



Participation & Sustainable Development in Europe

CITIZEN ASSEMBLY FOR THE CLIMATE (ASSEMBLEA CIUTADANA PEL CLIMA)

Date: April/2024

Country + Region

Spain - Barcelona

Date (Start - End)

July 2022 - February 2023

Short Description

The Assembly is a new instrument of participation, based on citizen deliberation, which helps to create a narrative legitimacy to promote and legitimize transformative projects to address the climate emergency. It allows you to delve deeper into the reasons and arguments for and against transformative projects that are necessary to deal with climate change in the city.

Background, Cause

The Citizen Assembly is born from:

- The need to include everyone in dealing with the climate emergency, each one from their area of responsibility, and specifically involve the public in dealing with the climate emergency.
- By incorporating people/voices with whom we normally do not have the opportunity to do so (entities/organizations and some regular citizens usually come to participatory processes).
- Find out what citizens need from the City Council to be able to carry out the necessary actions/changes to deal with the climate emergency.
- Interest in climate justice and issues where science has no answers and citizen involvement is needed, focused on identifying barriers and how to overcome them.

The participants of the assembly were citizens chosen by lottery from the municipal register of inhabitants with representative criteria (gender, age, origin, district) of the citizens of Barcelona.

Likewise, academics, sector experts and municipal professionals have also participated who selflessly train the participants according to the selected topics and advise and resolve doubts of the Follow-up Commission; although they were not properly part of the Assembly.

Goal(s)/Objective(s)

The main objective of the Citizens' Assembly for the Climate is to draw up informed citizen recommendations for addressing the climate crisis in public policies and how we do it so as not to generate inequalities.

The areas of work that the participants chose were:

- Mobility
- Energy
- Consumption and waste

Process and Flow

The activity of the Assembly is structured as follows:

Phase 1: SELECTION, INFORMATION AND DRAWS	Phase 2: DEBATING THE AGENDA	Phase 3: THEMATIC DEBATES	Phase 4: EXPOSITION OF PROPOSALS AND FEEDBACK
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stratifying the population according to criteriaCall for participation (Letter from the Mayor): 20,000 potential participants (30 June)Consulting expertsSelecting participants (200 people: 100 members + 100 possible substitutes)Call for the selected people (end of July)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1st and 2nd session (17 September, morning and afternoon). Introduction how the sessions work, what climate change is, how it affects us, what we can do, jurisdictions, IT tools, start of the debate on subjects to be dealt with in subsequent sessionsLunch will be offered to those attending3rd session (30 September): Selection of subjects to be dealt with in subsequent sessionsSearch for experts according to subjects and planning of remaining sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Exploring the three chosen subjects with experts and making proposals <p>4th session (21 October) 5th session (22 October) 6th session (4 November) 7th session (5 November) 8th session (18 November) 9th session (19 November)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Technical work preparing proposalsOne additional session may be added according to the needs of the assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">10th session. finalising proposals (16 December, afternoon)Preparing technical and political responses to the Assembly's proposals11th session (19 January). Delivering the Assembly's recommendations to the Mayor and political parties (Saló de Cent event)Municipal feedback session (to be determined)
April - July	September	October - November	December - January

During the process, the participation platform Decidim.barcelona was used and all sessions were recorded and documented in video, graphically and with minutes.

The Assembly has taken various measures to facilitate inclusion and participation: babysitting service for children, simultaneous translation service, etc. The sessions took place on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning to try not to coincide with the working day of the participants. In addition, the participants have received financial compensation for their participation at the Assembly sessions.

Results of the participation process

In the closing process, on January 19, 2023, the proposals arising from the work of the Assembly were delivered to the Mayor and the municipal groups.

The proposal document can be consulted here:

[Catalan]: <http://hdl.handle.net/11703/128362>

[Spanish]: <http://hdl.handle.net/11703/128363>

[English]: <https://bcnroc.ajuntament.barcelona.cat/jspui/handle/11703/129347>

Final report: A final report has been drawn up and presented to the participation spaces and municipal authorities that are considered and which has been published on the municipal website and on the Decidim.barcelona platform. This document can be consulted here:

[Catalan]: <http://hdl.handle.net/11703/134307>

[Spanish]: <http://hdl.handle.net/11703/134308>

Why it made sense to work with participation

The main result is that citizen proposals with a high value and impact on public policies will be implemented to tackle climate change. Thanks to the composition of the assembly, these actions and projects could be assessed by people with a highly diverse range of sensitivities, in a process which identified which measures were more socially attainable.

100 people were chosen to guarantee a representative cross-section of Barcelona society in terms of gender diversity, age, district, place of birth and level studies.

Experience to share / Lessons learned

From the experience of the organization, some elements can be taken into account for future editions:

- The planning of a process of these characteristics requires deadlines. It is desirable to start planning the execution of an assembly at least 1 year in advance.

