with key facts.
- How to run a Citizen’s Assembly (RSA et al; 2020): a handbook covering the planning, organizing and delivery stages of a CA.
Step 6: Tips for implementation
The implementation of a participation process largely depends on the method chosen. Key elements of each model are outlined in the previous section. However, there are some general considerations that concern any participatory process – such as preparing an adequate timeline, communication strategy and selecting appropriate digital tools.

Timeline

- **Plan sufficient time to implement the participation process.** Simpler processes such as public consultations might take a couple of months to implement – from preparing necessary materials, to communicating and inviting citizens to participate and giving them enough time to provide their contributions. More complex processes, such as participatory budgets, citizen science projects or deliberative processes can take much longer, depending on their scale. For example, for a deliberative process several months are required to get stakeholders and decision makers on board, around two months to conduct a process of random selection of participants, and several months of learning and deliberation of participants (as they meet every or every other weekend).

- **Make a citizen participation plan that includes all planned participation activities.** The preparation and implementation of a large linear investment is can take up to 8-10 years, taking into account the time to prepare documentation, tenders and administrative conditions. In most cases, it may not be enough to carry out a participation process in the beginning – a series of them would have to be carried out successively while the investment process is progressing. Planning citizen participation strategically and in the long-term is important to ensure that even though there is time pressure to implement the investment project, there is dedicated time for citizen participation.

- **Make sure that participation process is aligned with the decision making process and project development.** Participation should be timely in order to inform the decision making that takes place throughout the investment project.

- **Prepare a detailed timeline.** It should include preparatory steps, such as booking the venue and preparing information material, as well as steps to implement the process (how long in-person sessions will be, how much time in between etc.). Ensure that participation process takes place during hours or days that are not only possible, but also convenient to attend. Remember to give enough time for citizens to participate and provide their feedback – this grants a genuine opportunity of participation and demonstrates respect of participants’ input and time.

Questions to answer during this step:

- Which participation method will you use?
- What are the steps you will need to take to plan and implement it?
Questions to answer during this step:

- How much time is needed to implement your participation process properly?
- What are the main steps, and how much time they take?
- Does the timing of the participation process align with any relevant decision-making processes?

Communication

- **Prepare a communications strategy** and plan which follows every step of the process.
- **Distinguish between communication with the participants of the process and communication with the broader public about the participation process.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication with participants</th>
<th>Communication with the broader public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> helpful at recruiting participants, keeping them engaged, and ensuring a smooth experience.</td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> raising interest, understanding, and awareness about the participatory process and the issue it tackles, ensure transparency and gain trust in the decisions made by the participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Channels:</strong> can be done using communication channels such as email, a dedicated Facebook or WhatsApp group or a dedicated online platform.</td>
<td><strong>Channels:</strong> ongoing communication on a dedicated website, making relevant information public, social media posts, videos, press releases or press conferences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Consider what channels are appropriate to reach your audience.** Younger citizens might prefer online and social media, whereas seniors might be easier reached by post, printed newspapers or posters in their local supermarkets.

- **Ensure constant, clear, and understandable communication that does not use technical language.** This is particularly important in the context of transport infrastructure investment that are technical in nature. Unclear information in technical language can easily discourage any participation.

**Tips for simple language**

- Don't think from your own perspective. Think about the recipient of the information, take their perspective. What you know is not necessarily known to the recipient.
- Address the recipient directly and consider writing about your institution or organisation in the first person plural "we".
- Start with what's most important. The legal framework is likely not it. Provide the legal basis for the activities undertaken after having caught their attention and having conveyed the main message, preferably at the end of the text.
- Arrange the statement in a logical order.
- Use well-known words that sound familiar. Avoid exaggeration.
- Choose words with specific meanings instead of vague terms.
- Choose shorter and simpler words.
- Avoid legal jargon, technical, specialized vocabulary. If you use one or two difficult terms, explain them. Remember: not everyone is an expert like you.
Try to write in your own words, for example, start from why you contact them.
Use headings that organize the structure of the text and allow the recipient to quickly navigate relevant sections.
Write in short, to the point sentences - up to 15-20 words.
Use natural word order. In Polish it is a noun and then a verb. Avoid inclusions.
Make sure that there are more verbs than nouns in the text. Verbs bring the message to life, give direction to the action, and show who's behind it.

