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FROM OPEN TO INCLUSIVE: BUILDING CITIZEN-CENTRED POLICY AND SERVICES

**37th Session of the Public Governance Committee
17-18 April 2008, Château de la Muette, Paris**

This document is a preliminary draft of a report on "Open and inclusive policy making" due for publication at the end of 2008. As such it is a work-in-progress, is incomplete and will benefit from delegates' input. Please send comments by email to: joanne.caddy@oecd.org before 16 May 2006.

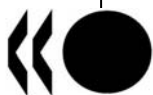
Please refer to Annex 2 for two data tables associated with this report that require updating by delegates (PGC/GOV(2008)8/ANN).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Work in Progress

This document is a preliminary draft of the final report on “Open and inclusive policy making”, one of the four cross-cutting themes of the 2007-8 GOV Programme of Work and Budget due for publication at the end of 2008. It is provided **for the information of members of the Public Governance Committee at their meeting on 17-18 April 2008** and for their comment. This version has benefited from comments made by members of the Steering Group on Open and Inclusive Policy making at their meeting on 13-14 March 2008.

This document represents a first “rough cut” of the final report. As such it is a work-in-progress, is incomplete and is wide open to amendments. The Secretariat has chosen to share this preliminary draft at an early stage in the hope that Public Governance Committee members will find it easier to react, provide suggestions and express their priorities.

What this draft includes

- **Part I - Snapshots:** An outline of the main content expected for each section in Part I. This consists of a description of the main findings based on the comparative data drawn from the questionnaire responses from 23 OECD member countries¹ plus 2 observer countries (Chile and Slovenia). These have been analysed and the most significant results shown as graphs.
- **Part II - Cases:** A first draft of the 12 country case studies submitted to date.
- **Part III - Voices:** A first draft of 12 opinion pieces by leading thinkers and practitioners.
- **Annexes:** a glossary of terms plus two tables dating from 2005 (“Legislation and policy measures for open government” and “Oversight institutions for open government”) to be updated by OECD member countries.

Additional material to be included in the final version

- **Part I - Snapshots:** While this draft version is largely descriptive, the final version will contain:
 - An executive summary highlighting key analytical findings and policy recommendations
 - Reference to the questionnaire responses submitted by over 50 civil society organisations (CSOs) from 12 countries
 - Boxes drawn from data in government questionnaires to offer practical examples
 - Cross-references to the “Cases” and “Voices” sections
 - Results from the International Workshop to be held in Ljubljana (26-27 June 2008)
- **Part II - Cases:** Updated executive summary plus 2 additional case studies.
- **Part III - Voices:** A brief introduction to the section and the authors.

Next steps

- This preliminary draft will be shared as a room document at the 17-18 April 2008 PGC meeting.
- **PGC members are requested to:**
 - a) **review the two tables in the annexes and update their country’s information; and**
 - b) **provide any written comments (preferably in “track changes” mode) by 16 May 2008.**

¹ AUS, AUT, CAN, CZE, FIN, FRA, DEU, HUN, IRL, ITA, JPN, KOR, LUX, NLD, NOR, POL, SVK, ESP, SWE, CHE, TUR, GBR, USA.

- After inclusion of PGC member comments, the draft report will provide the basis for substantive discussions between government and civil society practitioners at the International Workshop on “Building Citizen Centred Policies and Services” of 26-27 June 2008 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. PGC members are, of course, very welcome to take part in these discussions at this event.
- A final version of the report, including the main findings of the International Workshop in Slovenia, will be prepared in summer 2008 for approval by the Steering Group and by the Public Governance Committee for final approval. **The report will be published by the end of 2008, as planned.**

FOREWORD

At the 2005 OECD Ministerial Meeting on Strengthening Trust in Government, held in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, ministers agreed that governments need to do better at engaging with citizens if they are to build trust while designing and delivering better public policy and services. In the words of the Chair, “Strengthening trust of citizens has, quite simply, become a matter of survival for open, democratic government.”²

In response to this ministerial call to action, the OECD’s Public Governance Committee launched a two-year cross-cutting project on “Open and inclusive policy making” in early 2007 which was led by a Steering Group composed of government representatives from 10 OECD member countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Korea, The Netherlands, Norway, Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey, UK) plus Slovenia and the European Commission. The Steering Group launched a survey of OECD member countries to review their legal and institutional frameworks, goals and progress made to date in ensuring open and inclusive policy-making. A set of country case studies highlighting concrete experience in 12 OECD Member countries provided valuable insights to complement the comparative information collected with the survey. An innovative set of original essays from 12 leading thinkers and practitioners drawn from around the world adds further depth and nuance to what is, in essence, an ongoing debate.

This report draws heavily upon the insights gained during regular meetings of the Steering Group. The report was prepared by Joanne Caddy of the OECD Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development. The report is published on the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD.

² Mr. Alexander Pechtold, former Minister for Government Reform of the Netherlands, in “Trust is the key”, *OECD Observer*, No. 252, November 2005. http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/1695/Trust_is_the_key.html

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretariat would like to thank the OECD member and non-member country governments that responded to the questionnaire and so provided essential input to the report. Members of the Steering Group on Open and Inclusive Policy making³ deserve special thanks for their significant contribution in providing guidance, advice and oversight during the project under the chairmanship of Katju Holkeri. Special thanks are due to the over 50 civil society organisations (CSOs)⁴ from 12 countries who took the time to respond to a targeted questionnaire and for sharing so freely their insights, experience and aspirations.

Thanks are also due to Tanja Timmermans, as editor of the country case study section, and to all case study authors: Thomas Bürgi, Hyun Deok Choi, Jon Fixdal, Katju Holkeri, David Hume, Ian Johnson, J. de Jong, Anna Di Mattia, Lee Mizell, Bilal Özden, Igno Pröpper, Laura Sommer and Harm van de Wal.

We are particularly grateful to the many eminent practitioners and thinkers from government, academia, civil society and the private sector who so generously contributed their ‘voices’ to this report, namely: Jocelyne Bourgon, Malcolm Crompton, Matt Dodd, Deirdre Garvey, Juan Pablo Guerrero A., Leda Guidi, Jong-Dae Lim, Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, Arne Simonsen, Edward Andersson and Richard Wilson, Jacques Wallage, Cees van Woerkum and Margit van Wessel.

Finally, a special mention is due to Tanja Timmermans, Otil Fasting-Tharaldsen and Christian Vergez for their part in launching the project, and to Ijeoma Inyama, Kate Lancaster, Catherine Candea and many others for their support in preparing this report.

³ See Annex X for a full list of Steering Group members.

⁴ See Annex X for a full list of civil society organisations responding to the OECD questionnaire.

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PART I: SNAPSHOTS

SECTION 1: WHY INVEST IN OPEN AND INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING?

1. The limits of government action are increasingly visible to the naked eye. Complex policy challenges ranging from the international to the personal level – in such diverse areas as climate change, ageing populations and obesity – cannot be ‘solved’ by government action alone. Tackling them effectively will require the concerted efforts of all actors in society and of individual citizens.

2. Governments everywhere are under pressure to do more with less. All are working hard to deliver effective policies and services at least cost to the public purse; many are trying to leverage resources outside the public sector.

3. Last but not least, governments are seeking to ensure and maintain high levels of public trust. Without high levels of public trust, government actions will be at best, ineffective and at worst, counterproductive.

4. Engaging citizens and civil society through open and inclusive policy making can help address many of these challenges. Governments stand to benefit from wider input when deliberating, deciding and doing.

What is at stake for governments?

5. Governments in most OECD countries are caught between the multiple challenges of weak public trust, strong fiscal constraints and rising citizen expectations that their voices be heard and their views be considered when making policy and delivering public services. All governments face objective limits to their capacity to solve complex policy challenges single-handedly. Few have found ways to address these issues. None have found the ‘magic’ solution.

6. Several driving forces have led governments to focus their attention on improving openness, transparency and participation in policy making and service delivery. These include the steady erosion of voter turnout in elections, falling membership in political parties and surveys showing declining confidence in key public institutions. Of particular concern is the specific case of younger generations who, by shunning traditional channels of participation (e.g. by failing to register for, or vote in, their first eligible election) never develop the ‘habits’ of civic life. These developments have profound implications for our assumptions regarding public perceptions of the relevance and legitimacy of government in the future.

7. Investing in greater openness and inclusion in policy making and service delivery can help achieve:

- **Greater trust in government.** Citizens generally judge democratic governments on the basis of two main measures: their ‘policy performance’ (i.e. ability to deliver on their policy promises) and their ‘democratic performance’ (i.e. adherence to the values and principles underpinning democracy). For policy performance, the focus is mainly on outputs. For democratic performance, the focus is mainly on processes. Successfully delivering on the first front generates credibility, success on the second generates legitimacy. Open and inclusive policy making can contribute to reinforcing both.
- **Better outcomes at less cost.** Making policy in a more open and inclusive way can contribute to raising the quality of policy outcomes and ensure the better use of public funds, by designing

policy measures on the basis of better knowledge of citizens' needs. Meanwhile, the nature of public services is changing. Today, a growing proportion is intangible, knowledge-based services which require a higher degree of interaction and involvement of end-users as active collaborators, rather than passive beneficiaries. **Co-design and delivery** of policies, programmes and services with citizens, businesses and civil society offers the potential to tap a broader reservoir of ideas and innovative solutions.

- **Innovative solutions.** Public engagement is increasingly recognised as a **driver of innovation and value creation** in both the private and public sectors. There is a growing awareness that government cannot deal with complex problems alone and that citizens will have to play a larger part in achieving shared public policy goals (e.g. public health, climate change). Citizens are also taking the initiative to tackle issues in the public domain themselves. **Active citizenship** initiatives may remain completely autonomous. But they may also solicit governments to join, facilitate or create the necessary legal framework for such projects to succeed.
- **Responding to greater diversity.** Despite progress in economic development, many social, economic, cultural and political cleavages which permeate modern OECD societies are growing: between poor and rich, rural and urban, ethnic and religious minorities and majorities, young and old. The claim that the government is representative of a majority of the citizens is increasingly tenuous. To date, most OECD countries have devoted their energies to closing these gaps through redistribution or social policies which aim to ensure basic services and an equal chance for all citizens. A complementary path, one aiming to lower the threshold for access to policy making processes for people facing barriers to participation and hearing the voices of a representation of all citizens in policy making processes, has been less travelled.
- **Higher compliance:** Making people part of the process of prioritizing and deliberation, helps them to understand the stakes of reform and can help ensure that the decisions reached are perceived as legitimate, even if they don't agree with them. Wider and more open policy making contributes to raising compliance levels with decisions reached.
- **Leveraging knowledge and resources.** On the opposite end of the scale, many of the citizens who are not facing specific barriers to participation (in terms of their economic and educational levels) are also withdrawing from contact with government and are instead turning to private providers of services and policy advocacy (e.g. social enterprises and single issue civil society organisations). As they do so, their skills, ideas and political clout are being lost to public sector efforts at addressing today's challenges in society. The incentives and sources of motivation that will reconnect these citizens with government and encourage them to share their skills and knowledge have yet to be clearly identified.

8. Governments in OECD countries have accumulated substantial experience in opening up their policy making and service delivery processes to a wider range of voices and actors. While many initiatives have been successful, it must be recognised that some consultation and participation exercises have been expensive failures. This is wasteful in two ways: it wastes public funds and it wastes goodwill among the public, civil servants and politicians. One way of reducing this risk of expensive failure would simply be to stop conducting consultations or promising participation on issues that cannot actually be changed – solely in order to “tick the box”. Concentrating efforts and resources on designing meaningful public participation which is delivered to high professional standards would be a good start.

9. Given the complexity and scale of emerging governance challenges, governments cannot hope to design suitable policy responses, nor to strengthen legitimacy and trust, without the input, ideas and insights of as wide a variety of citizens' voices as possible. This report reviews efforts by OECD countries to achieve a greater degree of openness and inclusion in policy making and service delivery.

What do we mean by open and inclusive policy making?

10. **Open** refers to *transparency, accessibility and responsiveness* in the policy making process. As defined in earlier OECD work⁵, an ‘open’ government is one that is:

- transparent, in other words being exposed to public scrutiny;
- accessible to anyone, anytime, anywhere; and
- responsive to new ideas and demands.

11. **Inclusive** denotes the effort to include as wide a variety of citizens’ voices into the policy making process as possible. The act of ‘inclusion’ means in practice:

- lowering the barriers of entry to participation for people that are **willing but unable** to participate. The barriers these people are facing can be socio-economic, cultural, geographical or barriers of another external nature.
- increasing the appeal of participation for people who are **able but unwilling** to participate. These people face subjective rather than objective barriers. The lack of ‘appeal’ of participation for them may stem from a low interest in politics, a lack of trust in how their input will be used, or limited personal benefits from participation.

12. **Policy making** includes all stages of the policy cycle: agenda setting, policy preparation, decision making, implementation and evaluation as defined in previous OECD work⁶

Open and inclusive policy making is
transparent, accessible and responsive to as wide a range of citizens as possible.

What is the scope of this report?

13. This report provides a comparative overview of government efforts to promote open and inclusive policy making in 25 countries. The report has benefited from in-depth discussions in an OECD Steering Group and [*was approved by the OECD Public Governance Committee - pending*] which gathers government representatives from all 30 OECD member countries. The report:

- provides comparative data based on questionnaire results – while recognising the importance of country context;
- offers a series of concrete case studies – covering both policy making and service delivery;
- includes a range of opinion pieces – to reflect the diverse perspectives of government officials, civil society practitioners and academics on current trends and future scenarios
- reflects the results of a broader discussion with civil society practitioners and government officials during an international workshop held in June 2008 in Ljubljana Slovenia

⁵ OECD (2005), “Open Government”, in *Modernising Government: The Way Forward*, Paris: OECD, p. 29.

⁶ OECD (2001), “*Citizens as partners: information, consultation and public participation in policy making*”. OECD Publishing, Paris, p. 21-22

Who provided the data?

14. The aggregate results reported here are for 25 countries – referred to throughout the report as the ‘respondents’ – that is, 23 member countries plus 2 countries (Chile and Slovenia) who are currently preparing for accession to the OECD. Given its supranational status and reach, the European Commission cannot legitimately be equated to national level governments. The results of its questionnaire response are therefore given separate mention throughout the report and have not been included in the aggregate data.

Figure 1 – Map of questionnaire responses from OECD member and non-member countries



Who contributed to this report?

- **Steering Group** – Government representatives from 10 OECD countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Korea, The Netherlands, Norway, Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey, UK) plus Slovenia and the European Commission served as the Steering Group. They were responsible for providing oversight, guidance and direction and met regularly in the course of this project (February 2007 in Helsinki, Paris in October 2007 and March 2008). See Annex 1 for full list of Steering Group members.
- **Public Governance Committee** – 30 OECD member countries represented on OECD PGC. Provided input and suggestions in the early stage of project (PGC Symposium of Oct 2007), general oversight and approval of this report.
- **Government experts** – by providing data, responding to questionnaires, drafting case studies.
- **Independent experts** – by providing case studies, independent reviews and quality control

- **Civil society practitioners** – by responding to questionnaires, providing feedback and suggestions (see Annex 1).

What are the limits and legitimacy of this report?

15. This comparative review of progress in building open and inclusive policy making rests on self-reporting by governments - an approach that has both strengths and weaknesses. Clearly there is great value in collecting and presenting reliable information delivered directly from central government units responsible for promoting openness and inclusion in policy making and service delivery. At the same time, this undoubtedly represents just one view of what is working and what is not. Governments, like all of us, are hardly immune to the biases of self-reporting.

16. In order to ensure the legitimacy and credibility of this report, significant efforts have been made from the outset of the project to include data and opinions from a wider range of sources. A variety of channels have been used to this end:

- collection of over 50 questionnaire responses from civil society organisations (CSOs) in 14 countries (see Annex 1 for full list)
- invitation of CSO representatives to meetings of the OECD Steering Group which oversaw the project
- inclusion of opinion pieces from leading civil society practitioners in a range of OECD member countries
- input from civil society practitioners gathered during the International Workshop on “Building Citizen Centred Policies and Services” in June 2008 which discussed the core themes of this report

17. Rather than seeking an impossible global consensus, this report seeks to provide reliable comparative data, a selection of current practice and a rich diversity of approaches and opinions from a wide range of actors engaged in supporting openness and inclusion in policy making and service delivery.

What do OECD governments see as the benefits of open and inclusive policy making?

18. In a democracy, public participation has **intrinsic value** by increasing accountability, broadening the sphere in which citizens can make or influence decisions and building civic capacity. It offers **instrumental value** by strengthening the evidence base for policy making, reducing implementation costs and tapping greater reservoirs of experience and creativity for innovation in the design and delivery of public policy and services.⁷ Without a wider commitment to the intrinsic value of public engagement, it is hard for governments to reap the instrumental benefits they seek.

19. Respondents recognised both intrinsic and instrumental benefits of open and inclusive policy making. Over half of the respondents believed that it was ‘important’ or ‘very important’ in helping to improve government transparency and accountability (61%), responsiveness (48%), and effectiveness (43%). Less than a quarter saw it as a means of improving government accessibility (22%), legitimacy (17%), efficiency (13%) or of preventing corruption (9%). With respect to the benefits of open and inclusive policy making with regard to citizens, close to half of the respondents saw it as ‘important’ or ‘very important’ in increasing citizens’ trust (43%) and in raising their awareness and knowledge (43%).

⁷ Bourgon J. (2007) “Responsive, responsible and respected government: towards a New Public Administration Theory”, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, vol. 73(1):7-26 and Bourgon J. (forthcoming) “Why should Governments Engage Citizens in Service Delivery and Policy Making?” (unpublished manuscript).

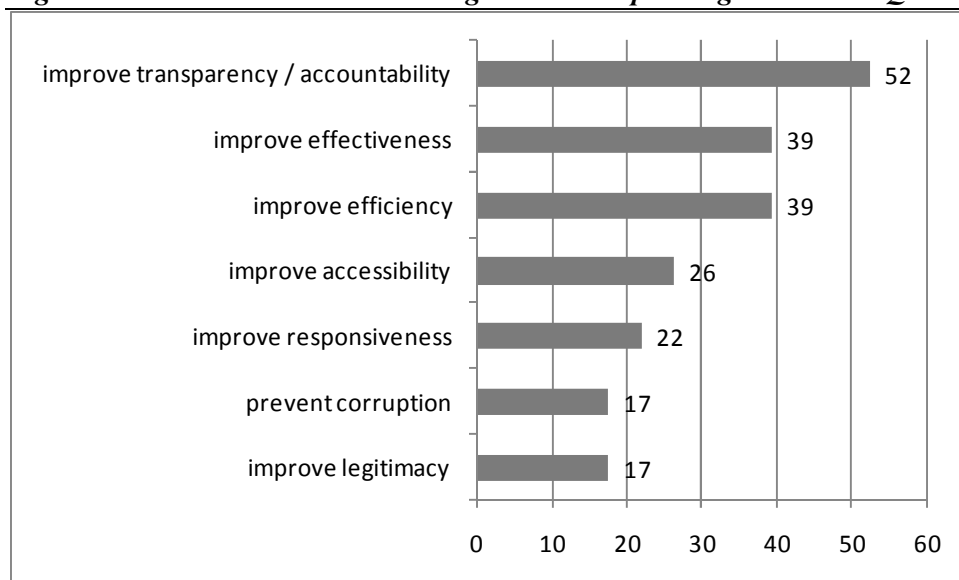
Over a third (39%) of the respondents believed that was ‘important’ or ‘very important’ in strengthening citizens’ scrutiny while less than a quarter saw it as a means of improving citizens’ compliance (22%) and strengthening social cohesion (22%).

What are OECD governments’ goals for open and inclusive policy making?

20. OECD governments are pursuing a range of different goals when they invest in open and inclusive policy making. Not only are the goals diverse, they are subject to change. Around 70% of the respondents indicate they have made changes or additions to their goals in the past 5 years. (Q8)

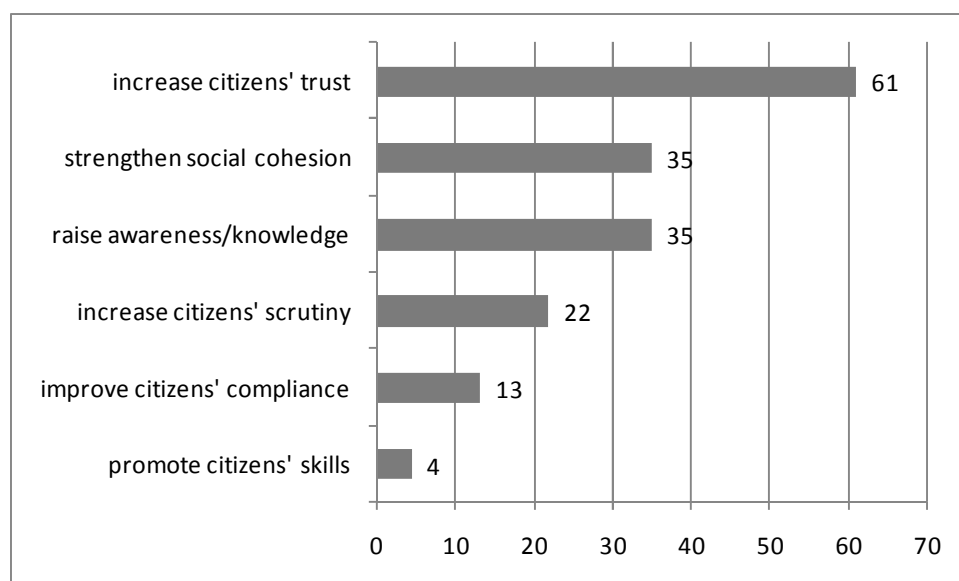
21. Countries were asked to indicate which goals were of highest priority to them when pursuing open and inclusive policy making. These priorities were expressed both with respect to government and with respect to citizens.

Figure 2. What are OECD countries’ goals with respect to government? Q6a



22. Over half the respondents indicated that they sought to improve government transparency and accountability (52%) followed by improved effectiveness and efficiency (39% each). The European Commission also reported that its top priority goal was to improve transparency and accountability. Only 17% of the respondents reported that improving the legitimacy of government was a ‘very important’ or ‘important’ goal (Figure 2). These results suggest that most OECD governments pursue open and inclusive policy making for its instrumental, rather than intrinsic benefits. This is an important finding as it runs counter to the widely-held belief that investing in openness and inclusion may be virtuous, but is not vital to the business of government.

Figure 3. What are OECD countries' goals with respect to citizens? Q6b



23. OECD countries are also pursuing open and inclusive policy making with an eye to their citizens. Within this set of options, the majority ranked increasing citizens' trust as a 'very important' or 'important' goal (61%) (also the top priority for the European Commission) while over a third saw it as a means of raising citizens' awareness and knowledge (35%). Only a few countries (4%) felt that it was 'very important' or 'important' in promoting citizens' skills (Figure 3).

24. Finally, it should be noted that the aggregate 'scores' for each of these goals can mask important differences between countries. For example, with regard to 'strengthening social cohesion' a clear polarisation between countries could be observed. While 35% of the respondents saw open and inclusive policy making as a 'very important' or 'important' means of strengthening social cohesion, an equal number (35%) ranked it of no importance at all in this regard.

Are OECD governments at a crossroads?

25. Several OECD countries have many decades of experience with open and inclusive policy making – to the extent that it has become second nature. Other OECD countries, whose successful transition to the market economy and democratic government is more recent, have displayed a marked propensity to innovate and experiment with more open and inclusive approaches to policy making and service delivery in their efforts to improve economic and social outcomes for their citizens.

26. Whatever their starting point, governments in all OECD countries are at a crossroads. To successfully meet the challenges they face will require a significant shift from a 'government-as-usual' to a governance perspective. Among the key messages conveyed by this report are that:

- **Complex problems require collaboration:** open and inclusive policy making helps governments to:
 - effectively respond to complex policy challenges by mobilizing a wider pool of information and resources in society (e.g. businesses, CSOs, individual citizens);
 - achieve policy outcomes by galvanizing citizens to take concrete actions to help achieve these outcomes (e.g. public health, climate change);

- better understand people's evolving needs and improve the quality of public services by harnessing their ideas, energies and resources;
- strengthen and adapt representative democracy to the demands of modern societies and build public trust in government.
- **OECD countries have made progress, but there are still significant gaps.** These require concerted efforts to build a supportive political and administrative culture, mainstream public engagement as part of 'core business', build skills and capacity among civil servants and develop useful evaluation tools. To be effective open and inclusive policy making needs to: have clear objectives, adopt an appropriate engagement design, make explicit its limits and potential impact, ensure adequate feedback on input received, and be subject to evaluation;
- **Participative web models are promising.** Platforms such as blogs, wikis and social media (also known as Web 2.0) can support open and inclusive policy making but are not, in themselves, the sole solution. The conceptual models underpinning the tools (horizontal vs. vertical; iterative vs. sequential; participatory vs. authoritative; open vs. proprietary; multiple vs. binary) may be more powerful, and of wider application in public policy making and service delivery, than the technologies themselves;
- **Sound principles are needed to support practice.** 'One size fits all' is not an option. To be effective, open and inclusive policy making initiatives must be appropriately designed and context-specific. This in turn depends upon the specific country, level of government, policy field, and objectives of individual agencies. A robust set of principles can help guide practitioners when designing, implementing and evaluating their initiatives. A set of OECD principles on open and inclusive policy making have been developed and are presented in this report as a sound and common basis on which to adapt practice to specific country contexts.

What happens next?

27. This report is just one element in an ongoing programme of work on public governance underway at the OECD. Building on the efforts to date, the following steps are planned:

- Future OECD/GOV work on Innovative Service Delivery (PWB 2009-10)

Questions for discussion:

1. Are there any points you would like to add to the 'preamble' of the report? (i.e. "What is at stake for governments?")
2. Why do you think governments should invest in open and inclusive policy making?
3. Why should anyone read this report?
4. What are the key messages to be conveyed by this report?

SECTION 2: BUILDING OPEN POLICY MAKING: WORK IN PROGRESS

Making progress

28. The scope, quantity and quality of government information provided to the public has increased significantly in the past 25 years thanks largely to the adoption of legislation on access to information. In 1980 less than a third of the (then 24) OECD member countries had access to information laws, today all but one of the current 30 members have such laws (see Table 1, Annex 2). As ever, adoption does not necessarily mean implementation. Applying legal rights to access information may face numerous obstacles in the form of prohibitive fees, delayed responses, lack of staff, expertise and public awareness.

29. Despite these challenges, the foundations for open and inclusive policy making and service delivery have been laid in OECD countries. When asked provide an overall assessment of their own progress in implementing open and inclusive policy making over the past 5 years, over half of the responding governments indicated that some progress had been made (58.3%) while the rest (41.7%), more enthusiastically, reported that a lot of progress had been made. No government reported a lack of progress. Q16

30. Self-perceptions are notoriously hard to trust and self-reporting clearly has its flaws, but these results do indicate that OECD governments who have invested time, effort and resources in building open and inclusive policy making perceive that these investments have paid off.

31. Interestingly, responses to a separate questionnaire by civil society organisations (CSOs) appear to mirror the moderately positive responses given by governments with regard to progress made over the past 5 years. There are also some exceptions, where CSOs see less progress than their respective governments. No definite conclusions can be drawn either way, given the low number of CSOs responding per country (no more than 8) and the limited range of countries (14) which returned responses from CSOs.

32. One of the key challenges remains that of gaining political support which goes beyond “cosmetic commitment”. The evolving profile of elected politicians, and their role in open and inclusive policy making processes, requires greater attention than has been received to date. They regularly express legitimate concerns regarding their potential loss of influence, vulnerability to opposition party politicians, and raising public expectations that cannot be met.

Applying principles in practice

33. In 2001, the OECD member countries identified a set of 10 guiding principles for successful information, consultation and active participation in policy making (see Box 1).⁸ These guiding principles have since been widely cited and incorporated into national and subnational policy guidelines on open

⁸ *Citizens as Partners: Consultation, Information and Public Participation in Policy-making*, p. 15, (2001) OECD: Paris

policy making.⁹ In 2007, the questionnaire on open and inclusive policy making provided an occasion to take stock of how well countries had fared in implementing the 2001 guiding principles.

Box 1. Guiding principles for successful information, consultation and active participation of citizens in policy-making (2001)

1. Commitment

Leadership and strong commitment to information, consultation and active participation in policy-making is needed at all levels - from politicians, senior managers and public officials.

2. Rights

Citizens' rights to access information, provide feedback, be consulted and actively participate in policy-making must be firmly grounded in law or policy. Government obligations to respond to citizens when exercising their rights must also be clearly stated. Independent institutions for oversight, or their equivalent, are essential to enforcing these rights.

3. Clarity

Objectives for, and limits to, information, consultation and active participation during policy-making should be well defined from the outset. The respective roles and responsibilities of citizens (in providing input) and government (in making decisions for which they are accountable) must be clear to all.

4. Time

Public consultation and active participation should be undertaken as early in the policy process as possible to allow a greater range of policy solutions to emerge and to raise the chances of successful implementation. Adequate time must be available for consultation and participation to be effective. Information is needed at all stages of the policy cycle.

5. Objectivity

Information provided by government during policy-making should be objective, complete and accessible. All citizens should have equal treatment when exercising their rights of access to information and participation.

6. Resources

Adequate financial, human and technical resources are needed if public information, consultation and active participation in policy-making are to be effective. Government officials must have access to appropriate skills, guidance and training as well as an organisational culture that supports their efforts.

7. Co-ordination

Initiatives to inform, request feedback from and consult citizens should be co-ordinated across government units to enhance knowledge management, ensure policy coherence, avoid duplication and reduce the risk of "consultation fatigue" among citizens and civil society organisations. Co-ordination efforts should not reduce the capacity of government units to ensure innovation and flexibility.

8. Accountability

Governments have an obligation to account for the use they make of citizens' inputs received through feedback, public consultation and active participation. Measures to ensure that the policy-making process is open, transparent and amenable to external scrutiny and review are crucial to increasing government accountability overall.

9. Evaluation

Governments need the tools, information and capacity to evaluate their performance in providing information, conducting consultation and engaging citizens, in order to adapt to new requirements and changing conditions for policy-making.

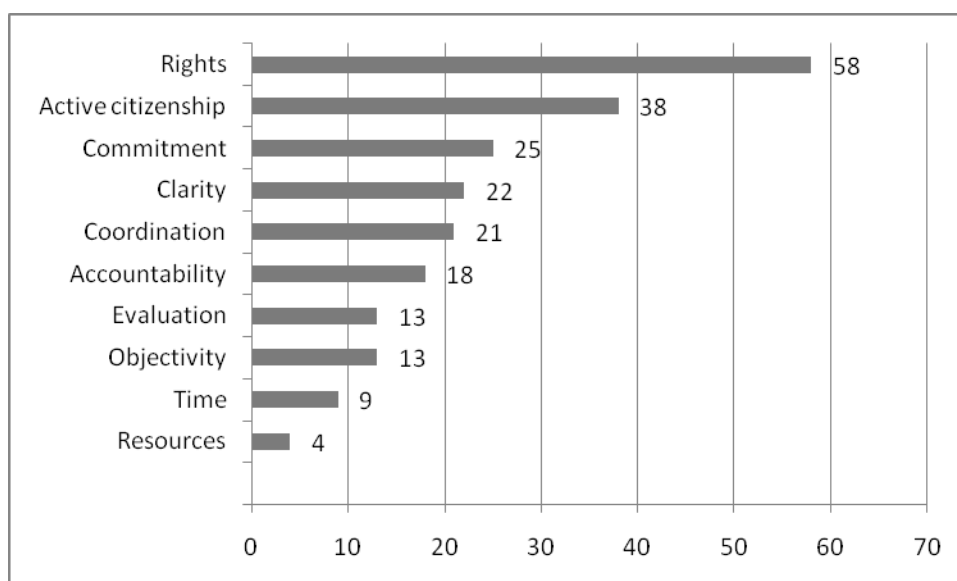
10. Active citizenship

Governments benefit from active citizens and a dynamic civil society, and can take concrete actions to facilitate access to information and participation, raise awareness, strengthen citizens' civic education and skills, as well as to support capacity-building among civil society organisations.

Source : *Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy Making* (2001), Paris: OECD, p. 15.

⁹ For example, in Finland (as a basis for the government's *Principles for Citizen Consultation*) and in Australia (see *Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-making*, p. 47, (2006) Office of Citizens and Civics, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, State Government of Western Australia <http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au/documents/BlackWhite.pdf>)

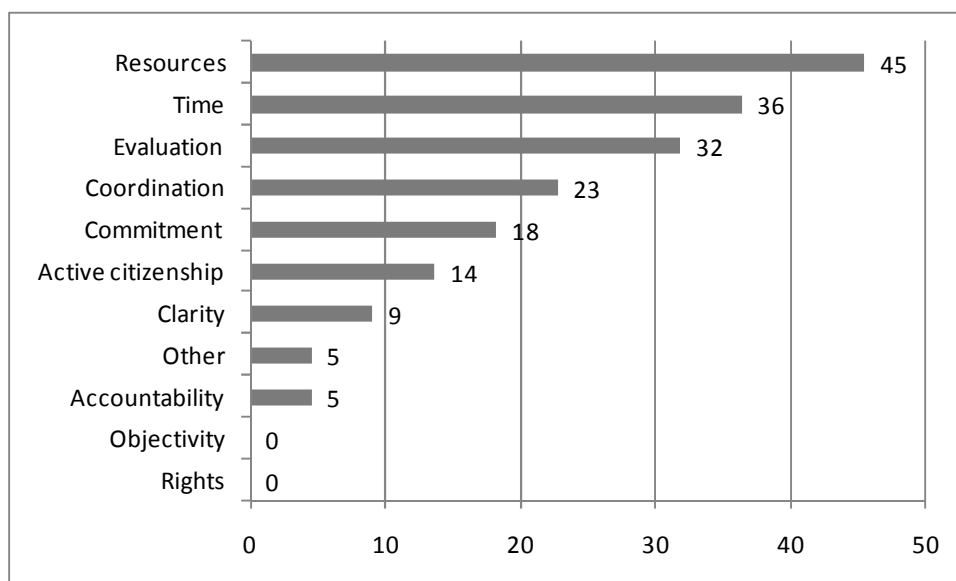
Figure 4. Principles for which greatest progress has been achieved Q11



34. Countries were asked to rank the principles in terms of most and least progress made in their implementation. The majority (58%) of the respondents to the questionnaire reported that, over the past 5 years, the most progress had been made in establishing **rights** to access to information, consultation and public participation. This is corroborated by the fact that all 30 OECD member countries (except Luxembourg) now have legislation in place to ensure rights of access to information.

35. With regard to **active citizenship**, the results were highly polarized – while a significant proportion (38%) of the countries felt that most progress had been made this sphere even more (46%) felt that this was one of the hardest principles to apply. A quarter (25%) felt that most progress had been made in terms of establishing **commitment** to access to information, consultation and public participation.

Figure 5. Principles which are the most difficult to meet Q13



36. In terms of the principles which proved hardest to apply, the practical constraints of securing sufficient **resources** (45%) and **time** (36%) were regarded as most challenging. Close to a third of the countries felt that the principle on **evaluation** was the hardest to meet (32%).

Box 2. The Netherlands: Code of Conduct for professional consultation

A 2006 cabinet policy on “Inspraak Nieuwe Stijl” has established a code of conduct for professional consultation containing 10 principles:

1. indicate who is finally responsible and commit this official to the process.
2. make a procedural plan beforehand and publish it;
3. get to know and mobilize all stakeholders in the policy;
4. organize relevant knowledge together, make this transparent;
5. be a trustworthy discussion partner;
6. communicate clearly, on the right time and with modern means;
7. be clear about roles and results on advice to be expected;
8. obligations for the consultants may be demanded concerning quality and energy devoted to their advice
9. be accountable about the follow-up;
10. consultation is not to be done just for the sake of it; additional value must be expected; however, if government refrains from consultation, this must be motivated;

Box 3. Czech Republic: setting new standards for public consultation

In 2007, a new element of transparency in law-making was introduced with amendments to the Legislative Rules of the Government (LRG) and the Government Rules of Procedure (Government resolution no. 816/2007) which now requires publication of all legislative documents prior to their discussion by the government. This will be done by launching a central government website where all dossiers scheduled for the submission to the government are to be published in advance and to which the public comments can be sent. Based on a set of Principles of Public Engagement approved in 2006, a Methodology for Public Consultation was adopted (Government resolution no. 879/2007) to enlarge the scope and possible approaches to public consultation during policy making.

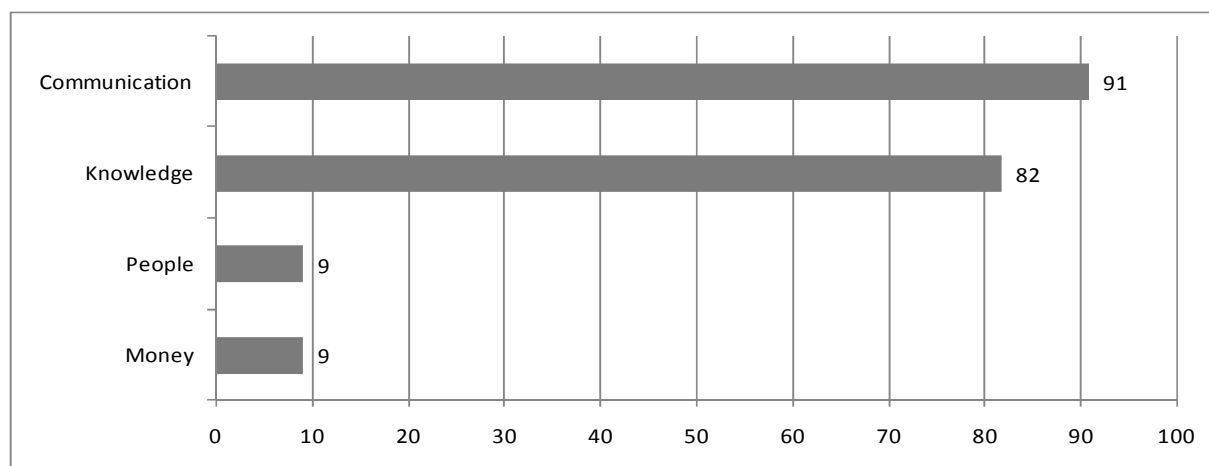
This methodology defines a minimal standard for public participation in policy making. It describes forms of public participation (formal/informal consultation, round tables, public meetings, working groups etc), provides approaches for the identification of target groups, minimum time schedules and ex post evaluation. Its implementation is planned in two phases - an initial pilot period (until end 2008) followed by general application (from 2009). During the pilot period three public authorities have committed themselves to follow the methodology during preparation of concrete drafts.

The results of the pilot period will be reviewed by the Ministry of Interior at the end of 2008 who will report to the Government and submit an updated version together with the proposal to make application of the methodology and public consultations during the regulatory process obligatory.

What resources are available for open and inclusive policy making?

37. Based on the responses above, OECD governments appear to be saying: “we have established rights, we have active citizens and a commitment to engage them in policy making but we face challenges of resources, time and a lack of evaluation.”

Figure 6. Resources devoted to promoting open and inclusive policy making Q17



38. Despite these challenges, OECD countries report that they are actively taking steps to promote open and inclusive policy making. When given four possible options, they ranked most highly **communication** (91%), including advertising open and inclusive policy making, providing a platform for exchange or supporting a network. Next was **knowledge** (82%) in terms of providing guidelines or handbooks on tools for open and inclusive policy making. Far behind in an equal last place, came the more tangible resources of **people** and **money** (ranked top by only 9% of respondents in each case). The former

in terms of providing trainers or (temporary) staff for open and inclusive policy making, the latter in terms of providing (extra) funding or grants for open and inclusive policy making.

39. Clearly, governments are focusing less upon investing substantial staff or budget resources in open and inclusive policy making than more on intangible capacity building measures. A finding which corroborates the finding that the principle on 'resources' is one of the most difficult to apply in practice.

Box 4. Finland – Building the capacity and culture for public participation among civil servants

The Ministry of Interior has chosen as an innovative method for getting their personnel to be more committed to openness and inclusion. In each calendar year, a civil servant in the ministry can devote one day of work to working within a civil society organisation (CSO). This procedure aims to encourage civil servants to develop a better knowledge of, and dialogue with, CSOs.

What actions have been taken to apply the principles?