- The required management tasks are diverse and require different work at different speeds. It is recommended to have a large team and have an exclusive technical secretariat to manage payments, monitor attendance, etc. Also, it is necessary to anticipate the recruitments in time and count on the involvement of the facilitator team and the technical team of decidim.barcelona from the beginning.
- It is an intensive process that requires a high degree of dedication. Resources need to be managed efficiently and not everyone needs to be at every meeting. However, it is a transversal project that will gain in effectiveness if the municipal sectoral reference areas or people are involved in the coordination meetings.
- The areas to be dealt with, the methodology and the participatory dynamics are the most important elements of the process and must be defined and agreed upon at the beginning.
- The physical space where the Assembly takes place is very important, to have a space with independent rooms and, if possible, that allows the location of an isolated booth for translation.
- The interventions of the experts and witnesses are very sensitive. So, it is necessary to have a database of people to choose the most suitable ones and to make the guidelines that they have to give to the public very clear.
- The appeal to citizens must be as specific as possible, with a single dilemma or challenge that motivates and mobilizes them to participate.
- It is important to maintain the representativeness of the Assembly and that the participants intervene in all the debates. This circumstance means that one must be counted on extensive time for debates (no less than 10 hours per group and with the support of experts in the field) and by sponging up the sessions enough so that the assembly members can rest the debates.
- The performance of accounts of the result of the assembly is momentous. It can be very interesting to make it clear how the proposals will be monitored and how the execution of the proposals can be reported from the start
- An aspect to review is the relationship between confidentiality and dissemination. The assistance of the press, especially the specialized press, can be useful for dealing in a didactic way with the topics that appear throughout the debates.

Applied Method

x	Method	Method	x
x	Agenda Konferenz / agenda conference	Kooperativer Diskurs/ Cooperative discourse	
	Aktivierende Befragung / activating interview	Laddering	
	Anwaltsplanung / advocacy planning	Mediation / mediation	
	Appreciative Inquiry / appreciative inquiry	Neo-Sokratischer Dialog / Neo-Socratic dialog	
	Bürger_innenbudget / participatory budget	Online Konsultation / online consultation	x
x	Bürger:innenrat / Citizens Assembly	Open Space Konferenz / open space conference	x
	Bürger:innenrat / wisdom council	Planning for Real	
	Bürger:innenversammlung / citizens' panel	Planspiel / experimental game	
	Collective Story Harvest	Planungszelle / „design cell“	
x	Community Organizing / Community Organizing	Pro Action Café	
	Community of Practice	Projektschmiede / Design for Wiser Action	
	Delphi-Befragung / delphi method	Runder Tisch / round table	x
	Design Thinking	Soziokratie / Sociocracy	
	Dialog / stakeholder dialogue	Strategic environmental assessment at the round table	
	Dragon Dreaming / Dragon Dreaming	Syst. Konsensieren / Systemic consensus building	
	Dyade / dyad interviews	THANCS	
	Dynamic Facilitation / Dynamic Facilitation	Workshop	

	Ephesos-Modell / Ephesos method	World Café	
	Fish Bowl / fish bowl	Zukunftskonferenz / Future Conference	
	Fokusgruppe / focus group	Zukunftswerkstatt / „Future Workshop“	
	GfK / nonviolent communication		
	Holacracy / Holacrcy		
x	Konsensus-Konferenz / consensus conference	other:.....	

Topic & Application

x	Topic	Topic	x
x	climate protection / climate crisis	Water resources management	
x	Energy(transition)	Natural hazards	
x	Construction & Buildings	Socio-space analysis	
x	Mobility	Social movements	
x	(Local) Agenda 21	Child and youth participation	
	Cooperative housing and living concepts	Technology Assessment	
x	Spatial planning	Nuclear Coordination	
x	Circular economy	other:	

Principal / contracting authority

Barcelona City Council - Climate Change and Sustainability Office (former Urban Ecology)
Barcelona City Council - Participation Department of the Urban Ecology Management (former Urban Ecology)

Process support and consulting

It has been contracted to the Raons cooperative for the dynamization of participation through the Framework Agreement for the contracting of services to dynamize citizen participation from Barcelona City Council.

Costs and financing

The cost of the participation process has been fully borne by Barcelona City Council. Approximately €150,000 were allocated for the assembly, a significant investment reflecting the importance and scope of the event.

The revitalization of the participatory process has had an approximate cost of €40,000 and the cost of financial compensation to the participants has been approximately €25,000 (participants of the assembly were compensated with approximately €9 to €10 per hour, recognising the value of their time and contributions).

Key expenses within the budget included costs for external facilitation, the assembly's physical location, infrastructure, catering, and video streaming services, which were essential for ensuring that the assembly's proceedings were accessible and transparent to the public. The comprehensive budget was essential to support the assembly's objectives and ensure that it operated effectively in addressing the pressing issues of climate change and sustainability in Barcelona.

The costs related to civil servants were not included in this budget, as internal resources were allocated to various projects simultaneously, making it challenging to attribute specific costs solely to the assembly.

Publications, links, resources

Link to assembly website (Spanish): <https://www.decidim.barcelona/processes/AssembleaClima>

Link to initial video (subtitles in English): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGL9sWCvIBA&t>

Link to final video (subtitles in English): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N5b0Do5qB8&t>

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Details of the person providing this case study

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