



Climate Citizens' Assembly of Copenhagen

Date: May/2024

Country + Region

Denmark, Copenhagen

Date (Start - End)

8. November 2023 - March 2026

Short Description

The Climate Assembly of Copenhagen is a three-year (semi-permanent) citizens assembly tasked with giving recommendations to the next climate plan for the municipality of Copenhagen. During the next three years, three rounds of assemblies will be held, each one delivering recommendations to the municipality and working upon the recommendations of the previous assemblies.

Background, Cause

What does a good Copenhagen life look like with far fewer greenhouse gas emissions from the consumption of food, housing and transportation, and how can we best get there together? This was the main question, the Climate Citizens' Assembly was tasked with answering.

The Climate Citizens' Assembly is one of the first steps in the City of Copenhagen's Climate Plan 2035, which will be completed in 2026. The recommendations of the Climate Assembly must therefore be ready in advance, so that politicians can be advised by citizens' work to create climate policy that better relates to citizens' wishes and priorities in the area. Citizens will work together through a process of listening to experts in the field and each other to answer questions about what to do first to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and how to ensure that as many citizens as possible actively support the green transition process.

Goal(s)/Objective(s)

We Do Democracy facilitates the three years of the Climate Citizens' Assembly with three different processes until 2026, where members gather to discuss key climate issues. The Climate Citizens' Assembly will annually submit preliminary recommendations to the City Council of Copenhagen until 2026, when the final recommendations will be ready. The Climate Citizens' Assembly is one of several initiatives in the City of Copenhagen's Climate Plan 2035.

The process should:

- Deliver recommendations for the Copenhagen Climate Plan 2035 that reflect the attitude of citizens in Copenhagen on key dilemmas related to the green transition of consumption.
- Deliver recommendations for how to implement the Copenhagen Climate Plan 2035 that reflect the attitude of citizens in Copenhagen on key dilemmas related to the green transition of consumption.
- Deliver experience and process knowledge on the pros and cons of making deliberation semi-permanent.

Process and Flow

The Climate Citizens' Assembly is a deliberative citizens assembly that met over 6 meetings (including one open meeting) during the winter 2023/2024. Deliberation consists of time to gain knowledge and grow confidence, deliberate with other participants, listen to outside perspectives from stakeholders and other citizens, develop and deliberate on recommendations that are finally voted for among the participants. Participants in the assembly are selected through sortition. 50.000 citizens were invited by official e-letter from the municipality and 3.2 % signed up to

participate. The 36 selected members were selected by sortition on basis of representing the citizens of Copenhagen by age, gender, educational background and income. Attitude towards climate action and geographical distribution was also taken into account in the composition of the assembly.

The assignment of the assembly is given through the key question and the influence is determined by the mandate. Both are determined politically by the City Council.

The task for the first year Climate Citizens' Assembly is: "What does the good life in Copenhagen look like with a much lower emission of greenhouse gases from the consumption of e.g. food, housing and transportation, and how we can best get there together?"

- How do we get started as soon as possible to achieve the biggest reductions?
- How do we ensure that as many Copenhageners as possible actively contribute to and support the effort?

The mandate of the Climate Citizens' Assembly describes the commitment of the politicians to the Climate Assembly. This was:

- The Climate Citizens' Assembly is tasked with advising the City Council and, in the first session, preparing recommendations that answer the questions that the politicians have given.
- The City Council gives the Climate Citizens' Assembly a mandate to draw up unbiased and independent recommendations within the framework of the core task of the Climate Citizen's Assembly.
- All members of the Climate Citizens' Assembly will have the opportunity to make minority statements.
- The task of the Climate Citizens' Assembly is to advise and make recommendations - not to design or decide.
- The City Council undertakes to receive and process the recommendations in connection with Climate Plan 2035, as well as to receive and process an evaluation of the process and the administration's proposals for further work with recommendations and core issues.
- The Climate Citizens' Assembly will be presented with the decisions made by politicians on what to proceed with and what not to proceed with, no later than two years after the handover of the recommendations.
- The City Council is not obliged to politically follow or adopt all recommendations.
- The Climate Citizen's Assembly is one of several tracks that will contribute to Climate Plan KBH 2035.

In the next two years, the assembly will work on new questions while building on the work of the previous assembly and following the implementation of the first recommendations.

Results of the participation process

The assembly agreed on 12 recommendations with specific initiatives within each recommendation. The 12 recommendations are:

Theme: System change and cultural values

#1 Sharing together

#2 Framework and policy for a new growth paradigm

#3 Hopeful communication

Theme: Housing

#4 Living smaller and socially balanced

#5 Sustainable building

Theme: Transport

#6 Car-free neighbourhoods

#7 More cyclists and less congestion

#8 Cheaper and better public transport

#9 Longer national and international train journeys

Theme: Food

#10 Less animal-based food

#11 More local food and less imports

#12 Climate partnerships, regulation and food waste

The full report can be found here (in Danish):

https://klimaborgerting.kk.dk/sites/default/files/2024-03/K%C3%B8benhavnerne%20Klimaborgerting%202024%20anbefalinger_Reduceret%20.pdf

The recommendations are now being treated by the City Council and the project team of the Climate Assembly are working on evaluating and improving the process.

Why it made sense to work with participation

Really changing the way our cities work to allow for and encourage more sustainable ways of living requires not just buy-in from citizens, but active participation and changing values, habits and consumption patterns. This is not just complex, but also politically sensitive. Therefore, everyday experts are needed to inform the entire process.

The municipality of Copenhagen are in many ways working actively with new forms of participation, and this is the first time the municipality works with semi-permanent deliberation.

Experience to share / Lessons learned

The first year just ended and we can only say a few things at this point:

- The remit was too broad for only 6 meetings (incl. a open-meeting for the rest of the city)
- There was a youth panel connected to the process, which had a good impact on the Citizen Assembly
- It was a wish from the citizens to know the impact of their suggestions and recommendations. Both the municipality and the expert group found this difficult to fulfil. This would have been helpful to have in the process, and we are working on how we can incorporate it in the next phase and how the effect can be measured in other ways than economy and CO2 emissions.

Applied Method

x	Method	Method	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	
	Bürger:innenrat / wisdom council	Planning for Real	
	Bürger:innenversammlung / citizens' panel	Planspiel / experimental game	
	Collective Story Harvest	Planungszelle / „design cell“	
	Community Organizing / Community Organizing	Pro Action Café	
	Community of Practice	Projektschmiede / Design for Wiser Action	
	Delphi-Befragung / delphi method	Runder Tisch / round table	
	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 / Holacracy		
	Konsensus-Konferenz / consensus conference	other:.....	

Topic & Application

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

Principal / contracting authority

Municipality of Copenhagen

Process support and consulting

We Do Democracy

Costs and financing

Process financed by the municipality of Copenhagen

Publications, links, resources

<https://klimaborgerting.kk.dk/> (in Danish)

<https://www.wedodemocracy.com/copenhagens-climate-parliament-citizens-to-give-recommendations-for-a-green-and-sustainable-copenhagen-of-the-future/> (in English)

Details of the person providing this case study

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