Despite the challenges, respondents reported taking a number of specific actions to promote adherence to the values expressed in the 2001 OECD guiding principles. By way of illustration, some examples are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Actions taken to apply principles in practice: some examples from OECD countries

Guiding principle	Example of action taken	Country
Commitment	State Secretaries in each ministry have each signed a copy of the Principles for Public Consultation and each year they receive a questionnaire from the Ministry of Finance about their application.	Finland
Rights	The 2005 Federal Freedom of Information Act establishes rights of access to information and stipulates that information must be provided to applicants within one month.	Germany
Clarity	Both the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act Brochure (published by the General Services Administration - GSA) outline the objectives and limitations of consultation and active citizen participation during the policymaking process. The GSA promulgates guidelines, in consultation with the Government Accountability Office and the Office of Government Ethics, on the proper use and composition of citizen advisory committees.	USA
Time	The Instructions for Official Studies and reports provides guidance and a timeframe for consultation.	Norway
Objectivity	Article 47 of the 2005 Law on accessibility of public services for the disabled requires that all online communication from public bodies be accessible to disabled persons.	France
Resources	All ministries have their own budget allocations for public information. However there is no data on the total amount of money spent on information, consultation and participation. Such activities are often subsumed under broader project budgets.	Norway
Coordination	The Ombudsman of Korea offers unified online receipt and resolution service for citizens' petitions and proposals. It aims to reduce the inconvenience and duplication for citizens – who may even discover how similar cases have been resolved and avoid the need to lodge a petition themselves. It also aims to reduce the time and effort spent by the public administration in redistributing and resolving multiple petitions and responding to those which may apply to several public organizations (see: http://www.epeople.go.kr)	Korea
Accountability	The Code of Conduct (criterion 4) states "Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy". A government response report should be published within three months of the closing date of the consultation.	UK
Evaluation	The government's Communications Policy includes a Planning and Evaluation component which sets out expectations for periodic review, evaluation and updating of communications plans in conjunction with business planning and budgetary cycles.	Canada
Active citizenship	In 2006, a Taskforce on Active Citizenship was appointed by the Taoiseach (Prime Minister). In response to its report, the Government established an Active Citizenship Office to implement the Taskforce's recommendations.	Ireland

Is there a legal basis for promoting open and inclusive policy making?

40. The majority of the respondents (88%) indicated that they have an overarching policy, law or regulation at the central government level to promote open and inclusive policy making. In some countries, the principle of open policy making is enshrined in their constitutions or other basic legislation.

Box 5. Constitutional provisions for openness

Several countries have embedded the principles of open policy making into their constitutions. Examples include:

Finland: "Democracy entails the right of the individual to participate in and influence the development of society and his or her living conditions." (Constitution, section 2.2)

France: "National sovereignty resides in the people who exercise it via their representatives and referendum" (1958 Constitution, art. 3.) and "The community has the right to hold accountable every public official in its administration." (l'article 15, 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen).

Germany: "Every person shall have the right individually or jointly with others to address written requests or complaints to competent authorities and to the legislature." (The Basic Law, Article 17)

Box 6. European Commission: accountability and participation in supranational decision-making

The European Commission has numerous sources of legal and policy guidance for promoting open, accountable and participatory decision making at the European level. Examples include:

- Amsterdam Treaty: protocol no. 7 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality
- Access to Documents Regulation (1049/2001)
- General Principles and Minimum Standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission (COM(2002)704)

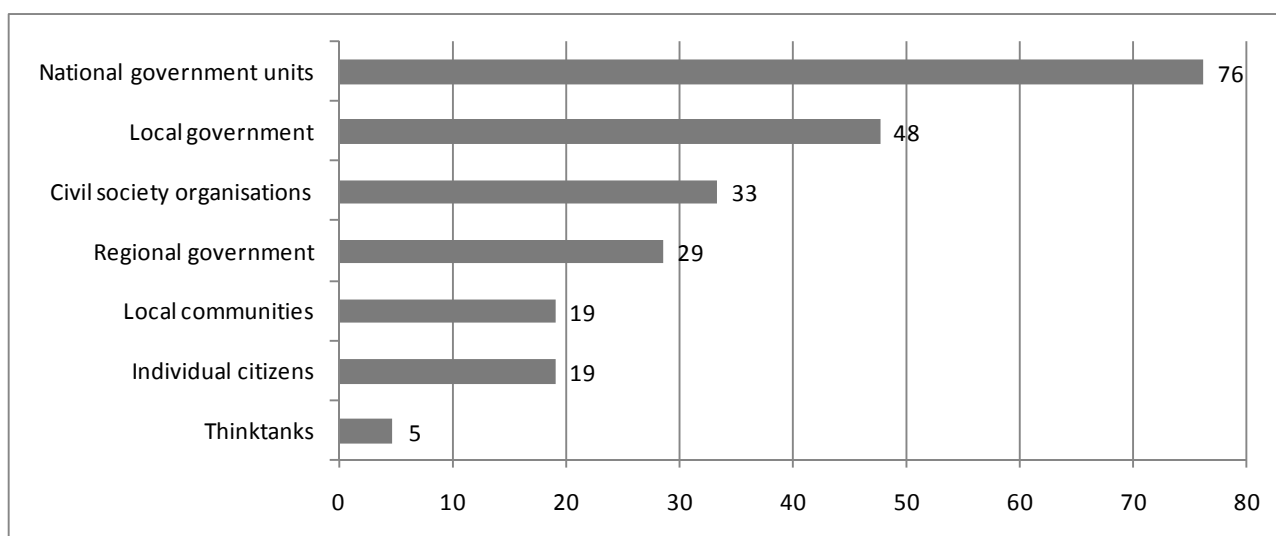
It has also undertaken a number of significant initiatives and programmes to this end:

- White Paper on European Governance
- Better Lawmaking Action Plan
- European Transparency Initiative
- The Active Citizenship Initiative
- Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate (COM(2005)494)
- White Paper on a European Communication Policy (COM(2006)35)

Who is responsible for open and inclusive policy making?

41. Well over half the respondents (64%) indicated that there was a central organisation responsible for promoting open and inclusive policy making. Q3 Their efforts to promote open and inclusive policy making through communication, knowledge sharing, money and people have a number of targets.

Figure 7. Main targets of support for open and inclusive policy making Q18

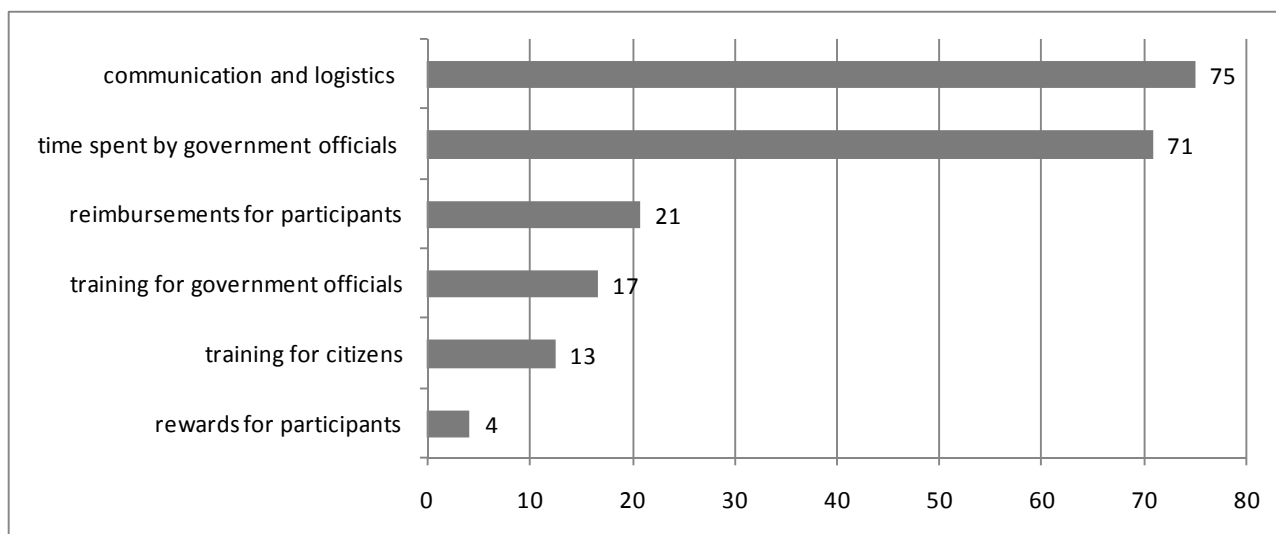


42. Over three-quarters of the respondents (76%) indicated that national government units were their main targets of attention, with just under half (48%) indicating local government as ‘important’ or ‘very important’. Interestingly, a third (33%) indicated civil society organisations as being more important a target for their efforts than regional government (29%), local communities (19%) or individual citizens (19%). This is perhaps in recognition of the important multiplier effect of liaising with organised civil society to mobilise their own networks.

What are the costs of open and inclusive policy making?

43. Measures to ensure openness and inclusion in policy making cost time, effort and money. Collecting hard data on these costs is itself a challenge, given that few governments have dedicated budgets or teams assigned to citizen engagement and the costs are generally subsumed under a wider policy- or service-development programme.

Figure 8. Identifying the costs for government Q19

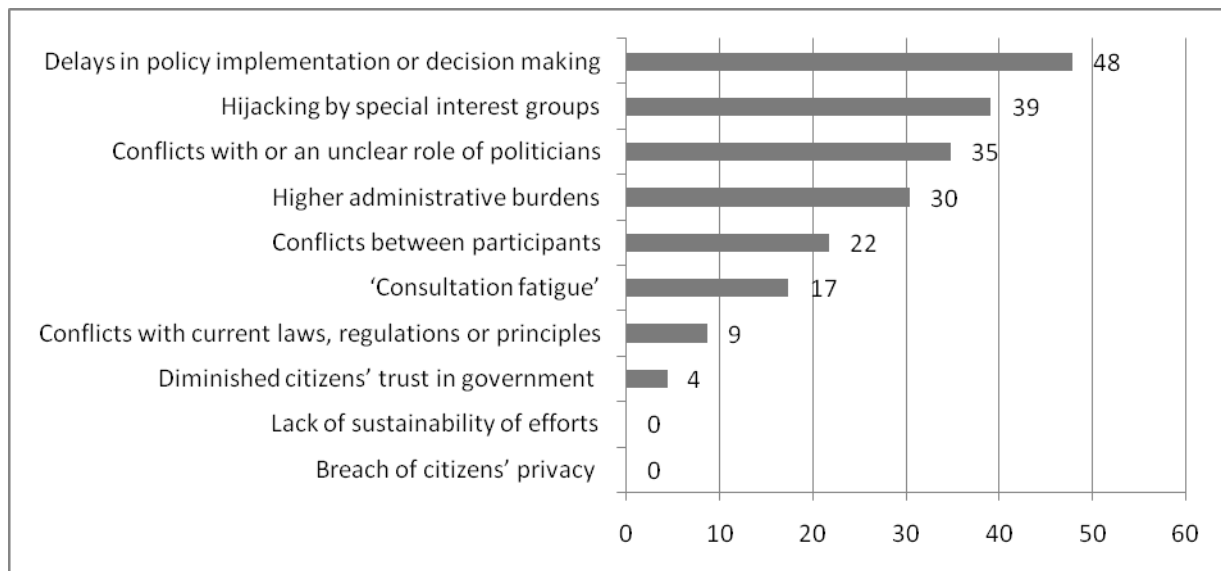


44. The majority of the respondents clearly identified communication and logistics (75%) and time (71%) to be the main costs to government. Far fewer cited the costs of training government officials (17%) or citizens (13%) as ‘important’ or ‘very important’. Direct financial transfers to citizens as reimbursement (e.g. child care, transport) or rewards (e.g. prizes, payments) for participation were only rarely cited as being significant.

What are the risks of open and inclusive policy making?

45. As with any action undertaken by government, open and inclusive policy making requires careful risk management and mitigation. Possible sources of risk may include: failed projects, insufficient feedback on how public input is being used, limited capacity, lengthy and/or indecisive processes, and lack of trust in the capacities of participating citizens.

Figure 9. Identifying the risks for government Q20



46. When asked to rank what they considered to be typical ‘risks’ of open and inclusive policy making, almost half of the respondents cited delays in decision making or implementation (48%) as ‘important’ or ‘very important’. Over a third (39%) perceived the risk of special interest groups ‘hijacking’ the process or as generating confusion with regard to the role of (or indeed conflicts with) politicians (35%). The risk of placing additional burdens on participants was also cited – in terms of higher administrative burdens (30%), conflicts among participants (22%) and ‘consultation fatigue’ (17%).

47. Equally instructive is the fact that very few respondents felt that open and inclusive policy making ran the risk of diminishing citizens' trust (only 4%) while none of them saw the lack of sustained efforts or privacy breaches as posing significant risk.

Questions for discussion:

- 1. Why is openness important?**
- 2. What are the limits of openness?**
- 3. The main obstacles to achieving openness have been identified in this section (time, resources, evaluation). So what are the solutions?**

SECTION 3: FROM OPEN TO INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING: TAKING THE NEXT STEP

Open but not inclusive: is this a problem?

48. Governments today are more open than ever before.¹⁰ But experience has shown that openness, while necessary is not sufficient to ensure inclusive public participation. Creating a ‘level playing field’ in terms of passive access to public information, consultation or participation is not enough – for two main reasons:

- ***Efficacy***: the true value of measures to open up policy making and service delivery lies in obtaining a wider range of views and voices as input for evidence-based public decision-making. Not simply in opening the door wider to well-endowed special interest groups or professionalised civil society organisations who already have access to decision makers. Without additional efforts to ensure inclusion, the full promise of open policy making as a means for designing and delivering better quality services and policies remains unfulfilled.
- ***Equity***: defining the “public interest” in a democracy founded on ‘one person, one vote’ requires government authorities to ensure that all relevant voices have had a real chance to be heard. This may mean making particular efforts to reaching out to, or building capacity among, those members of society who are least-equipped for public participation in terms of their education, capacity, culture and status (e.g. children, immigrants).

49. Furthermore, current trends in demography and migration mean that most OECD countries will be more linguistically and culturally diverse in the future. Efforts to ensure inclusion of the “willing but unable” in government decision making can either be seen as an additional cost, or as an investment in leveraging diversity as a source of innovation. Adapting to the needs of new immigrants and citizens will require multilingual options and culturally appropriate forms of engagement to ensure that services and policy are designed and delivered effectively.

50. Equally important are the swelling ranks of citizens who choose not to participate in some of the lynchpin events of public life – from national elections to public hearings and town hall meetings. Making government relevant to youth and finding appropriate channels for their participation in public life is another important challenge for many OECD countries.

Who is not engaging?

51. If governments are to improve their capacity to effectively interact with the people they need to hear from, they will need far better information about the profiles and preferences of those they are trying to reach. Such research has been undertaken in some OECD countries and the results, while clearly not applicable across the board, offer some useful insights.

¹⁰ “Open Government”, *Modernising Government: The Way Forward*, OECD 2005.

52. The Institute for Insight in the Public Services (IIPS) in the UK has examined the value people place on such things as time, energy, money, information and space. When asked which one is of most value in their everyday lives – time emerged as the most precious resource (38%), followed by (personal) energy (30%), money (17%), information (9%) and space (2%).¹¹ On the basis of its research the IIPS has developed 5 ‘engagement profiles’ for the UK (see box 7) which resonates with the results of a similar, although more localized, investigation in The Netherlands (see box 8).

Box 7. UK: developing engagement profiles

Research undertaken by the UK’s Institute for Insight in the Public Services (IIPS) has revealed the following segments of the general public:

- **Community bystanders** (36%) are the least engaged in any activities in their communities
- **Passive participators** (33%) engage in ‘easy’ activities (e.g. socialising with neighbours, attending school events)
- **Community conscious** (16%) organise local community activities, volunteer and attend a place of worship
- **Politically engaged** (8%) engage in local politics, attend community planning or consultation meetings
- **Active protestors** (7%) write to newspapers and their MPs, canvas for political parties.

Source : Harrison M. and M. Singer (2007) “The timesqueeze generation: what the public are doing with their spare time”, in Creasy S. (ed.) *Participation Nation: Reconnecting Citizens to the Public Realm*, Involve: London, p. 55

Box 8. The Netherlands: piecing together the profiles of non-participants

Some research into the motives of those who decide abstain from participation which shows that distrust, lack of time and low sense of political efficacy are most common reasons not to participate. Research commissioned by the Inspraakpunt V&W showed that among the people who were invited to be consulted in 2 major railway-projects but did not show (i.e. non-participating but relevant persons, living in the area) 5 main profiles could be discerned:

- **enquirers**: people who like to get better information before they think they can be consulted properly (nevertheless these people often obtain valuable local knowledge): 18%
- **distrusters**: people with cynical feelings or distrust towards politics in general or consultation: 35%
- **time-stretched**: people who do not have the time, will not make lengthy meetings a priority (but who neither are often involved in the environment in which they live): 27%
- **indifferent**: people who do not care very much about their phisycal environment: 10%
- **uncertain**: people with little political efficacy, doubting about their possibilities to add value: 10%

53. For the purposes of this report, two groups of ‘not-included’ citizens can be discerned:

- *‘people who are willing, but unable’*: those who face barriers of entry to citizen engagement, e.g. cultural, physical, socio-economic barriers
- *‘people who are able, but unwilling’*: those who face barriers of a more subjective nature, e.g. a lack of interest in politics or a disbelief that their opinion will be taken into account.

¹¹ Harrison M. and M. Singer (2007) “The timesqueeze generation: what the public are doing with their spare time”, in Creasy S. (ed.) *Participation Nation: Reconnecting Citizens to the Public Realm*, Involve: London, p. 53

Limits of inclusion

54. Including everyone all of the time, is neither feasible nor desirable. So the question is, how much time, energy and money should governments invest in making their policy making and service delivery processes more inclusive? Including the right people at the right time may be a useful instrumental goal – but even this is much easier said than done.

Breaking down barriers, increasing appeal

55. Ensuring a greater degree of inclusion in policy making faces two main challenges. Each poses significant, albeit distinct, challenges to the current *modus operandi*:

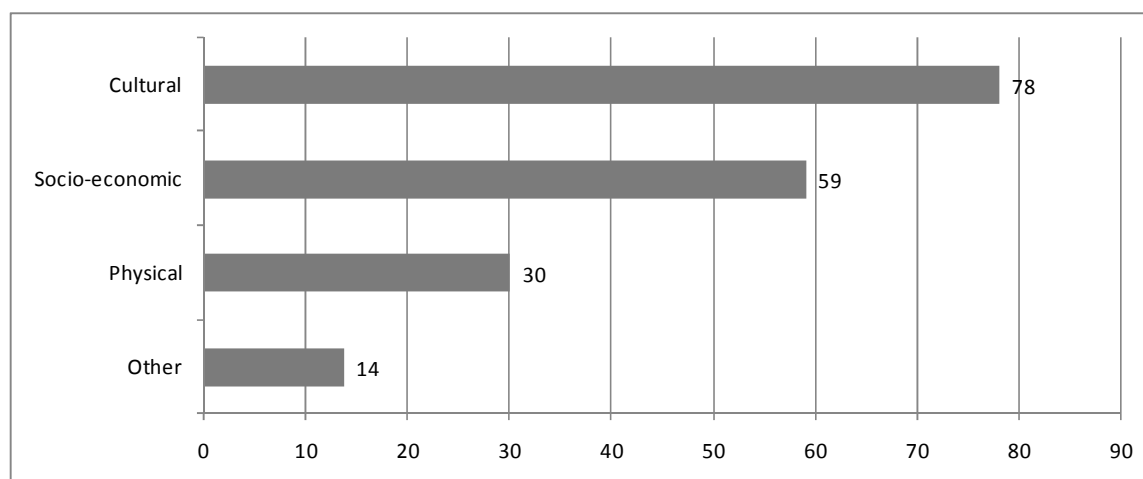
- **Barriers** – removing barriers to participation in terms of physical, cultural or socio-economic constraints.
- **Motivation** – ensuring that participation policy making has greater appeal and offers greater benefits to all participants

56. Governments were asked to rank a number of barriers and possible reasons for non-participation. Whether their answers to the questionnaire were based upon based on in depth research or simply their own perceptions of the issues at stake is not clear. With this in mind, the following results should be read more as offering some indications of where governments consider the main challenges to lie.

What are the barriers to participation?

57. Barriers of language, time and public awareness are all examples of objective barriers to participation. Subjective barriers include people's lack of faith that government will listen and low confidence in their own ability to express themselves. The challenge is to create an enabling environment which ensures that people could participate if they wanted to. This entails a) lowering the barriers (e.g. distance, time, language, access) for those who wish to participate and b) building capacity, skills and knowledge to participate effectively.

Figure 10. What barriers are people facing? Q23



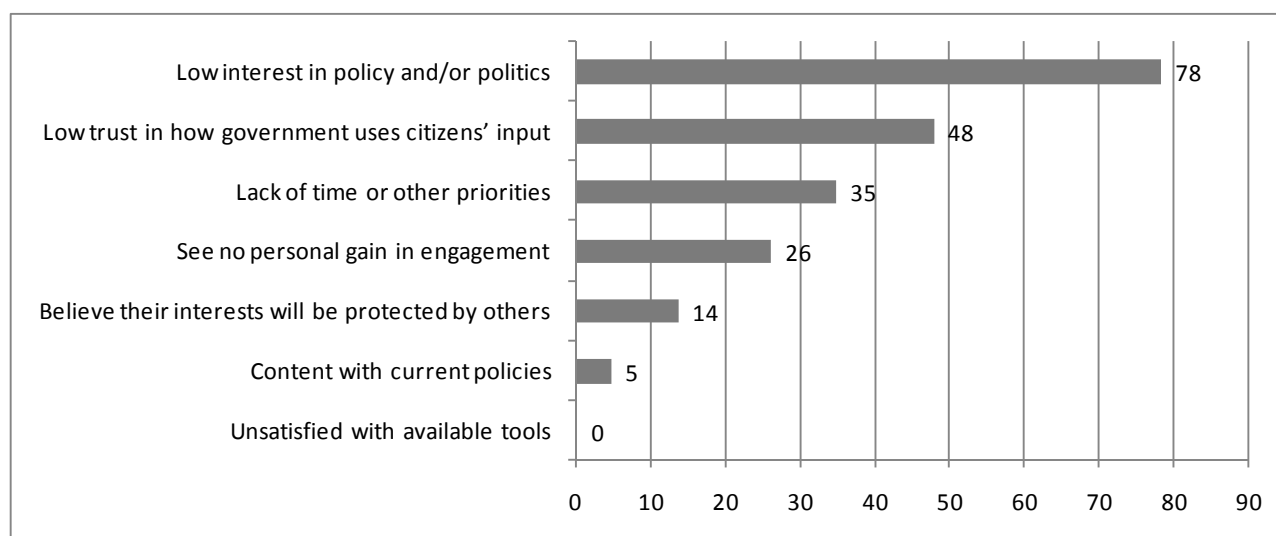
58. Over three-quarters of the respondents (78%) identified cultural barriers (e.g. lack of command of the official language) as being ‘important’ or ‘most important’ while over half (59%) saw socio-economic barriers (e.g. education, access to ICT) as playing a large role. Physical barriers (e.g. for those with physical disabilities or living in remote rural communities) came a distant third place and were cited by

30% of the respondents. Among the other barriers mentioned were the fact that many participation exercises take place during working hours or that people simply lack the time and energy to get involved.

What motivates people to take part?

59. If the opportunities for public participation are greater today than ever before, why don't more people get involved? Governments report a number of reasons for people not wanting to participate in policy making even when they do not face any particular external barriers. These results can help in formulating a “diagnosis” of the causes of non-participation and hence options for action.

Figure 11. Why do people not participate? Q25



60. Over three-quarters of the respondents (78%) attributed a lack of interest in policy issues or politics as being an ‘important’ or ‘very important’ factor affecting people’s decision to *not* participate in policy making. Just under half (48%) indicated citizens’ low levels of trust in how governments would use their input as a motivating factor. Taken together, these figures are a sobering wake-up call for governments to take action to reverse citizens’ perceptions of their declining relevance and trustworthiness.

Quote:

«Many people continue to perceive public authorities as distant from their concerns and do not dare imagine that their opinion, even if it is very personal or non-institutional, could legitimately be heard in a public decisionmaking process. » **France** questionnaire response (Q25)

61. People are busy (see box x above). They are also rational actors who need to allocate their limited time and attention. Just over a third (35%) of the respondents recognise that many of their citizens are ‘time poor’, a quarter believe citizens see no immediate gain in participating (26%) or act as ‘free riders’ content in the knowledge that someone will promote their interests on their behalf (14%).

62. Apparently none of the respondents thinks that people are unsatisfied with the tools currently available. Certainly, governments have never had so many options (online and off) for informing people of, and engaging them in, policy making or service delivery. This finding is itself significant as it

demonstrates that there are no “quick fixes” when engaging the ‘able but unwilling’ (e.g. by simply rolling out another new tool or channel).

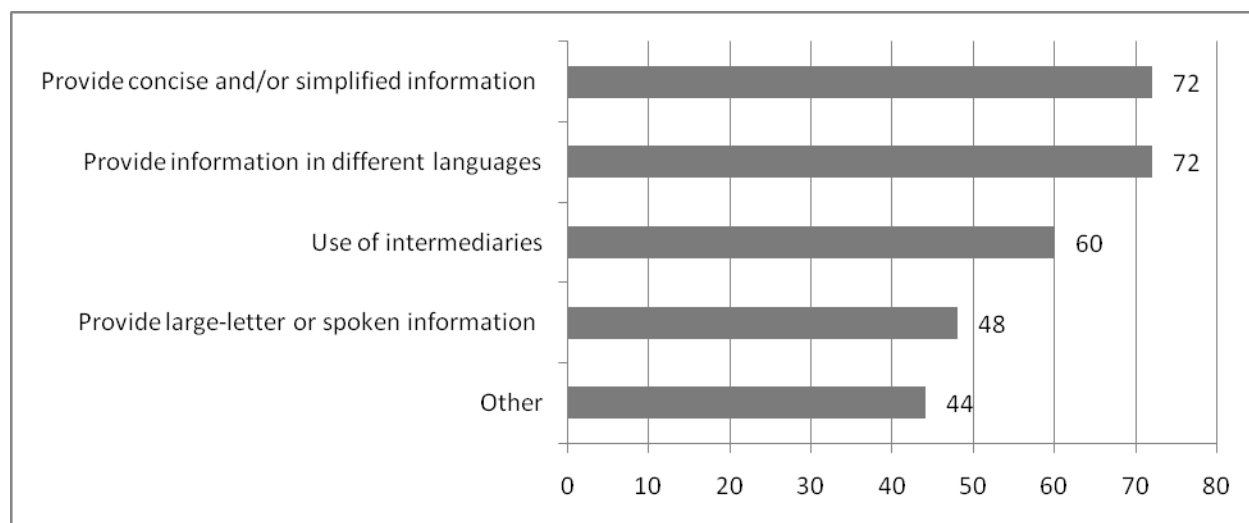
63. Only a very few (5%) of the respondents believed that the lack of participation was because people are content with current policies and therefore do not feel the need to get involved. This is an important result, as it draws attention to the ‘silent majority’ whose silence cannot, according to these survey results, be blithely attributed to people’s satisfaction with government policy making and service delivery.

How can barriers be lowered?

64. When it comes to informing the ‘willing but unable’, respondents ranked a series of measures which can be grouped into three main types. These are factors which determine the successful dissemination and uptake of government information, namely its:

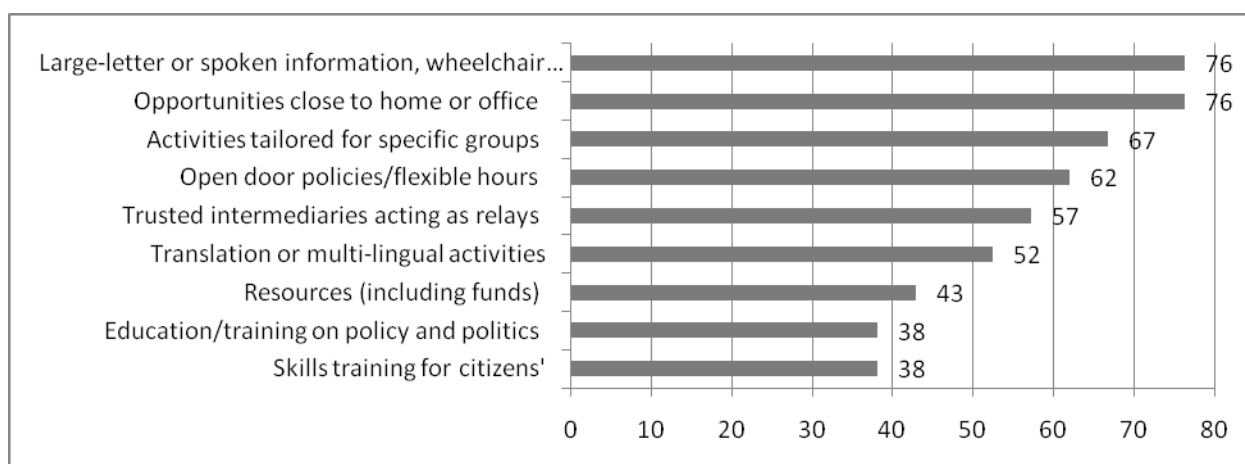
- **Content** – providing concise and/or simplified information, or in additional languages
- **Format** – providing large-letter or spoken information
- **Channel** – using intermediaries

Figure 12. Measures to lower barriers for government information Q26



65. Close to three-quarters (72%) indicated that they provided information in other languages and that they provided concise or simplified information (72%). Over half (60%) turned to intermediaries, such as CSOs or community groups, to ensure that government information reached a wider group of people. Just under half (48%) provided large-letter or spoken information while 44% mentioned a range of other measures including: communication campaigns, online information, multimedia tools.

66. In terms of lowering barriers to consultation and participation, countries’ aggregate priorities fell rather neatly into three main categories of measures. First and foremost, respondents cited measures to overcome physical barriers as ‘important’ or ‘very important’, followed by cultural barriers then socio-economic barriers.

Figure 13. Measures to lower barriers for consultation and participation Q27

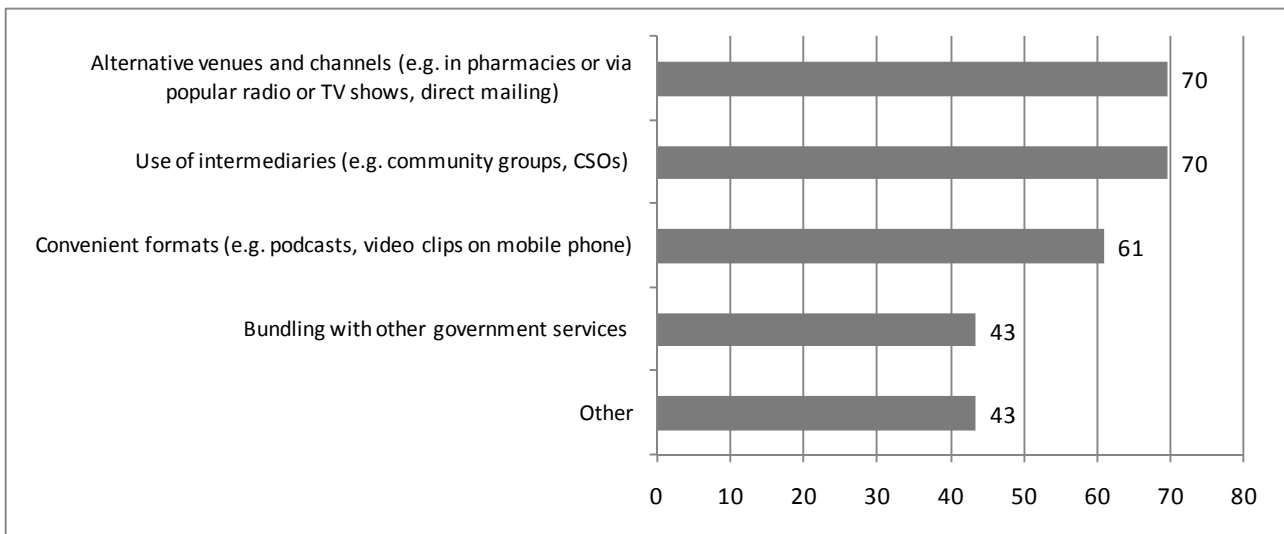
67. Over three-quarters (76%) mentioned efforts to overcome physical barriers by using large-letter or spoken information and wheelchair access as well as proximity measures (e.g. providing opportunities close to home). Close to two-thirds (62%) also mentioned flexibility measures (e.g. open door policies/flexible hours) as a means of lowering physical barriers for consultation and participation. Over two-thirds (67%) saw tailored consultation and participation activities (e.g. designed for women only, or immigrants only) as being useful measures to lower cultural barriers for the 'willing but unable'. Over half (57%) turned to trusted intermediaries to act as relays with specific target groups or used translation or multi-lingual activities (43%). Fewer than half addressed socio-economic barriers by investing resources (43%) to support the active engagement of the 'willing but unable'. Fewer still invested in raising citizens' skills for engagement (38%) or in education or training on policy issues or politics in general (38%).

68. Although mentioned here in relation to the 'willing but unable', many of these measures can, of course, improve access for everyone. This is analogous to efforts to ensure greater accessibility to the online world, where applying the W3C (www.w3.org) accessibility standards helps make better websites for all – not just for people with disabilities.

How can appeal be increased?

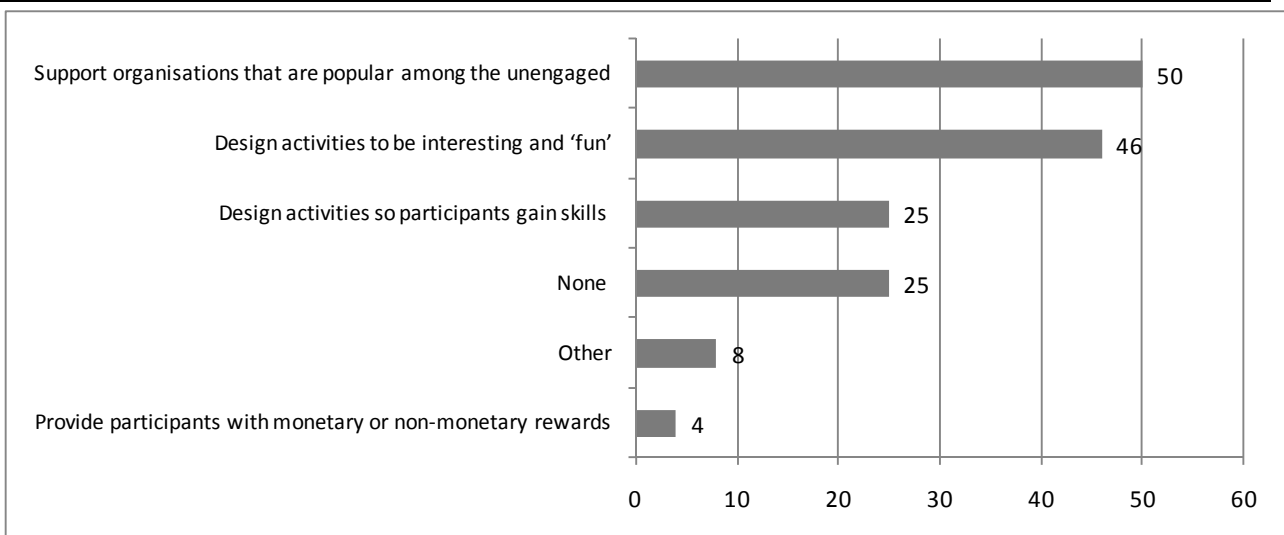
69. In an age of information overload and multiple claims on people's attention (which is limited) and time (which is increasingly their most precious asset) one of the key challenges for governments is to increase their relevance and appeal.

Figure 14. Measures to increase uptake of government information Q30



70. Respondents appear to recognise these challenges as their own. Close to three-quarters (70%) consider alternative venues, channels and intermediaries useful in reaching the ‘able but unwilling’. It is of interest to note that here too, governments appear to make good use of intermediaries in disseminating information to a degree comparable with ‘hard to reach’ groups. Some 61% rate highly the use of convenient multimedia formats (e.g. podcasts) and bundling with other government services (43%).

Figure 15. Measures to increase the appeal of consultation and participation initiatives Q31



71. Half of the respondents (50%) report that they support organisations that have high membership or support among the unengaged as one of the ways to enhance the appeal of their consultation and participation initiatives. Just under half (46%) seek to make participation activities interesting or ‘fun’ while a quarter (25%) design the activities so that participants gain useful skills which they can then apply in other areas of their lives (e.g. in education or job searches).

Beyond spin, towards meaningful engagement

72. These results indicate that OECD governments recognise that there are more fundamental questions at stake when seeking to engage people effectively. Ones that go well beyond the technical issues of choosing appropriate content, formats or channels.

73. Among the questions faced by governments are:

- how to make policy/politics more interesting and relevant to more people?
- how to earn and keep people's trust that government will actually use their input?
- how to address the very real constraints of the 'time poor' which characterise modern urban societies in OECD countries?
- how to design engagement so that everyone gets direct, tangible, personal benefit in terms of building 'skills for life', knowledge or self-confidence?

Questions for discussion:

1. **Why is inclusion important?**
2. **What are the limits of inclusion?**
3. **Some of the challenges facing governments when trying to be more inclusive have been identified in this section (e.g. lowering barriers, raising motivation). So what are the solutions?**

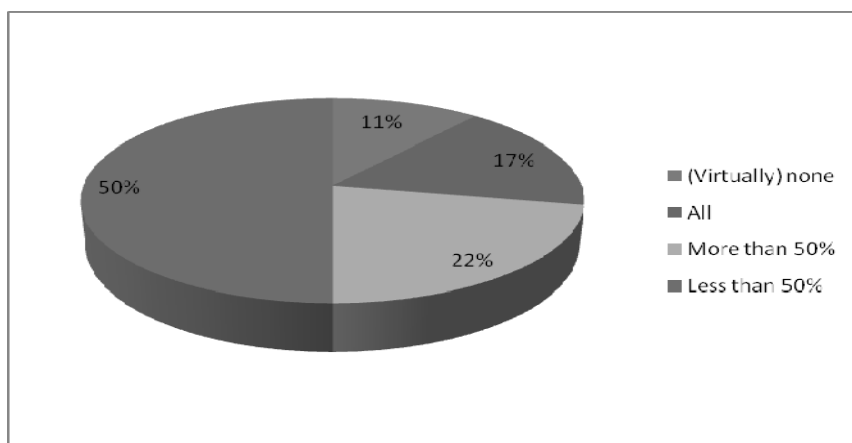
SECTION 4: LEARNING TO EVALUATE, EVALUATING TO LEARN

Evaluation remains a challenge

74. Of the 25 countries responding to the questionnaire, 80% indicated that central government had developed standards or guidelines for open and inclusive policy making (Q 4). Yet over a quarter (28%) of them either left the evaluation section of the questionnaire entirely blank or answered only a few of the questions - citing a lack of experience with evaluation. This itself is indicative of the challenges facing governments in terms of developing the tools and capacity to evaluate their own efforts to be open and inclusive during policy making.

75. Of the 21 respondents to the question, only 38% reported having developed performance indicators for open and inclusive policy making. Q38

Figure 16. Evaluation remains a challenge for OECD governments Q40



Note: Percentages expressed in terms of the 18 countries who answered question 40.

76. Of the 18 respondents to the question, 11% were honest enough to report that they evaluated virtually none of their open and inclusive initiatives, while 50% reported that they evaluated less than half of their open and inclusive initiatives. Close to a quarter (22%) of the respondents evaluate over half of their initiatives while only 17% can claim to evaluate them all.

77. These findings invite a number of reflections:

- a) the evaluation gap identified in the 2001 report is alive and well (in at least a quarter of the OECD member states, if not more)
- b) standards have been developed but performance against those standards is not evaluated on a regular basis.

78. Evaluation remains a challenge for open and inclusive policy making. This may be due to a lack of planning, energy, attention or simply a fear that transparency may draw criticism and undermine support for open and inclusive policy making. All of these are, however, obstacles to improving performance and ensuring good practice, as noted in the quote below from New Zealand’s *Guide to Online Policy making*.