Questions to answer during this step:
- What will be the communication strategy for before, during, and after the process?
- Which channels will you use to inform the public?
- How will you ensure that citizens who are not directly involved in the process are informed about what happens?

Accommodating people with special needs
Everyone should have equal opportunities to take part in citizen participation activities and to decide on investments that affect their environment and their lives. It is even more so the case when it comes to transport infrastructure projects – individuals with disabilities are future users of the project's products, and their voice is invaluable. When it comes to ensuring new transport infrastructure is inclusive and accessible, citizen participation processes should take into consideration any special needs and ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to exercise their right to participate in comfort. This includes people using assistive mobility devices (such as wheelchairs, canes, and walkers), individuals with visual and hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities or other disabilities that reduce their physical and/or sensory fitness.

Ensuring access to information
When communicating information about investment plans and participation opportunities, it is important to use a variety of media and communication channels, including those adapted to different types of disability, for example:
- placing materials sufficiently low, at a height adapted to the capabilities of people in wheelchairs;
- website design should be in accordance with accessibility standards;
- providing a sign language interpreter at meetings and hearing aids or additional information on the screen, accompanying the voice message;
- conducting information meetings in easily accessible places or using places without access barriers.

Ensuring physical access to participation activities
The place for information meetings should enable a person with a disability to reach it independently. Using an assistant is a choice, not an obligation. Consider the following aspects: easy access to adequate parking, access from parking to the entrance and through the entrance with assisted mobility devices, ramps/lift available, information in the building adapted for the use of individuals with various disabilities, availability of appropriate equipment during any meetings – such as an induction loop for the hearing impaired, and other.

**Questions to answer during this step:**
- How will people with special needs be accommodated?

**Digital tools**

The use of digital tools for citizen and stakeholder participation is a widespread practice at all levels of government around the world. It is normal for public authorities and investors to be prone to reach out to the public using digital tools, as it might seem more accessible, easy to put in place, allowing for an instantaneous and massive participation etc. However, before using digital tools for participatory processes, public authorities have to take into account some considerations:

- **Keep in mind the existing “digital divides”** (i.e. the fact that societies can be divided into people who do and people who do not have access to - and the capability to use - digital technologies) and avoid the emergence of new forms of “digital exclusion” (i.e. not being able to take advantage of digital services and opportunities). For example, men, urban residents and young people are more likely to be online than women, rural populations and older persons (International Telecommunication Union, 2021). It is important to always propose a non-digital alternative to ensure the inclusion of digitally excluded populations. Participatory processes, as well as public services, should aim at equality of access and participation. Non-digital alternatives can be for example: physical vote, consultations via phone or any other in-person mechanisms (workshops, kiosks, paper mail, etc.).

- **Using digital tools requires resources**: using digital tools does not imply that the costs or the needed resources will be reduced, so public authorities should not think about digital as a saving option. On the contrary, a qualitative use of digital tools, one that ensures inclusion and impactful participation requires technical, human and financial resources. In some cases, investors might want to outsource (meaning contract external resources for a limited period of time) to set up and manage the digital tools and in other cases, they can use internal resources. It is important to avoid overlaps, so it is recommended that investors reach out to colleagues or dedicated offices in their institutions to ensure that a digital platform is not already in place or if a digital tool has been pre-selected by the institution for these types of uses.

- **The technological choice**: As it has become evident in the latest electoral campaigns, technology such as algorithms and social media, can have a direct impact on the democratic

**Questions to answer during this step:**
- Will online platforms and digital tools be used?
- What tools will you use?
- How will you ensure that everyone has access to those tools?
process and the outcomes of a citizen participation process. Investors should think twice before selecting a digital tool, this means ensuring that the technology selected is transparent and accountable. These guidelines do not support any digital tool in particular, but evidence shows that open source software is best suited for democratic processes because it allows for scrutiny and accountability. In Part 4, we provide concrete examples of digital tools that public authorities can use in their participatory process.