“Evaluation is too often an afterthought, or left out altogether. Unwittingly perhaps, proponents and detractors of public participation conspire to maintain the current 'evaluation gap' -- albeit with different ends. Given the lack of benchmarks against which to measure the costs and benefits of this emerging field of practice, proponents are loathe to lay bare the real costs of participation as they are unsure what counts as too much or not enough. They are also unsure how to account for the tangible and intangible benefits of public participation. Detractors benefit from the lack of hard data on either costs or benefits as it allows them to vociferously maintain that whatever is spent, is certainly misspent.

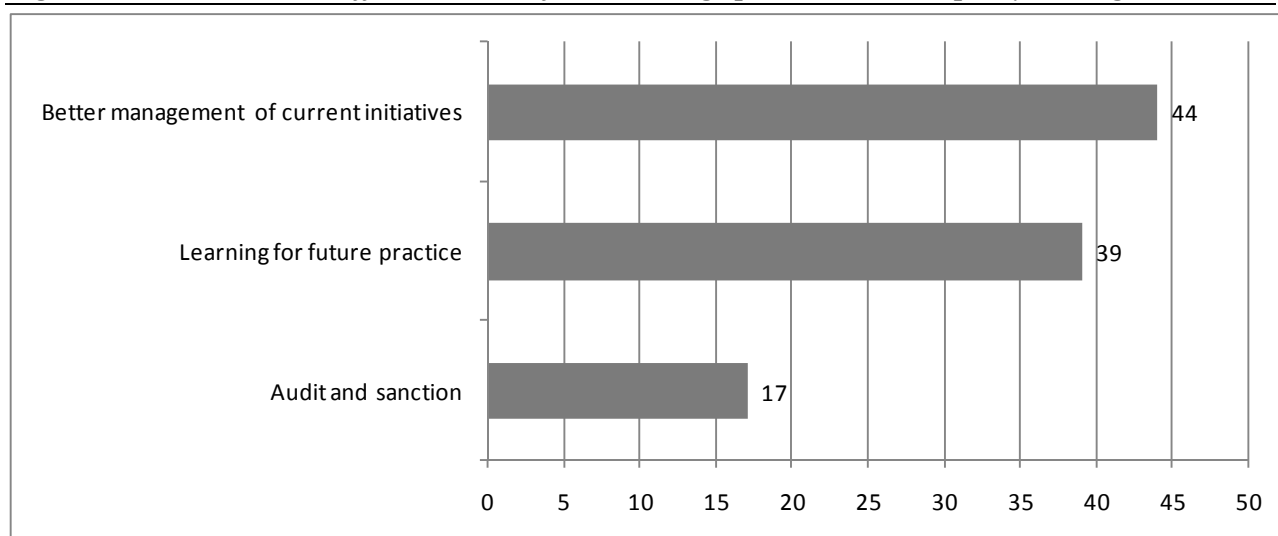
In the end, it is the public that pays twice over -- first, as taxpayers funding government's efforts to inform and engage with them; second, as participants who have to make do with poorly planned and executed public participation initiatives. As public servants we owe them a better deal.”

Source: State Services Commission (2007) *The Guide to Online Participation* (www.e.govt.nz/policy/participation/opg-07-4.3.pdf) New Zealand.

Why evaluate?

79. The questionnaire proposed three main reasons for undertaking the evaluation of open and inclusive policy making and gave respondents three options to prioritise, namely: audit (past), management (present) and learning (future).

Figure 17. Countries have different reasons for evaluating open and inclusive policy making Q36



Note: Percentages expressed in terms of the 18 countries who answered question 36.

80. Of the 18 countries who submitted responses to this question, close to half (44%) indicated that evaluation helped improve the management of current initiatives while over a third (39%) felt that it provided valuable lessons for improving future practice. Only a few countries (17%) undertook evaluation for the purpose of audit and sanction.

81. These responses reflect a sound understanding of the limits of evaluation by OECD countries in what is still a relatively new domain of practice. Evaluation is clearly seen as a means of improving current performance and future practice rather than an instrument of inspection and sanction. It demonstrates the need for further development of methodology, tools and knowledge sharing in this emerging field.

Box 9. Austria: Evaluation helps government identify people’s expectations and needs

Austria’s questionnaire response provided additional insights into its evaluation efforts. Among the reasons for undertaking evaluation were:

- to make policy and service delivery more responsive to the needs and expectations of people;
- to find out what citizens expect from the civil service and what their real needs are;
- to raise citizens’ satisfaction with the services provided

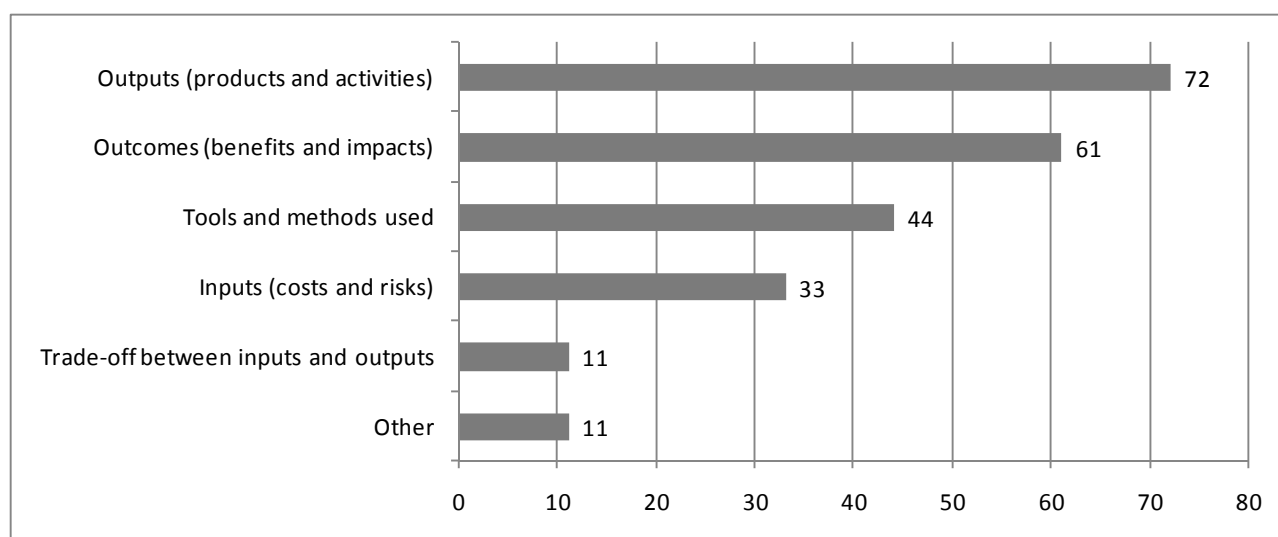
Among the methods used were:

- customer satisfaction research studies at all levels (federal, local)
- guestbooks on internet platforms providing information and services for all citizens (help.gv.at)
- special feedback-platforms on various homepages of ministries (finanz-online)

What is being evaluated?

82. The evaluation of open and inclusive policy making initiatives can encompass a number of elements (e.g. inputs, outputs and outcomes) and the questionnaire proposed a range from which respondents were asked to choose and prioritise.

Figure 18. Countries evaluate a range of factors in open and inclusive policy making Q41



Note: Percentages expressed in terms of the 18 countries who answered question 41.

Note: The graph expresses the sum of the percentages for the three factors considered to be of most importance for respondents (i.e. those ranked most important, second most important and third most important).

83. Most respondents (72%) focus their efforts on evaluating the outputs of open and inclusive policy making in terms of products and activities completed. More ambitiously, close to two-thirds (61%) report that they attempt to evaluate outcomes in terms of benefits and impacts. Close to half (44%) focus on the tools and methods used while a third (33%) evaluate the inputs in terms of costs and risks. Only a minority evaluate the trade-offs between inputs and outputs (11%) while an equivalent proportion (11%) evaluate other factors such as: adherence to guidelines for consultation (UK), which groups participated (UK), referenda results (Switzerland).

When to evaluate?

84. Evaluation can be conducted upstream, downstream or as part of the exercise itself. The choice of timing influences how the results of evaluation will be used to improve performance. The results of an evaluation which takes place after a given open and inclusive policy making initiative is completed (i.e. *ex post* evaluation) will clearly have little chance to impact on anything other than future reiterations of the exercise. Evaluations that are conducted alongside open and inclusive policy making processes (*in itinere* evaluation) can provide 'real time' results which can be used immediately by managers of to adjust their activities.

85. The majority (83%) of the respondents indicated that they conducted evaluation *ex post*, after the activities had been completed while close to three-quarters (72%) reported that evaluation happened during the open and inclusive policy making process itself (*in itinere*). Over one-third (39%) indicated that evaluation may take place at several moments (before, during, after the process), while only a minority (17%) undertook evaluation prior to the activities (*ex ante*).

Who evaluates?

86. A key issue in any evaluation is who undertakes the evaluation and under what terms. The relative merits of internal, independent and participatory evaluation have been discussed extensively elsewhere (see OECD 2005). In short, independent evaluation may offer a greater degree of objectivity and legitimacy but will suffer from incomplete information and, all too often, limited impact on internal management and behaviour.

87. Internal evaluation has the great advantage of raising the likelihood that the outcome of the evaluation will be accepted as relevant and will be incorporated in the planning and management of future initiatives. At the same time, painful truths or uncomfortable results may be more readily ignored or underplayed thereby undermining the chance that evaluation leads to significant improvements in performance.

88. Participatory evaluation requires a substantial investment in building capacity amongst participants and providing methodological support. Its great advantage is that it raises the likelihood that the outcome of the evaluation will be accepted as relevant by all stakeholders and will provide the leverage needed to ensure that its results are used as a basis for future actions – one of the most common shortcomings of independent or external evaluations (see Table 2)

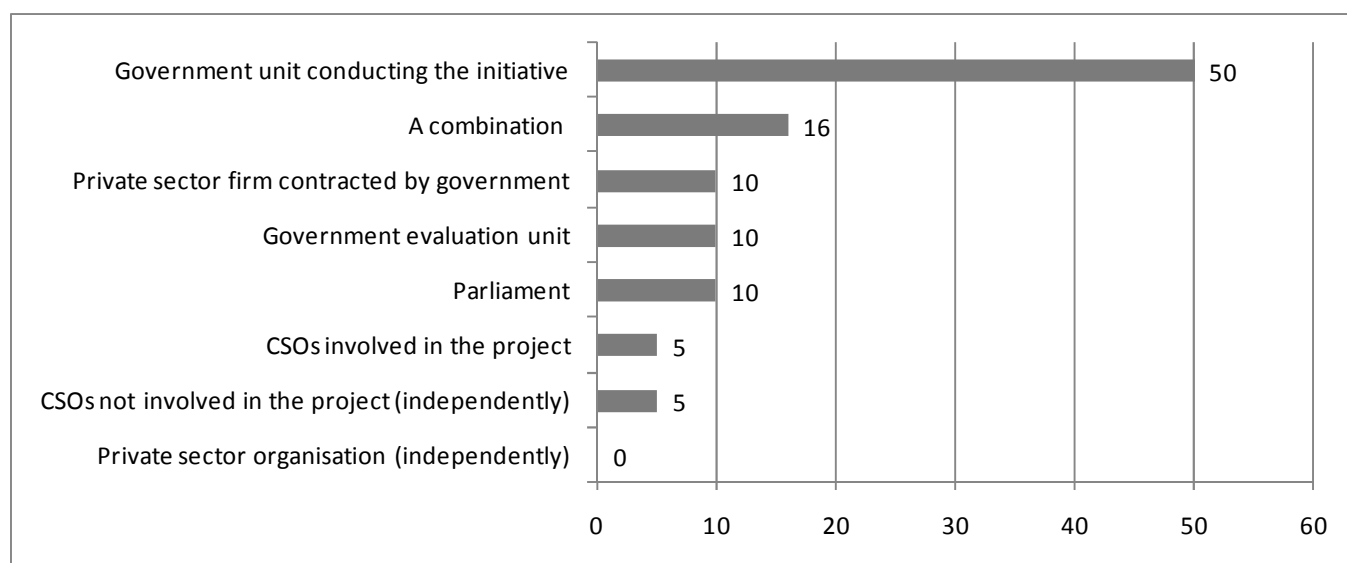
Table 2 Advantages and disadvantages of internal, independent and participatory evaluation

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Internal evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full information • Maximises learning • Immediate application of lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited competence • Can avoid difficult issues
Independent evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence • Legitimacy • Speed • New perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incomplete information • Minimal internal learning • Low dissemination • Limited impact
Participatory evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual learning • Lessons applied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low competence • Requires commitment • Slow

Source: OECD 2005.

89. The 2007 questionnaire offered an opportunity to collect information regarding the main actors responsible for conducting evaluation of open and inclusive policy making.

Figure 19. Self-evaluation is the norm Q43



Note: Percentages expressed in terms of the 19 countries who answered question 43.

90. Half of the respondents (50%) indicated that the government units conducting open and inclusive policy making initiatives were also the ones responsible for their evaluation. Internal or self-evaluation is clearly the main option for the 19 countries who answered this part of the questionnaire. External evaluation was far less frequently cited and included: government units charged with evaluation (10%), private sector firms contracted by government (10%) and parliament (10%). Participatory evaluation clearly plays a very minor role with only a few respondents citing civil society organisations (CSOs) as participants in evaluation (5%) or as independent evaluators (5%).

Box 10. Canada: Building on multiple sources of evaluation

The practice of evaluation is well-established in Canada and can involve a range of actors:

- Government departments regularly review their processes or engage in independent reviews.
- Parliament regularly reviews government performance through examination of Departmental Performance Reports and Reports on Priorities and Planning and through Standing Committee studies. Agents of Parliament may also review certain facets of government operations.

Some civil society organisations may also independently report on their experiences and outcomes of policies and programs.

Questions for discussion:

1. **The idea of evaluating public participation is no longer new. Why has practice lagged behind?**
2. **What tools and resources would be most useful to governments seeking to strengthen their capacity for the evaluation of open and inclusive policy making? (e.g. principles, guides, checklists, training, online resources)**

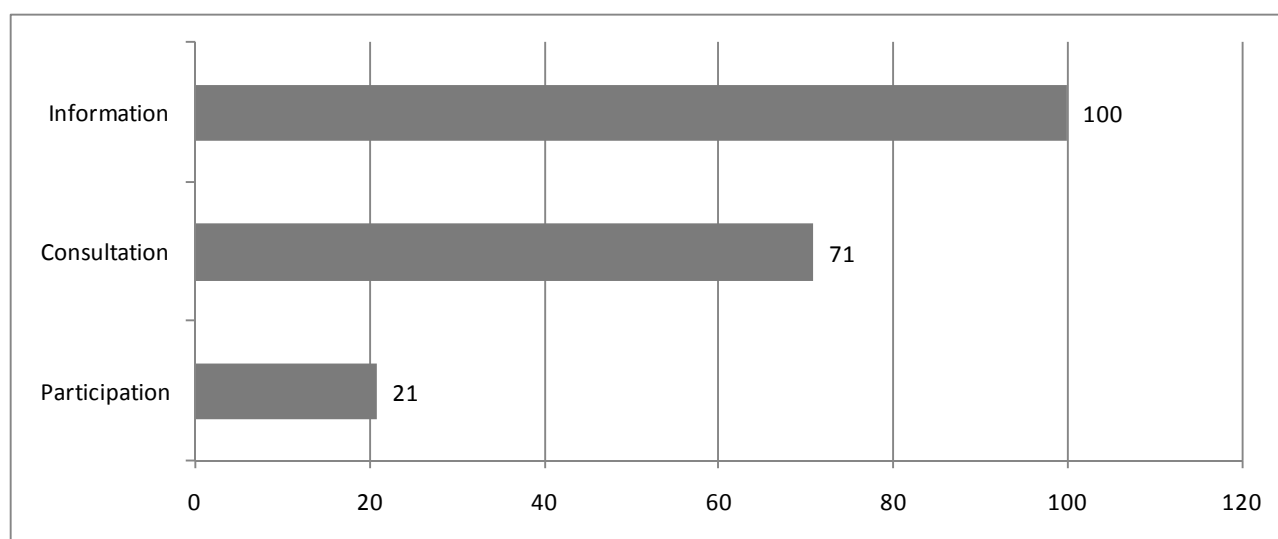
SECTION 5: BEYOND BINARY: LEVERAGING THE PARTICIPATIVE WEB

How are ICT used today in open and inclusive policy making?

91. “The Internet is the tool of choice for OECD Member countries in providing citizens with access to government information anytime, anywhere.”¹² Seven years after the first OECD questionnaire on the use of ICT in strengthening government-citizen relations in 2000, this finding holds true today. All respondents to the 2007 questionnaire indicated that their priority in the use of ICT is for the provision of information.

92. Today, close to three-quarters (71%) indicated that online consultation is also a priority. This represents a far larger share with respect to the beginning of the decade and is reflected in the multitude of country experiences with online consultation on draft policy, plans, programmes and legislation (see Figure 20).

Figure 20. OECD governments use ICT to inform more than to engage people Q33



93. What is more striking, and far less encouraging, is that another finding from the 2001 report appears to be equally valid today, namely: “Governments’ use of ICTs to actively engage citizens in policy-making is extremely limited in all OECD Member countries at the national level.”¹³ Indeed, only 21% of the respondents indicated that using ICT to foster active participation in policy making is a priority.

¹² OECD (2001) *Citizens as Partners*, Paris: OECD, p. 52

¹³ OECD (2001) *Citizens as Partners*, Paris: OECD, p. 56

94. It may well be that this finding *may* be about to change with the current explosion of interest in – and initial tentative use of – ‘participative web’ tools and platforms.

What is the participative web?

95. The defining feature of what many are calling the participative web (also known as Web 2.0 or read/write web) is the ability of users to create, share and link content as they develop communities. A recent OECD report offers the following definition of the concept and its implications:

“The ‘participative web’...is based on intelligent web services and new Internet-based software applications that enable users to collaborate and contribute to developing, extending, rating, commenting on and distributing digital content and developing and customising Internet applications...New web software tools enable commercial and non-commercial service providers to draw on an ever-widening array of content sources and what is often called the “collective intelligence” of Internet users, to use information on the web in the form of data, metadata and user resources, and to create links between them. A further characteristic of the participative web is the communication between users and between separate software applications via open web standards and interfaces.”¹⁴

96. The technical underpinning of these new, user-friendly online tools lies in the shift from the use of HTML¹⁵ programming language to produce classic ‘read only’ websites to the use of XML¹⁶ which allows users to readily create, edit, link and share web-based content.¹⁷

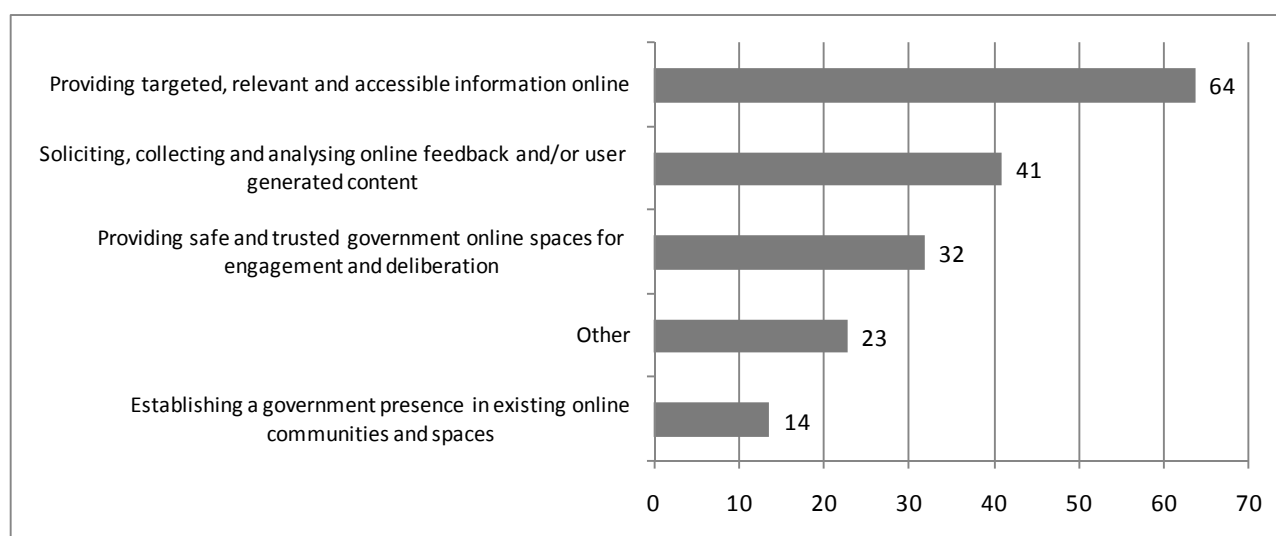
97. Respondents to the 2007 questionnaire indicate that they are beginning to explore some of the new ‘participative web’ options available to them. Given the aggregate nature of these data and the rather large range of tools bundled under each option offered by the questionnaire, these results should be taken as indicative only and handled with due caution. The results do show that more fine-tuned investigation into the actual use and perceived success rate for government use of each of these tools (e.g. RSS feeds, wikis, SecondLife) is clearly needed.

¹⁴ OECD (2007) *Participative Web and User-Created Content: Web 2.0, Wikis and Social Networking*, Paris: OECD, p. 17.

¹⁵ HTML or ‘HyperText Markup Language’ is the predominant markup language for web pages developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

¹⁶ XML or ‘eXtensible Markup Language’ is an open standard for describing data which enables easy exchange of information between applications and organisations.

¹⁷ For a visually compelling account of the potentially far-reaching implications of this technical shift see: “The Machine is Us/ing Us” by Prof. Michael Wesch, Kansas State University on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLIGopyXT_g)

Figure 21. OECD governments are exploring new online options to inform and engage citizens Q34

98. Close to two-thirds (64%) reported that they are providing targeted, relevant and accessible information (e.g. RSS feeds, email alerts, blogs, podcasts, search engines, interactive games, viral videos, multilingual sites, websites meeting W3C accessibility standards). Of the respondents, 41% say they are soliciting, collecting and analysing online feedback and/or user generated content (e.g. online reputation managers, use of ratings, wikis, blogs etc.). Close to a third (32%) are providing safe and trusted online spaces for engagement and deliberation (e.g. shared workspaces, wikis, simulations, interactive games, online discussion groups). While only 14% report establishing a government presence in existing online communities and spaces (e.g. MySpace, SecondLife, popular blogs). Close to a quarter (23%) mention other strategies and tools including: portals (Canada), online consultation on draft laws and regulations (Norway), focus groups and user testing of new online services (France).

99. These fast-paced developments in online platforms and practice require us to update our conceptual ‘map’ of the interactions which take place during policy making and service delivery – and which go beyond the increasingly porous boundary between online and “offline” participation.

Box 11. OECD: designing and launching Wikigender

Wikigender (www.wikigender.org) was officially launched by the OECD Development Centre on 7 March 2008 on the occasion of International Women's Day. Drawing upon the work of the OECD Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, this wiki aims to facilitate knowledge exchange on gender-related issues around the world and to highlight the importance of social institutions such as norms, traditions and cultural practices that impact on gender equality.

As with all wikis, Wikigender's content can be freely accessed, edited and supplemented by any user. As a consequence, the OECD declines all responsibility for the site's content. The main goal remains that of developing a user-friendly platform which will reach out to new communities who are willing to share and discuss their knowledge online. In this respect, Wikigender also serves as a pilot project for the OECD Global Project on Measuring the Progress of Societies (www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum).

How can the participative web improve policy making and service delivery?¹⁸

100. The tools and practices of the participative web can help make both online and face-to-face public participation more open and inclusive. They are transforming three factors which contribute to successful policy making and service delivery:

- **knowledge** is free flowing – from an economy of shortage to an economy of surplus
- **connections** are public – from binary, private and hierarchical to multiple, public and networked
- **actors** are embedded – from atomistic to embedded

101. These developments have several important implications for policy making and service delivery by government:

- **Government is just one of the nodes in the network** -- albeit a large one which is well endowed and highly connected. It is obliged to struggle for the attention of those online, prove its relevance and add value in the same way as any other node.
- **People can be connected even if they are not on the Internet** -- if they are offline, they may enjoy strong connections with others who are also offline. Membership of emerging virtual communities hardly discounts the importance traditional communities.
- **People might be indirectly connected to Internet via others** -- who are already online (e.g. granddaughters, radio journalists, frontline public service providers) who therefore provide a 'conduit' for the two-way flow of information. You don't have to be online yourself to harness the benefits of the Internet if you know, and trust, someone who is.
- **People may be highly connected online and have little or no connection with government** -- bypassing it altogether except for those moments of obligatory contact (e.g. registering births, deaths, paying taxes).
- **People will use their connections to share, compare and verify** -- before placing their trust in the information and services provided by a given node (including government).

¹⁸ The following sections draw heavily upon the content provided in the glossary entry for "Participation 2.0" in the New Zealand State Services Commission (2007) *Guide to Online Participation*. See: http://wiki.participation.e.govt.nz/wiki/Guide_to_Online_Participation/4_Resources/4.3_Glossary#P

Box 12. France: Engaging users in designing online services

In 2004, the Service for the Development of Electronic Government (SDAE - Le Service du Développement de l'Administration Electronique) of the General Directorate for State Modernisation (DGME - Direction Générale de la Modernisation de l'Etat) established a Users/Citizens network. This network is mainly, but not solely, composed of associations and includes representatives for several issue areas related to access: family, rural areas, seniors, consumers, mediators, exclusion, disability, job seekers etc. This network has four main objectives:

1. to associate its members with e-government projects that have an impact on citizens' lives through information and communication actions
2. to support the participation of user representatives in experiments such as online address changes, 'my public service', public service contacts, the launch of a new service « Life changes » on the public service portal www.service-public.fr
3. to provide for exchange of information on innovative projects undertaken by the various members
4. to stimulate discussion on issues of common concern for all actors (e.g. e-government for all, innovative solutions for e-inclusion)

Several tools are used to support this network : general information meetings on e-government projects, specific working groups on issues of access, participation in studies and pilot projects of new services, priority email news alerts, calls for comments.¹

1. See www.modernisation.gouv.fr/info-de-la-semaine/browse/6/article/37/administrati-1/index.html?tx_ttnews%5BuidExclu%5D=151&tx_ttnews%5BdateMAJ%5D=1179829020&cHash=3c2edb9a97

Are we witnessing a paradigm shift?

102. Given what we know today about the importance of social networking (both online and offline), what is striking about the image used by the OECD 2001 report “Citizens as Partners”¹⁹ in its definition of information, consultation and active participation is its depiction of a set of isolated individuals each relating to government on a bilateral basis (see Figure 22 below). The image is entirely silent about interconnected citizens, and the role of these relationships in shaping how individuals access government-held information, services and decision-making processes. With the advantage of hindsight, the OECD 2001 report could be said to represent a **Participation 1.0 model**.

103. The distinguishing feature of a **Participation 2.0 model** is the presence of networks, flexible connections and transient audiences – akin to David Weinberger’s famous description of the Web itself: “small pieces loosely joined”.²⁰ Here, government may indeed ‘push’ information out the door via blogs, RSS feeds and webcasts but cannot foresee how other actors will circulate, share, adapt or react to it. It may launch consultations online, but will then witness multiple interactions and exchanges among participants seeking to clarify, promote and substantiate their positions or undermine those of others. Rather than promoting active participation, governments may well be on the receiving end of e-petitions, spectators in collaborative workspaces and consumers of user-generated content.

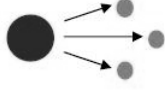
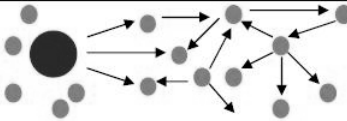
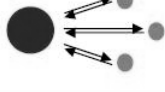
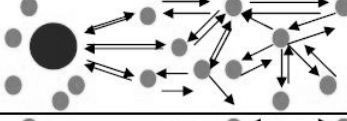
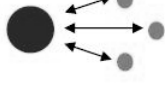
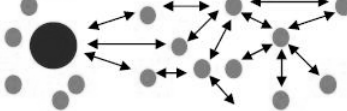
104. This paradigm shift from Participation 1.0 to Participation 2.0 and how this impacts on our use of the Internet, is summed up in Figure x below.

¹⁹ OECD (2001) *Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy making*, Paris: OECD.

²⁰ Weinberger D. (2002) *Small Pieces Loosely Joined: A Unified Theory of the Web*, Perseus Books Group.

Figure 22 – Shifting paradigms: from Participation 1.0 to Participation 2.0

Shifting paradigms: from Participation 1.0 to Participation 2.0

	Participation 1.0 model	Tools	Participation 2.0 model	Tools
Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email alerts • Websites 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blogs • RSS feeds • Tag clouds • Podcasts • Webcasts
Consultation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online forms • Online consultation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online polls • Online surveys
Participation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion forums • Shared online workspaces 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-petitions • Mash-ups • Wikis • Tagging • Virtual worlds

Source: New Zealand State Services Commission (2007) *Guide to Online Participation*.²¹

Box 13. fixmystreet (UK)

<http://www.fixmystreet.com/>

FixMyStreet is a website launched by mysociety.org (see www.mysociety.org) in conjunction with the Young Foundation (www.youngfoundation.org) in February 2007 to help people report, view, or discuss local problems (e.g. graffiti, unlit lampposts, abandoned cars) they have found to their local council by simply locating them on a map. After entering a postcode or location, users are presented with a map of that area. You can view problems already reported in that area, or report ones of your own simply by clicking on the map at the location of the problem. These reports are then sent to the relevant council by email. The council can then resolve the problem the way they normally would. Alternatively, the website allows users to discuss the problem on the website with others, and then together lobby the council to fix it, or fix it directly themselves.

What are the benefits of the participative web?

105. Many commentators have extolled the virtues of collaborative networks for value creation in the private sector. Fewer have examined their applicability to the public sector. This is surprising given that there is arguably a closer ‘fit’ between the basic values of ‘altruistic’ collaboration and those underpinning the public service.

106. Three main benefits of participative web approaches for public policy making and service delivery can be identified:

- **Efficiency:** turning the many separate strands of bilateral ‘traffic’ between individual citizens and government into a public information resource can help reduce administrative burdens for both the administration and the citizen (e.g. www.fixmystreet.com). For example, by publishing online the results of a specific request filed under access to information legislation, citizens (or other actors) can avoid having to file a new request and

²¹ See glossary entry for “Participation 2.0”:
http://wiki.participation.e.govt.nz/wiki/Guide_to_Online_Participation/4_Resources/4.3_Glossary#P

governments can avoid the burden of having to respond to identical requests in the future (e.g. single service counter and Automatic Distribution System for petitions offered by the Ombudsman of Korea <http://www.epeople.go.kr>). Such an approach could offer significant benefits for all non-personal data transactions.

- **Innovation:** online collaborative tools, such as wikis and data-sharing sites²², allow asynchronous collaboration with actors inside and outside government (e.g. wiki.participation.e.govt.nz/wiki). They can be used to pool knowledge and ideas but also harness the power of tagging, ranking, data visualisation and state-of-the-art search engines to sort through information, analyse data and develop recommendations
- **Accountability:** the symbolic power of government seeking to develop policy on an online ‘public space’ is itself an important asset in establishing public trust. So is the level of accountability exacted by online ‘reputation managers’ where all participants are rated on and held accountable for their comments and submissions (e.g. for a private sector example see the LinkedIn answers service www.linkedin.com) Actors external to government are beginning to develop online tools for linking publicly available information in innovative ways and with geospatial information (e.g. local service delivery using Google Maps) (e.g. MapLight.org which links campaign contributions and legislators’ votes www.maplight.org)

What are the limits and challenges of leveraging the participative web?

107. Participative web tools are a means to an end. They do not themselves create social networks – but simply reveal existing ones and facilitate their development. Nor can they solve entrenched problems of coordination, conflict or apathy. They can help pool, tag and circulate knowledge thereby breaking down ministerial silos and transforming the bilateral traffic of citizens’ exchanges with government into a common resource of questions and answers.

108. Wikis, blogs, multimedia and mash-ups of government information are among the many options available. If not today, OECD governments are likely to be actively exploring, and experimenting with, these new platforms and tools in the near future. In doing so they will need to address a number of challenging issues:

- How do people want to use technologies to interact with government policy making processes and services (e.g. personalised interfaces, regular updates)?
- How can government-held information be accessed, analysed and re-purposed by other actors (e.g. mash-ups of service performance and geospatial data)?
- Will government agencies need to design their own participative web platforms or simply join existing ones (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, SecondLife)?
- How will governments ensure privacy and security on non-proprietary platforms (e.g. citizens’ personal data stored on servers located abroad)?
- What guidance and protections do civil servants need when they use participative web tools in their work?

²² For example, data visualisation websites such as IBM’s Many Eyes (services.alphaworks.ibm.com/manyeyes/home), freebase (www.freebase.com) and Swivel (www.swivel.com) where the OECD is an official data source.

Questions for discussion:

- 1. Are governments using 'participative web' tools to engage with their citizens? How? With what success?**
- 2. Can the concept of collaboration inherent in 'participative web' tools and platforms be extended beyond the online world?**
- 3. What about autonomous collective action by citizens? What role does/will government have in supporting/facilitating action by other actors?**
- 4. What rules, cultures and skills will government need to successfully play a role in the 'participative web'?**

SECTION 6: PRINCIPLES TO SUPPORT PRACTICE

Sound principles can help guide practice

109. This section provides OECD member and non members with a set of robust principles validated by comparative experience and international policy dialogue. They serve as a common basis upon which countries may draw when designing policies, programmes and measures for open and inclusive policy making and service delivery which are appropriate to their national context.

110. These principles are based on the “Guiding principles for successful information, consultation and active participation of citizens in policy-making” developed together with OECD member countries and published by the OECD in 2001. They have been reviewed, revised and updated in the light of OECD member country experience since then.²³

Box 14. OECD PRINCIPLES FOR OPEN AND INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING AND SERVICE DELIVERY (2008)

OECD countries recognise that open and inclusive policy making and service delivery has both intrinsic value (by increasing government accountability, broadening citizens’ influence on decisions and building civic capacity) and instrumental value (by improving the evidence base for policy making, reducing implementation costs and tapping wider networks for innovation in policy making and service delivery).

Experience has shown that a clear commitment to the intrinsic value of open and inclusive policy making is needed if governments are to reap the instrumental benefits they seek. These principles have been formulated to support government efforts to improve their practice of, and performance in, open and inclusive policy making and service delivery.

1. Commitment

Leadership and strong commitment to open and inclusive policy making and service delivery is needed at all levels – from politicians, senior managers and public officials.

2. Rights

Citizens’ rights to access information, be consulted and actively participate in policy making and service delivery must be firmly grounded in law or policy. Government obligations to respond to citizens when exercising their rights must also be clearly stated. Independent institutions for oversight, or their equivalent, are essential to enforcing these rights.

3. Clarity

Objectives for, and limits to, access to information, consultation and public participation during policy making and service delivery should be well defined from the outset. The respective roles and responsibilities of people, stakeholders, elected representatives and public servants must be clear to all. Government information should be complete, objective, reliable, relevant, easy to find and understand.

4. Time

Public consultation and active participation should be undertaken as early in the policy process as possible when all options are still open to allow a greater range of policy solutions to emerge and to raise the chances of successful implementation. Adequate time must be available for consultation and participation to be effective. The relative merits

²³ *Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy Making* (2001), Paris: OECD, p. 15.

of single, time-bound initiatives versus ongoing deliberative processes which can build sustainable relationships over time should be considered.

5. Inclusion

All citizens should have equal opportunities to access information, be consulted and participate through their channel of choice (i.e. online and offline). Every reasonable effort should be made to engage with as wide a variety of people as possible, demonstrating respect for their contributions, perspectives and values.

6. Resources

Adequate financial, human and technical resources are needed if public information, consultation and participation in policy-making and service delivery are to be effective. Government officials must have access to appropriate skills, guidance and training as well as an organisational culture that supports their efforts to use both traditional and online tools.

7. Co-ordination

Initiatives to inform, consult and engage citizens and civil society organisations should be co-ordinated among central government units and, where possible, across levels of government to ensure policy coherence, avoid duplication and reduce the risk of “consultation fatigue” among citizens and civil society organisations. Co-ordination efforts should not stifle initiative and flexibility but should leverage the power of knowledge networks and communities of practice within and outside government.

8. Accountability

Governments have an obligation to inform participants of how they use inputs received through public consultation and participation. Measures to ensure that the policy-making process is open, transparent and amenable to external scrutiny and review can help increase accountability of, and trust in, government.

9. Evaluation

Governments need to evaluate their own performance in providing information, conducting consultation and engaging citizens. To do so effectively will require efforts to build the demand, capacity, culture and tools for public participation evaluation.

10. Active citizenship

Societies benefit from active citizens and a dynamic civil society, and governments can take concrete actions to facilitate access to information, encourage participation, raise awareness, strengthen citizens’ civic education and skills, as well as to support capacity-building among civil society organisations. Recognising the autonomous problem-solving capacity of citizens, civil society organisations and businesses will require governments to explore new roles to effectively support such initiatives.

Questions for discussion:

- 1. As this report shows, applying principles in practice remains a challenge for most OECD countries. Are the 2008 principles on open and inclusive policy making useful today?**
- 2. Are there any further revisions/additions needed?**
- 3. Are there any new principles to add (in addition to that of “inclusion” which is new with respect to 2001)?**

PART II: CASES

COUNTRY CASES OF OPEN AND INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING IN OECD COUNTRIES

From comparative to country analysis

In addition to the comparative data gathered through questionnaires for governments and civil society organisations, a lot of in-depth and specific knowledge can be gained by studying examples of citizen engagement practices in different countries and policy areas. The case studies reflect diverse contexts and experiences with citizen engagement. First of all, because the cases centre on different stages of the policy cycle, secondly because they reflect a wide variety of methods of citizen engagement, ranging from participatory budgeting to the use of online tools. Thirdly, because they come from different levels of government: some from the local, some from the regional or state level, some from the national level. And last but not least, the cases come from many different countries, each with its own traditions and history of citizen engagement, ranging from Switzerland where there is a century-long tradition of referenda to Korea, where in a relatively short period of time a huge amount of experience with citizen engagement was gathered.

All these country cases were produced by members of the Steering Group, local and national experts in OECD countries as well as by some of the OECD secretariat's staff. The majority of these cases focus on a particular practice: some of them focus on more general aspects of citizen engagement.

Insights from practice

All case descriptions are built on the basis of a standard format of questions, but were left with enough room for in-depth analysis of the specificities of the engagement initiative. To simplify the comparison between different cases, all cases also present a table representing some of the key features and questions regarding practices of citizen engagement. These tables can be found throughout the case documents, and a summary of these features of the specific practices can be found in Table 1 on the following page.

Although the number of cases and their diversity makes it impossible to draw definitive conclusions or inferences, there are some significant similarities between them that suggest there is more to them than mere coincidence.

Benefits: benefits that are mentioned in most cases include improved knowledge and input to the decision making process for the administration, and an increased knowledge or awareness among participants. To what extent the input from participants was actually used in the decision making process remains unclear in most cases, which raises questions as to the relevance of these engagement initiatives for the decision making process.

Costs: the costs of running an engagement initiative seem to vary widely, being dependent on the type of engagement method used, the number of people involved, whether people are rewarded for their participation etc. A major aspect is whether, like in participatory budgeting practices, participants get to decide over the distribution of funds or not. If this is the case, the costs are higher. However, these costs would otherwise most probably be borne under different parts of the budget of the authority.

Risks: several cases acknowledged the risk of not capturing all voices or even a fair representation of all voices. Several cases also see an increase in the administrative burdens for the organizing institution, and sometimes increased costs. Some cases indicate that if the process takes too long, or runs over several years, consultation fatigue may set in. Some cases mentioned that the voice of the more vocal participants was relatively large. In Canada, this was countered by making use of different methods of engagement that do not solely rely on 'town hall meetings'.

Inclusion: Efforts at engaging a representative part of the entire population seem to differ. In some cases, specific measures are undertaken to strengthen participation from all parts of society. In other cases this

seems less of an issue or is not pursued as benefit in and of its own. The impression arises in some cases that officials do not yet see the relevance of this as an issue.

Evaluation: Here, too, practice varies widely. Some cases of citizen engagement are evaluated by external bodies some are evaluated by a combination of participants and the government organisation responsible for the engagement process. One case has not been evaluated at all. What remains unclear is whether this evaluation focuses on the process of citizen engagement, on the results, on the offsetting of costs and benefits or on a combination of these. In most cases, the focus seems to be most on evaluation of the process. Interestingly enough, previous OECD reports on the topic of citizen engagement also identified a lack of evaluation. There is possibly a slight improvement apparent in the cases presented here, but still evaluation is not always carried out by independent agents and often does not take in account the extent to which the activity has actually brought about change in policy or decisions.

Table 1- Overview of main characteristics of the individual country cases

Location	UK – N-East England	Canada – New Brunswick	Norway - Trondheim	Germany - Bremen	Turkey - Canakkale	Korea – Buk Gu
Topic	Regional Economic Strategy	Self-sufficiency agenda (economic independence of New Brunswick)	Urban planning – new area in municipality	Social and structural improvement of disadvantaged neighbourhood	Participative budgeting in municipality	Participative budgeting in municipality
Costs	Approximately £250,000	Canadian \$ 100.000	NOK 100.000 (€ 12.500) Participants were rewarded NOK 1000 (€ 125).	Approximately € 300.000 (varies per year)	35.000 New Turkish Liras, of which 25.000 for projects	Approximately €17,700 per year (NB: does that include money spent on projects decided upon by participants???)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consultancy fatigue - losing support - increase of administrative burden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - non-representativity of participants and their input - not all input could be accommodated - loss of momentum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limited variety of voices - process did not allow enough time for discussion - rules for discussion unclear - domination of discussion by some participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sustaining participation over long period of time - consensus principle (instead of majority) makes decision making a lengthy process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limitations in (financial) resources - delays in implementation due to lengthy financial processes - difficulties in management of project and participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time consuming and inefficient budgeting processes - increased administrative burdens - increased citizen expectations/demands
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new input to substantive issue at hand - increased understanding of different points of view on substantive issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased awareness among general public - long term model for engagement was created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advice from panel provided to the municipality - better understanding of planning issues for participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthened social cohesion and better quality of life - added value for city authorities - empowered residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - invreased awareness among public - relevant input to substantive issue at hand - better intra-institutional evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - budget information to citizens has improved - increased number of consultations - citizens put more trust in government
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1000 stakeholders involved - mostly experts and/or stakeholders, - no specific effort to guarantee a representation of the general public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hundreds of people involved - citizens, business, NGOs, marginalized groups - the small size and strong community network of New Brunswick was helpful in recruiting participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - invitation to participate was sent to random selection - selection made sure that equal number of men and women, different age groups and inhabitants of different parts of the city were involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - between 40 and 80 people from business, residents etc. - overrepresentation of women, underrepresentation of immigrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participation by the mayor in meetings helps increase number of participants - approx. 0.6% of the total population participated in 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - over 1000 stakeholders from private, public sector, academia, NGOs etc. - the main decision body is comprised of 100 people. - risk of exclusion due to digital divide
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carried out by independent consultancy - focused on process and/or results??? 	Not (yet) professionally evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carried out by independent researchers - Focus on process, not results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carried out by 2 external insitutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation carried out by a joint group of bureaucrats and participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation carried out by joint group of participants and civil servants

1. UNITED KINGDOM - SHAPING HORIZONS IN THE NORTH EAST (SHINE)

Lee Mizell (OECD)

Introduction

Regional development policy in OECD countries often focuses on identifying and promoting sources of regional competitiveness in order to achieve and sustain economic growth. Attention is given to developing multi-sector, place-based policy packages that build on a location's endogenous assets to cultivate, attract, and retain productive firms. Planning for such regional development increasingly involves national, regional and local governments as well as other stakeholders, with the central government taking a less dominant role than in the past. The result is an approach to policy making that prioritises local knowledge, assets, and potential for growth. This case study examines one approach to regional economic planning that took concrete steps to reveal and incorporate this local knowledge: a project in the UK called Shaping Horizons in the North East, or SHiNE.

Shaping Horizons in the North East (SHiNE)

Context

Since 1997, strong emphasis has been placed on devolution and decentralisation of policy making and implementation in the UK through newly created regional bodies. This included the creation of nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) for the eight English regions plus Greater London whose goals include enhancing economic development and competitiveness in their regions. They do so, in part, by leading the development of a Regional Economic Strategy (RES) in cooperation with regional and sub-regional partners in their regions every three years.

The Regional Economic Strategy is a blueprint for economic planning and development. It lays out the region's main economic development priorities, offers a strategic assessment of the challenges and opportunities facing the region, and provides a framework within which stakeholders can act. Developing this document is intended to be a participatory process. In 2003, One NorthEast, the RDA for the northeast of England, launched SHiNE, a 14-month process which complemented the traditional research and consultation process used to develop the RES.

SHiNE was a futures-scenario building project intended to take advantage of local knowledge and create buy-in for the regional economic strategy in the North East region. The 2002 RES had been developed using more traditional planning strategies and SHiNE represented a new approach intended to capture a broader spectrum of views than in the past. Its purpose was two-fold: to directly inform "Leading the Way," the 2006 Regional Economic Strategy and to encourage actors in the region to take collective responsibility for the future.

Summary of key characteristics

Costs	The project is estimated to have cost approximately £250,000. This includes the fee paid to one consultancy (£130,000), as well as the costs of organizing meetings, five full-time staff time, travel costs, etc.
Risks	<p>A number of challenges were anticipated and encountered in the implementation of SHiNE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With an extended process of 14-months, the project ran the <i>risk of consultant fatigue</i>. However, as a completely new exercise it was able to reach out to new actors and engage stakeholders in new ways that helped mitigate the fatigue might have been encountered using a more traditional process, as in the past. In addition, relying on a core team of 120 individuals to move the process forward meant that attrition of a few individuals was not exceptionally costly. • The project also ran the <i>risk of losing support</i> if it was seen to be delaying planning efforts unnecessarily. A change of administration midway through the process meant (re)securing senior management support. • Finally, the project did increase the <i>administrative burden</i> on One Northeast staff – requiring five full time staff and tapping the time of other members of the One Northeast strategy team.
Benefits	<p>SHiNE influenced the North East Regional Economic Strategy (RES) in three ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, it highlighted areas where the previous strategy fell short. • Second, eight priority areas identified by SHiNE contributed to the structure of the new RES. Credit is also given to SHiNE for revealing the importance of “Business, People and Place”- the themes around which the RES and related documents are organised. • Finally, there is some suggestion that the process pushed the boundaries of thinking about economic development in the region. <p>There is also a perception that bringing together stakeholders that were unlikely to meet in other circumstances to exchange of ideas added value in terms of understanding of different points of view on regional development.</p>
Inclusion	The project engaged over 1000 stakeholders in interviews, workshops, and presentations regarding the issues and drivers impacting the region and its economic development. SHiNE engaged or reached the private, public, and voluntary sectors, as well as academics, students, faith communities, and others. No specific mechanisms would put in place to gather opinions from individual citizens, although the project web site listed a toll-free phone line that linked the public with members of the Project Team.
Evaluation	The project was evaluated shortly after completion by an independent consultancy. The results of the evaluation are publicly available. I

Project implementation

The project, instigated and funded by One NorthEast was conducted with substantial support from a consultancy, as well as a communications firm. The process was organized around five teams of actors:

1. A *Project Team* of 5 full-time staff within One NorthEast that led and managed the process;
2. A *Management Group* composed of personnel from One NorthEast and their partners;

3. A *Officers Group* composed individuals who “tested” the different phases of the project;
4. A *Scenario Team* composed of 120 stakeholders from around the region that played the central role in the strategic conversation regarding key drivers, future scenarios, the strategic implications, the RES, and future actions. The team was purposefully selected, largely by invitation, to ensure a broad representation of the individuals and organisations in the region;
5. A *Regional Council* consisting of high-profile individuals invited from across the region that provided strategic guidance to the SHiNE process and opened doors to various organisations. The Council was chaired by the Regional Director of the Government Office of the North East, and included senior executives from the private sector, voluntary sector, and academics; and
6. *Contact groups* of important organisations that could advise the process and confirm research findings

The primary tool for engaging stakeholders was a series of workshops held to develop future scenarios and a related decision making framework. In all, 15 workshops were conducted with the Scenario Team in which the drivers and future scenarios were defined and/or refined, the 2002 RES was strategically reviewed, and actions for the future were proposed. These provided the foundation for the shared vision for 2016 which emerged from the project. The workshops were complemented by interviews, presentations and information dissemination activities.

- Interviews: Prior to undertaking workshops, the Project Team launched SHiNE by conducting approximately 230 interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to reveal local perspectives and knowledge regarding the issues and drivers affecting the region and its future economic development. These stakeholders, who identified largely through personal contacts and were formally invited to participate, included both individuals from the North East region, as well as people from outside the region who could provide an external view.
- Presentations: Over the course of the process the Project Team also provided over 130 presentations and interactive seminars for a variety of groups across all sectors in order to ensure that stakeholders remained engaged throughout. Groups ranged from large, influential organizations to private firms to high school students to grassroots community groups, and ultimately engaged over 700 individuals. These sessions were a mechanism for testing and tailoring the findings emerging from the work process.
- Information dissemination: Information about the SHiNE process was made available online through a web site that contained information about the project and links to a membership-only portal where “SHiNE Communities” could access project reports, background information, research findings, and a forum for posting comments and questions. The web site was complemented by the SHiNE Information Line, a toll-free phone line that linked the public with members of the Project Team.

In all, the project engaged over 1000 stakeholders in interviews, workshops, and presentations regarding the issues and drivers impacting the region and its economic development. SHiNE engaged or reached the private, public, and voluntary sectors, as well as academics, students, faith communities, and others. The risk that outcomes would not be sufficiently representative of regional stakeholders was heavily anticipated. Substantial time was spent trying to ensure a diversity of participants by extending invitations to participate to specific individuals and organisations, as well as presenting the SHiNE process to as many stakeholder groups as possible.

The findings from SHiNE were eventually synthesized and transmitted to One NorthEast RDA for incorporation into the Regional Economic Strategy. In addition to the SHiNE process, the draft economic

strategy was formally submitted for public review in region-wide consultation process lasting from June through August, 2005.²⁴

Managing “risks”

A number of challenges were anticipated and encountered in the implementation of SHiNE. On the one hand, as an extended 14-month process, organisers ran the risk of encountering consultation fatigue. On the other hand, as a completely new exercise, SHiNE was able to reach out to new actors and engage stakeholders in new ways that could overcome the consultation fatigue that might have been encountered had a more traditional process been implemented, as in the past. With a Scenario Team of 120, the loss of a handful of individual participants was also less costly to the process than it could have been had the team numbered 30 or 40 individuals.

With its extended timeline the project also ran the risk of losing support if it was seen to be delaying planning efforts unnecessarily. A change of administration at One Northeast midway through the SHiNE process meant (re)securing senior management support – important for the project’s success.

Finally, the risk that outcomes would not be sufficiently representative of regional stakeholders was heavily anticipated. Time was spent researching the regional organisations and key actors in those organisations to determine who tended to be represented frequently or infrequently. Some individuals asked if they could participate in SHiNE, but most others were invited directly to ensure both demographic and professional diversity. They were encouraged provide their personal perspectives, rather than to represent a particular group or position.

Impact of SHiNE

A substantial amount of time was spent on the SHiNE process, identifying drivers, and building and testing future scenarios. Efforts were made to identify and include a wide range of stakeholders, to keep them engaged, and to incorporate their thinking into the SHiNE process and products. After 14 months and approximately £250,000, it is important to know if the project achieved its goals. Did SHiNE have an impact on the development of the third Regional Economic Strategy in the NorthEast, “Leading the Way”? Did it encourage regional actors to take collective responsibility for the future?

According to the project evaluation, SHiNE influenced the RES in three ways. First, it highlighted areas where the previous Regional Economic Strategy (“Realising Our Potential”) fell short. The lack of attention to the issue of leadership, the inward-looking focus, the lack of prioritization, and lack of emphasis on distinct regional assets and opportunities in the first RES were subsequently addressed in “Leading the Way.” Second, eight priority areas identified by SHiNE contributed to the structure of the revised RES. Credit is also given to SHiNE for revealing the importance of “Business, People and Place”- the themes around which the RES and related documents are organised. Finally, the evaluation notes that as some proposals emerging from SHiNE were deemed to radical for “Leading the Way,” this demonstrates that the process effectively pushed the boundaries of thinking about regional economic development in the region. The usefulness of SHiNE is further reflected in the references to the process and outcomes in multiple One NorthEast strategy documents, such as its 2005-2008 Corporate Plan.

In addition to contributing to the RES, SHiNE was intended to build a sense of regional ownership for future economic development. In this regard, the evaluation points to positive effects of SHiNE on strategic thinking of participants and the value of bringing together a diversity of stakeholders for the

²⁴ This consultation process included opportunities for public and third sector agencies, businesses and citizens to attend large-scale events and to provide written feedback on the RES.

purposes of learning and exchange of ideas. The 2005-2008 Corporate Plan notes that SHiNE “has also acted as a major catalyst for cross-sectoral networking” and goes on to note that the project underscored the continued need to build common understanding, language, and leadership across sectors for economic development. Individuals who participated in the workshops often would not have met under usual circumstances, leading to important exchange of views. However, SHiNE’s longer term effects on the activities of regional stakeholders are less well-documented.

Evolution of SHiNE

In December 2005, SHiNE merged with a programme funded by the (former) UK Department of Trade and Industry called Foresight to create Future Matters, a strategic futures consultancy operating in the region. Spinning off the SHiNE process meant shifting the capacity and knowledge developed as part of the regional consultation process away from One Northeast. However, Future Matters continues to collaborate on multiple projects with the RDA while also working with public, private, and voluntary organisations in the region. One Northeast provides partial funding to Future Matters.

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2. CANADA – NEW BRUNSWICK’S SELF SUFFICIENCY AGENDA

David Hume (Canada)

Introduction

Driven by a world of increasing complexity and interdependence, OECD governments are struggling with how to evolve classically hierarchical structures into more horizontal, open and responsive service delivery and policy development models. An emerging strategy to create this shift is establishing system-wide goals that coordinate public service agencies and potentially enlist other stakeholders including other levels of government, business, civil society and individual citizens in an attempt to achieve results. Open and inclusive policy making is critical to such a strategy, since stakeholders are more likely to buy into a goal they have some say in setting.

From a governance perspective, there are three basic and interconnected difficulties with this approach. First is legitimacy. Who can set goals, and who gets to influence the goal setter? Second is implementation. If we can set the goals, who is responsible for achieving the goals, and how can we hold those responsible to account for their performance? Third is political. Given that coordinating goals are often long term, and political mandates relatively short, does uncertainty about potential changes of government stall engagement? In other words, from a stakeholder perspective, is it worth investing the time and energy in pursuing a goal when the next government might come along and change the game? More fundamentally, are system-wide goals good politics? Do they help win elections?

This case study examines the recent development of the Canadian Provincial Government of New Brunswick’s Self Sufficiency Agenda as a way of exploring emerging answers to these questions.

New Brunswick’s Self-Sufficiency Agenda

Context

The New Brunswick Liberal Party led by Shawn Graham was elected in late 2006 on a platform that included an overarching goal that became the theme of the new government: self-sufficiency for the New Brunswick by 2026.

The goal is a response to a long-term crisis. Located in an economically underperforming region of Canada, New Brunswick has below average population growth as young people born in the province move away to areas of higher wages and more opportunity, while few others are moving into the province to take their place. Moreover, skills shortages due to an aging population mean that the New Brunswick’s labour force could shrink dramatically and unsustainably within the next five years.

Self sufficiency, then, is meant to focus the efforts of government, business, civil society and citizens in changing their situation. The definition of self-sufficiency is still subject to some public debate, but has been variously explained through three benchmarks of success:

1. ***Moving New Brunswick off the Federal Equalization Transfer Payment program.***

The Federal Equalization Transfer Payment (known generically as ‘equalization’) program transfers federally collected to tax dollars to provincial governments to ensure Canadians living in less prosperous provinces receive comparable levels of public services as Canadians living in more prosperous provinces. Examples of services delivered by provinces include health care, education and child protection. As of 2008, three of Canada’s ten provinces are not receiving Equalization Payments: Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

The significance of New Brunswick potentially moving off of equalization payments is hard to overstate. As of 2008, New Brunswick receives the second highest level of equalization funds of all provinces. Getting off equalization would mean that the province funds all its public programs under its own economic steam, signifying a larger population base, higher productivity and higher wages across the province. It would make New Brunswick one of Canada’s economic leaders.

2. ***Increasing income to the national average***

In January of 2008, many have come to see the first benchmark as perhaps too ambitious. The definition of self-sufficiency has been refined to mean raising the income of New Brunswickers to the national average.

According to 2001 Census of Canada Data, the average income in New Brunswick for men and women is \$25,107. The national Canadian average by the same measure is \$32,183.²⁵

Higher incomes will support spending and economic growth for the province, and improve the tax base to enhance key infrastructure such as transport, educational institutions and public healthcare.

3. ***Increase New Brunswick’s population by 100 000 people***

In addition to higher incomes, to support increased economic growth and public investment the province will need more people. This means more immigration, an increased birth rate, repatriation of New Brunswickers who have left and more opportunities and incentives for those within the province to stay.

Statistics Canada estimates that as of October 2007, New Brunswick has a population of 750,851²⁶. To achieve self-sufficiency by 2026, then, it is projected that the population of New Brunswick will be in the range of 850 000 people.

Setting the Agenda

The Premier of the province has consistently emphasized the need to engage all New Brunswickers in progressing towards the self-sufficiency goal. In a conference speech, Premier Graham said: “Self-sufficiency is a 20-year goal. It can’t be solely my agenda or the agenda of a Liberal government. It will need to be the shared dream of the people of New Brunswick.”²⁷

²⁵ See the Government of Newfoundland’s breakdown of census data: http://www.stats.gov.nl.ca/statistics/Census2001/PDF/AvgWage_CanProvTerr_2001.pdf. Accessed January 9, 2008.

²⁶ <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/071219/d071219b.htm>. Accessed January 9, 2008.

²⁷ As quoted in the New Brunswick Telegraph Journal, March 28th 2007. “NB to write book on rules of engagement” by Rob Linke. http://www.nben.ca/environews/media/mediaarchives/07/March/engagement_e.htm

To begin the process of setting the agenda, the Premier appointed two well respected business people—an Anglophone and Francophone, reflecting New Brunswick’s bilingual population—to reach out to private citizens and stakeholders about their views on self-sufficiency and what it would take to achieve it.

The Premier also named a Provincial Advisor on Public Engagement to assist the public service in developing new approaches to getting New Brunswick’s citizens and stakeholders involved in the project of self-sufficiency over the long term.

Together, the Self-Sufficiency Task Force and the Public Engagement Initiative represent the beginning and the future of a long term strategy of open and inclusive policy making to achieve the goal of self-sufficiency.

Table 1. Summary of Key Characteristics

Costs	<p>The Self Sufficiency Task Force is estimated to have cost between \$400 000- \$500 000.</p> <p>The Public Engagement Initiative has a budget of \$100 000.</p>
Risks	<p>A number of challenges were anticipated and encountered in the implementation of the Self Sufficiency Task Force and the Public Engagement Initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Task Force, a risk was creating the right conditions for participants to be heard. There was a concern that certain styles of engagement would overly favor some kinds of groups or individuals over others. The Self Sufficiency Task Force deliberately avoided ‘town hall’ style public meetings, favoring one on one conversations, focus groups, written submissions and online surveys and discussion. • The Task Force wanted to avoid unstructured feedback. There was a concern that feedback from the public would be overwhelming or irrelevant to the essential issues, as the Task Force saw them. The Self Sufficiency Task Force published position papers to provoke focused feedback from participants, improving the chances that the feedback was constructive. • There was a concern that New Brunswickers would see the Task Force process as illegitimate if it did not appear to take their views into account. Using discussion papers to be get reactions to the Task Force’s preconceived ideas on the issue of self-sufficiency, and being upfront about the Task Force’s attitude that it was not beholden to participants to accommodate all points of view meant that expectations about the process were managed. • Both the Public Engagement Initiative and the Task Force risked losing momentum. There was a concern that the Task Force was ‘just another consultation’ destined to gather dust on the shelf. However, the Government’s commitment to respond, and the fact that self-sufficiency is a centre piece of the political agenda in New Brunswick helped improve the chances the report would spark action. Similarly the Public Engagement Initiative Pilots flourished where there was strong senior management support, and suffered where there was less. • Project failures were a risk for the Public Engagement Initiative Pilots. This risk was mitigated by keeping the projects small scale.
Benefits	<p>The projects have created the following benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of key challenges facing New Brunswick among the general public. • Focus of attention and energy from government and stakeholders on solving the crisis.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long term model for public engagement to enhance collaboration in achieving the self-sufficiency goal. • Launch of Self-Sufficiency Government ‘Action Plan’ supported by comprehensive strategies for enhancing public and post-secondary education, investment attraction local governance, and relationships with local First Nations.
Inclusion	<p>Both projects have engaged hundreds of people, from individual citizens to business people to members of civil society organizations and representatives of marginalized groups. New Brunswick is a small province, and has strong community networks that ensure processes do not have to look too far to engage people and groups.</p> <p>In particular, the Self Sufficiency Task Force worked to ensure its feedback was representative by basing its focus groups on a random, representative sample of New Brunswickers. A campaign to raise awareness of the face-to-face meetings was designed to draw in as wide a cross section of New Brunswickers as possible.</p> <p>The Public Engagement Initiative has used different strategies to ensure representative responses depending on the purpose of engagement. Where stakeholders or opinion leaders are the main object of engagement, drawing representation from the right sectors and interest groups (e.g. business, labour, education, media, ethnic groups etc.) has been the main strategy. Where the public has been the object of engagement, public awareness campaigns have been used to draw in participation.</p>
Evaluation	<p>The projects have not been professionally evaluated.</p>

The Self-Sufficiency Task Force

Chaired by two prominent New Brunswickers and supported by a small secretariat of two people, the Self-Sufficiency Task Force began in January 2007 and delivered its final report in May that year. It held focus groups, conducted an online survey, held online discussions and had one-on-one meetings with individuals and stakeholder representatives.

The Task Force produced a series of discussion papers, called ‘Reality Reports’, that made clear their ideas and preconceptions about what the key issues were facing the province, and the steps they felt were necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. Based on these reports: “At the Crossroads”, “An Export Driven Economy” and “Policy Options”, the Task Force invited reactions from New Brunswickers online, in writing, and in person.

The Task Force deliberately held no public meetings. It was their view that public meetings tend to serve only the most vocal participants, and tend to dissuade others despite the value they might add. As a result, they were careful to choose mechanisms that allowed a variety of kinds of interaction for participants, and promised the most value for the Task Force.

Face-to-face meetings and written submissions were favored by participants and the Task Force. These made a significant impact on the thinking of the Task Force members, especially the submissions that came from individual New Brunswickers instead of representatives of interest groups. Indeed, policy options around child care were not on the radar of the Task Force until it was raised consistently by participants in the process.

According to the Secretariat, the Task Force underestimated the resources required to drive very productive discussion in the online forums. While there was a good deal of useful information that came out online, the forums tended to be dominated by a few regular voices rather than a wide cross section of people. In this way they were seen as analogous to public meetings, and thus a poor tool for hearing a range of views on issues.

The Task Force reached out to the public primarily through media presence—interviews on radio and television as well as articles in newspapers. A key strategy for the Task Force was to communicate what was happening in the process and invite participation, but also ensure that the public had no expectations that the Task Force had to accept the views of anyone and everyone who contributed.

Numbers of participants were as follows:

- face to face with nearly 100 groups and individuals,
- commissioned four focus groups with a random selection of between 8 and 12 members per group,
- conducted an online survey that garnered 960 responses
- 69 individuals posted a total of 261 comments to the online forum
- received 420 written submissions from individuals, interest groups, community organizations, academic researchers, educational institutions, local and federal governments.
- The Task Force also received thousands of letters and postcards in support of the forestry industry in New Brunswick.

In May of 2007 the Task Force's report was released, containing ninety-one recommendations and associated timelines for implementation. The Government responded in November that same year with its Action Plan for Self Sufficiency (see the Impact section below for more).

The Public Engagement Initiative

Five small-scale pilot projects have been launched to test and develop a model of public engagement to involve the public and stakeholders in achieving the goal of self-sufficiency:

- The Skills Development project aims at launching an ongoing dialogue that will allow government and stakeholders to begin working together more effectively to prepare New Brunswick's workforce for the future.
- The Wellness Project will engage ordinary citizens and stakeholders from community organizations on issues related to wellness in order to assess their readiness to play a more active role in promoting wellness individually and within their families and communities
- The Climate Change project will engage a group of opinion leaders in a dialogue on the need to reduce greenhouse gases. The aim will be to test the group's willingness to provide public leadership on the issue.
- The Miramichi Action Committee at building a network of community leaders who will be responsible for launching and ongoing dialogue around long-term development in the Miramichi region or New Brunswick, forging a plan to begin making it happen, and moving it forward
- The Sustainable Communities in a Self-Sufficient Province project involves some 35 stakeholders in a dialogue aimed at consolidating the lessons from a community-led initiative to transform five communities in the greater Saint John region into sustainable communities.

Combined with feedback from public servants and politicians in other Canadian jurisdictions, the developing model aims at expanding the planning and policy development process beyond government officials. The model will also seek to describe various purposes and methods for public engagement, including online engagement, with a special focus on helping government learn to become a facilitator and convener of dialogue and action around societal goals, such as environmental sustainability or wellness. The model aims at distinguishing the roles of citizens, stakeholders and government in these processes so as to make them more productive and successful in the eyes of participants.

Due in March 2008, the final report of the Premier's Provincial Advisor on Public Engagement will describe the results of each pilot project and elaborate the public engagement model proposed for take-up by the New Brunswick Government. It is positioned to become a key 'how-to' manual for creating future

collaboration and engagement on the goal of self-sufficiency across New Brunswick.

Impact of the Self-Sufficiency Agenda

It is still early days for the Self Sufficiency Agenda. A key indicator of its success in the eyes of the public, a provincial election, is still years away. From an administrative perspective, it has taken a year for public service departments to become concrete about how their work aligns with the self-sufficiency goal. As of January 2008, plans are being made public and program work is set to begin following the passage of the upcoming provincial budget.

For its part, there are two schools of thought about the impact of the Self-Sufficiency Task Force. The first says that as a beginning point in a twenty year process, the Self Sufficiency Task Force made a strong impact as a blueprint for major changes in New Brunswick. It addressed hard truths about New Brunswick that would have been difficult for political leaders to take on. It has supplied a platform of policy ideas that will help public service departments pursue the ‘transformation’ of the province that the Premier and the Task Force say is necessary for future success.

Moreover, the Task Force has sparked awareness and discussion among New Brunswickers about challenges to their province’s future, and how they may collectively make change. It has also sparked discussions with local governments and the federal government about their roles in contributing to the self-sufficiency agenda. In fact, the Chief Clerk of the Privy Council, the head of the federal public service, is a key collaborator in the Self-Sufficiency Agenda, and meets regularly with counterparts in New Brunswick.

A second school of thought looks to the response from the Government, called “Our Action Plan to Be Self-Sufficient in New Brunswick”, and sees a basic thematic relationship between the final report of the Task Force and the Government’s Action Plan, but little of the detail. The Government’s response included four themes: transforming our economy; transforming our workforce; transforming our relationships; transforming our government. However the commitments under these themes did not include timeframes or resources, and were not directly connected to the recommendations in the Task Force’s report.

So on the one hand, it is possible to see the Self Sufficiency Task Force as making a significant impact in bringing New Brunswickers into a major agenda setting process. On the other hand, it is possible to see a conventional consultation process with a less than satisfactory response from the Government.

As of January 2008, the final report of the Public Engagement Initiative has yet to be released, so it is difficult to assess its impact. From discussions with those involved, however, the final report should chart the future course for bringing New Brunswickers deeper into the process of achieving the goal of self sufficiency. It is likely to depart from typical patterns of consultation (e.g. call for submissions, in camera discussion of submissions and final report with recommendations), and focus on methods of dialogue and deliberation (off line and online) that emphasize collective discussion and collaborative action.

Of course, it remains to be seen if or how quickly the provincial government will implement the guidance in the forthcoming report, though the Government’s Self-Sufficiency Action Plan has made public engagement a priority under its ‘transforming relationships’ theme.

Evolution of the Self-Sufficiency Agenda

The Self Sufficiency Agenda stands out as a novel experiment in governance that has open and inclusive policy making as its foundation for achieving an ambitious socio-economic goal. While still in its early stages, key milestones will be the release of the Public Engagement Initiative report, the March 2008 provincial budget as well as subsequent Throne Speeches and budgets.

The challenge of sustaining the Self Sufficiency Agenda will be both political and administrative. It is at once the central theme of a newly elected Liberal government trying to make its mark, as well as a mission statement for New Brunswick's public service, business community and civil society. Building and sustaining momentum around the goal will require a shift from the planning of 2007-2008 into concrete actions for 2008 and beyond, supported in large part by local and federal governments. Collaboration and good relationships at all levels will be critical. The recent establishment of an Office of Self-Sufficiency lead by a Deputy Minister should help in coordinating these efforts.

The Self Sufficiency Agenda raises interesting political questions. Should the idea of self-sufficiency truly engage the public service, stakeholders and citizens, the inertia may be impossible to resist. On the other hand, if the current government's plans fizzle, they may become vulnerable, though it could be difficult for a new government to change course too quickly given the focused efforts currently underway.

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3. NORWAY - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN URBAN PLANNING

Jon Fixdal, Teknologiradet (Norway)

Introduction and background

The purpose of the Norwegian Board of Technology's project on local democracy and urban planning has been twofold:

- First of all, to develop a method for participation from non-organized citizens in planning processes according to the Norwegian Plan and Building Act.
- Second, to organize a participatory process according to this method.

The project's origin lies in the awareness that urban development affects and engages many citizens throughout Norway. At the same time, better methods for public participation in planning processes, particularly from ordinary, non-organized citizens, have been requested on several occasions, most notably in 2003 by a governmental commission assigned the task to make proposals for revisions of the Planning and Building Act.

The Norwegian Board of Technology has wide ranging competence about participatory methods for technology assessment. Understanding "technology" in a broad sense, the Board is of the opinion that urban development may be understood as technological development. Technology comprises not only technological artefacts, but also systems which connect people, technological artefacts, material structures (e.g. roads and buildings) and technology-related enterprises (e.g. those associated with production, maintenance and transportation).

With this in mind, the Board of Technology wished to investigate closer whether venues might be created where affected, non-organized citizens may be actively involved in urban planning processes. We also wished to investigate whether it is possible to promote fruitful discussions among the participants, so that they may debate planning issues, and express their opinions about these issues to policy makers.

Urban planning in the municipality of Trondheim

The focus of the project was the proposed transformation of the Tempe area in the south of Trondheim, Norway's third largest city. The local politicians had decided that this urban area should be renewed according to the following criteria:

- Up to 10,000 new white-collar workplaces
- 1,500 new residences/apartements
- A new bridge over the large river Nidelva
- There should be local services such as retail, shops, bakeries etc, with a connection to new and existing public transport, the main road system and attractive public space.

Based on these criteria an architecture firm had designed a concept study with five different strategies for development of the area. The concept study, called “5 x Tempe”, served as background information to the participatory process.

In the space of four gatherings, the citizens’ panel learned about the municipality’s plans for reforming the Tempe area, they were introduced to the concept study “5 x Tempe”, they met affected parties, and they carried out a field visit to Tempe. And, of course, they discussed among themselves how the Tempe area should be transformed. The process started with announcement for participants in the largest regional newspaper on 3. June 2004. It ended on 27. October the same year when the report from the lay panel was handed over to the mayor of Trondheim.

Design of the method used in the project

When designing the participatory process, the main requirements were:

- The process should allow participation from non-organized citizens.
- The participating citizens should be provided the possibility to learn about the planning process for the Tempe-area, its aims and time schedules.
- The participants should be able to get the views and opinions of stakeholders about the planned transformation of the Tempe area.
- The process should provide the participants the time required to identify what topics and problems they wanted to address in their joint statement, as well as time to discuss the topics among themselves and to write a final statement.

Furthermore, the Norwegian Board of Technology emphasized that participation should be possible within the frames of an ordinary, everyday life. Hence, it should not require taking time off work, and not be too time consuming.

In designing the process the Norwegian Board of Technology took inspiration from the Danish Consensus conference model, and the German Planning Cell model. Both processes allow panels of 14-25 non organized citizens to learn and deliberate about important policy issues, and provide policy makers with advice.

The process

The process had the following key elements:

- A panel of 14 non-organized residents of Trondheim
- Four meetings, each lasting four hours, and with two weeks in between each meeting.
- The writing of a statement which was handed over to the Mayor of Trondheim.

In greater detail, the process ran as follows:

- Via announcements in the local press, and invitations to 1000 randomly selected residents in Trondheim, the Norwegian Board of Technology recruited 14 participants to the panel. The participants were from 18-72 years of age, equal number of each sex, living all over Trondheim city, and having different educations and professions. The 14 citizens were not a representative sample of the residents of Trondheim (which would have required a far larger group of participants), but a broadly composed group of engaged, non-organized citizens. The idea is that when composing such groups where the participants differ on important socio-economical factors, they will bring to the fore a majority of the opinions that any other group composed by the same criteria would produce. Whether or not this actually happens is of

course an empirical questions which would require multiple panels working in parallel. The Norwegian Board of Technology has not conducted such a study, but our experience with similar process suggests that such panels seldom, if ever, are accused of leaving out important issues.

- Prior to the first meeting, the panel members received the concept study “5xTempe”. The purpose was to prepare the participants about the information they would receive during their first meeting, and to allow them to develop independent thoughts before engaging in debates with the other panel members.
- The first meeting had a fourfold purpose:
 - 1) The members should get to know each other.
 - 2) They got a brief introduction to the project and the four meetings.
 - 3) One person from the Plan and Building department in Trondheim county informed the participants about urban planning and the concept study, and discussed those with the members of the panel.
 - 4) The panel members identified a series of questions that would be the focus for the next meetings.
- The second meeting started with a field visit to Tempe. Thereafter, the panel members had three lectures. The first was a person from the Norwegian Public Roads Administration describing the traffic situation in the area. The second were a representative from the municipality of Trondheim describing green areas and recreational values. The third was from the Trade Union of Trondheim, outlining their view on business development in the Tempe area. During and after the lectures the participants were able to engage in discussions and dialogue with the lecturer.

Afterwards, the panel summarized what insights they had gained, both from the tour and the lectures. The lecturers and their topics had been chosen by the Board of Technology, but the Panel asked the Board of Technology to organize presentations from two other parties; someone currently doing business in the Tempe area and one from a professional property developer.

- The third meeting started with the two presentations requested by the panel members. Thereafter the panel made a list of five prioritized concerns that they meant should guide the transformation of Tempe. These should serve as the point of departure for the writing of their final recommendations at their last meeting.
- The fourth and final meeting begun with a Panel discussion of the five topics. The main purpose was to create a common understanding of the issues, before they were written down as recommendations to the politicians. The panel then worked in five groups, each responsible for one topic. After the first version, all members read the document individually, then followed by a plenary discussion. At the end of this meeting, the panel did not manage to finish their recommendations. Therefore, one male and one female panel member were selected by the Panel to finish the report in cooperation with the Board of Technology. The final edition was circulated between the members and smaller details were edited.
- On 27. October, two months after the first meeting, two representatives of the lay panel met with the Mayor of Trondheim and handed over their recommendations.

The recommendations

The main arguments in the joint statement from the citizens' panel do not correspond with the municipality's plans for the area. The citizens' panel concluded that the construction of new residences in Tempe is incompatible with the current traffic situation, and the panel therefore argued that the main road of entrance to Trondheim from the south should be located underground. The panel also questioned the need for 10,000 new white-collar workplaces in the area. The panel members believed that the area's centralised and pleasant location along the Nidelva suggests an increased focus on residential areas. The panel also desires a change in the area's commercial structure from today's industry and transportation-heavy enterprises to more offices and stores, something which could be combined more easily with housing.

The statement is now an appendix in the case documents and afforded the same status as other contributions to the municipality's planning activity. It is up to the municipality to assess how much importance the statement shall be given in the further work of transforming the Tempe area.

In 2005 the urban planning process for Tempe was put on hold until a new master area plan for the whole city of Trondheim was in place. This plan was approved in September 2007, and the further progress for the Tempe plan has not yet been decided upon.

Since the main purpose of the project of The Norwegian Board of Technology was to test out the participatory process resulting in the recommendations from the lay panel, the Board has not kept track of how the recommendations have been used by the city administration and politicians.

Evaluation of the project

The Norwegian Board of Technology evaluated the participatory process. The evaluation shows that it is possible to involve regular, non-organised citizens in urban planning processes, and that citizens can make valuable contributions these processes. The process also showed that it is possible to create informed and fruitful discussions among the panel members.

An important prerequisite for such processes to work, is that the panel members are given sufficient time to become acquainted with one another. There must also be clear-cut rules on how the plenary discussions are to take place. In such a context it is important to ensure good process facilitation. Some adjustments could be made to the method:

- Increase the number of people asked to participate in the panel, to make up a broader selection of applicants and members of the panel.
- Extend the duration of the process. Organizers could, for example, replace two of the evening meetings with a weekend. This would allow the panel members more time to get acquainted, and further time for discussions. There would also be more room for lectures and information meetings.
- Establish clearer rules for discussions, and if necessary, guide the discussion more. This is to ensure that all members have an equal say and influence over the final statement. In the Tempe project, four panel members tended to dominate the discussions.

The Board of Technology believes that the participatory method and the positive experiences from the participatory project in Trondheim may be of benefit for others who wish to involve concerned citizens in planning processes.

Costs

The cost of the process was approximately NOK 100.000 (€ 12.500). This includes all project expenses (rent of conference facilities, newspaper announcements for recruitment of participants, refreshments

during the meetings, travel expenses for participants and the two employees of the Norwegian Board of Technology who worked with the project, etc). However, it did not include the wages of the two employees.

Each panel member received a payment of NOK 1000 (appr. € 125) for their participation. This is mainly a symbolic payment, in appreciation of their contribution as engaged citizens.

Both the representative from Trondheim county, and the five persons who gave lectures during the three first meetings, worked free of charge.

Table 1. Summary of Key Characteristics

Costs	The cost of the process was approximately NOK 100.000 (€ 12.500). Participants were rewarded NOK 1000 (appr. € 125) for their participation.
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher number of participants would have ensured a broader selection of panel members, and possibly a wider variety of voices. • The process was possibly too short to ensure enough time for panel members to get acquainted, and enough time for discussions, lectures and information meetings. • The rules for discussions were not completely clear • Some panel members tended to dominate the discussions, more guidance may have increased input from those who were not as prominent in discussions.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advice from the citizens panel was provided to the municipality (NB: what result has that had on decision making?) • Better understanding of planning issues for participants
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A random selection of all citizens was invited to participate, and a selection was made that consisted of equal numbers of men and women, different age groups and people living in different parts of the municipality.
Evaluation	Evaluation was restricted to the process of engagement, not to the actual results and how they influenced the decision making process.

4. GERMANY - CIVIL PARTICIPATION IN A DISTRESSED URBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD: TENEVER, BREMEN

Anna Di Mattia (OECD)

Introduction

Many German cities have experienced spatial segregation and the decline of some neighbourhoods. The problems of distressed urban areas are multi-dimensional and the outcome of complex interactions between economic, social and spatial factors. Disadvantaged neighbourhoods tend to be characterised by high unemployment rates, a poor physical environment, social and economic exclusion, low educational attainments, high crime rates, lack of infrastructures and service delivery and a general sense of despair among residents. The large numbers of migrants who tend to accumulate in these distressed urban neighbourhoods place additional stress on these neighbourhoods and the individuals living in them. In the past most regeneration efforts were focussed on improving the physical space but recently, initiatives have centred to improve the social infrastructure of distressed neighbourhoods. Whilst some initiatives use a top-down approach there is increasingly a shift towards explicitly involving local residents in improving their neighbourhood. Participation on the local level can empower people and give a sense of ownership and control. However, people with a low socio-economic background, young people or migrants may be shy to articulate their views or lack the rhetoric skills to express their opinions in public fora and their opinions and may not be taken serious. In addition, state representatives may not be comfortable to relay power and (binding) decision making to ‘the people’.

WiN – Wohnen in Nachbarschaften (Living in Neighbourhoods) and Soziale Stadt (Districts with Special Developments Needs - Socially Integrated Cities)

Context

The communal project WiN – Living in Neighbourhoods was launched on 8 December 1998 by the city state of Bremen in Northern Germany to improve ten deprived neighbourhoods. It is horizontally organised involving all relevant city and Land departments and over 800 projects have been realised so far. WiN goals are threefold:

1. improving the living conditions in distressed urban areas;
2. developing local engagement of citizens and;
3. cooperation between local actors. The project gives room to local actors to determine the exact contents to ensure that it fits local realities.