Step 7: Keeping your promise
Getting back to participants and the broader public about the results of the citizen participation process is an essential step. It is also one that is often neglected. Without proper acknowledgement of the hard work and inputs from citizens and stakeholders, participants might get a wrong message that their input was not important or will not be taken into account, discouraging them from participation in similar activities in the future. Citizens should also know which of their suggestions will be taken into account and how, and why some of them might not be used. This increases transparency and accountability of the participation process.

Closing the feedback loop

- After the participation process, get back to participants as well as the broader public with the acknowledgement of their inputs, recommendations, or help implementing your project.
- Explain, how exactly their contributions will feed into the bigger picture of your project, and when can they expect any concrete results.
- If some of the proposals cannot be taken into account, it is important to be transparent about what are the reasons why they were not taken into account. This demonstrates respect to participants’ and reduces ambiguity or potential misunderstandings.
- Thank participants for their time and effort and keep them updated on the progress of the project to ensure they feel valued and appreciated.

By not properly closing the feedback loop organisers risk discouraging people from participating another time and potentially diminishing the benefits of participation, such as the increased sense of trust, efficacy, and agency.

Example

Marrickville Infrastructure Jury (2014), Australia

Marrickville Council has commissioned a Citizens’ Jury to help address the challenging problem of renewing a portfolio of aging physical infrastructure – such as roads, parks, pavements, stormwater drains. 30 randomly selected citizens met for five days to discuss various trade-offs and options and agree on local priorities for public infrastructure. They produced 10 recommendations. The council then publicly responded to those recommendations by publishing a detailed report. They committed to implement some of the recommendations. The council has also sent individual emails to the 30 participants thanking them for their work and sharing the report. To make sure that citizens’ recommendations were implemented well, the council has reconvened the group sometime after the Jury was over to ask them to consider changes the council is proposing according to citizen recommendations.

Taking into account the results of the participation process

- Results should be taken into account based on the remit and the task that was initially set for the participants of a participatory process.
- Results should be given careful and respectful consideration, and used as set out in the beginning – with clear justifications and arguments if certain results are not used or implemented.
- There is no obligation to implement all of the recommendations, ideas, or proposals that came out of the participatory process, nor an obligation to use all of the data gathered – as long as such choice is justified.
- It might not possible to communicate to participants right away how their input or recommendations were taken into account. Instead, let them know the potential timeframe and provide regular updates on the status of the outputs of their efforts.

Questions to answer during this step:

- Who will respond to the participants’ inputs and recommendations? What form will this take?
- How will you recognise and celebrate the hard work of the participants?
- How will you communicate the response to the recommendations? And when?

Step 8: Evaluating the participatory process

Why evaluate?

- Evaluation allows to measure and demonstrate the quality and neutrality of a participation process to the broader public. This can increase trust and legitimacy in the use of participation processes for public decision making and implementing projects.
- Evaluation creates an opportunity for learning by providing evidence and lessons for investors, public authorities and practitioners about what went well, and what did not. It gives a basis for the iteration and improvement of the design and implementation of a participation process (OECD Evaluation Guidelines for Representative Deliberative Processes, forthcoming in 2021).

How to evaluate?

Tina Nabatchi (2012) suggests that evaluation of citizen participation are most often evaluating the process or the impact of a participation activity:

Process evaluations can help managers better understand and improve the implementation and management of a citizen participation program/process.

Impact evaluations can help managers determine whether the citizen participation program/process reached its intended audience and produced its intended effects.

Evaluation should be planned for from the very start of designing a participation process. Depending on the method of participation and scale of the participation process, different types of evaluation
can be chosen. For a short, small scale process, such as a public consultation, a participant questionnaire administered by the organisers would be an appropriate evaluation. Whereas for participatory budgeting or representative deliberative processes it is recommended to commission independent evaluation. In principle, the evaluation should be carried out by people who are not involved in the participatory process, and thus able to objectively indicate what went according to the plan and what did not work. Although the initiators of the participatory process should also reflect on the activities carried out.