‘Soziale Stadt’ (Districts With Special Development Needs - Socially Integrative City), a joint federal and Länder programme to foster participation and cooperation, signifies a new integrative political approach to urban district development. The programme is managed under the auspice of the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs (BMVBS), represented by the Federal Office for Building and

Regional Planning (BBR), who commissioned the German Institute of Urban Affairs (Defy) to support the programme for the initial implementation phase (1999 - 2003). A nationwide network was set up, providing onsite programme support in 16 Socially Integrative City pilot districts (among them Bremen) and designing a programme evaluation system. The thematic focus covers all relevant topics ranging from strategic fields of activities such as neighbourhood management to activation and participation. Substantive activity areas include: employment; qualifications and training; accumulation of neighbourhood assets; social activities and social infrastructure; schools and education; health promotion; transport and the environment; urban district culture; sports and recreation; integration of diverse social and ethnic groups; housing market and housing industry; living environment and public space; image improvement and public relations and; community living in the districts.

The high degree of thematic, strategic and location overlap between WiN and Soziale Stadt led the authorities in Bremen to link both programmes to create synergy effects. Combining the resources and commitment of two programmes may be one of the factors why Tenever, a distressed neighbourhood in Bremen, has implemented more projects than any of the other ten pilot neighbourhoods.

Tenever is one of the ten deprived neighbourhoods that were selected to participate in WiN – Soziale Stadt. Tenever is a peripheral neighbourhood built on a greenfield site on the eastern outskirts of Bremen, a city state²⁸ in Northern Germany. The high-rise buildings were constructed in the early 1970s and are home to ca. 6500 people in 2635 flats. About 82% of residents are foreigners (including ethnic Germans) originating from 88 countries. The population is characterised as being particularly young. Approximately 41% of Tenever residents receive unemployment benefits. Tenever, approximately 13 kilometres away from the city centre, is not served by an underground train or train but relies instead on a bus service which takes about 30 minutes to the city centre.

The high fluctuation of residents is an obstacle to achieve sustained participation in Tenever. Residents with a degree of choice leave for other neighbourhoods after an average flat occupancy rate of 9 years. This is a short period considering that the average flat occupancy rate in the ten distressed WiN areas is nearly twice as large with 17 years. A constant need to integrate recent immigrants puts additional pressure on the neighbourhood. Between 2004 and 2008, the high-rise buildings are being renovated and unoccupied buildings are demolished. The anticipated rent increase as well as moving residents of buildings that will be demolished to other flats has caused concern among residents.

Summary of key characteristics

Costs	Tenever receives ca. €160,000 per year from WiN and a budget of €150,000 (2005), €330,000 (2006) and €135,000 (2007) per year from “Soziale Stadt” (Districts With Special Development Needs - Socially Integrative City). The total budget per year varies accordingly. In 2008 Tenever received €160,000 from WiN and €140,000 from Social Stadt and €80,000 from LOS.
Risks	A number of challenges were anticipated and encountered in the implementation of

²⁸ The city state Bremen, together with Bremevenhaven, is one of 16 Bundesländer that form the Federal Republic of Germany.

	<p>WiN – Soziale Stadt in Tenever.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining citizens’ participation over long periods of time can be challenging. The evaluation in 2004 has shown that citizens are more likely to get involved if the projects were time-bound and on a specific issue that concerns them directly. • In the district group the consensus principle is used to reach a decision. The consensus principle, unlike the majority principle, can be a lengthy process and risks that results are attained on the lowest common denominator which may create a sense of dissatisfaction among decision makers and participants?. However, since participants are forced to openly communicate in order to find a viable solution more innovative decisions may be reached. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a risk that the participatory process in Tenever is not sufficiently democratic as the district group members are not democratically elected to represent their neighbourhood. 2. Transparency in the decision-making process is sometimes lacking according to some project leaders. 3. Local projects that were implemented in Tenever were very often initiated by the professional project leaders and not local residents. 4. A clear strategic orientation is sometimes missing and there is a lack of objective criteria to assess and evaluate projects. <p>However, citizens play an active and decisive role when it comes to evaluating and approving projects. In fact, the high competency in evaluating and assessing new projects by residents contributes to deeper local ownership of the projects.</p>
<p>Benefits</p>	<p>WiN – Soziale Stadt contributed to cohesion in Tenever in three ways:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">First, it highlighted the situation in Tenever and there is a perception that the participation of residents in neighbourhood management added value for city authorities in terms of understanding the points of view and specific needs of local residents.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Second, actively participating in the district group meeting with all actors, including city and Land administrators empowered residents.</p> <p>Finally, it improved overall quality of life in Tenever as suggested by the evaluation report. The principle strength of the district group is its high competency in evaluating and approving projects which aim to improve the overall quality of Tenever.</p>
<p>Inclusion</p>	<p>The project puts local residents at the core of decision making as all projects have to be approved by the district group which is open to all residents and meets once a fortnight in Tenever. The composition of the district group tends to change each time but women tend to be somewhat overrepresented and migrants underrepresented.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>WiN and Soziale Stadt in the 10 neighbourhoods were evaluated in 2004 by two external institutions. The evaluation approach was holistic and included reviewing the programmes, their impacts and assessing to what degree previously determined goals were reached as well as appraising the design, governance and prospect. Both programmes contributed to significantly improving the physical and social situation.</p>

The evaluation also emphasised that many problems that exist in distressed urban neighbourhoods such as unemployment are problems that go beyond what a relatively small urban reneration programme can do and require changes in society at large. The evaluation identified the merging of two urban reneration programmes – WiN and Soziale Stadt – as having resulted in a more efficient financial and human resources mangement. The results of the evaluation are publicly available.

Programme implementation

Setting the stage: It was recognised from the start that inclusion in the decision making process is vital since it creates a sense of ownership and pride and subsequently makes projects more sustainable. This is particularly important considering that WiN – Soziale Stadt programme funds will eventually expire. Improvements in the social sphere cannot be made from the outside but require support from within. Local participation can also integrate residents who feel far away from decision-making centres. A salaried project manager with a background in Social Work for each pilot neighbourhood is the first contact point for residents and any group who wishes to run a project in Tenever. The district manager organises and moderates the project group meeting, brings different actors together, and is responsible for initiating and managing projects as well as for setting priorities in the project group. Tenever also has a neighbourhood office.

The programme relies for its decision making on the district group which meets every five weeks. Working groups to develop specific projects - for example to enlarge the youth centre into a veritable centre for children, youth and adults - meet on an ad hoc basis. Every meeting is organised around five points. i) questions and problems; ii) report of actions taken since the last meeting; iii) updated information regarding the renovation of Tenever; iv) updates regarding WiN – Soziale Stadt projects and funding; and v) any other business. In addition, the district group also chooses a political focus theme, or example ‘Pisa and Schools in Tenever’. The group is a forum for exchanging information and to discuss problems directly with responsible officials. The first two points in particular paint a long-term picture of residents’ evolving priorities and worries which should be reflected in the various projects. The project group has become one of the pillars of community life with 40 to 80 people participating in each meeting. Approved projects get the ‘WiN Seal of Approval’, a prerequisite before a project can be considered by the administration and implemented. The district group can have a huge impact on behalf of Tenever’s residents. For example, the district group negotiated to convince a well-known low-price supermarket to open a branch in Tenever. The district group meetings typically last three hours. The district group’s work includes the following areas:

- Neighbourhood management and lobbying;
- Facilitating local citizens self-help and organisation;
- Developing and implementing Tenever’s rehabilitation;
- Advisory service to all interested parties;
- Implementing WiN;
- Liaising with the authorities, city council and building society;
- Networking;
- Collaboration and co-ordination mechanisms;
- Public relations; and

- Initiating and steering of all activities and plans related to Tenever and representing Tenever during official events.

Each year in autumn the annual WiN – Soziale Stadt workshop is organised by the district manager. During the workshop a stock-taking takes place to evaluate which projects worked well and how to improve projects and the process. Based on the original WiN and Soziale Stadt frameworks a list of objectives for the coming year is drawn up by the district managers and all interested parties can log their new project proposals. The district manager spends the next two months discussing each project with the different actors to get a better picture of which projects have the best chance of being realised and to concentrate interests and resources. The revised list of projects is then presented and discussed in the next district group meeting until a consensus is reached and a final list of projects with a budget is adopted. It can happen that a project is rejected at a later stage. Projects can also be proposed later during the year, permitted that there are still funds left.

Sustaining Participation: Prior to establishing WiN –Soziale Stadt, an urban amendment project was initiated in the 1980s under the auspice of the Senator für Umwelt, Bau, Verkehr und Europa to improve the physical side of distressed neighbourhoods including Tenever. As part of this project a district group was established in 1989 so that residents were already familiar with the local participative process when WiN – Soziale Stadt was implemented. The same district manager has headed Tenever’s district group since its establishment. Having the same district manager for 19 years gives a high degree of continuity, institutional memory, a wealth of experience and solid working relationships with all actors which has certainly contributed to the success of local participation in Tenever. Once a year a ceremony to appreciate and thank particular engaged local residents is staged in Tenever and the “golden skyscraper” is awarded to worthy individuals and groups.

Information dissemination: Information is distributed through various channels thereby maximising its outreach potential. Information about the work and decisions taking by the district group is made available online through a regularly updated website. The website is complemented by posters, flyers, blackboards in the neighbourhood, and an information stall in the local shopping centre. Minutes of the meetings are also mailed to interested citizens upon request. Tenever’s own TV show on a public television channel – Quaak Kanal - is aired once a month to inform local residents about what is going on in their neighbourhood. The evaluation showed that WiN – Soziale Stadt is well known among residents.

In all, the district group is very lively and engages between 40 and 80 people. The project manager organises the participatory process, bringing together different actors, initiating and organising projects as well as giving a general direction of the project work. In Tenever everybody who lives, works and is in any way responsible is invited to attend the meetings of the district group with the same right to speak. Besides residents and local business owners, Land and local politicians, Land and local administrators, housing associations, church and mosque representatives, charities and housing associations attend the meeting. Women tend to be somewhat overrepresented and migrants underrepresented. Young people are more like to attend if something that is of concern to

them is being discussed, for example constructing a skateboard ramp or converting an empty shop into a gym.

Managing “risks”

A number of challenges were anticipated and encountered when citizens were asked to participate in the decision making process. First, unrealistic expectations of what participation on the local level can achieve and to what degree underrepresented segments of societies such as migrants get involved have to be managed. Some migrants also face language barriers which prevents them from fully participating in the district group.

There is a risk that the participatory process in Tenever is not sufficiently democratic. First, although district meetings are open to anyone the district group members are not democratically elected to represent their neighbourhood. Second, transparency in the decision-making process is sometimes lacking according to some project leaders. In addition, there is a strong presence of professional actors in these meetings. There is a risk of having a de facto top-down approach that is not embedded in the community. Local projects that were implemented in Tenever were very often initiated by the professional project leaders and not local residents. Finally, a clear strategic orientation is sometimes missing and there is a lack of objective criteria to assess and evaluate projects. Each project proposal cannot be evaluated in all thoroughness during the annual workshop or in the district group due to time restraints so that a basis for evaluating projects during the decision making process is lacking. An objective set of criteria which form a clear strategic orientation is still missing despite defined priorities. However, citizens play an active and decisive role when it comes to evaluating and approving projects. In fact, the high competency in evaluating and assessing new projects by residents contributes to deeper local ownership of the projects.

Impact of WiN – Soziale Stadt

Merging WiN, with its focus on social improvements, and Soziale Stadt, with its focus on structural improvements, has been seen as a chance to solve highly complex structural and social problems. The combined programmes contributed a greater identification of residents with their neighbourhood and a greater capability to solve or ease some of the issues facing Tenever residents. It prevents Tenever from becoming a social hot spot and contributes to more stability and peaceful relations among neighbours.

WiN –Soziale Stadt is a landmark initiative in dealing with social and structural issues in distressed urban neighbourhoods. It was the first time an integrative and complex programme was launched on a large scale. A noticeable improvement regarding the structural and social situation was measured in Tenever. This has also been verified by district police records. Efforts are made to include as many local residents as possible in the district group meetings and projects through effective media dissemination. During the programme phase an increase in project activities and participation of local residents was measured. In many cases this was also the first time that different actors, that is all relevant Land and city authorities, local working groups, housing associations, NGO, etc. worked effectively and continuously together.

However, WiN – Soziale Stadt’s longer term sustainability is less well-documented. There is a danger that if all WiN – Soziale Stadt funds, including stabilising or ‘phasing out’ funds, are withdrawn the level of activity may decline, although this is not likely to happen in the near future. Both WiN and Soziale Stadt have been approved until 2010 and the strong political will in Bremen to improve distressed urban areas such as Tenever suggests that these programmes will continue in one form or another.

Evolution of WiN – Soziale Stadt

In 2004 an external evaluation was carried out by two independent research institutes “Institut für Stadtforschung und Strukturpolitik GmbH, Berlin (IfS)“ and „Forschungsinstitut Stadt und Region, Bremen (ForStaR)“. Both institutions came to a positive conclusion regarding the impact and organisation of WiN – Soziale Stadt in the ten pilot neighbourhoods. Since January 2005 the programme continues in a slightly different format and financing modus to take account of improvements that have been made in some districts. Although Tenever has gained from WiN – Soziale Stadt, it remains one of the neighbourhoods that warrants continued support from this programme.

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5. TURKEY – PARTICIPATIVE BUDGETING IN ÇANAKKALE

Bilal Özden, Prime Ministry (Turkey)

The changes and developments in the public sector have brought about the need to review and improve the principles and procedures, objectives and targets of administration in local governments. The municipalities that use the city funds through the authority they receive from the dwellers are now obliged to restructure the decision making procedures and to determine new strategies. In Çanakkale, the first examples of active citizenship and partnership relations go back to 1960s. Modern examples based on today's governance and management principles began with the establishment of the City Council in 1996, it was followed by Local Agenda 21 and City Council²⁹ activities and it is still in progress today.

The ideas, applications and projects originated in this period have been realized by the municipality administration with the motto "*We Will Administer Together*". Partnership and active citizenship and their effect on-interaction with the city and people were evaluated and a number of negative elements in the decision making process were identified. These negative elements can be summarized as:

- limited participation mechanisms,
- inefficient participation,
- monopoly created by certain groups,
- decrease in the interest of citizens in time, etc.

The first concrete step in overcoming these problems was taken with the preparation of Çanakkale Municipality 2006-2010 Strategy Plan prepared by the municipal council which is the decision-making body of the municipality, with the full participation of the municipality personnel. Non-governmental organizations, institutions and agencies, 45 stakeholders from the private sector and nearly 2000 individuals took active part in the process and the joint work which has an effect not only on the outputs but also on the results. The following mission and principles were agreed upon in cooperation with

²⁹ The City Council is composed of the representatives of the following individuals, institutions and agencies.

- a) Highest ranking civil authority or his/her representative,
- b) Deputies of the region of the municipality,
- c) Mayor or deputy mayor,
- ç) Maximum 10 representatives from public institutions and agencies to be determined by the governors in cities and by sub-governors in districts,
- d) Representatives to be selected among the members of the municipal council. The number of representatives should not exceed 30% of the total number of the council,
- e) Representatives to be selected among the members of the provincial council. The number of representatives should not exceed 30% of the total number of the council,
- f) Maximum 10 representatives among the headmen (muhtar),
- g) Representatives of the political parties,
- ğ) One representative from the university, if any. If there are more than one, one member for each,
- h) Representatives of public professional institutions, trade unions, notaries, bar council, cooperatives, unions, related associations and foundations,
- ı) One representative each from the council and working groups established by the city council.

citizens: “Local administration acting by the principles of participatory democracy and governance” and “City Management Achieving Urbanization”.

The need to adopt a new administration model emerged to ensure participation not only in the strategic planning phase but also in the decision making process and city management. Another aim of this model is to allow citizens to decide on the allocation of resources. Our municipality is of the opinion that one of the ways to achieve it is to sample “budgeting and implementation” methods. It undertook a number of projects to this end. General principle in this new process was to grant the citizens the right to participate in decision-making and budgeting processes. Knowing that ensuring public participation in a difficult issue as budgeting requires informing the people, awareness raising activities were undertaken. The information was disseminated through public meetings, focus group meetings, and information brochures, visual and print media for approximately 3 months.

A structure similar to “participatory budgeting” which was first introduced in Porto Alegre Brazil in 1989 and which is used today in hundreds of cities in various countries in different forms was selected as the method of including the budgeting right of the citizens in intuitional budgeting and implementation process. A parallel and simpler participatory model has been put into practice as it requires a long time to establish institutional capacity and it is necessary to attract citizens until the method is settled. All these activities were designed in three steps for the model stakeholders determined by the Çanakkale Municipality. The main components and roles of the model are as follows:

1. Municipality:

- To determine the Budget Policies with Multi Annual Investment Plan in order to make the best use of the current resources for providing the best service possible.
- To improve financial management and service provision quality.
- To ensure the sustainability of the participation ability acquired in the financial management system of the Municipality.
- To submit the results of participatory budgeting activities, Evaluation Reports of the Investment Planning Committee³⁰ to the City Assembly and City Council and to evaluate them.

2. The Headmen And The Inhabitants:

2.A. The Headmen (Mukhtar)

- To assist in the organization of the Participatory Budget meetings
- To submit the needs of the neighborhood to the Municipality
- To inform the inhabitants
- To participate in the works of the Investment Planning Committee and to prepare an evaluation report

2.B. The inhabitants

- To participate in the processes of budgeting and implementation
- To use the right to participate in the processes of Decision-making, Budgeting and Implementation

³⁰

Investment Planning Committee: Investment Planning Committee has been established with the aim of determining the investment budget and budgeting policies, enhancing the institutional capacity of the municipality and to preserve the participation concept achieved through financial management system. It is composed of 1 member each among the party group members selected by the Development Commission, Planning, Budgeting Final Accounts Commission of the Municipal Council, 1 member of the Municipality Strategic Planning Commission, Deputy Mayor, Director of Municipal Financial Services, Official in charge of the Strategic Planning and Management Unit of the Municipality, 1 member of the City Council and the headman of the relevant neighborhood.

3. The City Council:

- To form a Participatory Budget Model for Çanakkale
- To participate in the works of Investment Planning Committee and to prepare an evaluation report
- To monitor and evaluate the Multi Annual Investment Program and Budget and the Performance Program of the Municipality and to establish working groups

The Processes and the Problems

- *Awareness Building Process:* The campaign of “I know my Budget, I Demand Accountability”: To prepare for the participating in processes of decision-making and right to budgeting, meetings with the inhabitants for almost 3 months, focus group meetings, information brochures (10.000 brochures were distributed to the houses) were shared with the city-dwellers through visual and printed media.

A survey for citizens that was conducted during the campaign for creating awareness suggested that the citizens in Çanakkale preferred the process of participatory budget secondly in terms of different participation options even though it is a new and unknown method which has never been tried before.

- *Implementation Process:* “Abstract Numbers Meet with Real Life: Budget Treasuries”: Public meetings were held to familiarize people with the idea of budgeting and to contribute to the establishment of monitoring and evaluation processes. The participants were informed of budgeting processes, previous years’ services and expenditures, future targets and resource requirements and the participants were asked to define the priorities of the city and the neighborhoods (investment demand forms, taking a poll to allocate resources, service evaluation forms, surveys). The information was used in the 2008 budgeting by the Investment Planning Committee and Municipality Bureaucrats and the investment planning was made in line with the information acquired. Following the completion of the legal budgeting process the second phase of the meetings were held and the affect of the decisions on the budgeting were explained to the participants.
- *Encouraging Process “I Have a Word to Say and a Project to Implement”:* Project applications from inhabitants on three themes “more green, more clean and safer” were accepted with a view to improve working together and the notion of being a dweller of a neighborhood and city. In 2007, 4 applications on improving open space areas and keeping them clean and 1 application on city safety were received. In order to increase participation and interest all the applications were accepted and implemented without evaluation and scoring. Today 4 neighborhoods dwellers assumed the maintenance and repair of the parks. The municipality provides financial resources and equipment. Fire extinguisher team of dwellers in a neighborhood assumed the responsibility of maintenance and protection of the fireplugs. Our experiences show that these activities have aroused interest in other neighborhoods.

In 2007, nearly 500 inhabitants participated in our meetings which are progressively continuing. This number corresponds to the 0.6 % of the total population of the city which may lead to a misunderstanding that the amount of participation is low. The participation of the mayor and particularly the accountability in these activities paved the way for increasing interest and creating an environment of trust. This result was uttered by the inhabitants attending the meetings. These activities will become more widespread once they are adopted and implemented.

Our institutional structure became much more disciplined. Accountability and transparency has brought about the right to take part in decision making processes and being diligent.

In our model, the role of the city council is not clear. The participatory budgeting approach of the municipality, main objectives and policies were reviewed in the city council. A working group was established to form a model adopted for Çanakkale and to ensure its sustainability. However, the activities were suspended due to the alignment process to the legal arrangements throughout the year and the working group could not fulfil its mission. As the city council will complete its institutional next year, its role will become more comprehensive and meaningful.

In conclusion, the city is still in the initial stages of our participatory budgeting which is a part of Support to Local Administration Reform Project³¹. Moreover, we continue with our efforts to establish a participation mechanism model based on the legal consciousness and social sensitivity towards the local administrations in Turkey.

TARGET OF THE PROJECT:

- To enable the continuous participation of the non-governmental organizations, professional organizations, public institutions and agencies and the city dwellers at local level in the Financial Management System and service provision;
- To improve and to enable the sustainability of the ability of working together of the city actors (municipality, special provincial administration, trade associations, trade unions and NGOs) defined in the decision making processes;
- To improve the senses of partnership and participation of the top management of the municipality in the decisions about the city during the decision processes of service production and budgeting.
- To determine the priorities of the city by providing the participation of the citizens in the course of formulating the capital and current investments and developing multiannual investment programs in the process of budgeting;
- To develop financial discipline and to enable the concept of accountability to be adopted within the institutional structure.

Summary of key characteristics of the “I Know my Budget” campaign

Costs	<p>The estimated cost of the project for 2008 is 35.000 New Turkish Liras (NTL). These costs have been envisaged by taking into account the awards for the selected projects in the project competition, the meeting organizations, documents to be printed for publicity and information.</p> <p>25.000 NTL has been allocated for the projects to be prepared at local level in 2008 budget.</p> <p>While determining the priorities, the projects that will be realized on behalf of the city and that concern the whole city dwellers within the boundary of Çanakkale Municipality have been determined by local meetings and electronic votes and these projects have been budgeted. Furthermore, superstructure works defined as routine services have been prioritized by the works done in neighborhood and an investment planning has been made. The cost of this has a share of around 50% in the budget of the year 2008. (Note: As observed in the cases of England, a separate budgeting and resource allocation for participatory budgeting aren't done; the cost of the resource to be allocated for the services and the priorities are</p>
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³¹ Support to Local Administration Reform Project; the project which is technically supported by the UNDP, financed by the European Union, Ministry of Interior as the main beneficiary whose aim is to improve the service quality and budgeting processes of the local administrations. Çanakkale Municipality was selected as the pilot municipality among nearly 300 local administrations. The Project was finalized in 2007.

	<p>determined. The aim of the Project is about determining the priorities and distribution of the resources based on these priorities.)</p>
Risks	<p>The active ones among the city actors in the works on participatory budgeting may benefit more, The individual or group demands stemmed from the lack of urban consciousness may stick out, Despite the availability of the applications relating to the models of taking part in decisions on local governments, in particular on the management of the municipality and the models of multiple management (i.e. city council) for a long time, an ambiguity may result from taking part in the participation stage, Challenges to be experienced in utilizing new managements in the ability to work together (project-oriented working) and in providing confidence among groups, The limited city resources The restrictions in implementing legal regulations The retarding factors stemmed from Financial Legislation (financial process and management of budget)</p>
Benefits	<p>The personal priorities have been replaced by the priorities of the neighborhood and the city thanks to the meetings held at local level for two years. Therefore, this can be deemed as a positive step for generating and improving the urban consciousness. The functions of the headmen of the neighborhood have increased and the office of headman which is the smallest body in the local management line has been provided to work consciously. The municipal activities and the joint works on the budget and investment programs have been positive steps in developing the city vision. The communication between the municipality and the citizen has grown. Intra-institutional evaluation mechanisms have been qualified.</p>
Inclusion	<p>In Çanakkale since 1996, a lot of practices relating to the models of participation and multiple management have been conducted and projects have been prepared and implemented about these practices. And this has provided for the city dwellers to become familiar with this sort of works and management techniques. Also, Çanakkale is a city that has been still developing and growing. In recent years, the population growth rate and immigration rate have been quite slow, so this caused the arising of a settled population. These evaluations set light to us during the local meetings. The elected Mayor attended the whole of the meetings. The fact that the Mayor takes part in the meetings is a significant factor in increasing the number of participators by enabling face to face communication between the Mayor and the inhabitants. Moreover, additional activities in the Project on providing sustainable and qualified participation have been defined. Giving the duty of project competitions and project selections to the citizens is an example to this.</p>
Evaluation	<p>IPC: The Investment Planning Committee (IPC) composed of the municipal bureaucrats, the headmen of the neighborhood, the representatives of the neighborhood, of the city council and of the municipal council prepare a report on the meetings held and the meeting results and this report is shared with the city dwellers. Meetings in the Neighborhood: The meetings in the neighborhood are held at two stages. While at the first stage, the views, proposals and priorities are taken; at the second stage, the results of the application are evaluated with the inhabitants. At these meetings, the results of the investment programs, action plans and the budgeting are shared. <u>Meeting on Activity Report:</u> Every year in April, meetings are held at which the activity report of the financial year is evaluated by the municipal council and the city actors.</p>

6. AUSTRIA – ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND PLANNING

[PENDING]

7. AUSTRALIA - COMMUNITY PLAN VICTORIA, PORT PHILLIP

[PENDING]

8. KOREA - PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN BUKGU

Hyun Deok Choi (OECD)

Introduction

1. Budgeting is a fundamental activity of government, symbolizing an explicit agreement between the people and their government - private resources in exchange for public services and benefits. Citizens rightfully expect governments to deliver on that promise. They further expect that public budgets be fair, equitable and transparent in support of national priorities and objectives.
2. Strengthening the transparency and openness of public budgets can help promote social accountability and restore the public's confidence in overall government. That will enable citizens to become more engaged, and, in the process, learn more about the budget and fiscal concerns. As they do, cynicism dissipates and trust in government improves.
3. Globally, there is growing recognition of the importance of public engagement in budgeting. There is growing experience, particularly in Latin America and in Europe, with different forms of incorporating citizens in budget decisions at sub-national levels of government. Municipal and regional public authorities, often in partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs), are actively involving citizens in the budget process and achieving promising results. Some have gone as far as adopting participatory budgeting measures that allow citizens direct influence over selected budget categories and fund allocations.
4. However, at the national level, the citizens' ability to participate in budgeting is limited to periodic elections of representatives who will act on their behalf. The direct approaches used by sub-national public authorities clearly are not workable for the national level. The barriers that inhibit local initiatives – physical distance, the numbers of citizens, the time required - appear insurmountable at the national level for the moment. However, with the introduction of advanced information and communications technologies (ICTs), it is no doubt to be expected that there will be conspicuous changes even in the national level in the future.
5. This case study examines one approach to budgetary decision making that started to yield positive results and became a role model in the sub-national level in the Republic of Korea.

Participatory Budgeting of the Buk-gu District Office of Gwangju Metropolitan City

Context

6. The Buk-gu District of Gwangju Metropolitan City (District) has a population of approximately 463,000, with a mayor-district council (representative) form of government and a mayor and 20 district council members are all elected. The District's successful experience with Participatory Budgeting (PB)

has inspired followers among many other cities and regions in Korea lately. The PB was introduced in the District in 2003 for the first time in Korea after Kim, Jae Kyjun won the mayoral election. He had the background of working for civil society organisations (CSOs), followed by as a member of the Gwangju Metropolitan City Council for 8 years. The introduction of the PB was one of the major policy priorities of his election promises to attain the goal of enhancing the transparency in government, improving the delivery of public services, holding civil servants accountable, and eventually realising the financial democracy. With a strong leadership of mayors and the District’s incessant dialogues with the stakeholders, the new political experiment has been settling down with positive outcomes.

7. In Korea, after having resumed local autonomy system since 1991, there have been a variety of movements in order to hold civil servants accountable and make the government transparent by engaging citizens to the policy making process from CSOs and political parties. The budget issues had been always in the centre of the debates. In 1999, the Budget Watch Network, which is consisted of 30 nationwide CSOs, was organized to focus mainly on monitoring the use of official perquisites of mayors and making petitions to local governments for institutionalising PB systems. In addition, the successful and well known experience of Porto Alegre of Brazil has attracted the academia, research groups, and political parties to review PB system as an alternative way to adapt similar measures to Korea.

Summary of key characteristics

Costs	The project is estimated to have cost approximately €17,700 (as of 2007) annually. This includes the fees paid to consultants and participants as well as the costs of organizing meetings, travel costs, etc. There is usually one full-time staff and he/she works with some other colleagues when it becomes peak season.
Risks	<p>A number of risks were anticipated and encountered in the implementation of the Participatory Budgeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of civil servants argued that it would result in poor budget formation because of the participants’ insufficient experiences and skills. • Some citizens argued that it would provoke the increased conflicts among citizens in the process of allocating limited resources and would be used as a means of justifying the mayor’s decision making without producing substantial outcomes. • The members of District Council (DC) argued that it would make the budget process time consuming and inefficient as well as go beyond the authority of DC. • Finally, the project did increase the administrative burden on Northern District – requiring one full time staff and fragmenting the budget stages from 5 to 14.
Benefits	<p>Participatory Budgeting benefited the District in several ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality as well as the quantity of budget information to citizens has been improved more in accessible and user-friendly format. • The number of preliminary or/and regular consultations between the District and the DC has been increased to reconcile the conflicts and narrow the differences before the District proposes the budget to the DC. • Citizens got to feel that government works better for them, as a result, place greater trust in government and public officials.
Inclusion	The project engaged over 1000 stakeholders in interviews, workshops, and presentations regarding the issues impacting the region and its economic development. It engaged or reached the private, public, and CSOs, as well as academics, students, and others. However, the Participatory Budgeting Council (PBC), which is consisted of no more than 100 citizens based on invitations and recommendations, plays the central role in decision making process. In addition, there

	is a project website, which contains all the necessary information and function as a two-way communications channel.
Evaluation	The project was evaluated by the District as a form of survey by the participants and civil servants 3 years after the initial implementation in 2003. The results of the evaluation turned out to be positive in all areas and are open to the public through its website and booklets.

Participatory Budgeting Process

8. In 2003, the District organised the Citizen Participatory Budgeting Study Group (CPBSG) with 8 people, which is consisted of civil servants, members of District Council, CSOs, and academia in order to analyse good examples of foreign countries and submit proper methodologies as a way of introducing the PB to the District. Based on the findings of the CPBSG, the Participatory Budgeting Council (PBC) and its 8 (5 from 2004) thematic sub-committees, which are consisted of 132 members (89 from 2006) in total, have been set up through public invitations and recommendations so as to play a key role in the process of budgeting (i.e. submission of citizens' opinions, operation of budget schools, holding the public hearings on budget and closing accounts, etc).

9. The thematic sub-committees enable its participants to debate more deeply on the major issues such as local economy, culture, urban life and environment. All citizens are entitled to participate in the entire processes directly or indirectly by attending the open forum, public hearings or sending opinions either by mail or through the Internet. Once the deliberative processes are finished, the mayor finalizes the budget proposal through the District-Citizen Joint Conference and it must be approved by the DC. The PBC evaluates city performance on the budget implementation to feedback the results to the next year.

10. Based on the experiences and performances, the District made it into a local rule to institutionalise the PB to make it sustainable in 2004. In 2006, the District established so called '*e-Budget Portal*' as a means of extending citizen's engagement to the budget process, providing quality budget information and enhancing on-line two-way communications based on advanced information communication technologies (ICTs).

Changes and Benefits

11. There have been remarkable changes or/and benefits after the introduction of the PB in the District as follows.

- The stages of budget process have begun earlier and have been fragmented from 5 to 14 with the addition of citizen's input channels, which eventually transformed the former closed process into open to the public;
- The quality of budget information has been improved by changing budget information in accessible format to the public (i.e. publication of budget terms handbook, revision of the budget proposal into performance-based format), and by developing citizen's capacity to analyze and influence government budgets (i.e. budget schools). In addition, the degree of disclosure has been extended through the various preliminary presentations, open forum, administration-PBC joint debates, etc;

- The District finalizes the budget proposal through the District-Citizen Joint Conference before submitting it to the DC with all the various opinions from citizens and its reviews by the administration;
- The number of preliminary or/and regular consultations between the District and the DC has been increased to reconcile the conflicts and narrow the differences before the District propose the budget to the DC;
- As a final stage, the District evaluates the citizens' inputs and outcomes, and awards citizens who have contributed actively to the community as a means of feedback to the PB at the end of fiscal year.

12. According to the District's report, for the past 4 years since 2004, citizens have responded 378 budget related or non related suggestions through the PB process. Among them, 69.8% (264 suggestions) had been incorporated into the final budget proposal after several stages of debate before it went to the DC.

13. The District reflected 1,300 million Won to the budget proposal, which amounts to 6.2% of its total disposable resources in 2004. In 2005, the proportion of citizens' suggestion went up to 9.8%, which is 3.6 % higher than the previous year. The majority of suggestions are about the improvements in public service delivery. Some small but meaningful examples are as follows:

- establishment of light lamps with music in a park in Mun-Heung area (24 places, 14 million Won);
- installation of a shelter for deserted pets in University of Jeon-Nam (5 million Won);
- extension and improvement of children's commuting road in front of Eastern Gwangju Elementary School (70 million Won);

Managing Barriers

14. However, there have been negative attitudes towards the implementation, too. The major arguments arisen are that the PB may:

- result in poor budget formation because of the participants' insufficient experiences and skills;
- provoke the increased conflicts among citizens in the process of allocating limited resources;
- make the budget process time consuming and inefficient;
- be used as a means of justifying the mayor's decision making without producing substantial outcomes;

15. In theory as well as in reality, these arguments are understandable and have enough reasons. The District has overcome these internal and external barriers mainly through:

- the strong leadership of the mayors;
- increased formal and informal dialogues and consultations with the DC and citizens;
- establishment of the PBC and its subcommittees as key channels of budget deliberations;
- operation of budget schools and several workshops to develop the capacity of citizens;
- continuous training programs for civil servants to change their attitudes and find a better way of working together with citizens;
- institutionalisation of the initiative to guarantee its sustainability;

16. After its first launch in 2003, the District's PB initiative has drawn attentions from many local governments, academia, and neighbour countries with numerous on-sight visits and conferences. In 2005, the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs (MOGAHA), which is responsible for managing the local budget and finance systems, incorporated the principle and foundation of PB into the Local Finance Law, which is applicable to all the local governments, irrespective of the level or form of government. In addition, the initiative was selected as one of the top ten best practices in the field of local administration innovation and awarded a special budget incentive after delivering a presentation before the president, city mayors and provincial governors from all the local autonomies.

17. There was a survey on the impact of the PB by the District after 3 years of implementation in 2003 to the PBC members and civil servants. Through the survey, most of the PBC members regarded better understanding of budget reality, having opportunities to be heard, and increased trust in government as the biggest benefits, whereas civil servants picked better understanding of citizen's needs, the guarantee of citizen's legitimacy, and prevention of waste of tax payer's money as those.

Challenges Ahead

18. With all the benefits and prominent accomplishments, there are still potential risks and challenges ahead.

- It may increase the demand to the local finance by raising the citizen's level of expectation without the consideration of the financial reality. Since the financial situation of the local governments is not good enough to finance all the demands from the citizens, how to increase the disposable revenues and how to make reasonable criteria to allocate limited resources among regions properly according to the regional priorities would be good topics to think about together in the process of budget deliberation with citizens;

- It may hurt the efficient way of managing local finance by making civil servants more concentrating on the short-term, technical, microscopic perspectives rather than thinking of mid-term or long-term strategic planning. The budgetary implications of demographic changes of the region, long-term sustainability of current policies are good themes dealt with the PB processes;

- It may become a means of legitimising the decision making of the mayor or formalistic without continuous active participation of citizens and voluntary efforts by civil servants to open all

the budget processes and disclose the quality information to the public. Therefore, institutionalization of the initiatives and establishment of two-way communications based on ICTs, regular reviews of citizens' inputs and feedback processes are required.

· It may widen the current gap between the groups who participate and who can't. It is quite true when it comes to the use of ICTs because there exists the issue of 'digital divide' between the young generation and senior citizens. As one of the principal goals of introducing the PB is more equitable distribution of the public resources, how to incorporate citizens who are 'willing but unable' to participate into the system will become all the more important.

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9. FRANCE – THE ENVIRONMENT ROUNDTABLE: A NATIONAL LEVEL CONSULTATION

Introduction

The aim of the Government's Environment Round Table (the "Grenelle de l'environnement") was to hold public consultations, through a dedicated internet website and 15 or so decentralised public meetings – in the end 18 were held.

This initiative followed the practice begun in France 25 years ago, of consulting the public in the fields of environment and sustainable development.

According to Ms Bettina Laville, this consultation falls within the Environmental Charter, Article 7 of which provides: "Every person has the right, under the conditions and limits defined by law, to have access to the information about the environment held by the public authorities and to take part in the preparation of public decisions that have an impact on the environment".

This consultation was unique, however, in that it no longer consisted of giving the public an opportunity to react to a specific planning proposal, but instead offered it the chance to approve or reject proposals that were themselves the product of collective effort and the deliberations of five colleges of national working groups. In this respect, it was the first consultation to claim to satisfy the requirements of Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Aarhus Convention, which recommends that the public be consulted before decisions are made: "Each Party shall provide for early public participation, when all options are open and effective public participation can take place."

The Environment Round Table process was organised in two parts:

The first part took place in three phases:

- Mid-July – end September 2007:
 - five colleges were set up, made up of trade unions, employers, non-governmental organisations, local authorities and public service representatives;
 - six working groups, dealing respectively with climate change, biodiversity, environment and health, sustainable production and consumption, environmental democracy, and environmental growth and economic instruments.

This phase ended with each working group drawing up proposals.

- End September – mid-October 2007: the second phase involved a very wide-ranging consultation based on the proposals of these working groups, on the internet, with the public at large, and through twenty or so public meetings held mainly in the regions, and also with Parliament.
- 24 and 25 October 2007: two days of negotiations to draw up positions on four key issues.

This first part ended with the announcement of the main positions and decisions by the **President of the Republic**: he made 238 commitments, covering a wide variety of fields.

The second part featured:

- the adoption of one measure that was implemented straight away: the system of variable insurance premiums on privately-owned vehicles
- the setting up of 33 committees charged with drawing up measures designed to ensure that the commitments announced in the fields, for example, of transport, construction, agriculture, consumption, biodiversity, health and waste management are met;
- follow-up work by these committees, which met every six weeks.

It was to conclude with the drawing up of a draft law containing the first measures to be submitted to Parliament, towards the middle of March 2008.

This was in many respects a novel structure:

- the consultation was based on proposals issued by the working groups, themselves representing different groups of actors in environment and sustainable development;
- it was a State initiative in liaison with the mayors of the host towns;
- it allowed the broadest possible cross-section of the public to take part;
- it was designed to be “objective”, and to involve the professionals in public debate;
- a member of the *Conseil d’Etat*, Ms Bettina Laville, was appointed to ensure that the discussions were transparent and the summaries neutral.

During the Environment Round Table, a number of citizens’ consultation processes were held.

Meetings were held in the regions from 5 to 22 October 2007. Citizens also had from 28 September to 14 October to comment on and put forward amendments to the proposals drawn up by the 6 working groups, via **the online website forum**.

Meetings were held in the regions from 5 to 22 October.

➤ **High levels of participation**

All citizens could take part, and all they had to do was send a request to the *préfecture* of the *Département*. Summaries of these meetings have been published and are available on the website <http://www.legrenelle-environment.fr/>

In total **more than 15 000 people** took part in these regional meetings, including elected representatives, economic, social or community actors and private citizens. The proposals of the working groups were discussed, and amendments put forward.