Well conducted evaluations can shed light on questions such as:

- What are the main lessons from implementing a participation process?
- Did the participation process go as planned and intended?
- Did it meet its goals?
- What worked what did not?

The results of evaluation should have a real impact on the design of the participation processes in future investments.

To design a participant questionnaire, guide self-reflections of the organisers or commission an independent evaluation, it is central to keep in mind the principles for quality participation, which can serve as a benchmark. Part 3 of this document outlines these principles. Further resources on evaluation can be found in part 4 of the guidelines.

Questions to answer during this step:

- How are you going to evaluate the participation process?
- What methods will be used?
- When will it happen?
- What criteria will you be using for evaluation?
PART 3 | ENSURING QUALITY OF PARTICIPATION

Various methods of citizen participation outlined in these guidelines rely on different principles of good practice to ensure their quality. Even though methods have their own specificities, there are general principles to keep in mind when implementing citizen participation activities.

1) Purpose

The objective of a citizen participation process should be outlined as a clear task and is linked to a defined task or public challenge. Relevant stakeholders are involved in setting the objective. It is phrased neutrally as a question in plain language. It aims for a genuine outcome – answering a policy or research question.

2) Accountability

There should be influence on investment, public or research decisions. There should be public commitment to responding to or acting on participants’ recommendations, following up on the use of their inputs (such as data) in a timely manner.

3) Transparency

The participation process should be announced publicly before it begins. There should be full transparency on any applicable decision-making process which will follow the participation process. The process design and all materials, as well as relevant data collected, should be available to the public in a timely manner. The funding source should be disclosed. The response to the recommendations or other outputs of the participation process and the evaluation after the process should be publicised and have a public communication strategy.

4) Inclusiveness and accessibility

The public must have good access to participatory processes. This means that the methods chosen must be appropriate for the intended audience, efforts are made to reduce barriers to participation and to consider how to involve underrepresented groups. Participation can also be encouraged and supported through remuneration, expenses, and/or providing or paying for childcare and eldercare.

5) Integrity

The process must have an honest intention. Depending on the scale of the process, there can be oversight by an advisory or monitoring board, and the participation process can be run by an arms’ length co-ordinating team different from the commissioning authority.

6) Privacy

There should be respect for participants’ privacy. Data published should have consent of participants. All personal data of participants should be treated in compliance with international good practices, such as the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and taking into account legal and ethical issues surrounding data sharing, copyright, intellectual property.

7) Information

Participants should have access to a wide range of accurate, relevant, and accessible evidence and expertise. Participation processes are designed to give citizens full and clear knowledge a specific issue.
These principles have been developed based on the analysis of good practice principles for each method (for which such principles were available), linked below.

- Good practice principles for representative deliberative processes
- Good practice principles for citizen science projects
- Good practice principles for public consultations
- Good practice principles for participatory budgeting
PART 4 | USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

Online tools useful for citizen participation

As explained in Part 2, the use of digital tools for participatory processes is becoming the new normal for many public authorities and investors. The list of existing digital solutions is very extensive and would be impossible to map all the possibilities in these guidelines. Public authorities can also decide to develop and design their own platform to be adapted to their specific needs.

The table below presents a list of digital tools that can be used in the context of the methodologies presented in these guidelines. All the tools listed are open source, which means that you can see, replicate and collaborate to the code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Citizen Science</th>
<th>Representative deliberative process</th>
<th>Public consultation</th>
<th>Participatory budget</th>
<th>Open meeting</th>
<th>Crowdsourcing</th>
<th>Civic monitoring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Priorities</td>
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<td>All Our Ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>HackMD / FramaPad</td>
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<tr>
<td>CitizenLab</td>
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Resources on using digital tools for participation:

- **The e-Participation canvas** (Citizenlab): A short e-book providing a framework for internal use for the development of a digital citizens’ participation platform.
- **Digital Democracy: The Tools Transforming Political Engagement** (NESTA; 2017): Published for Nesta research, this paper shares lessons from different experiences of digital democracy put forth by different European governments.
- **Designing Online Public Deliberation** (newDemocracy & Democratic Society; 2020): This paper explains how to build tools for online deliberation that do not simply mirror offline deliberation, but that are better adapted for the digital space.
- **Digital Tools for Citizens’ Assemblies** (mySociety; 2019): This paper explores how digital tools can be used to enhance in-person CAs.

Databases of various examples of citizen participation

- **OECD database of representative deliberative processes**
- **Participedia**
• LATINNO database
• People Powered Hub
• Gov Lab CrowdLaw Catalog

Handbooks & further readings on citizen and stakeholder participation

Handbooks and practical resources

• How To Design And Plan Public Engagement Processes: A Handbook
• How to run a civic lottery
• The International Open Data Charter
• The Open Contracting Partnership’s Guide on Open Contracting
• The Open Data Handbook
• 21st Century Town Meeting
• Guide to Public Participation
• Citizen’s Guide to Monitoring Government Expenditures
• Open Policy Making Toolkit
• The Open Policy Making Playbook
• Action Catalogue
• SCivil Guides and manuals
• EU-Citizen.Science
• Citizen science for all
• Digital Tools for Citizen Science
• 72 Frequently Asked Questions about Participatory Budgeting
• Participatory Budgeting Toolkit
• Participatory Budgeting in Schools: A Toolkit for Youth Democratic Action
• OECD Trello board
• Handbook on Democracy Beyond Elections
• Digital Democracy: The Tools Transforming Political Engagement
• Guidelines on Stakeholder Consultation
• Background Document on Public Consultation
• The FAQs of Digital Consulting
• 6 Methods for Online Consultation
• Consultation Principles
• Participatory Budgeting (PB) Blueprint Guidebook
• How Cities can use Participatory Budgeting to address Climate Change
• How to Start a Climate Assembly
• How to run a Citizen’s Assembly

Civicus factsheets

• Fact-sheet on Public Forums
• Fact-sheet on Town Hall Meetings
• Fact-sheet on Social Audits
• Fact-sheet on Community Based Monitoring System
• Fact-sheet on Public Expenditure Tracking
• Fact-sheet on Community Monitoring and Evaluation
• Fact-sheet on Citizen Report Cards

Briefs
• Crowd Law Guide
• The Power of Hackathons: a roadmap for sustainable open innovation

Good practice principles
• Good practice principles for representative deliberative processes
• Good practice principles for citizen science projects
• Good practice principles for public consultations
• Good practice principles for participatory budgeting

Academic materials
• Journal of Deliberative Democracy
• Proactive Transparency: The future of the right to information?
• The Participatory Budgeting World Atlas
• Another city is possible with participatory budgeting
• Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave (2020).
• Citizens as Partners: OECD Handbook on Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-Making
• Bringing public judgement to democracy: Eight models of representative public deliberation implemented across OECD Member countries (forthcoming)
• Evaluation Guidelines for representative deliberative processes (forthcoming)

Blogs and podcasts
• Participo
• A Framework of Open Practices
• The Living Library – Gov Lab
• 21st-Century Public Servants: Using Prizes and Challenges to Spur Innovation
ANNEX A
Survey on citizen participation in programming and planning of transport infrastructure projects in Poland

CEUTP used various research methods, such as desk research, surveys and an experts’ panel, to analyse the current state of citizen participation in programming and planning transport infrastructure projects in Poland.

Analysis of the various available studies revealed the lack of tailored guidance on citizen participation for linear transport projects. Taking into account the importance of such projects, their share in the budget of public funds, including EU funds, their impact on the lives of the residents as well as the functioning of many companies and other sectors, it is key to further develop citizen participation in this area.