➤ **The workshop sessions**

Very often, workshop sessions were organised, chaired by prominent local persons, to provide an initial view on the proposals and conclusions of the national working groups. Experts took part in these workshops, first examining and commenting on each of the proposals of the national working groups and then placing them in a local context. Their work was then submitted and discussed at the plenary sessions which were open to the general public.

➤ **Balanced representation of the territories**

Having considered organising six major inter-regional debates, the Government decided in the end to accept invitations from various different towns.

The Government chose to include average sized towns so as to be more accessible to those citizens who are not always well served by the communication links of the major cities, and to reach out to representatives from rural areas.

Seventeen towns were initially selected by the Government: Annecy-le-Vieux, Arras, Aurillac, Besançon, Bourges, Brest, Chalons en Champagne, Drancy, Epinal, Laval, Le Havre, Mulhouse, Nice, Périgueux, Perpignan, Saint-Denis de la Réunion and Saint Etienne.

The central government representatives (*préfets*) in each area mostly complied with the request from the Government to “manage” the debates without actually taking part. They worked in close collaboration with the headquarters town of the Round Table and its mayor, who jointly issued the invitation. They had to identify the experts, organise the workshops, choose which prominent local people to invite, and deal with the large numbers wishing to take part, with the help of other decentralised government departments.

➤ **Assessment**

The Laville report drew **three very positive conclusions** from these regional debates:

1. They fulfilled the aim of conducting a **global debate at local level**. While many of the examples used in both the workshops and the plenary sessions were local, the debate was never hijacked by purely local issues that would have undermined the Government’s aim to have a genuinely nationwide debate.
2. The **diversity of the regions and their spontaneity of expression** were preserved.
3. The principle of the Environment Round Table was also kept intact: **consensus was sought**, or at any rate notice was taken of dissent, and the regional forums moreover confirmed the main national trends, except perhaps with regard to eco-taxation and governance.

However, Ms Laville also expressed **three reservations** in her report:

1. The question of time: most of those taking part were disappointed that no more than 17 days had been allowed for consultations at local level.
2. The short timeframe meant that there was no order of priority or importance established among the proposals at the workshops.
3. The level of participation by women in the debates was very low. In a more general sense, it was regrettable that no clear rules had been laid down to ensure maximum diversity among the participants.

The internet forum

From 28 September to 14 October, citizens also had the opportunity to put forward comments on, and amendments to, the proposals drawn up by the 6 working groups, via the online website **forum**. Over 17 days, 14259 people took part in the forum. By comparison, the number participating in a previous online consultation about smoking was 11 700 (in a consultation lasting 4 months) and on the minimum service requirement, 3 000 (over 2 months).

So successful was it that Jean-Louis Borloo, Minister of State, Minister of Ecology and Sustainable Planning and Development, decided to keep the forum open until Sunday 14 October 2007 (it had originally been set to close on the evening of 12 October).

Summaries of the forum are also available on the website.

Overall assessment of the consultations

The public consultation through the Environment Round Table attracted around 15 000 people to the regional debates and more than 300 000 visits to the dedicated internet website, who made over 14 000 contributions.

Despite the short time available both for assimilating the proposals of the national working groups and for review in the workshops, and despite the vagueness of the rules governing the discussions, the regional debates generally proceeded in a very open manner.

To a large degree, the public affirmed the consensus reached in the national working groups and reflected the same areas of disagreement.

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10. NEW ZEALAND - WIKI WORKING: DRAFTING A GUIDE TO ONLINE PARTICIPATION

Laura Sommer, State Services Commission (New Zealand), Joanne Caddy (OECD), David Hume (Canada)

Introduction

The New Zealand State Services Commission (SSC) Online Participation Project was launched in 2003. Its purpose was

1. to examine the scope for e-government
2. to improve the opportunities for the public and businesses to participate in government, and
3. improve policy and services.

A major output is the 2007 Guide to Online Participation which provides agencies with advice on the principles, strategies, implementation and evaluation of online participation projects.

The Online Participation Project aimed to put participation into practice from the outset. This has meant applying the principles at each stage – from exploring issues in face to face workshops, to working with a diverse community of practice to develop the guidance through to trialling online tools that will enable participation.

This case study presents a unique example of government engaging online to draft a policy and guidance in collaboration with a variety of people.

Context

To meet future challenges, government, at all levels, will need to use all available channels to draw on a wider range of knowledge and ideas than ever before. Technology is one small part of the picture.

New Zealand has set ambitious goals for transforming government. These are expressed as concrete development goals for the State Services³² and as milestones in the E-government strategy³³ which aims to ensure that:

- *By 2020, people's engagement with the government will have been transformed, as increasing and innovative use is made of the opportunities offered by network technologies.*

³² See *Development Goals for the State Services* at www.ssc.govt.nz/development-goals

³³ See *Enabling Transformation: A Strategy for E-government 2006* at www.e.govt.nz/about-egovt/strategy.

Table 1 - Summary of Key Characteristics

Costs	The costs of designing and launching the ParticipatioNZ wiki consisted mainly of staff time (around x days), domain registration and server space on the SSC's server given that a free open source software (Mediawiki) was chosen to run the application.
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Box 2 for a full account of risks and mitigation measures taken..
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main benefits were in terms of policy quality (i.e. substantive improvements and original contributions to the SSC <i>Guide to Online Participation</i> made by ParticipatioNZ wiki members) and sustainable networking (i.e. creation of a community of change-makers across and outside government).
Inclusion	Efforts to overcome barriers of distance and time were relatively successful, given the online and asynchronous nature of the wiki platform. However, efforts to ensure a wider range of perspectives and representatives of New Zealand's diverse communities (e.g. Māori, Pasifika, Asian) were less successful.
Evaluation	An initial evaluation of the impact of the wiki soon after launch provided input to real-time adjustment of the platform. A simple set of evaluation questions for tracking the wiki's use and development over time was drafted and posted on the wiki.

Community building

As a first step towards this ambitious goal, the SSC launched a Community of Practice (CoP) in December 2006 to share knowledge and ideas on participation. The CoP played an active role in developing and drafting a Guide to Online Participation (the Guide) and soon grew to over 200 members including public servants, academics, members of civil society and the private sector located in New Zealand and internationally. This group has met through:

- workshop sessions in December 2006 and May 2007 initially to shape, and subsequently to review, the draft Guide
- regular lunchtime presentations at the SSC in Wellington to support networking, share knowledge and maintain momentum around online participation.
- the ParticipatioNZ wiki³⁴, where members could contribute to drafting the Guide to Online Participation and could share news and knowledge.

The main focus of this case study is on the use of this innovative, highly interactive online space in drafting a piece of policy guidance.

Box 1. Why use a wiki?

A Wiki website is a set of web pages where anyone with access can provide comment and add content directly. Governments can use wikis to seek public input to legislation, policy and service design. The SSC project team considered that a wiki would provide:

- an appropriate method for government agencies and ministries to gather information to inform policy and service design and delivery.
- a transparent process that is not interpreted through journalists' or other intermediaries' eyes
- sequential reporting to provide transparency and completeness (similar to a parliamentary transcript) where New Zealanders can enter their own comments, or comment on the views of others.
- an opportunity for participants to enter considered thoughts compared to immediate responses they might give in a physical public forum.

³⁴ See <http://wiki.participation.e.govt.nz/wiki>

Box 2 – Wikis in government: risks and mitigations

Some potential risks and mitigation for government using social media such as wikis include:

Risks	Mitigations
Offensive edits/comments might occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publish a clear and well-defined commenting policy on the wiki on what is not appropriate. Offensive or malicious comments will be deleted; criminal activity can be reported. • realise that there are more editors in a community that want to make it right than there are those who want to make it wrong (as for Wikipedia)
Responses are not timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wiki hosts should post content regularly and be prepared to engage people when it suits them. This may mean checking comments or making edits after work hours and on weekends
Understanding of social media such as wikis to engage public is low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use existing government networks to improve awareness and understanding • demonstrate increasing public uptake and expectation for government to engage through these technologies. • promote the <i>Guide to Online Participation</i> to support agencies' development of online tools to engage public involvement in policy and service design.

Launch and learn: the ParticipatioNZ wiki in use

The SSC project team wanted to provide the Community of Practice with an online space where members could share knowledge, views and contribute content about public engagement with government.

The SSC project team considered what functions were needed to support policy development and sharing of knowledge in an online environment. They then looked at the tools that could support those functions. A wiki was chosen as the most suitable online option for members to collaborate, view and create content. The project team described it as a whiteboard where members could put up ideas, comments and diagrams, as you would in planning or developing a project, policy or service.

The process of designing and building the ParticipatioNZ wiki (see: <http://wiki.participation.e.govt.nz>) started in January 2007 and a beta version was launched on 30 March 2007. The wiki was demonstrated to the Participation Community of Practice at one of the regular, face to face lunchtime sessions before it was launched.

Who is using the ParticipatioNZ wiki?

Members of the community of practice with access to the ParticipatioNZ wiki are a diverse range of people drawn from academia, government, business and civil society as well as international experts who are interested in public participation.

Full access to the wiki is open to community of practice members only who are provided with a password by the project team. Members are required to login with their own names and encouraged to add a short biography which all members can access. This is intended to create an online space characterised by high levels of mutual trust and joint ownership.

At the same time, each member is free to invite anyone they know who has an interest in the issue of online public participation. This is to ensure that membership remains open to anyone with something to contribute and to guard against capture or 'groupthink'. The wiki is similar, in this sense, to a social networking tool. The success of this approach is reflected in membership numbers: within six months of its launch on 31 March 2007 membership had grown from an initial 100 members to around 300 members. As membership grows and diversifies so will the issues raised, to the benefit of all members.

A number of factors were considered when developing this 'hybrid' approach to membership management (i.e. password protected but invitations open to social networking):

- the trust that needs to be established within the community of practice - everyone needs to know who is at the party and understand on what basis everyone is contributing
- how public servants could interact in an online space on the understanding that their opinions and ideas are not committing their agency to policy positions
- the more limited investment in moderation required for a trusted space compared to a public space
- the experience of other online communities (e.g. groups registered with Democracy.org).

How did the SSC project team use the wiki?

The SSC project team was charged with developing a "Guide to Online Participation" for the state services within a relatively short timeframe (8 months). Instead of adopting the classic policy consultation cycle (of draft, consult, redraft, publish) the project team opted to 'draft naked' and produce a 'living document':

•**drafting naked:** content for the *Guide to Online Participation* was written directly on the ParticipatioNZ wiki, where it could be reviewed instantly by members. There was no 'cut and paste' from an MS Word document -- where it could be refined in-house -- before being released to the community of practice. All members were free to make edits directly on the draft text or to raise issues for discussion on the associated discussion pages for each section. All revisions to the guide are transparent thanks to the 'history' function of the Mediawiki platform which shows the individual names of who those who make edits, which greatly increases the granularity of who contributed what and when.

•**living document:** the SSC project team decided early that the *Guide to Online Participation* would be 'locked down' after launch to establish a first edition, but that it would not be printed on hard copy. This meant that the Guide would remain a user-friendly online resource offering significant navigating power given its dense cross-references and links between the various sub-sections. The SSC project team also proposed that the Guide be subject to 'road testing' by a number of agencies after its launch in order to test implementation of the principles and policy advice contained within its pages. The results of this testing, together with continued discussions within the Community of Practice, would then feed into a future edition of the Guide. In this way the Guide was promoted as a distillation of constantly evolving practice and experimentation with online tools - rather than a definitive rule book issued by a central agency.

Initial evaluation of the ParticipatioNZ wiki

Two weeks after the launch, an initial evaluation of the tool was undertaken by contacting participants for their views, initial impressions and experiences. This feedback provided very useful insights regarding the platform and how users approached it. Members felt that they got value out of: 'being part of the group' even if they are not actively contributing at the moment; being "kept in the loop" and knowing that SSC is taking the lead in launching such a platform. On the basis of feedback from members the main page was redesigned to improve navigation.

An evaluation framework was designed and posted on the wiki to allow members to react to the criteria and data sources proposed. Regular data collection provides a sense of how the wiki is being used and how it is evolving.

In terms of outcomes, the ParticipatioNZ wiki has to date led to:

- a transparent and participative process in developing policy and guidance
- broad involvement beyond the capital city of Wellington (e.g. members from rural areas and the South Island) and internationally (e.g. New Zealanders abroad or members from Canada, Australia, UK)
- increasing domestic and international interest expressed by New Zealand's public agencies, other governments and the press about using social media such as wikis to support public participation, particularly with young "digital natives"³⁵.

Lessons from experience

The SSC's initial experience raises a number of strategic, technical and cultural issues which government agencies in other countries may also wish to consider when setting up a wiki for public engagement:

Strategic

- recognise that technology is just an enabler -- the first step is to identify what functions are needed to support public engagement and then consider the technology options that are available.
- choosing an appropriate name for the wiki as well as its design, presentation and branding (with advice from your communications team) to reflect that it is a government space
- risk analysis and mitigation measures required (e.g. when moving from an 'internal' laboratory, testing environment to a publically available version of the wiki)
- the need to follow your organisation's information management requirements and ensure that relevant data hosted on the wiki (e.g. text, uploaded files) are captured at regular intervals

Technical

- the resources required to support public versus limited access (e.g. monitoring users' input on the wiki to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions)
- the terms and conditions of membership (which should be reviewed with your legal unit)
- hosting requirements, registration of the domain name, defining the helpdesk resources required to support the wiki (e.g. one person with back-up in case of absence) and production of guidance on navigating and editing the wiki
- linking between the various social media used to engage with the community (e.g. the wiki, a project blog, email, podcasts, video) so that ongoing conversations are as connected as possible
- providing a way for users to select relevant sections of the wiki and print the results as a single formatted document

³⁵ For example, "NZ Looks to Wikis for Public Engagement", *Australian CIO Journal*, 21 June 2007 (see full article at: <http://www.cio.com.au/index.php/id;1799575026;fp;4;fpid;21>).

Management

- adopt a multi-channel approach to communications, using both online and offline means (e.g. marketing to alert potential members about the wiki space could use email, regular face-to-face meetings, phone contacts)
- welcome new members and encourage them to comment, discuss, edit or post articles on the wiki – particularly if they are unfamiliar with this co-drafting space
- involve members in designing and refining the wiki at each stage to better meet their expectations and needs (i.e. participation in practice)
- realise that not everyone will interact in the online environment, as per the “1 percent rule”. In most online environments, typically just 1 percent of users will contribute 90 percent of your content. About 10-20 percent will contribute occasionally. The rest will watch, and contribute if you make it easy for them
- provide opportunities for different voices to be heard and consider various ways to respond to those voices
- be transparent by enabling participants to access and share information and comment as policy is developed
- build community and a sense of trust by providing opportunities for members to get to know each other (e.g. encouraging them to post information about themselves on their wiki user pages, organising face-to-face events, workshops, and celebrations to mark specific achievements)

What next?

The *Guide to Online Participation* was launched in November 2007 as the first step in an evolving area of theory and practice. As such it will be tested and refined. Consistent with the Statement of Intent and 2006 E-government Strategy, the State Services Commission will continue to:

- promote online participation as one of several ways to incorporate public ideas and comments on policy and service design and delivery
- research and test online participation strategies and engagement tools
- promote and test the Guide to Online Participation with agencies, including how to use social media such as wikis
- add resources and case studies, such as the Police Act wiki, to share with State services
- respond to increasing local and international interest in online tools and methods for public participation
- demonstrate leadership of the State Services Development Goals, in particular accessible, co-ordinated, networked and trusted State services.

11. THE NETHERLANDS - PROFESSIONALIZING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

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Introduction: Dutch experience in citizen engagement

Since the 1960s the issue of how the Dutch government could engage citizens in policy making has been on the agenda. At the local government level especially, citizens are requested to actively contribute to policy implementation and new policy design. And national government is pursuing direct dialogue with citizens more and more actively. On the other hand, there is an increase in the amount of initiatives from citizens to realize certain societal goals, for which they seek cooperation with government. Over the last decades, the approach to citizen engagement has shifted from an ideological to a more pragmatic one: how to utilize knowledge that is available in society, and how to gain and maintain social support, without losing speed or momentum?

A lot of experience with different types of citizen engagement has been gained at all government levels in The Netherlands. Absent so far is a common standard for the quality of the design and execution of the citizen engagement process. So far, there is no clear picture either of the extent to which citizen engagement has a noticeable impact on decision making.

Citizen engagement - the Dutch perspective

In 2006, a vision towards citizen engagement for interventions in the spatial-economical policy area was presented by a team led by professor Pieter Tops. This vision was the result of a request by the Dutch government. The main message of this vision is that citizen engagement can be more effective if it is reorganized, made to measure and professionalized. It helps politicians take better decisions; the input is more useful, citizens are more understanding towards decisions and have more trust in the value of citizen engagement. The vision does not imply radical changes in policy, but adds to with other government goals such as good decision making reduction of bureaucracy and putting the citizens' preferences at the forefront; all these developments are already becoming visible in policy, legislation and practice.

The envisaged approach to citizen engagement is comprised of two steps that merge towards decision making:

- 1 In the policy preparation phase, citizens are consulted to make use of the knowledge and creativity that already exists within society. Here, citizen engagement provides input for a draft decision or decree.
- 2 In the decision phase, a *final test of interests* takes place, in accordance with the usual public preparation procedures. This final test of interests acts as a safety net for issues and interests that were overlooked, and for citizens who feel their interests are disproportionately disregarded or harmed. The test of interests is the finale of the citizen engagement and the departure of the judicial test.

Because emphasis is put on the beginning of the process, where there are still many different policy options, the knowledge and creativity available in society can be put to maximum use. This does require a made-to-measure citizen engagement process. 'Made-to-measure' here means that an approach that is well-

adjusted to the specificities of the policy problem at hand, the power relations between government and society, the policy options available etc. The quality of engagement processes is secured by *professionalism*. This professionalism consists of: a code of conduct with 'principles of good consultation' and an interdepartmental organisation that can support civil servants (e.g. by providing a platform for knowledge exchange and a regular benchmark of the quality and effectiveness of citizen engagement)

The vision has been adopted by the Dutch government as 'intended government policy'. The goal is to transform developments that are already underway in actual practice into a common standard for a professional procedure in citizen engagement. This standard will be developed by the interdepartmental *Inspiraakpunt* (consultation organisation). Once there is proof that the proposed procedure is beneficial for citizens, policy makers and politicians, it will be implemented in all policy areas at the national government level. A supervisory board will monitor the implementation.

DERIVING A PROFESSIONAL STANDARD FOR CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT FROM EXPERIENCE

In order to develop a professional standard for citizen engagement, the Dutch government has requested the *Inspiraakpunt* to put the procedure proposed by Tops' team into practice in seven exemplary projects. It is, of course, only in practice that the proposed procedure can be researched and proof can be found for its claims to more effective and satisfactory citizen involvement. Partners+Pröpper, a consultancy and research organisation for policy will support the operationalization of the professional standard for citizen engagement, by monitoring and evaluating the seven projects. All seven projects are in the domain of spatial planning and economy, and include the long-term mobility-problems in Middle-Netherlands, the restructuring of a military airfield, allocation of swimwaterlocations and planning studies for crucial national stroomwegen

The seven exemplary projects are currently all in different phases and the monitoring will in the end only cover a (small) part of the entire decision making process. Each exemplary project will therefore paint an incomplete picture, but the depth per segment is large and the overall picture does give an impression of the implementation of the proposed procedure in all stages of the policy making process. Referring to this research proposal, the supervisory board of the *Inspiraakpunt* has explicitly expressed the wish for Partners+Propper to execute a quantitative analysis in addition to the evaluation and monitoring of the seven projects. In this analysis a large amount of engagement procedures will be evaluated with the research structure (secondary analysis) that has been developed. A web-based questionnaire will be distributed to several hundred project leaders and ten pairs of projects, in which engagement was or was not used, will be compared

To perform the monitoring, Partners+Propper and the *Inspiraakpunt* have spent a lot of energy in the development of a professional standard for citizen engagement which can function as a research framework. In this framework, the professional standard and the expected effects thereof (impact of the engagement) are operationalized in detail. The monitoring is in full effect at the moment and will be finished by mid-2008. This paper is based on the preliminary results.

From code of conduct to measurable standard

Starting point for the professional standard for citizen engagement that is used in the monitoring research, is the code of conduct that was developed by professor Tops' team. This code of conduct states:

- Determine who has final responsibility and commit this person or organisation to the process.
- Build a process plan in advance and make it public. Transparency of the rules of the game makes the process transparent for everyone and provides clarity about expectations.
- Know and mobilise all stakeholders. Every question demands a specific target group and poses specific demands to the recruitment and selection of participants.

- Organize knowledge. Learn from others and open knowledge to others. Evaluate every engagement process.
- Be a reliable interlocutor.
- Communicate clearly, at the right moment and up-to-date.
- Be clear about different roles and about what will be done with the results.
- It is okay to make demands. You can demand from others what you demand from yourself.
- Account for what has been done. A fitting feedback of results and decisions shows respect to the input of those involved.
- Don't consult for the sake of consultation. Don't involve citizens for legitimacy of the decision. Consultation is only meaningful if it can contribute to the quality of the decision making.

This code of conduct has been elaborated by Partners+Propper and the Inspraakpunt in a detailed and measurable research framework which can be perceived as a second version of the professional standard for citizen engagement. The research framework consists of 35 characteristics that are more or less apparent in citizen engagement processes. In this sense, the research framework provides a tool to 'score' and analyze engagement processes. The research framework is summarized below.

To successfully utilize the creativity and knowledge of society, a couple of basic conditions have to be met:

- the policy problem at hand must have a certain 'impact' and be considered important to the parties involved
- it is an absolute necessity that there is some room for policy options in order for those involved to be involved have a useful discussion about the use and necessity of the policy and/or possible solutions. By no means can it be a 'race that's already been run'.
- There is political and administrative commitment; politicians and administrators commit themselves to the design, the process and the results of the citizen engagement and formulate clear substantial preconditions.

The engagement process is professionally undertaken. Professionalty means that:

- project leaders have a good knowledge of the conditions mentioned above
- project leaders evaluate the necessity and desirability of citizen engagement on the basis of this knowledge;
- project leaders will do their utmost to favourably influence the conditions if these hinder successful citizen engagement;
- project leaders will deliver tailor-made process designs, that are adjusted to the specific traits of the policy issue at hand;
- participants to the engagement process have clear, understandable and neutral substantial information at their disposal.
- Project leaders and government leaders manage the expectations of participants: they explain participants exactly what their input and influence entails, and they account for what happens with the results of the citizen engagement.

Clear insight into the impact of citizen engagement

The proof of the pudding is in the eating! Can it be proven that professionalism and made-to-measure processes really make a difference to the quality of the results of citizen engagement? To answer this question, the impact of citizen engagement has been made measurable in the research framework. A distinction is made between substance vs. process and objective vs. subjective impact. A combination of these labels yields four types of impact:

	Objective	Subjective
Substantive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Useful input from participants. · Substantive enrichment of the eventual policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Satisfaction of politicians, policy workers and professionals about substantive results. · Satisfaction of participants about substantive results.
Process-related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Involvement of stakeholders in the policy process. · Societal support. · Acceleration of the policy process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Satisfaction of politicians, policy workers and professionals about the process. · Satisfaction of politicians, policy workers and professionals about the process.

Four types of impact of citizen engagement

1. Substantive-objective impact:
 - The citizen engagement yields useful input from participants. Useful means: within the policy options, feasible and creative.
 - Useful input from participant is in practice noticeable in a vision, white paper, policy plan or draft decision and heightens the quality thereof.
2. Substantive-subjective impact:
 - Politicians, policy makers and professionals are satisfied with the substantive results of the citizen engagement.
 - Participants are satisfied with the substantive results of the citizen engagement (they recognize the result).
3. Process-related-objective impact:
 - The citizen engagement reaches a large number of stakeholders. This group is representative for the entire population that has a real stake in the problem at hand.
 - There is support in society for the policy plan or draft decision at hand.
 - Reduction of the time the entire policy process will take and the total decision making costs, as a consequence of a reduction of the amount of formal participation and appeals.
4. Process-related-subjective impact:
 - Politicians, policy makers and professionals are satisfied about the process of citizen engagement.
 - Participants are satisfied about the process of citizen engagement.

Example: operationalisation of 'usefulness'

For each of the 35 characteristics of the research framework, a 5-point scale was developed. Every process of citizen engagement can be awarded a score ranging from '1'; (characteristic is hardly present) to '5' (characteristic is very present). In a manner of illustration, here the way in which usefulness – an aspect of substantive-objective impact- can be measured. The 5-point-scale looks like this:

1	2	3	4	5
Most of the input unfeasible, both in financial and substantive terms.	A relatively large amount of input is new, but hardly feasible in financial and substantive terms.	A relatively large amount of input is feasible in financial and substantive terms, but it isn't new.	Input is feasible both in substantive and financial terms, but yields only limited new insights.	A large amount of input yields new insights and is feasible both in financial and substantive terms.

In the development of new policy for car parking in a Dutch city, citizen engagement was used. Citizens were requested to help think of solutions to reduce the nuisance of badly parked vehicles in neighbourhoods around the city centre. Neighbours thought up ideas that were new to traffic experts of the city council. Specific characteristics and wishes of specific streets could be accounted for. Ideas were applicable within the preconditions the council had set. This example would therefore score '5' for usefulness.

Results of 36 Dutch cases: professionalization pays off

In the secondary analysis 36 examples of citizen engagement that were undertaken in the past were scored on all the characteristics of the research framework. Because all characteristics were given scores ranging from 1-5, it was possible to execute statistical analyses to analyse the effects of professionalism on impact. The first results are promising.

A professional approach works, especially if the basic conditions are favourable.

A professional approach appears to lead to better impact of citizen engagement. The more the standards for professionalism are met, the higher the scores of subjective and objective effects. An important nuance is that this particularly true in case of favourable preconditions. If, for example, the policy options are limited, or commitment from the political level is low, the effect of a professional approach towards impact will be considerably lower.

Good communication is crucial.

Good communication causes more impact. Participants are more satisfied with the process and the results if there is clear communication about the influence participants have, if what happens with results is clearly accounted for. Also, support from the community for the eventual decision will, in general, be greater.

Professional processes work.

If project leaders ensure that the process is made-to-measure to the specific problem at hand, all those involved are more satisfied with results in the end. Support from society for the solutions will be larger, in accordance with the amount of maatwerk.

Administration and representatives play an important role.

Of all preconditions, political commitments stand out: impact is generally bigger in processes where responsible politicians are supportive of the citizen engagement. This is equally true if these politicians are visible to participants during the process and operates as a unit to the outside world.

Conclusion: securing and further development of professionalization

Important steps have been taken in the formulation and evaluation of a professional standard for citizen engagement. Professionalization and made-to-measure processes constitute an ongoing process of implementation, knowledge gathering, evaluation and adjustment. This not in order to reach perfection in citizen engagement, but to determine a professional standard for processes. Such a standard is dynamic, never 'finished' and demands constant attention.

The Inspraakpunt identifies several key points for further standardisation and with which further developments can be guaranteed:

- An important condition is that policy workers and project leaders can make use of an overarching centre of expertise that provides advice on how to shape the process of citizen engagement and supports the elaboration thereof.
- Minimum conditions in the professional standard offer conditions for successful citizen engagement, but no guarantees. Building a 'collective memory' consisting of tried and trusted methods and best practices is essential.
- To get an overview of these best practices, a continuing nationwide monitor for citizen engagement will be built by the Inspraakpunt. This will also check how politicians and policy workers treat citizens and what the citizen engagement has contributed to the quality of the decision making.
- Citizens ought to be facilitated to contribute to the engagement process in the best way possible. To this effect, budget should be allocated on the basis of clear criteria, for proposals for further research or further elaboration of the alternatives that citizens propose. In this way, the importance of the citizen engagement is made visible and the input is put into action straight away.
- There should be a recurring evaluation with a report to parliament. Continuous monitoring provides input therefore.

12. UNITED KINGDOM - BUILDING GOVERNMENT'S CAPACITY TO GIVE THE PUBLIC THEIR SAY

Ian Johnson, Ministry of Justice (UK)

High-quality inclusive public engagement is important in a modern representative democracy. Engaging and empowering citizens to become involved in decision-making not only contributes to better policy outcomes and improved public services by tapping reservoirs of experience and creativity but, on a more fundamental level, also helps build civic capacity and trust in government.

However, UK citizens are not always effectively engaged around issues they care about. For instance, the fourth *Audit of Political Engagement (2007)*³⁶ conducted by the Electoral Commission and the Hansard Society revealed that while around 70% of British citizens wish to have say in how the country is run, less than 30% believe they currently do. While people don't necessarily want to engage with the government all the time, they do want to know that they *could* be involved should they wish to.

The *Audit* also showed that many citizens feel they don't have the knowledge and skills required to be able to participate effectively (only 39% believe they do), or that their involvement would make a difference to policy outcomes (only 33% believe it will).

The *Sciencewise: Public Dialogue Research and Scoping Study (2006)* identified other challenges or barriers to involving the public by canvassing the views of civil servants, professional practitioners and academics. For public officials, these included lack of time, budget constraints, insufficient knowledge and skills, lack of confidence, resistance to change across the civil service and difficulties associated with weighting and reconciling public, stakeholder, expert and Minister's views.

Other factors may limit the ability of officials to effectively engage the public. One of these is failure to develop strategic oversight of multiple participation exercises and thus identify gaps and eliminate any overlaps. This lack of co-ordination limits the opportunity for shared learning and can contribute to public cynicism and 'consultation fatigue'.

Many public servants are unaware of the range of public engagement support tools available, and do not know where to turn for help. Engagement exercises are seldom formally evaluated, examples of good and bad practice are not captured and disseminated, and skills and experience are lost as key staff members move on.

But it is by no means all doom and gloom. In recent times, public engagement has moved up the political agenda, and officials increasingly recognise the importance of involving the public in decisions that affect them, in ways that are sensitive to their particular needs.

³⁶

www.hansardsociety.org.uk/blogs/parliament_and_government/pages/audit-of-political-engagement.aspx

The Prime Minister's commitment to reinvigorate the democracy by 'changing the way government does business' is set out in the *Governance of Britain* Green Paper, published in July 2007³⁷. One of the main challenges going forward is to put the high-level political imperatives into action by providing citizens and public officials with the opportunities, encouragement, skills and practical support they need to engage in meaningful dialogue. The sections that follow highlight examples of some of the innovative work underway to help address the barriers to participation outlined above.

Building capacity in officials

The *Sciencewise* report highlighted the need to support policy-makers across government to identify when and how to consult, how to commission, monitor and evaluate public engagement exercises. The key resource or support sought by respondents was *access to other people and their knowledge*, with the establishment of peer groups and one-to-one mentoring clearly favoured.

The Democratic Engagement Branch of the Ministry of Justice developed several programmes and initiatives in direct response to these findings.

One of these was a 'Community of Practice' for public engagement – a network designed to help policy-makers within central government make contact and communicate with each other. Regular meetings and events satisfy the need for face-to-face networking and frequent email bulletins ensure members are aware of innovations, best practice and training opportunities in the public engagement field.

Several resources were developed to provide officials with a source of practical help and advice. One of these is People and Participation.net (www.peopleandparticipation.net) an innovative online tool designed to assist anyone who wishes to take a collaborative approach to developing ideas and/or public policy. The site features an interactive tool to help users choose the best participation method based on their specific circumstances, along with comprehensive methods and case study databases and an 'Ask an Expert' function.

Ministry of Justice also responded to the call for one-to-one support to help officials navigate through the process maze and identify the appropriate engagement tools, by launching the 'Participation Partners' initiative in 2007. Participation Partners, which is currently in its pilot phase, offers policy teams across the UK the opportunity to access free, bespoke coaching support from expert participation practitioners in planning, designing, delivering and evaluating public engagement exercises.

Rather than the experts taking the lead, the goal is to educate and empower policy teams so they have the skills and confidence to run their own engagement exercises and disseminate these skills throughout their organisations. The initial response has been encouraging, with policy teams across the UK seeking help to engage the public on a diverse range of issues including production of an equality scheme for disabled people, deciding who should bear the costs of animal health issues (including Foot and Mouth Disease) and new rights and responsibilities for citizens.

Innovative use of modern technology to encourage the public to get involved and improve the citizen-government relationship is a reoccurring theme that is explored further in the following sections. The Digital Dialogues project, funded by the Ministry of Justice and undertaken by the Hansard Society, aims to promote awareness of and increase, online engagement skills and techniques across central government.

This initiative investigates the use of online technologies such as blogs, webchats and forums to promote dialogue between central government and the public. Examples have included webchats and blogs by

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www.justice.gov.uk/publications/governanceofbritain.htm

Ministers, and an on-line discussion forum on the openness of family courts. The most recent report, published in September 2007 (www.digitaldialogues.org.uk/secondreport), contained a set of recommendations for central government in relation to its online engagement strategy, based on 14 case studies from across government agencies, departments and ministerial offices.

The Central Office of Information (COI) offers consultancy support and advice to all government departments and has extensive experience in working on deliberative projects. These range from large-scale citizen summits to much smaller citizens juries and reconvened workshops, as part of a formal consultation or as a standalone project. COI is currently working on a guide to deliberative techniques and the key principles that should underpin them, to support government practitioners, and actively seeks to optimise knowledge sharing and experience between the departments with which it works.

The National School of Government (NSG) (www.nationalschool.org.uk) provides a range of training courses specifically designed to meet the needs of government policy-makers, including engagement and communication skills and skills for working with key stakeholders and institutions. The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) is currently working closely with NSG to develop new public engagement courses and ensure there is a consistent and joined-up approach to engagement across all related courses. This is part of the SDC's work to see an institutional shift in how engagement is considered and delivered across the civil service, in line with Prime Minister Gordon Brown's vision for a 'new type of politics'.

Work is also currently underway to improve the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation (first published in 2001)³⁸. Meetings have been held across the UK, as well as an online discussion forum, to give the public the opportunity to share their views on how the Government consults and where improvements could be made. The new Code will form an important part of an overall approach to engagement and will be accompanied by more and better guidance on reaching different sectors of society, improved oversight functions and better support mechanisms.

The need for government to adopt a more 'joined up' approach to public engagement and ensure key lessons are captured and shared is well known. In response, several websites have been developed to provide 'one-stop-shops' for various aspects of public engagement. These include the 'Policy Hub' (www.policyhub.gov.uk) which includes links to a range of public engagement toolkits, Sciencewise (www.sciencewise.org.uk) which aims to develop policy-makers ability to effectively engage the public on emerging areas of science and technology, and Participation Works (**Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**), a single access point for information on all aspects of children and young people's participation. In a similar vein, the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health, an independent public body sponsored by the Department of Health, was established in 2003 to ensure the public is involved in decision-making about health and health services in England.

Building capacity in participation practitioners

'Training the trainers' is important to ensure educators have the necessary confidence, skills and tools at their disposal to convey important democratic principles and encourage students to become actively involved in the democratic process.

For instance, the English Secondary Schools Association (ESSA) (www.studentvoice.co.uk) provides training, guidance and resources designed to support and promote the involvement of young people in decision-making processes at a local, national and international level. The distinctive feature is that ESSA is a student-led organisation, run by and for students aged 11-19 years. With support from Ministry of

³⁸ <http://bre.berr.gov.uk/regulation/consultation/code>

Justice, ESSA recently trialled citizens' juries in schools (designed to model a democratic process) and released an online toolkit for students and teachers in late 2007.

A number of organisations have a broader mandate and attempt to build capacity within the private, community and voluntary sectors, as well as across all levels of Government. For instance, InterAct (www.interactweb.org.uk) – an alliance of practitioners, researchers, writers and policy-makers - uses its combined experience and influence to promote effective public engagement practices to private, public and third sector practitioners and academics. They also work alongside writers, press or media who wish to participate in pilot initiatives, cover or contribute to debate on key issues.

Involve (www.involve.org.uk), one of the fastest growing 'think tanks' in the UK, believes that today's challenges can only be met if society works together to develop shared solutions to shared problems. In addition to their extensive research programme, Involve deliver training and host workshops tailored to the needs of practitioners across all sectors, and provide consultancy support to government, academics, the private sector and international organisations

As well as promoting best practice, the Consultation Institute (www.consultationinstitute.org) organises professional networking events for anyone engaged in public or stakeholder consultation and encourages membership of their consultation community. The Institute also runs a very comprehensive training programme, including courses on engaging the 'hard-to-reach', older citizens, children and faith groups.

Building capacity in citizens

Strong evidence exists to suggest that many citizens – particularly those from socially excluded or disadvantaged groups – feel they lack the knowledge, skills or confidence to participate in public engagement exercises, or political activities more generally. Consequently, a number of initiatives are underway to up-skill, encourage and empower citizens to participate, and demystify political processes by making them far more accessible and 'user friendly'.

One of these is *Take Part* (www.takepart.org), a project led by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This initiative provide programmes of active learning to enable people to gain the skills, confidence and knowledge they need to make an active contribution to their communities and influence public policies and services.

On 19 October 2007, (CLG) published *An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success*³⁹. The Plan, which was produced in partnership with the Local Government Association, set out 23 actions that CLG is taking to enable people to play a more active role in the decisions that affect their communities. These include Participatory Budgeting Pilots intended to give local people some say over public spending in their communities, development of more Local Charters (voluntary agreements between Local Authorities and communities), measures to empower young people and strengthen the role of local councillors.

The Ministry of Justice currently funds a number of projects through a dedicated 'Innovation Fund', to develop new tools which facilitate easy dialogue between the government and citizens, and between citizens who share the same interests and concerns.

One example is 'Fix-my-Street' (www.fixmystreet.com) developed by mySociety in partnership with the Young Foundation. This online web-mapping tool makes it easy for people to talk to their local authority and other local people about issues in their neighbourhood, ranging from graffiti and barking dogs to

³⁹ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/communityempowerment/actionplan/>

broken paving slabs and street lighting. The tool aims to transform the act of reporting faults, turning a private one-to-one process into a public experience and lowering barriers to communication between local government and communities.

Some initiatives respond to a need to build capacity in certain citizen groups. For instance, evidence suggests that young people are increasingly disengaging from formal political processes, with two out of three 18-24 year olds choosing not to vote in the 2005 UK general election and 16% of under 25s failing to register. To reverse this trend, and capitalise on the willingness of many young people to get involved in 'single issue' civic activity, a number of projects have been specifically designed to give young people a voice, and better equip them to engage in dialogue with relevant civic leaders, politicians and authorities.

For instance, the Hansard Society works with young people in schools and colleges through its *Citizenship Education Programme*, to educate them about parliamentary democracy and develop innovative way to involve them in participatory democratic activities.

One example is the *HeadsUp* online forum (www.headsup.org.uk) which provides a space for young people (11-18 years) to discuss political issues, while developing the analysis, negotiation and debating skills needed to participate in democratic processes. The site also provides politicians with the opportunity to engage and interact with young people around topical issues of the day, including 'Do we need a constitution?' 'Who benefits from globalisation?' and 'Should the voting age be lowered?' A detailed evaluation of the initiative revealed that 60% of under 18-year olds said they were more likely to vote after taking part.

The Radiowaves 'Voice It!' online forum (www.radiowaves.co.uk) encourages young people to become citizen journalists by providing MP3 recording kits that enable them to interview decision-makers about issues of interest using web podcasts. Podcasts are then published on the Radiowaves website where they can be shared with a global audience. Recent podcasts cover a diverse range of topics such as bullying, smoking and regulation of junk food, as well as young people's response to news items that have recently hit the headlines.

Building capacity in politicians and political institutions

Democratic institutions and processes can sometimes appear formal, bureaucratic, impenetrable, off-putting and irrelevant. Recent studies suggest that 'politics' suffers from an image problem, with many citizens finding it difficult to trust or relate to politicians and political processes.

In an attempt to make parliament and political institutions more accessible and relevant to the people they serve, electronic and mobile technologies are increasingly being employed to break down perceived barriers and inject greater immediacy into citizen-government engagement.

For instance the 10 Downing Street (official website of the British Prime Minister) (www.number10.gov.uk) and Scottish Parliament (www.scottish.parliament.uk) websites now allow members of the public to create or sign e-petitions, which are submitted automatically once the closing date is reached. This innovative use of online technology makes petitions and supporting information available to a potentially much wider audience than traditional paper petitions, and allows government to respond directly to signatories. In the Scottish example, each e-petition also has it's own discussion forum where interested parties can discuss and debate the issue online, thereby encouraging the creation of issue-specific community forums.