Surveys

CEUTP has conducted two surveys to gain more insight into the status quo of citizen participation in the planning and designing transport infrastructure investments and public awareness of the opportunities to participate. The results of the surveys supported the analysis of the current state and the possibilities for strengthening citizen participation in the preparation and implementation of transport projects as well as the development of good practices in this area.

The surveys aimed to reach two groups: one was aimed at the general public, the other at investors - beneficiaries of EU funds in the transport sector.

The objective of the survey among general public was to collect information on the needs of citizens in the context of participation in the planning and design process of major transport infrastructure projects by:

- identifying how much they know about the possibility to participate in making decisions regarding transport solutions;
- experiences of citizens linked to participation;
- identifying the value that the public sees in participation in designing transport infrastructure solutions.

The objective of the survey among investors was to gather information on investors' views on involving citizens in the planning and design of major transport infrastructure projects by:

- identifying how much they know about the possibility to involve citizens making decisions regarding transport solutions;
- experiences of investors linked to citizen participation;
- identifying the value that investors see in involving citizens in designing transport infrastructure solutions.

Recruitment of respondents

In order to engage a wide range of citizens and stakeholders, the questionnaire was distributed through many channels (including the CEUTP social media, the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy and the Ministry of Infrastructure). Invitation to selected non-governmental
organizations was also sent. Additionally, the CEUTP commissioned an external company to recruit respondents for the citizens’ survey.

**Insights from the citizens’ survey**

In total, 833 questionnaires were qualified for further analysis.

**Main conclusions from the citizens’ survey:**

- The most active amongst the respondents (37%) were between 36 and 50 years old and, the majority of which were women. The least active group (9%) were people aged 16-25 years old.
- The most active respondents in terms of location were residents of cities with more than 250,000 inhabitants (28%) and residents of rural areas (28%).
- Three professional groups dominate among respondents: 33% are office workers and working outside of their home, while 20% are retirees and pensioners, and 13% are people working from home (including office workers partially or fully working in the form of teleworking).

**Selected questions and answers:**

- **Are you informed about planned infrastructural transport investments in your commune/county/city?**
  
  46.5% Yes, and there is sufficient information about it
  43.6% No
  10% Yes, but there is not enough information about it

  Respondents emphasized that they have to source information proactively. They also highlighted that there is a lack of a single source where they could find all information about planned infrastructural transport investment. In addition, there is not enough information about projects in their early planning stages – it becomes available only during their implementation. At the same time, 89% of respondents would like to be informed about planned infrastructural transport investments carried out in their place of residence. Only 11% do not want to be informed.

- **How did you take part in the public consultations?**
  
  70% I attended a consultation meeting
  45% I sent comments on documents that were shared online
  11% I visited the investor’s office and analysed the documents on site
  8% Another way

  Face-to-face consultation meetings are most prominent amongst inhabitants of rural areas, while providing comments in an electronic format - amongst city residents. This might indicate the preferences of these two groups that should be taken into account in the consultation process.

- **How do you hear about public consultations? (multiple choice question)**
  
  78% Internet/social media
  40% Local government’s website
  21% Received information at my place of residence
It is worth noting that for citizens, government websites are not the main source of information where they find out about participation opportunities. Previously very popular information channels, such as radio, television or the press, reached only a small percentage compared to other channels (only slightly more than 11%).

- **What information/documents are most relevant to you when you participate in public consultations on transport projects? (multiple choice question)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Information/Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Detailed project description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81%</td>
<td>Maps with the location of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Costs and benefits associated with the project implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Environmental impact assessment of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td>Project needs assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Information on sources of project financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Budget of the project</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This demonstrates the breakdown of the kind of information residents would like to receive when participating in public consultations about transport infrastructure projects.

Respondents were also asked to rate the public consultations they have taken part in. The majority of the respondents thought they were good or average. Public consultations were rated on a scale from 1 - very bad, 2 - bad, 3 - average, 4 - good, 5 - very good. The average of all answers was: 3.17.

- **Have you received feedback on the results of the consultations in which you participated and answers to your comments or suggestions?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Feedback Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td>No, I have not received any feedback from any consultations I took part in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Yes, for some, but not all of the consultations I took part in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Yes, for all the consultations I took part in</td>
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A disturbing result of the study is the fact that 47% of respondents declared that they did not receive any feedback from any consultations in which they participated. 29% received it, but not from all consultations. Only 24% received information about the results of all consultations in which they participated, and it should be noted that this group is dominated by people who participated in one or two consultations.

**Insights from the investors’ survey**

A total of 144 people (representatives and employees of investors) took part in the survey. Overall, 119 questionnaires were complete and qualified for further analysis.

**Main conclusions from the survey:**

- Most of the respondents (50.47%) were investors (institutions and companies) located in large cities with over 250,000 inhabitants, and 23.36% of respondents were from cities with 100,000 to 250,000 inhabitants. 26.17% of respondents were from small towns are only 2.80% - from investors operating in the countryside.
• Among respondents working in institutions/companies that carry out national level investments, the majority specialize in road transport (33%), followed by public transport (30.71%), rail transport (13%), inland waterway 5.71%, intermodal – 5.00%, and maritime transport – 4.29%.

• The vast majority of respondents providing answers came from public administration institutions - local government (45.63%) and national governmental administration (29.13%). Some of the respondents were also a state treasury company, a commercial company, public transport operators, and a municipally owned company.

Selected questions and answers

• In your opinion, should the public be informed about the planned transport investments?
  100% Yes
  0% No

• Do you think that the public should be able to influence the shape of a transport investment projects?
  74% Yes
  8% No
  18% I don’t know

The most frequently repeated responses indicate that projects are to serve people/residents, and that their design should be effective.

• In your opinion, what is the purpose of public participation in planning transport investments?
  71% Real impact on a given investment – public involvement in the decision-making process
  18% Fulfilment of the legal obligations
  8% Other purpose
  3% I don’t know

Other proposed purposes for participation included collecting information about the needs of the society in order to properly formulate the goals and solutions of the planned investment.

• In your opinion, at what stage of preparation or implementation of a transport investment, public participation is the most important?
  86% - At the initial planning stage before the administrative process begins
  12% - At the stage of the decision on environmental conditions
  2% - At the stage of the building permit

The majority of respondents are aware that the best moment to conduct consultation participation process is at the earliest possible stage.

Experts’ Panel
In order to properly interpret the survey results and to understand the views of public administration, stakeholders and organizations representing various social groups, CEUTP organized a panel of experts.
The invited experts represented: ministries of key importance for the development of transport (the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy), investors (PKP Polish Railway Lines JSC, General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways), NGOs (Foundation Without Barriers, Fenomen Foundation, Think Tank City) and scientists (Warsaw School of Economics, Warsaw University of the Live Sciences).

In order to learn more about the opinions of citizens, questions were asked before the panel via social media and the CEUTP website to be an additional source of topics for discussions with the experts.

Experts’ Panel was focused on main assumptions and conclusions of the survey and sharing experiences and practices.

- Experts found the conclusions of the survey appropriate and consistent with their experience.
- Experts stressed that the public consultation process is difficult and a balance is needed between public expectations and investors’ capacities. This includes investments financed by cohesion policy as well as by other financial sources (public and private).
- How to prepare for a public consultation? This element was considered by the experts to be crucial for the success of any consultation.
- It is essential to define at the beginning what our objective is - why we are consulting, what we want to achieve and what the possible framework is (to what extent and at what level of detail comments/proposals for changes can be made).
- Experts stressed the importance of providing feedback to participants on how their recommendations and suggestions will be taken into account in order to show respect to the time that participants put into them and encourage their further participation. Important elements to cover:
  - How to formulate questions to citizens when setting up a participation process?
  - How to provide feedback on their input?
  - How to remove unnecessary barriers to participation?
- How to choose who to recruit for a participation process and what are the ways to do it?

Experts also had the opportunity to refer to the recommendations proposed in the Guidelines.
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