In a similar vein, the www.hearfromyourmp.com website, designed and operated by mySociety, allows constituents to log their interest in a range of issues with their British Member of Parliament (MP). When

the number of constituents who've expressed interest in a particular issue reaches a predefined level, their MP is sent an email to suggest setting up an email circulation list on this topic, with links to a discussion forum. This represents the beginning of a conversation between constituents and MPs and allows MPs to more easily 'take the pulse' of constituent concerns. Currently, around 47,000 members of the public have signed up for this service, in 650 constituencies.

The Hansard Society runs online consultation exercises on behalf of Parliamentary Select Committees and All-Party Groups, through the 'TellParliament' website (www.tellparliament.net). Members of the public are encouraged to use this online forum to contribute to and ask questions about current inquiries, and respond to points raised by others. The Select Committee on the Modernisation of the House of Commons commissioned an online consultation exercise in 2003, and the resulting report made a number of recommendations intended to help the public understand the work of Parliament, and make the Commons more accessible to interested visitors and citizens wishing to be more involved.

Many of the recommendations have since been implemented, including a radical upgrade of the British parliamentary website (www.parliament.uk). Among other things, members of the public can now use the website to subscribe to email alerts, view live video and audio feeds for debates and committee proceedings, access information about lobbying and petitioning and contact their MP.

The Hansard Society also produce free information packs designed to help teachers, students and elected representatives make school visits as interesting and productive as possible⁴⁰. Different versions of the pack have been developed for Members of the English, Scottish and European Parliament and Assembly Members at the National Assembly for Wales, including translations in Gaelic and Welsh.

⁴⁰ http://hansardsociety.org.uk/blogs/citizenship_education/archive/2007/09/28/Helping-schools-to-develop-better-links-with-their-elected-representatives.aspx

13. FINLAND – EVALUATION OF THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION POLICY PROGRAMME

Katju Holkeri, Ministry of Finance (Finland)

Basic Information

Country: Finland

Institutional level: central, regional and local

Sector: all sectors

Years: 2003 -2007

Type of policy: policy

Target audience: individual citizens, civil society organisations

Stage of policy cycle: mostly agenda setting, policy options

Summary of key characteristics	
Costs	
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The programme was very comprehensive so there was a risk of the whole-of-programme view disappearing under the tens of different projects. Thus there was also a risk of lack of coherence. However by setting the targets and therefore also the projects under the four sub-sectors (active and democratic citizenship, civil society, citizen participation, The structures and practices of representative democracy) the programme was able to avoid fragmentation. - Due to the comprehensiveness there was also a risk of the time running short. For instance for starting and running through research programmes and using their results for new projects four years is not a very long time. - In an administration where ministries tend too often to work inside their own stovepipes the co-operation in a programme is always a challenge. The ministries tend to safeguard their own working areas. During the civil participation policy programme the fact that there was a steering group of ministers from the participating ministries was a good way to avoiding too one-sighted views. The co-operation was further strengthened by a co-operation group from the ministries where the different projects and issues were discussed together. - A risk in the programme was also that it would only reach those that already previously had been involved with the issues. For instance in the ministries to reach the wider audience of civil servants remained a challenge until the end of the programme.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The programme was able to connect together a large amount of different development projects and areas that had previously been handled separately and not in connection to each other. - The programme was able to secure the continuation of this co-operation. There now exists Democracy Unit in the Ministry of Justice that promotes citizen participation. It is responsible for the drafting of the democracy policy, organizes co-operation between Ministries in the area of citizen participation and is in charge of the maintenance of the discussion forum otakantaa.fi and the portal

	<p>kansanvalta.fi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The information basis of the democracy is being ensured. - Research on civic education has been strengthened and the share of the Citizen participation in teacher training has been increased as well as the share in schools.
Inclusion	<p>The programme in its different parts has engaged a huge number of people. All active civil society organisations have been involved in some part of the programme - most in several. The project also tried to include individual citizens by different means in different projects. Internet, direct mailing, meetings, round tables and workshops were for instance among the methods used.</p>
Evaluation	<p>The evaluation of the policy programmes has been linked to the yearly Government Strategy Document. Clear effectiveness targets are set for each horizontal policy programme and they are included in the Government Strategy Document. In the policy programme also indicators for policy evaluation have been developed.</p>

Main results of the Citizen Participation policy Programme

- The information basis of the democracy is being ensured and a framework for administration of democracy has been established.
- Research on civic education has been strengthened and the share of the Citizen participation in teacher training has been increased as well as the share in schools.
- The overall picture of the importance of civil society was developed and some major development projects are on the way, e.g the conditions required for activities of public utility, voluntary work and peer assistance are being explicated, for example, in relation to taxation and putting services to tender.
- New initiatives have been made for consultation and participation by citizens in decision-making
- Amendments to the local Government Act will improve the ability of municipals councils to direct the activities of municipal concerns as well as clarify the position in the market of municipally owned commercial undertakings.

Context

The Citizen Participation Policy Programme was described in the Government Programme in 2003 as a national democracy project. Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government adopted a new coordination tool aiming at more horizontal and strategic Government policymaking. The participation policy programme was one of the four key-horizontal programmes that the Government launched.

The Ministry of Justice, which is responsible in Finland for arranging elections and democracy in legislation, got the coordinating role in the programme. Other ministries that were involved in the programme were Education (civic education and research, sports, cultural and youth work), Interior (municipal affairs) and Finance (public management).

The Minister of Justice assisted by a programme director with a small staff at the ministry headed the programme. The task was to develop the totality of the programme, although responsibility of the activities resided in with the ministries. Compiling an annual Government Strategy document strengthened the

programme's cohesion. Meetings were held to enable representatives of the various projects to present their activities to each other and build mutual cooperation.

Democracy is founded on the idea of the free, independent and fully empowered citizen, who considers, sets goals and makes decisions together with others with the aid of discussion. Active citizenship arises from people. Its genesis is not in the law and cannot be brought into force through administrative regulations. The policy programme on Citizen Participation respected these starting points.

Public authorities can however, create favourable preconditions for participation and the exercise of influence in such a way that they support fully-fledged citizenship. The general objective of democracy policy is that Finland will be recognised, in accordance with her traditions, as a forerunner in the development of democracy and her indicators of active citizenship will be comparable to those of the best European countries. Decision-making is founded on broad participation and equality of citizens.

The general objective was approached in the Citizen Participation Policy Programme through four sub-sectors:

1. Schools and other institutions of learning support growth to **active and democratic citizenship** in accordance with the principle of lifelong learning. Besides Finnish citizenship, EU and world citizenship must also be taken into consideration in education.
2. The legal and administrative prerequisites for the operation of **civil society** are favourable and up to date from the perspective of civic activity. The third sector has sufficient research, training and development services.
3. Traditional and new channels for **citizen participation** are developed in such a way that they support the full involvement of citizens in the activities of communities and society. Administration has the necessary tools and the kind of attitude it needs to be able to interact with citizens.
4. **The structures and practices of representative democracy** function well on all levels of decision-making, and they take the changes that are taking place in everything from knowledge society to globalisation into consideration.

Interaction between citizens and administration

Citizen's trust in administration is one of the core questions of democracy. It is born of people's personal experiences of fairness of administration, but also of opportunities to take part in influence decision-making processes. This makes the relationship between citizens and civic organisations, on the one hand, and decision-makers and civil servants on the other, a key question.

The policy programme pointed out that there is a need for innovative development to ensure that the new opportunities to participate and exercise influence are opened up to individual citizens and groups of them. New methods must be developed in such a way that they function effectively also from the perspective of administration and are not excessively time-consuming.

The work in the field of strengthening citizen government connections had started already at the beginning of decade as individual projects. Now these projects were continued and further developed as part of the policy programme.

During the programme:

- The permanent State Secretaries of the ministries signed a declaration on "administration's general principles concerning consultation of citizens". The Ministry of Finance is monitoring the implementation of these objectives by a yearly questionnaire to the ministries. The signatories also

included the Association of local and regional authorities and representatives of individual municipalities.

- A guidebook on consultation of citizens was drafted for civil servants and office holders. Strategies on civic organisations were required of all ministries.
- A study concerning the use of information networks for consultation of and participation by the citizens as well as digital TV as a channel for citizens' exercise of influence was conducted. The state administration discussion forum was renewed and the development of electronic consultation was continued.
- The SAG group, through which cooperation between Swedish-speaking organisations and various ministries takes place, promotes consultation of civic organisations at various stages of the preparation of decisions. Special attention was paid to the initiation and early stages of preparations.
- The principles for evaluation of communication by the State administration were developed as a project run by the Prime minister's office. Monitoring of public opinion is one of the evaluation criteria in the revised set of principles.

There is still work to be done

The Ministry of Finance sent a questionnaire to ministries and to civil society organisations in summer 2007 to monitor whether there is progress in implementing the principles. The answers to this questionnaire shows that the direction of development is right but there is still quite a lot of work to be done before the results will be satisfactory.

The results showed that giving out information is well taken care of. Of all the projects started about 90 % are immediately in the Government's project register in the Internet after being launched or even before. But when it comes to the ministries' strategies on consultation and participation not all ministries yet have such strategies even though it was required by the Government. However consultation is seen as a normal integral part of the preparatory work in the ministries and the ways of hearing citizens are more diverse than before. Also regional hearings and horizontal hearings done in co-operation with other ministries are more common than before.

The time given for Civic Society organisations to answer written consultation is longer than before but the goal (8 to 12 weeks) is so far only reached in one single ministry (out of 13 ministries). According to the CSO's the development is going to the right direction, but the organisations argue that sometimes hearings seem to be organised more for window dressing and occasionally also the both ministries and CSO's are politically too correct in their behaviours in the public hearings and the true hard questions and problems are carefully avoided.

Evaluation of consultation and participation as well as the training of civil servants in this area are issues where the development is perhaps lacking the most behind.

Democracy indicators

The Civil Participation Policy Programme has also created Democracy indicators to monitor the state and development of Finnish democracy.

The indicators cover the following topics:

- Election and party democracy;
- Participatory democracy and social capital;

- NGO participation;
- Citizens' views on citizenship and their own opportunities to influence;
- Attitudes towards political institutions and actors;
- Criteria of informed citizenship.

Which data are the democracy indicators based on?

To produce comprehensive and reliable democracy indicators, a variety of data- and register-related measures are required. These include an established system of collecting results of election opinion polls and questionnaires aimed at NGOs, political parties and educational institutions.

What are democracy indicators needed for?

There is plenty of demand for information about democracy. Civic discussion calls for clear and reliable information that creates a firm enough basis for the formulation of opinions and decisions made by citizens in the context of their own active role in society. Political and government decision-makers need information that is relevant to society's development and in concrete problem-solving situations.

Democracy issues include key elements that cannot be properly illuminated without measurable indicators. Many questions typical of democracy discussions are formulated in quantitative terms. Which development trends can we observe in people's attitudes towards democracy? What is the rate of those participating in "non-traditional" political activities among the population? How representative among the public is the often-detected negative attitude towards politics? Which factors explain the drop in election turnouts?

Finland is not highly ranked internationally in comparisons of the availability of wide-ranging empirical data on politics and society. Most developed western countries have access to data that has been collected and developed for considerably longer and more systematically than in Finland. For example, election research – which is vital for the monitoring of democracy development - is still mostly in its infancy in Finland when compared with other Nordic countries.

How is the data utilised?

Creation of indicators and collection of data on the basis of them is not an end in itself. Work related to democracy indicators can only be regarded a success when they have been utilised to produce data that is relevant to research, decision-making and civic discussion.

Data is collected on key issues related to both democracy research and to practical problems with democracy, ensuring that long-term monitoring of Finnish democracy is served as appropriately as possible.

Fundamental democracy indicators will be published as easily understandable and concise tables and graphs on democracy.fi. In addition to summaries intended for the public and media, a main academic report and briefer publications in journals will be created on each topic.

Who will create the democracy indicators?

The research work will be carried out by academic researchers. Each set of research data will be compiled by an independent research institution that is well-established in collecting data on the topic and has been selected on the basis of appropriate competitive tendering.

International cooperation networks and international comparability are vital tools for research into Finnish democracy.

Who will finance the democracy indicators?

The basic data will be financed by the Ministry of Justice.

Background material - text based on:

Programme Management within the Finnish Government, Prime Minister's Office Publications 12/2007

www.kansanvalta.fi

Democracy.fi. A website for those interested in democracy, political participation and influencing in Finnish society.

14. SWITZERLAND - STANDARDIZED SURVEYS ON VOTER BEHAVIOUR

Thomas Bürgi, Federal Chancellery (Switzerland)

Short summary of case

After each popular vote at federal level (with 3 to 4 votes held each year on 10 to 12 proposals), a standardized survey has been conducted since 1977 with a representative sample of voters on their interests, motivation, and competence on matters relating to voting and on politics in general. To make the surveys comparable, the variables have been standardized (about 430 variables). The cost of the surveys amounts to about € 120 000 per year. The time spent by government officials to administer the mandate is negligible. The results of the surveys are made available to the media.

Introduction: Votes in Switzerland

One particularity of the democratic system in Switzerland is the extensive political rights at local, cantonal and federal level. By means of different co-decision tools – at the federal level, principally the *referendum* and the *popular initiative* – the people can effectively take part in the management of the State. At the federal level these political rights are exercised in votes usually held four times a year, with decisions on up to 10 to 12 items. Citizens can propose amendments to the Constitution by means of *popular initiatives*. Before such a proposal can be submitted to a popular vote, the signatures of at least 100,000 eligible voters must be gathered within an 18-month period. In some cases, the authorities respond to popular initiatives by submitting an alternative plan or counter-proposal to the people and placing it on the same ballot. For either the popular initiative or the counter proposal to be accepted, a double majority is required (majority of the people and majority of the cantons). *Referendums* are a form of veto, which allow citizens to respond to Acts of Parliament. Decisions concerning amendments to the Constitution or Swiss participation in certain international organizations are, by law, always subject to referendum. In these cases, a double majority is required (majority of the people and majority of the cantons). All other decisions are subject to optional referendums. These decisions are voted on when at least 50,000 eligible signatures are gathered within 100 days of publication. To veto a parliamentary decision in an optional referendum, only a simple popular majority is required. Prior to each vote, every adult citizen receives documentation on the relevant topics and ballot papers by post. The participation rate is usually between 40 and 50 per cent.

Vox Surveys

Since 1977 “Vox” surveys have been carried out after every federal vote. These surveys are conducted in the form of representative samples of roughly 1,000 eligible voters (700 voters until 1987) and take place during the two or three weeks following the vote. The surveys focus on the interest, motivation, and awareness of the citizens on voting matters and on politics in general. The principal points covered during interviews include: general political opinions and habits, political and social affinities, degree of understanding of the items put to vote, the various aspects relating to the decision on how to vote on these

items, how the individual's opinion was formed and, finally, the individual's appreciation of the importance of what is at stake.

The Vox surveys benefit from the financial support of the Swiss Confederation and private groups and are carried out by a partnership which includes: a private research institute (gfs.bern) and the political science institutes from three universities (Bern, Geneva & Zurich). The private research institute is responsible for the collection and preparation of the data; the analyses of the data are carried out by each of the university institutes in turn. A Vox report giving the results of these analyses is published after each survey. The Vox reports are one of the best developed demoscopical products in Switzerland. They are well-known by politicians and public and widely accepted.

Standardized Surveys and VoxIt Database

Over time the Vox surveys have changed significantly. This change has been substantial enough to create problems for a user wanting to compare surveys carried out several years apart. The standardized Vox surveys are the result of a project to harmonize Vox surveys carried out after each federal vote since 1977. The work to standardize the most significant variables was begun in the early 1990s in the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Geneva. The final work, named VoxIt, produced standardized files and generated a documentation of questions. A system is in place which allows the integration of new surveys as and when they become available.

To cover all standard Vox surveys, more than 430 variables have been defined. While any given survey will contain no more than half of these variables, this number demonstrates the successive changes made to the original Vox surveys. From the point of view of the standardization process, these variables can be divided into three categories. The classification is principally based on the differing sources of the integrated data.

The VoxIt data combines information from several sources into one file. First, the data integrates and standardizes the most significant variables in the Vox surveys. The second type of variable includes specific characteristics of votes and items (i.e. popular initiatives or referendums) such as the date of the vote, the results of each item, participation rates, slogans of the federal government and the principal political parties. Finally, the standardized surveys include a third type of variable. These variables were designed specifically to synthesize data and to make comparisons from across the range of the available surveys possible.

Taken as a whole, the standardized Vox surveys constitute a relatively complex database. There are at least three reasons for this complexity: first, the data includes a large number of surveys which, from small adaptations to more substantial alterations, have changed considerably over time; second, each survey brings its own surprises (missing variables, inaccurate data, etc.) which further confuse the issue; and last, the process of standardization itself can at first present a certain amount of complexity.

Use of the results

The standardized surveys provide information on voter behaviour. Since every important reform has to be approved implicitly or explicitly by the citizens, detailed information on their voting behaviour is essential for everyone involved in politics (government, administration, parliament, business interest groups, civil society organisations, individual citizens, etc.). When a reform has been rejected by the citizens, the administration, the Government and Parliament have to know the reasons if they are to draw up a second draft with better chances of success. The surveys also show whether citizens have properly understood what is at stake in a vote. This helps the Government to improve its information policy.

Public consultation prior to decision-making

The *consultation procedure*, derived largely from the “facultative” (or optional) legislative referendum of the 19th century, has become an important stage in the legislative process. It is an efficient means of involving the Cantons, political parties and stakeholder groups (civil society organisations, citizens) in the shaping of opinion and decision-making process of the Confederation. It is intended to provide the public at a sufficiently early stage with information on the material accuracy, feasibility of implementation and public acceptance of federal projects. There is accordingly both an informative and a participatory dimension to the consultation procedure, which falls within the scope of the Constitution (Article 147) and the Federal Law on the Consultation Procedure. In addition, there are numerous provisions in the relevant legislation that make it mandatory to consult stakeholders before drawing up standards. There are other forms and instruments for consulting/involving third parties, as well as scope for dialogue between the federal authorities and third parties (including round tables, popular discussions and public forums), but these are not the subject of explicit regulation.

Extraparliamentary procedure: by sitting on extraparliamentary commissions, many organisations on the political/economic scene and in society at large (civil society organisations, citizens) can directly influence the work of government and thus defend their interests effectively.

Groups of Cantons: in the Swiss Federation, under the Constitution (Art. 46), the Cantons implement federal legislation. Article 45 stipulates that, in cases specified in the Federal Constitution, the Cantons participate in federal decision-making, particularly regarding legislation.

Consultation of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs): the SME compatibility test provides information on the problems that SMEs might face under new legislation. The idea is to ask SMEs about the implications for them of draft legislation. An average of five or six tests are conducted every year for legislative amendments with a potentially major impact on SMEs. The SME Forum is an extraparliamentary committee of experts, comprising company directors and government officials; it discusses Bills or draft Ordinances with a potential impact on SMEs.

Links

Vox Survey Partners

gfs.bern, a research institute in politics, communication and sociology which is responsible for the collection and preparation of the Vox data (<http://www.gfsbern.ch/e/index.php>).

Institute of Political Science, Bern University (http://www.ipw.unibe.ch/content/index_ger.html)

Département de science politique, University of Geneva (http://www.unige.ch/ses/spo/index_en.html)

Institut für Politikwissenschaft, University of Zurich (<http://www.ipz.unizh.ch/index.html>)

VoxIt Database: Swiss Information and Data Archive Service for the Social Sciences SIDOS (<http://voxit.sidos.ch/index.asp?lang=e>)

Contextual Information

All data concerning the votes, such as: participation rates, voting results and the Federal Council’s vote recommendations, come from the *Federal Chancellery*. The official results of federal votes since 1848 can also be found there (<http://www.bk.admin.ch/themen/pore/index.html?lang=fr>).

GOV/PGC(2008)8

Political party slogans come from a database which is updated by the *Political Science Institute of Bern University* (http://www.ipw.unibe.ch/content/index_ger.html).

Federal Votes and Swiss Politics

The *Federal Chancellery's website* is an essential reference tool for everything relating to votes, political rights and the structure of government organizations in Switzerland (<http://www.admin.ch/index.html?lang=en>).

Direct Democracy

The website of *C2D – the Research Centre on Direct Democracy* – is a very useful resource on this subject (<http://www.c2d.ch/?lang=en>).

The website *Plate-forme Eurocité* includes a file in which the primary aspects of direct democracy in Switzerland are simply and clearly described (<http://www.eurocite.ch/dossiers/ddirecte/>).

PART III: VOICES

WHY SHOULD GOVERNMENTS ENGAGE CITIZENS IN SERVICE DELIVERY AND POLICY MAKING?

The Honourable J. Bourgon P.C., O. C. (Canada)

INTRODUCTION

The Public Governance Committee and the OECD Secretariat have launched some very important projects on citizens' engagement as a result of the Ministerial meeting in Rotterdam in November 2005. Personally, I believe that citizen engagement in Government will be at the forefront of future public service reform in many countries, and as a result of the work of your committee, the OECD will be well positioned to assist member countries.

Over the past 25 years we have acquired a vast experience of public sector reforms. In the mid-1980's some reforms were driven by the need to restore the fiscal health of governments; others were aimed at rebalancing the role of government in society after a long period of expansion which started in the early 1950's. Various measures were introduced to improve the quality of service, performance and productivity. All governments introduced modern communication and information technologies in support of public service missions. These initiatives took on many names and many shapes including, E-government for services provided on-line; integrated service delivery among departments and among governments; single windows providing a range of integrated services based on citizens life cycle or targeting specific target groups. Finally all OECD countries introduced measures to promote openness and improve transparency and accountability.

All these initiatives have laid the basis from which public reforms will take shape in the future.

During this period, important changes have taken place in the world. We have witnessed an unprecedented process of convergence toward a governance model which includes market economy and democracy, or at least some democratic principles. This model has emerged as the most efficient way of ensuring a simultaneously high standard of living and high quality of life.

We learned about the importance of good governance and understood better the interconnected roles of the private sector, public sector and civil society. In effect we came to understand the importance of shared governance⁴¹. In our global societies, no one has all the power or controls all the levers to bring about complex and durable results. To serve the collective interest in the XXI century requires an effective public sector; an efficient private sector; a dynamic civil society and an active citizenry.

Past public sector reforms have focused on performance, efficiency, and productivity. Future public service reforms will focus on citizenship, democracy, responsiveness and public accountability. These reforms will prove no less challenging than the ones we have managed in the past.

⁴¹ BOURGON, J, *Shared Governance*

Past public policy reforms focused on fiscal and taxation reforms, regulatory reforms and various measures aimed at creating an enabling environment for wealth creation in an expanding global market economy. Future public policies are likely to give greater attention to people as economic, social and political agents. They will focus on productivity through innovation, which means people's capacity to innovate and to transform ideas into new assets. They will explore new forms of global solidarity to ensure a more equitable dispersion of benefits and the broadest possible participation in the global economy. They will pay greater attention to the role of citizens as "agent" in shaping and implementing public policies which depend more on a collective change of behavior than on the legislative authority of the State.

Public sector reforms and public policy reforms over the coming years may very well converge; both will focus on people. The countries which will be most successful will be those able to create a culture supportive of innovation and reasonable risk taking; to develop new forms of social solidarity to harness human and social capital; to ensure the active participation of citizens in the workplace, in the community and in society.

Why Should Government engage citizens in service delivery and policy making?

The question the organizers of the Symposium have put to me is: "Why should government engage citizens in service delivery and policy-making. The Secretariat has circulated as a room document an article entitled: *Responsive, responsible and respected Government*⁴², it can be used as a reference document for many of the questions we will not have time to address today.

To address the theme of the Symposium, I have decided to use some of the arguments most frequently raised "against" citizen engagement, or if you prefer I will start from the case against in order to make the case in favor. This will allow me to reframe some of the arguments in favor of citizen engagement without overstating the benefits which would run the risk of undermining the credibility of a promising avenue for future public service reforms.

I would like first to propose a definition. Citizen engagement includes:

"All measures and-or institutional arrangements that links citizens more directly into the decision-making process of a State as to enable them to influence the public policies and programmes in a manner that impact positively on their economic and social lives"⁴³.

Is citizen engaging in conflict with representative democracy?

One concern which has been raised about citizen engagement relates to the role of Ministers in representative democracy. Put simply it is questioning whether citizen engagement is compatible with our system of representative democracy or if it leads over time to some form of direct democracy with all the dangers that this entails.

A related argument is that once ministers are elected every 4 or 5 years, they are free to determine the public interest and their decision amount to serving the public good. Therefore, according to this view there is no

⁴² BOURGON, J. *Responsive, responsible and respected Government*

⁴³ UN-OESA, *Institutionalizing Civic Engagement*

need and no role for citizen engagement. It would simply delay decisions, create expectations that the government may not be able to fulfill or reduce Ministers flexibility for action.

Taken the limits this view is reductive of the role of Ministers, government, citizens and democracy. It also fails to take into account the changing nature of public policies and public sector services over the last quarter century.

Citizen engagement can only take place in the context of the legal and constitutional laws in place in a country. In that sense it cannot be in conflict with representative democracy. It does not diminish the political will, nor does it change the doctrine of Ministerial responsibility. Some countries have introduced in their constitution some measures of direct democracy. It is for instance the case of Switzerland which must hold referendums on various questions. These measures do not constitute per se a commitment to citizen engagement per se.

The important point to remember is that *having a vote* is different from *having a say*. Democratic societies guarantee citizens' right to vote to select their representatives. This right does not imply that people are *given a voice* on matters that interest them most or that they have a role in the decisions that affect them most directly.

Today public policies are increasingly complex and require increasingly complex interactions inside and outside of government; to get the best available information; marshal the best evidence; to understand the impact of alternative options; and to reduce the risk of unforeseen consequences. Furthermore, an increasing number of public policies, require the active role of citizen as "agent" in implanting public policies, in particular when issues require a change of societal behavior or where the legislative authority of the State is insufficient to bring about a desired outcome. It is the case for issues such as global warming, environmental protection, disease prevention (obesity, diabetes) and so on.

A previous century gave us the principle of "no taxation without representation", a modern version may be "no commitment to actions without participation". At a minimum level citizens should be *given a voice* in the matters where they are expected to play an active role as "agent" of public policies.

Ministers decide which initiatives will be most deserving of public support. They alone can decide how the political capital that they have earned through a democratic electoral process will be invested to serve public interest. That being said, there is more to the role of Ministers than the affirmation of political will. Ministers set the agenda for change; forge broad base consensus in support of the Government agenda; bring key players and stakeholders to the table; forge strong partnerships to ensure the harmonious functioning of the private sector, the public sector and civil society.

Citizen engagement opens the prospects of modernizing and enriching the practice of representative democracy. In my experience, Ministers generally take comfort in citizen participation because, when it is done well, it broadens the base of support and reduces the political risks associated to ambitious new initiatives.

Citizen engagement is not a panacea. It is not in conflict with representative democracy and it is no substitute for political will. An active and dynamic citizenry will be increasingly needed not because Ministers are somewhat lacking, but because the active role of citizens as players in policy formulation and policy implementation will be increasingly central to creating new common public goods.

Is there a demand for citizen engagement?

It is sometimes argued that the proponents of citizen engagement “*romanticize the citizen*”⁴⁴.

According to that view, the vision of participating, choosing citizens rarely exists in practice. Most people find it difficult enough to make a living and to look after their family. They do not want to spend their time in town hall meetings or filling questionnaires. At the same time it is argued that government should not discriminate in favor of those who get actively involved and respect the decision of those who choose not to participate.

No one is interested in everything. People have not demonstrated an inclination to do the jobs of the elected officials they have selected to represent them or of the professionals paid to serve them. I would readily agree that people have no interest in spending their week-end in town hall meetings; why should they. However I would hasten to say that these practices are not tantamount to citizen engagement; they are more representative of traditional consultations practices⁴⁵

Put simply, people want to know that they *could participate if they wanted to* and that *their voice would be heard*.

In practice, public servants are not confronted with a lack of interest but with the difficulty of managing a process of engagement that balances various interests and responsibilities. The issue from a practitioner’s perspective is not whether people want to participate; they do, but rather how to encourage citizen’s participation in a manner that balances the diversity of interests, while avoiding being hostage to special interest groups. Some participants have an explicit role and responsibility in the decision process; some bring expertise necessary for making a decision which engages their professional responsibility; some have powerful power bases; others are beneficiaries and have a direct and personal knowledge of the potential impact of a decision.

From a practitioner perspective, citizen engagement opens up the possibility of a disciplined and structured way to respond to the pressures exerted by citizens demanding to have a say in the decisions that affect them most.

People “want in”. Closing our eyes to this reality may simply lead to further erosion of confidence in government and public sector institutions.

Are the costs too high?

There is a concern that Citizen Engagement may be too costly. Consulting takes time, involving people even more. Citizen engagement may delay necessary decisions. Furthermore, there is no compelling evidence that citizen engagement leads to better results at a lower cost.

All this is true and yet these may not be the most significant costs to consider. Since the early 1960’s there has been a steady decline in trust in government and public sector institutions. For a while some countries with long traditions of civil engagement and active non-governmental organizations resisted the trend. Today this trend is apparent in every developed country and in every segment of the population irrespective of income, education or age.

⁴⁴ POLLIT, C, *Towards a New Public Administration Theory*, p39

⁴⁵

It is a disturbing phenomenon. It was the subject of the 7th Global forum organized by the UN and hosted by the Government of Austria, in Geneva, this summer.

An unprecedented period of growth and economic prosperity did not reverse the decline in trust in government. Twenty-five years of public service reforms aimed at improving the quality of service may have improved *user satisfaction* but it did not translate into higher trust in government. Measures such as access to information, codes of conduct, ombudsman, and new controls may have improved *transparency* but did not reverse the decline in trust in government.

Declining trust is a cost to government and society as a whole. No country is rich enough to pay the price of distrust.

Distrust in a government may lead to a change of government through the democratic process but it may also lead to social tensions. Low trust reduces the scope for public initiatives, in particular when the benefits are in the mid-term and are not equally distributed. In the absence of trust, governments become timid and the costs of government services increase as layers after layers of controls are added which further erodes trust. Declining trust in public institutions may lead to low voluntary compliance; tax evasion; corruption; social unrest; instability and even violence.

In my opinion, there has been a growing disconnect between the public service reform agenda of the past 25 years and citizen's expectations. Citizen engagement brings us back to basics and to the very purpose of government and public sector institutions.

Citizen engagement is not a new kind of public service reform or the fashion of the day. It is a view, in fact a very old view, of the role of government in society which has an implication for the way we develop policies and deliver programs.

Citizen engagement may not, per se be able to reverse the trend in the declining trust in government. Trust is not an input but an outcome of good government. It comes at the end of a long chain of deliberate and sustained actions.

At first, the tangible results may simply be more openness; greater public accountability which in turn elevates the public discourse and public debate. Over time it looks to more responsiveness and a greater awareness of citizens, needs or expectations. Only then may we see the early sign of increasing trust in government and public institutions if nothing else, in the meantime has undermined public confidence.

The role of government

Governments are the primary instrument of democracy in our society. Their role is to preserve democracy; defend and expand citizen choices; create the space for public debates; and encourage civic participation and community building. A characteristic of good government and good governance is the existence of an active and literate citizenry; without it democratic institutions can easily fall prey to the next dictator, benevolent or not.

Citizens are all at once citizens of the world, of their country and of their chosen communities of interest. In a global environment, the role of government is to carry the voice of its citizen in an international forum and to exert influence on their behalf. Citizen engagement enhances the legitimacy of a government's action beyond its borders.

Governments have a key role to play in encouraging citizen engagement while at the same time avoiding misunderstanding and false expectations. The first responsibility is to create an *enabling environment*; the second is to clarify *the rules of engagement*.

An enabling environment encourages civic participation. Citizens are more than constituents, voters, or clients. As citizens we reconcile our conflicting individual interests as taxpayers, workers, parents, or users of public services. An enabling environment helps to remove the obstacles to the participation of groups most frequently excluded: the youth who have no right to vote but are frequently saddled with disproportionate costs for the services provided to the generation in power; the poor whose voices must be heard on issues of fairness and social justice; those affected by special barriers due to age, handicaps, distance, literacy, etc.

The rules of engagement are specific to a domain of activity, a service, or an organization since the diversity of circumstances implies a diversity of approaches. Some areas carry deep responsibilities for law and order; others require a high level of expertise; or are aimed at protecting rights. The rules of engagement help clarify how the commitment to citizen engagement is given shape in practice in the decision-making process of an organization.

Citizen engagement is hard work; it is neither a panacea nor a romantic vision of the ideal citizen. Citizenship is the cornerstone of the democratic system and of democratic institutions. Giving them a voice in the matters that affect them most will be central to future public sector reforms.

CONCLUSION

Citizen engagement has both an *intrinsic* and *instrumental* value. It has an intrinsic value because it leads to a more active citizenry. It elevates the public discourse, enhances transparency and accountability. It increases the sphere within which citizens can make choices.

It has an instrumental value by encouraging debates which leads to broad based consensus in support of government initiatives. In that sense it increases reduce the political costs, and improves the likelihood of success of government actions.

It is a vision of the role of government within society which impacts on the way we develop policies and the way we provide services. Seeking citizens' participation from time to time, when it is convenient or on issues of interest to the government of the day can be met with cynicism if it is not part of a broader commitment which recognizes the value of citizen participation as a matter of course and on matters that interest them most.

OECD is ideally positioned to advance this body of work and to provide timely advice to member countries on how to remove the barriers and how to create an enabling environment. There are many unresolved issues but one thing we know for sure is that the reform agenda of the next ten years will not be the simple extension of the past agenda. I believe it will be about *people* as economic, social and political agents in a global economy and global society.

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THE PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Malcolm Crompton (former Privacy Commissioner of Australia 1999-2004 and
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Is there a problem and what's so different about Government?

“Who said it? Why did they say it? Where do they live? How did they vote last time? What are their interests and concerns?”

No, this is not from the film “The Lives of Others”, (George Orwell’s “Big Brother” or even Ben Elton’s recent book “Blind Faith”.

It’s the kind of questioning an elected politician and candidate in a modern democracy is expected to answer and record in the databases of their political parties’ after every contact with constituents who visit their electorate office or phone in. Political parties are the most comprehensive, aggressive direct marketers on the planet. In some democracies, they even have special laws that allow them to collect more personal information from more sources than any other civilian organisation in their society and then keep it secret from their citizens.

The operations of political parties are supposed to be separated from those of government in a strong democracy. However lines blur and more importantly, the citizenry does not always know where the boundary lies or even believe there is one. More importantly, this is a case where the facts don’t matter: it’s perceptions that matter.

Citizen concerns about government can be greater for at least three other reasons:

- the unique power government has in society, such as the power to pass laws that require data sharing between its agencies or other governments, be they for law enforcement, national security, service delivery improvement or policy analysis;
- the lack of choice citizens may have, for example paying taxes, updating electoral roll data, or receiving essential health, housing or welfare services, each of which may diminish the power of citizen control as a trust mechanism; and
- the lack of regular contact citizens may have with some government services – which make it more difficult for citizens to learn to trust a service through direct experience.

For these reasons and more, democracies are required by their citizens to great lengths to provide a secret ballot in the ultimate consultation: general elections.

In the world of Government 2.0, the difference compared with traditional government will be the increased ability to track behaviour. Whether or not it involves ‘personal information’ no longer matters – the impact on personal lives can be the same.

Governments will have enormous opportunities to use wiki processes to develop policy, blogs and online forums to gain feedback or social networks to generate mutual assistance between citizens. Whether they will be able to do so will depend critically on assurance of anonymity when sought and fairness in treatment in all circumstances.

Social networks moved into mainstream life extremely rapidly in 2007, followed by the desire to monetise the value so created. Then came consumer reaction to initiatives that individuals found offensive or undesirable. It all showed how powerful these tools are and how much risk they create.

In short, the question is this — how can the citizen be sure that it is “safe to play”? How can they be assured that government will be trustworthy? Within this, ‘Privacy’ or ‘data protection’ is a key component but not the only issue.

A new frame for generating trustworthiness

In seeking to create trust, three areas emerge as critical: control, fair risk allocation and accountability. No single one of these elements matters more than the other. What makes them powerful as a frame for thinking about trust is the way they interact. They work together in a constantly changing pattern of mutual influence and support.

When individual citizens say they don’t trust an organisation or demand ‘privacy’, it is likely that these are the three things that actually concern them, even if they might not articulate it that way.

A dynamic system linking control, risk allocation and accountability

Control

First, citizens are concerned that either they will lose control over what happens to information about them or that they have insufficient control over how that information is demanded, collected and stored in the first place. Their sense of loss of control is heightened if they do not understand how organisations control any such information that they have. It is heightened a lot more if they fear new information will be used against them in their daily lives.

Risk and its allocation

The sense of unease will grow – along with the feeling that this is a game in which it is not “safe to play” – if citizens don’t have enough knowledge about the risks of participating in a consultation and how the risks that do exist have been defined and allocated.

This is a very significant issue for governments. Citizens are becoming much more aware that they have been asked to shoulder an increasing proportion of risk in most parts of their lives over the last couple of decades. Will a new consultation lead to more?

Accountability

Finally, citizens are concerned that organisations which collect and use information about them, too often fail to accept full accountability. In particular, they fail to demonstrate full accountability for the way they manage risk or to accept responsibility quickly and effectively when risks manifest themselves as failures or breaches. While organisations manage failures affecting themselves with business continuity plans, the equivalent ‘citizen continuity plan’ is often strangely missing for other stakeholders in a service provision relationship, especially the service user.

Lack of a good safety net for citizens when failure occurs is tantamount to allocating a disproportionate amount of risk to the individual, who is often least able to manage, mitigate or bear that risk compared with a government agency.

The dynamics

These three factors are significant because they are interdependent. If issues in only one or even two of the elements are addressed, it’s unlikely that the trust dimension will have been properly addressed. Sometimes they are complementary; at other times they are not. A common reaction to a perceived increase in personal risk, for example, is to demand increased personal control or anonymity. Another

example is the way greater accountability can be used to reduce risk significantly. Each component must be addressed to achieve rising levels of trust.

This thinking derives from work funded by Cisco Systems. To read the full paper on “Safe to Play – a Trust Framework for the Connected Republic”, visit www.TheConnectedRepublic.org.

Where to from here?

This analysis tells us one thing: governments have to act in a trustworthy way if they are to engage their citizens in meaningful consultation that is to be viewed as neither ‘spin’ nor entrapment. The key to earning trust will be respect for individual citizens and the personal information about them through a particular focus on control, risk and accountability, viewed from the citizen perspective. When government consults through new channels that leave richer footprints, such as Web 2.0 tools, the need to address these dimensions becomes even more critical.

The final test, though, remains unchanged: old fashioned good public administration: listen to the outcomes of consultation and ‘say what you’re going to do & do what you say’ in response.

Some suggested Principles

The following principles provide a practical guide for governments exploring new ways to build high trust into all dimensions of consultation and service provision.

Control

- Don’t hide behind consent if the service user has no real choice.
- Be prepared to pay greater attention to mitigating citizen risks, accountability and a safety net where direct citizen control is not possible.
- Give citizens as many options as possible about how they management their relationships in online world; make it possible for them to conduct them as they would in the offline world if they wish to.
- Encourage a learning system; enable people to understand and discover the capabilities and risks of a new service gradually and in a safe environment; encourage adaptive solutions that utilize the ‘power of the edge’.

Fair risk allocation

- Focus on risk for all parties – including the citizen – identify, allocate and be clear and specific about ways to mitigate it. Align the incentives so risk is managed by those best able and motivated to manage it. In particular, look after citizens when they are ill-equipped to look after themselves.
- Regularly review risk settings to make sure they evolve appropriately in line with the dynamic nature of the collaborative web environment.

Accountability

- Be prepared to be more transparent.
- Have strong internal and external audit and review mechanisms to demonstrate trustworthiness.
- Ensure that there is a good safety net for citizens when service delivery fails them in some way. Credible restitution (for example, for identify theft) is worth more than over-promising a foolproof, perfect system.

AN ESSAY ON OPEN GOVERNMENT

Matt Dodd, a Year 13 (final year student) of Wellington College, New Zealand.

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa (Greetings, greetings, greetings to you all)

As obvious as it may sound, it must be stressed that an open and inclusive government cannot truly exist without including youth. A government cannot hope to be inclusive in the future if the youth of today - future voters and future contributors to open policy - are already being 'disengaged' by systems that seem outmoded and irrelevant to their lifestyle. The antidote to disengagement is to identify technologies that young people use on a daily basis, provide us with government services in a form that we are used to and then back it up with legal structures that demonstrate that government is able to adapt to our technical innovations. To a young person, the fact that putting music from a CD they own on to their iPod is still illegal (in New Zealand at least) is a clear reason to believe that government has no relevance to their daily lives. To appear relevant, and be truly inclusive, government must not allow itself to fall behind change in the way voters live.

An open government is also a necessity for young people. Today's technology means people can and will bypass official sources of information, and efforts at censorship prove ineffective when faced with the relative anonymity and cross-border nature of the Internet. Internationally, revealing emails and information have ended up on political blogs long before elected politicians or government officials have made any comment on the issue. It has sometimes been said that youth distrust authority, but in fact what we distrust most are hypocrites who only feign interest in our affairs. Openness in all steps of decision making, as far as is practical, allows youth to be assured that consultation is not merely salutary but builds trust with youth, which is invaluable. A simple demonstration that our wishes have been reflected in concrete, completed legislation and policy might go a long way in curing the scourge of 'disaffected youth' that newspapers seem to love writing about.

The applause we gave to politicians branching out into blogs and YouTube in 2007 is symptomatic of the fact that we are accustomed to having policy thrown at us but very little of our input incorporated into the finished product. It seems that this is a paradox of accessibility and effectiveness. While civil service in this country seems open and eager to consult, it appears largely faceless and powerless to us as youth. Conversely, politicians have the charisma and power that can carry an issue to public awareness, but only the most committed young New Zealanders would bother to visit their local MP on the one day a week they are in their electorate office. This is where technology once again becomes important. By virtue of being servants of the public, politicians have a duty to make themselves as easily contactable as possible. For young people like me, the keystone of an inclusive government in New Zealand is the growth of communications infrastructure. Technology has provided young people with a wealth of tools which we have integrated into *our* lives. The problem is that policy makers have not yet integrated them into their work. When direct contact with government or any corporation becomes as simple as an everyday activity like sending a text message to your friends, then neither physical distance nor generational differences will impede open policy making and open government. I believe that an easy and effective access to government would encourage all of us, but particularly youth to keep voting and to keep participating in government in the future.

Note

Matt is part of a group of young people from the high schools of Wellington who support the work of Wellington City Council City Communities team. Named 'Tech Execs', they are young people particularly interested in how Information and Communication Technologies affect our work, education and daily lives.

The Tech Exec team provided to the City Communities team of Wellington City Council in 2007 through the following events

8 March 2007-The Launch of the Wellington Loop with the Contact -Energy CEO- TUANZ Education day
 20 March 2007-Tech Crew Hui 23 May 2007
 21 May 2007- Virtually at the TUANZ Telecommunication day
 30 May 2007- The New Zealand Correspondence School e-strategy launch
 6 June 2007 - MOE
 20 June 2007 - Senior Net
 20 June 2007 Youth Council
 3 September 2007 -Talking to the SSC and equivalent Australian Organisations at CISCO via Video conferencing
 8 September 2007- Second Sight Symposium – Wellington College
 4 October 2007 -Virtual Presentation at ULEARN Auckland
 8 October 2007 - Virtual Presentation at Wellington Girls' College
 23 October 2007 - Tech Execs/ Tom Mitchell's presentation to City Communities
 7 November Digital Strategy Expert Groups at the Ministry of Economic Development
 21 November 2007- Delegation from the Netherlands – Ministry of Social Development

In Wellington New Zealand, there many high schools that support Youth based School Councils and youth groups to encourage Information and Communication technologies (ICT's) two of the most well known are the Tech Crew of Wellington College and the Tech Angels of Wellington Girls' College. Wellington City Council supports the work of these Information and Communication Technology groups through the Tech Crew Hui or gathering , which is an event managed by the Wellington City Council and Wellington College The Hui hosts 200 secondary school age students, at this Hui young people learn about leading edge ICT's and present their own computer based projects to each other.

PARTICIPATE, PRAGMATICALLY

Archon Fung (archon_fung@harvard.edu)
Opinion Piece for OECD Report: Minding the Gap

The content — and indeed the very existence — of this report shows that political leaders and policy makers across mature and developing democracies have gained a newfound appreciation for citizen participation in both the making of public decisions and their implementation. In their more candid moments, however, public officials frequently confess many suspicions about engaging citizens. They worry that unschooled citizens will make rash and unwise choices or that they will be too demanding. They worry that increasing public participation will actually *harm* the quality of democracy. Whereas most people vote in elections, methods of direct citizen participation and consultation such as town meetings, citizen juries, and public hearings can engage a highly select and unrepresentative set of individuals who are the “usual suspects” in political participation.

At a deeper level, there is a tension in our political culture between representative government and participatory democracy. Almost everyone who supports greater citizen participation sees citizen input as a complement to representative government. This superficial harmony, however, belies real tensions and conflicts. Citizen participation — especially in its boldest and most promising forms — encroaches upon the prerogatives and authority of elected politicians and professional policy makers. Participatory budgeting — at least in the original flavor that was developed in Porto Alegre, Brazil — works *because* it transfers authority over public investment decisions *from* public officials *to* citizens who participate in neighborhood meetings and the other institutions of the Participatory Budget.

Politically speaking, what should be done by politicians and other officials, and what should be done—and decided—by citizens themselves? To my mind, the tension between representative and direct, popular rule by citizens is marked especially by the following trade-off. On one hand, citizens in modern democracies are busy people — they have jobs, families, and numerous other concerns. Though we usually don’t think of it this way, one of the main advantages of representative government is its efficiency. Elected officials and civil servants do the hard work of making laws and policies and implementing them so that the rest of us don’t have to. On the other hand, the institutions of representative government sometimes produce poor decisions and actions. In such cases, it may be that consulting citizens or even endowing them with public powers can improve the quality of democratic governance. A pragmatic approach to democratic governance would use the comparative advantages of citizen participation where representative institutions are ineffective, confused, or unjust.

There are many issues, for example, on which citizens lack clear views and opinions. Many of us would like low taxes and good services, a clean environment and fast growth, and good schools for all but the very best schools for our own children. If the popular “inputs” to the democratic process — citizens’ preferences over parties and politicians — lacks firm grounding, then the rest of the democratic process stands on feet of clay. Fortunately, practitioners of citizen participation have developed a range of deliberative methods that effectively inform participants and create the kinds of discussion and reflection that can help them to form sound judgements that are consonant with their own values and lived experiences as well as complex factual realities.

On other issues, citizens know what they want but the machinery of electoral accountability is too weak to tether the self-interest of politicians or civil servants. In such cases, public officials act to advance their own interests at the expense of the public good. When legislators make decisions about where to draw the boundaries of electoral districts in the United States, for example, they frequently do so in order to maximize their own chances for re-election. The interest of most citizens, on the other hand, lies in electoral districts that will produce competitive elections, responsive representatives, or other values of a just electoral system. To take another example, the central purposes of the participatory budget in Porto Alegre included stemming the corrupt use of public monies and redistributing those funds to poor areas of the city. To achieve these ends, the force of popular participation countervails tendencies of some politicians to divert public funds for patronage purposes.

Finally, there are a range of issues for which the machinery of government — with all of its taxing power, authority, and expert agencies — lacks the resources, legitimacy, or know-how to accomplish agreed-upon ends. The good of public health, for example, is produced not just by doctors, drugs, and access to health services, but also through the informed and responsible choices of individuals. The effective education of children depends not just excellent school facilities and skilled teachers, but also attentive parents and engaged students. In crime-ridden neighborhoods, maintaining safe streets depends upon the many coordinated efforts not only of police and various city services, but also residents themselves.

These are some of the “democratic deficits” of representative government. In many cases, a healthy dose of citizen participation can help to mitigate these deficits. It is unfortunate that the most common methods of engaging citizens in public affairs are so often ineffective. Public hearings and notice-and-comment provisions, for example, often attract small and biased segments of the larger public, and the link between what happens in these venues and officials’ decisions can be thin to non-existent. In recent years, deliberative entrepreneurs have developed a range of novel and much more promising methods of public engagement. These methods include citizen juries, twenty-first century town meetings, deliberative polls, participatory budgeting processes, and citizen assemblies. Though their designs vary widely, these democratic innovations show how modern societies require contemporary technologies and methods of participation to keep the practice democracy vital and relevant. The machinery of national political representation that was developed in the eighteenth century has begun to show its age.

The question, therefore, is not whether we should have a representative or direct democracy, but rather what mix of expert, representative, and participatory decision-making and public action best advance the values of *democracy* overall. When citizens and officials alike treat the question of political institutions from that pragmatic frame of mind, they will discover that realizing the ideal of democracy requires moving flexibly between a wide range methods that include both representation and direct public consultation. Indeed, modern democrats should abandon the ideological and defensive terms in which existing political methods are often championed in favor of a probing assessment of the problems inherent in the democratic institutions we have inherited and a wide-open search for alternatives — many of which are likely to incorporate forms of direct citizen engagement — that can do better.

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP IS A PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS

Deirdre Garvey, Chief Executive Officer, The Wheel, Ireland.

When examining the structures and process that exist in Ireland for involving citizens in a partnership relationship with the state it would appear to an objective observer that we rank relatively well. In this article I will briefly describe those structures and systems and then move on to providing a personal perspective on whether they are delivering open and inclusive policy making. To a certain extent, there are no straight answers to these types of debates and the 'perfect system' does not exist, and so ultimately I offer some recommendations for change, which I believe could strengthen the systems of policy making in Ireland.

In the Republic of Ireland the main set of structures and processes which exist through which citizens can become involved in policy making at a national level - other than the parliamentary democratic system - is called 'social partnership'. This is essentially a space in which the state interacts in a structured way with representatives of society through a four 'pillar' structure. In total there are 27 non-profit organisations across all four pillars involved in this system as follows:

- Business and employers pillar: four representative organisations
- Trades unions pillar: one representative organisation
- Farming pillar: five representative organisations
- Community and voluntary pillar: seventeen representative organisations.

Many organisations in various spheres of life have sought to become members of a particular pillar (i.e. become Social Partners), but it is only the Government which chooses the social partners from its own analysis as to which organisation(s) provides the best representation in the various areas.

Set up in the mid 1980s, when unemployment was so high that the shared objective of reducing it became a common objective that brought the initial three Pillars (the Community and Voluntary Pillar only got invited into this process in the late 1990s) to the negotiating table with Government to create what became the first national agreement 'A Programme for National Recovery'. The ongoing purpose of the Social Partnership process has been the negotiation of a series of such 'national agreements' - usually lasting three years each - between the Pillars and the government. Originally comprising purely pay agreements, they now cover a very wide range of socio-economic policy areas that affect most of the citizens in Ireland. This reflects the changing reality of Ireland's economic development as well as the developing rationale behind each Pillar's motivation in engaging with this process.

Social partnership is, in effect, a problem-solving process that allows the various participants involved to influence policy-making. It allows provides the space and structures for the four Pillars – and the people they represent – to sign up to a shared vision. Key to identifying a shared vision is the publication every three years, immediately in advance of the commencement of the negotiations, of the 'Strategy Report' by the state-appointed think-tank, the National Economic and Social Council (NESC). Membership of NESC is determined by Government but each of the four pillars in social partnership is entitled to five seats. The development of the Strategy Report with all the Social Partners in non-negotiating mode, allows for a shared analysis of the current social and economic environment. This is then used as a basis for the ensuing negotiations between the Pillars and government as a national agreement gets negotiated.

Within the community and voluntary pillar the 17 organisations are organised into strands which are defined by themes e.g. disability, older people, housing, labour market, poverty, networks/voluntary. Although a debate has existed within the sector as to the actual benefits to the more marginalised and vulnerable in our society of participating in the social partnership arena, it remains the most powerful avenue for associations of citizens to input into policy making. Therefore any organisation which is invited by Government to become a Social Partner tends to accept it. On this note it is instructive to note that in 2003 two organisations in the community and voluntary pillar withdrew from the process as they felt that they could not sign up to the national agreement of the time, 'Sustaining Progress', as they felt that nothing had been won for their respective constituencies in the document. Not signing up to the agreement lost them their status as social partners and with it their access to various policy-influencing committees to which only social partners have access. It also lost them the ability to participate in the ensuing (and current) national agreement, 'Towards 2016', which is a 10-year framework agreement. The two organisations concerned subsequently applied to Government to come back into the process and they were duly invited back in, but only after a three-year period and subsequent to the end of negotiations on the current agreement. Their experience seems to have been that although it is a flawed process, it is better than trying to influence policy making 'on the outside'.

The system of Social Partnership at a national level has been somewhat replicated at local levels, although in a very different context. Decision-making by the State in relation to policy making and budgets is highly centralised in Ireland (which is one of the reasons why being a Social Partner carries with it such power in terms of access to policy makers). The structures that have been set up in every local government jurisdiction, which involve a similar range of social partners to that at national level, is more about implementation rather than actually influencing policy making. That said, associations of citizens' organisations have been formed in every local authority area and they are called Community Fora. Twenty five people are elected every three years onto the Community Forum by the community and voluntary organisations in that area. Members of the Community Forum sit on a wide range of strategic and implementation bodies that affect all aspects of life at local level, including the County Development Board. All of these Community Fora were set up by the Reform of Local Government Act in 2001 and although some of them were created by merging previously existing grass-roots community representative structures, many remain in a kind of 'limbo' where their only purpose as a representative structure is to provide the Local Authority with representatives so that it can complete its social partnership style structures.

All of the above refers, of course, to just one of the systems through which citizens can become involved in public policy making – the participatory democratic process. The alternative of the elected representative democratic process is also a key access route to influencing policy. Over the last twenty years Ireland has had coalition governments and in all but three of those years the largest party, Fianna Fáil, has been the dominant coalition partner.

There is an irony in that Government claims that Ireland's innovative social partnership structure makes policy-making more inclusive. Yet, the opinion of the opposition parties, and indeed many government back-bench members of the Dáil (lower house in the parliament) is that Social Partnership is actually making policy-making more opaque and less inclusive. This is not just the gripe of parties that have been in opposition for 17 of the last twenty years, there is a valid point here because it has to be acknowledged that Social Partnership is not an openly democratic process as the people involved are not elected. The counter argument, of course, is that all social partnership deals are agreed with the elected Government of the people and therefore social partnership is democratically accountable.

Social partnership, in my opinion, is a positive step towards the distribution of democracy on a continuous basis as opposed to exercising democracy once every five years at election time. It succeeds in giving a voice and a say to those organised parts of society and civil society which are invited into the process, but

obviously challenges remain. The main challenge being to ground the institutions of social partnership in an appropriately accountable framework. This would allow the civil society partners to become more representative without threatening or alienating the opposition parties and the appropriate role of the Oireachtas (the two houses in the parliament).

It is necessary to note that both the social partnership process as well as the elected parliamentary process are all based on the existence of intermediary organisations between individuals and the state. A different challenge in terms of open and inclusive policy-making is to involve citizens directly – without the need for intermediary organisations. In 2007 the Government-appointed independent Taskforce on Active Citizenship published a report with recommendations as to how citizens might be enabled to become more involved in their communities and all the recommendations were accepted by Government. One of the strongest messages coming through to the Taskforce from the thousands of people who contributed to its consultations was that people are sick of ‘cynical consultations’ conducted by various agencies of the state just for the sake of it, so it is doubly disappointing to report that almost 12 months later the implementation group for the recommendations has not been appointed and much momentum has been lost. It would be a real pity if this report is not progressed in its entirety or if purely the ‘volunteering related’ recommendations were to be picked up upon, leaving the more important element of empowering citizens aside.

In looking at all the various dimensions of the policy-making framework, one thing is clear from my perspective as CEO of an umbrella network for the community and voluntary sector: the Irish community and voluntary sector is a component in a healthy parliamentary democracy and not an alternative. The challenge for those of us involved in civil society representative roles is how we and the system can develop to enable us to better perform that role?

As mentioned earlier, one of the risks that are inherent in either making social partnership too strong and/or increasing the direct involvement of citizens is that of diluting the role of parliamentary democracy. In Ireland there are two houses in the Oireachtas (parliament), the lower house (the Dáil) and the upper house (the Seanad or Senate). The answer to the balancing act could potentially lie with the Seanad. Originally, it was conceived of being the forum in which civil society could debate and interact with policy and legislative developments. It is comprised of 60 members. Eleven members are nominated by the Taoiseach (Prime Minister), 6 members are elected by university graduates and 43 are elected from panels of candidates representing specified vocational interests: Cultural and Educational; Agricultural; Labour; Industrial and Commercial; and, Administrative. The way that it has developed over the years, however, has been along party political lines where the majority of members belong to political parties and the party whip is imposed. Therefore the Seanad does not perform the role for citizens and civil society that it was intended to.

In conclusion, I would observe that the access to policy-making provided to organised parts of civil society is not bad in Ireland. Although the openness and transparency of the practice of actually influencing policy could do with some improvement. In seeking to make the Irish system of policy making more open and accessible, I would suggest that we need to ground social partnership by making it more open and accessible to a broader reach of civil society; we need to reform the institutions of parliamentary democracy to engage more with institutions of policy-making in Social Partnership, as well as reforming the Seanad and its role within the parliamentary system; and, we need to find better ways of engaging citizens by removing the barriers to their engagement in policy-making.

RIGHT TO KNOW IN MEXICO: THE CHALLENGE OF DISSEMINATION

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January 2008

The most relevant instrument for the effective implementation of the Mexican Law for Transparency & Access to Information (LAI), which was enacted in June 2003, has been the use of information technologies. Official Federal Institute for Access to Information (IFAI) statistics show that since the law was enacted, over 270,000 requests for information have been submitted to the Executive Branch; over 13,000 appeals have also been filed with the IFAI.

The political culture in Mexico has led many citizens to distrust or even fear public authorities. So an important innovation of the LAI is that citizens are not required to identify themselves in order to request public information from the government. The system provides users with considerable protection against the perceived power imbalance between the government and the citizens, by allowing the submission of information requests through an electronic system where the user is in complete control over what personal information can be accessed by government agencies. In addition, this system eliminates the possibility of dwelling on questions of *who* is requesting information and *why*. An information request must be answered, when possible through the system, and the only means through which government agencies can deny access is if the information requested falls under narrowly defined categories of classification. These classifications are often reviewed directly by the IFAI, further ensuring that a denial of information is legitimate. Therefore, it is no longer acceptable for government officials to deny access for fear of the motivation behind the request.

Anyone, anywhere in the world can access government information in Mexico through these information technologies. However, an accurate profile of users is hard to get: information available to IFAI comes from the applicants themselves, voluntarily and without rigorous verification (65% of users have spontaneously provided this information). Taking this limitation into account, the available profile shows that the average applicant is a young metropolitan male, with an income and education higher than the national average: 64% of requesters are male, 55% live in the Metropolitan area of Mexico City, 54% are between 20 and 34 years old, 32% locate professionally themselves in the academic sector, 18% in the business sector, 12% are bureaucrats and 9% work in the media.

One important fact, and one which gives cause for concern, regards the concentration of the demand for public information. From June 2003 to December 2007, there were only 90,000 registered users and only five thousand of them accounted for 50% of the requests. Four hundred and fifty users made 25% of the total number of requests.

It is obvious that this concentration of demand undermines the positive effects of the right to know in Mexico to some extent. In general, it is accepted that freedom of access changes the behaviour of public authorities, because they know they can be observed or supervised by the general public. A large number of citizens applying for government information increase the social pressure on public servants to behave legally. However, such pressure has not yet come to bear on Mexican public officials, since 90,000 users

cannot match the needs of more than 105 million inhabitants. Thus, dissemination of the right to information is one of the biggest challenges of the IFAI in the short run.

That being said, given the public deliberation sessions at IFAI, where five commissioners integrate an administrative court of appeals, as well as the fact that frequently the people requesting information are journalists and specialized civil society organizations, many cases have reached large audiences. This attention has generated on many occasions media follow-ups, including front-page articles in the main newspapers. Having such cases on the front page of many national papers for a number of days has a clear multiplying effect on the impact of access. This has forced the government to correct or cancel some programs once opacity, excesses or corruption was revealed. For instance, the Office of the President ceased buying expensive clothes for the First Lady and the shopping list of previous acquisitions was revealed, due to a request for information. The expenses, use and destiny of the budget to finance the transition between administrations are now public, thanks to the publicity generated by another request for information. There is greater control on grants and financial donations to unions and non-governmental groups. Access to information concerning the financial management of public trusts is now possible. Criteria and allocations of subsidies are now disclosed at the community level; military procurement is now public. These are only a few of the many success stories that were made possible thanks to media requests, coverage and follow-up.

Social pressure for disclosure of government records is a new element in the equation for fighting impunity and corruption, one we would like to help strengthen. In this sense, it is essential to encourage requests for information on the part of strategic social actors, as well as to help reporters involved in investigative journalism, civil society groups that could enhance their performance with access to government information, or businessmen involved with provision of goods and services to the government.

Looking at the other side of the social spectrum, and driven by these concerns, the IFAI launched the *Proyecto Comunidades* in August 2005, with the support of the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation. This program seeks to identify the best strategy for dissemination of the right to know and the use of the LAI within marginalized social groups, that is, social groups that under normal conditions would not be able to exert this fundamental right. After two years of activities, results of the Communities Program indicate if adequate training and follow-up activities are established, that these groups can search, gather and obtain the technical and human resources to request information. However, one necessary condition is that their efforts be accompanied by a grass-root organization that they can trust.

Some of the experiences are worth mentioning here. In the city of Monterrey, *Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos* (CADHAC), is working with federal prisoners. A study from 2005 reports that 46% of the prison population do not have any information regarding their behaviour status and detected that the unit in charge of up-dating this information did not respond to requests, especially related to early release due to good conduct in prison. In this context, CADHAC helped prisoners to use the LAI and submit applications to request personal records containing the files of each of the prisoners and the status of the anticipated process for freedom. The Public Security Department denied access to the requests, so the applicants filed a complaint to the IFAI. Thus, simply by using the LAI and obtaining IFAI's intervention, some of the procedures went forward after months and in some cases years of stalemate. Today, over 40 % of the requesters have been liberated.

In the State of Jalisco, the *Colectivo Ecologista* supported a local community's efforts to obtain information regarding the territorial status of their land. In spite of pressure from commercial developers, the land-owners decided to reject offers to sell, kept their properties and formed an association in order to sponsor projects dealing with protection of natural resources and ecologically friendly development.

The *Instituto Mexicano de Desarrollo Comunitario*, in Jalisco, requested information on federal concessions for timber and wood industry. The responses they received allowed them to prove the monopolist distribution of the forest exploitation. This information was the seed for the development of a project for environment protection and forest conservation that brought together land-owners, community leaders, local government authorities and environmental groups.

In Veracruz, the *Centro de Servicios Municipales Heriberto Jara* requested information related to the allocation criteria of federal regional funds for municipal development. The information was obtained after appealing to IFAI, and this experience has set a precedent that has showed other municipalities how to get information on the distribution of federal resources for local development.

These examples point out some important achievements of the Communities Program. Under certain circumstances, these groups have begun an appropriation process of the right to know. At the same time, there has been a strengthening of the group identity through the search for solutions by the communities. In the process, the use of the LAI has proven to be an effective tool for empowerment. Finally, the organizations have learned how to use public information within more general strategies aimed at increasing the well being of the communities and empowering them in their relationship with local and federal authorities. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that this is just the beginning: these efforts need to develop flexible training strategies and to create social networks of organizations, in order to reach many more communities.

“INCLUSION” MEANS CITIZENSHIP

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Why would local government invest in inclusive policy making?

“Inclusion” means citizenship, since citizenship is the basic way each individual is included in the democratic process. The involvement of citizens in the decision-making process and in designing (and monitoring) services activities appears increasingly a mandatory element if the quality of public policy is to be enhanced and the challenges of the information and knowledge society faced. The Municipality of Bologna is reshaping itself, trying to move – in its internal ways and methods of functioning and interacting - from a mainly “hierarchical” and complex organization (as in general the Public Administration are) to a more citizen-centered one. There is a “perspective shift” by the public administration, from the delivery of services (e-government and distributive portals) to interaction and knowledge sharing, and more: from debate and dialogue to “listening”. The traditional arenas of representative democracy are complying with their own institutional requirements and are equipping themselves with the means to allow direct citizen intervention and inclusion. This marks a quantum leap compared to the past. The aims are mainly to:

- allow more direct citizen participation in consultation and decision-making processes;
- renew citizens’ interest in areas of dwindling political participation;
- build a more solid consensus around the choices planned;
- foster an ongoing dialogue which ensures balanced power and voices;
- promote transparency in the public administration;
- provide a more direct and equal access to information, knowledge and services;
- reduce discretionary administrative practices
- reduce the various “divides” and gaps in order to empower citizens’ status and competences
- improve the quality of life and the economy

- inject social knowledge/capital into the public administration and counter the natural entropy of such complex and verticalized organizations

The commitment of Local Public Bodies is crucial to promoting inclusion, co-operation and shared visions of the future with citizens, thereby creating the conditions for a real “democracy of proximity” based on the widening and deepening of the “public sphere”. Bologna – from its side – with its projects and services aims at obtaining a proactive citizen, so one of the key-points chosen is to invest in citizenship and e-Citizenship at all levels: the Municipality has always been open to the use of the ICT both in the reengineering back office activities as well as in the relation with citizens and communities. Iperbole - the

free civic network and community portal (by 500.000 daily hits) promoted and realized by the Municipality - was set up in January 1995 (first public provider in Italy and second after Amsterdam in Europe) as a “telematic bridge” between the community (at that time just starting to rise as digital community) and the city in order to build an “information and knowledge society at local level” (www.comune.bologna.it www.iperbole.bologna.it). Since the year 2006 has been created “Iperbole wireless” too, an experimental service for the community – a new extension of the “traditional” civic network infrastructure – which provides for free citizens and also students of Bologna University with broadband Wi-Fi access in public (outdoor and indoor) places within the area of the city centre of Bologna. As an important issue is fighting against the digital divide, the Bologna Municipality strongly supports the realization of projects to try to “minimize” the risk of a “double level” e-community, where the electronic means could become another source of marginalization and social injustice instead of being an instrument of cultural growth and emancipation. According to this point of view, it seems fundamental to provide all the citizens with equal opportunities to have access to the basic knowledge and instruments necessary to use the ICT both in professional and non professional environments. An important requirement for the e-society is the chance for every citizen to be able to use intensively and in a critical, creative and productive way, the resources provided by the web. The aim is to create a virtual environment in which you can learn the rules to build up a community where the weakest ones can share the opportunities with the more experienced ones. For these reasons, the Municipality has started to experiment e-participation and mobile/wireless free connections, which improve the choices for the potential users. This project will implement and improve the interactions between citizens and Public Administration, ensuring easy access to a wide range of facilities, paying attention to the privacy policies. Very recently has been launched Iperbole 2.0 project, an experimental platform allowing the implementation of new communication flows through the use of 2.0 tools (My Iperbole – www.comune.bologna.it/lamiaiperbole). The main features of the project are: interactivity, customization and opensource. Iperbole 2.0 is an open platform of services, multichannel and easy to use. Everyone can customize the layout of the portal choosing which contents to be shown and in which way, adding links or Rss feed.

Which tools, when and for whom?

The Municipality of Bologna is exploiting a wide range of tools to build a negotiated consensus around the choices planned on the basis of wider community participation in decision-making processes. Services, structures and procedures have to be available to citizens both in traditional and innovative ways in order to foster a constant dialogue and “balanced in power” voices. The objective is to involve citizens at all stages of the decision making process so as to show real interest and commitment. The risk is to engage citizens too late and to create a sensation of meaningless participation. To generate consensus around participation processes the first step is to have clear rules about the role of citizens and administrators, aims and outcomes of the processes. Current experiments carried on by the Municipality of Bologna (the so called “laboratories of participation” on various topics and projects, mainly environment and urban planning, carried on both in meetings/working groups and on line platforms) show that the more suitable and easy to manage dimension for participation processes seems to be the district area. People feel the need to take care of their neighborhood and they have the right skills and the experience to talk about it and also they commit themselves quite easily on it. This generates a useful exchange of knowledge, ideas and proposals with the administration. As technologies are evolving and changing, the City of Bologna has continuously developed new on line services for citizens, keeping up-to-date with the new opportunities offered by the digital convergence of ICT. The multichannel communication strategy is intended to progressively offer - in the next years - the possibility and the opportunity to communicate and interact with citizens at any time and anywhere in a complementary way, using different channels (also the “traditional” ones) addressed to different targets, in different moments and contexts. One of the communication strategy priorities is the promotion of a kind of new „electronic citizenship“ for all, in order to spread – as wide as possible - the

new rights in the virtual sphere and make „netizens“ aware of the potential of ICT and support them in the interaction - with and within - new channels in an conscious way.

The instruments to get citizens involved may vary from the collection of signatures to start popular initiatives, questionnaires, complaints channels or face to face meetings to electronic tools of eDemocracy (newletters, polls, on line forums). The multichannel and mobile approach (seamless communication) seems to be the most fruitful and easy for the citizens/users.

Strengths and weaknesses of online tools

Traditional channels for participation are the leading instruments for civic engagement nowadays since it is easier to involve citizens, especially those people who cannot or do not want to access digital media. A digital culture is not so widespread at all, so people place greater trust in “live” face-to-face events even if it is very difficult to encourage people to devote their time to participating. Digital communications media could be new enabling factors for wider participative policy making processes, since they make it easier (in terms of time, spaces, places, settings) for people to participate, thus widening the range of possibilities/settings/contexts of participation (multichannel interactions and platforms) and attract new targets (young people, for example).

The main weak points to be tackled – also according to our concrete experience - are:

- involvement in e-participation on the political side
- commitment by administrators at every level of government, offices and facilities, which is also crucial
- sustainability models for e-governance and e-democracy services
- new skills and profiles within the administration
- more efforts to simplify language and eliminate “jargon”
- gender issues which are not sufficiently taken into account

The main strengths – on our experience too - on which build are:

- mediation/moderation by professionals
- availability of all the documents and information related to topics under discussion
- involvement of all kinds of local ‘social actors’ and stakeholders
- new communication and production models for ICT applications in collaboration with women’s associations (e.g. on language, models and gender issues)
- policies and actions in favour of “e-citizenship inclusion” of new citizens (e.g. immigrants) and their communities
- network of free and attended access points also for disabled people
- free wireless access and connections in public places (indoor and outdoor)
- open source and open contents/formats approach

Box 1 - Frameworks for open and inclusive policy making in Italy

At the national level, Italian law n. 142/90 (and subsequent amendments) require Italy's Provincial Authorities and Municipalities to guarantee the right of all citizens to information and their right to access information and thereby participate in the administrative process. Law n. 241 of August 7 1990 lays down the general principles of administrative procedures and rights to access. In addition, the law governing Italy's local authorities (267/2000) foresees regulations facilitating forms of free association conducive to citizen participation and public consultation. The local authorities are also obliged to establish procedures to ensure that the proposals of individual citizens and associations of citizens be given a hearing.

Subsequently the reform to Chapter V of the Italian Constitution recognises the right of citizens to take an active part in all areas of public life in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity. Law n. 150/2000 ("Regulations governing the information and communication activities of the Public Administrations") recognizes that, without information and communication, citizens are not really citizens at all.

Law n. 4 dated January 9, 2004 concerning social participation of the disabled addresses the question of safeguarding the rights of disadvantaged groups. The law aims to facilitate access by the disabled to ITC tools, mitigating the risk that the widespread use of new technologies might create new forms of marginalisation, and encouraging the adoption of new technologies as a means of overcoming disabilities and social exclusion.

Furthermore, the Directive of the Ministry for Technological Innovation of December 19, 2003, "The Development and Use of IT Programmes by Public Administrations" provided the technical and operational framework for more effective management of the process of setting up or acquiring Open Source IT programmes. Finally, Legislative Decree law n. 82 of March 7, 2005 establishing the "Digital Administration Code" makes innovation compulsory within the public administration. On the one hand, the law offers citizens the right to interact – at all times, in any place and vis-à-vis whatever public administration – through the Internet, e-mail and information networks. On the other, it requires all administrative functions to ensure that all information made available is also in digital form.

Overcoming internal and external barriers

The City of Bologna aims at promoting the real participation of those social groups at risk of exclusion, improving their quality of life and helping them to overcome every kind of barrier. In particular related to:

- Disability: Special measures adopted to support people with specific disabilities (sensory, motor or cognitive impairments) using the human and technological resources best suited to the physical context in which these citizens live and relate socially. In Bologna, for example, we have set up specific public access points to internet for disabled people and we pay attention to the accessibility and usability criteria and rules in implementing e-services and the Iperbole website.
- Social gap: leverage programmes for people whose development is lagging behind. In particular Districts, as levels of government closest to the citizens' needs are committed to support and help in various ways – both with policies and services - the parts of population mostly in danger as, for example, immigrants and elderly people.
- Gender divide: foster innovative projects in cooperation with the network of gender associations to develop new communication and production models reflecting language, models/formats and gender issues. The Iperbole Civic Network activities and services have played - since '95 – a key role in empowering women in accessing and using ICT. Due to this "public" engagement in Bologna the "gender divide" is less strong than in other parts of Italy: in fact the 50% of the users of public (it means set up by the Municipality) internet points are women and the 40% nearly of the "netizens" are women too. Now we are working on a project (together with the Regione Emilia Romagna and the Server Donna service-www.women.it) focused on the e-services and gender issues, in particular the semantic and language used in internet.

- Knowledge: giving substance to the duty of inform citizens about decision processes in a highly understandable way. In this scenario, continuously evolving, accompanying actions for awareness, information, communication and “literacy” have to be set up to facilitate participation and inclusion. Despite efforts to break down digital barriers, a part of the population – even in the most “smart” cities, as Bologna that was pioneer in ICT for citizens - risk being cut off from e-participation processes (due to age, gender, social-economic situation, etc.).
- Digital divide: a multichannel approach promoting mobile and ubiquitous communication would enhance eInclusion, allowing citizens access to services and applications anytime/anywhere from the most suitable device. It is crucial to reach and involve all citizens with more targeted actions of e-literacy and training.

All this also according to the Mandate Programme of the Administration and the Charter of European e-Rights of citizens in the Information and Knowledge Society, the Municipality – in partnership with local stakeholders and taking part in international networks. Taking into account the lessons learnt from the long experience in implementing, deploying and evaluating services, applications and processes for inclusion/e-inclusion we have decided to act inspiring our activities to these main principles:

- rights to access to technological equipment and networks (also broadband), equal opportunities, privacy and personal data protection
- rights to education and training, providing each citizens with the content and knowledge she/he really needs
- information rights, through a user-friendly, high understandable, complete, high quality and up-to-date public information
- rights to participation, reinforcing this fundamental rights of citizens and ensuring a public Administration actively engaged.

People in fact will participate only if the commitment of governments is real and sincere. There is a need to promote a culture of participation on the political side and an acceptance of engagement by administrators at every level of government. But the cultural obstacles to participation lie on citizens’ side too and they will be overcome only through literacy actions and policies to support active citizenship. Even if at the local level it is – to a certain extent – easier to reach citizens and find suitable environments and solutions to facilitate inclusion processes, exclusion could remain a real condition for parts of population but could also be a kind of “conscious choice”. If all else fails, there is a need to rethink the process globally, first of all hearing the voices of all those who were involved in the policy. Efforts to promote inclusion in decision making can benefit from the involvement of all kinds of actors, even if they are “outsiders” since they may bring innovative solutions and points of view.

Learning from evaluation:

We have to say that the Bologna’s e-government “business model” is continuously evolving, but it has set its targets high. Because the impact of e-government is long-term, the Municipality does not view return on investment in a short-time perspective related to specific individual projects. There are no real complete metrics and benefits should be analysed with both quantitative and qualitative indicators. It is necessary to develop more methodologies capable of measuring a “social balance” (social responsibility and accountability), which are not the same as traditional accounting principles. Nevertheless we have some indicators already which provide a partial set of results; the trend is clear, we need and we want to do more in e-government and e-governance.

In any case, a successful policy is based on a clearly defined evaluation process. Even if the evaluation attitude is not spread enough within PAs, the criteria to be followed in egov services planning and implementing since the starting point are quite clear, for example:

- clear allocation of resources;
- clear relation between purposes and outcomes;
- real (and verifiable) increases in accountability;
- improvement of the skills and knowledge of the individuals and organizations involved ;
- relation between time and actions implemented
- relation to the mission and the vision of the institution
- strict relation to the overall information and communication strategy of the institution as a key point requiring constant fine-tuning with the targeted communities and stakeholders.

A good evaluation needs to distinguish between the failure of a policy to impact on the problem and organizational or operational failures in implementation (back office issues and the related reengineering actions are crucial here). Evaluation results should be highlighted through an effective programme of dissemination and communication, since they could create a positive effect of learning from experience and foster an open conversation about what worked and what did not. For example, evaluation results should be used to assess whether administrations have the appropriate skills to ensure social inclusion. This may lead to the identification of specific recruitment needs or the provision of training programmes to provide the knowledge and skills required. Finally, the dissemination of evaluation results will itself increase citizens' perceptions of the transparency and openness of the administration, fostering greater trust and sense of belonging.

As mentioned above, Web 2.0 platforms, that allow bottom up, social and user generated content, could help to promote participation, inclusion and sense of belonging to the community. As Municipality we are working – together with the Emilia-Romagna Region and other cities of the regional territory - on a project of a new model for an institutional portal (territorial); we will test the technological and organisational aspects related to the productive, editorial and communications methods/processes, developed and shared amongst the partners, through the application of participatory and social web tools that highlight and give importance in particular to:

- bottom up aspects in the production of shared content;
- participation and inclusion of social creativity and capital;
- change in the method of interaction with citizens, so as to gather knowledge and skills on the web portal and put them back into circulation in an organised way.

The new participatory and social portal model we intend to pilot, will have several distinctive characteristics. It will be:

- participatory: active users (many to many) who enrich the collective knowledge through interaction with each other and with the administration.
- possible to personalise: not only distribution of information and services as predefined by the editorial framework but also flexible consultation methods based on the user adaptable to the requirements of the various target groups. These include professionals, citizens, businesses and simple readers or navigators and this too takes place in a participatory context defined by interaction with the users.
- inclusive: not just one language is considered but also the languages (and specific/sector based languages) of the users, who become co-producers. In fact not only a few major languages are to be taken into account but the many languages that “live” in urban communities.

So, the innovation of Iperbole 2.0 implies a complex shift from a traditional, distributive, more broadcasting structure, to a social sharing of contents too (wiki, blogs, user generated contents, etc.). This change requires a global rethinking about the role and the use of the PA websites and communication models in general (editorial frame, professional profiles, back-offices organisation, etc). The spirit of open

and participative communities (such as creative commons and open source ones) can be applied to civic networks, opening a challenging phase of their evolution, since the rights to access are progressively changing into rights to participation and co-production. New spaces of dialogue, exchange and interaction will be experimented to create and promote new forms of horizontal, multi-lateral and polycentric interaction among citizens, public administrations and groups of interests. A key success factor is also inter-institutional, multi-level cooperation (at regional, national and international level), in order to achieve resource effectiveness, generate synergies, and standardise approaches and languages.

Overcoming internal and external barriers

Governments have to promote the real participation of those social groups at risk of exclusion, improving their quality of life and helping them to overcome every kind of barrier.

- **Disability:** Special measures must be adopted to support people with specific disabilities (sensory, motor or cognitive impairments) using the human and technological resources best suited to the physical context in which these citizens live and relate socially.
- **Social gap:** leverage programmes for people whose development is lagging behind or regions that are undergoing economic and social conversion
- **Gender divide:** foster innovative projects in cooperation with the network of gender associations to develop new communication and production models reflecting language, models/formats and gender issues
- **Knowledge:** giving substance to the duty of inform citizens about decision processes in a highly understandable way
- **Digital divide:** a multichannel approach promoting mobile and ubiquitous communication would enhance eInclusion, allowing citizens access to services and applications anytime/anywhere from the most suitable device.

People will participate only if the commitment of governments is real and sincere. There is a need to promote a culture of participation on the political side and an acceptance of engagement by administrators at every level of government. But the cultural obstacles to participation lie on citizens' side too and they will be overcome only through literacy actions and policies to support active citizenship.

Even at the local level where it is – to a certain extent – easier to reach citizens and find suitable environments and solutions to facilitate inclusion processes, exclusion could remain a real condition for parts of population but could also be a kind of “conscious choice”. If all else fails, there is a need to rethink the process globally, first of all hearing the voices of all those who were involved in the policy. Efforts to promote inclusion in decision making can benefit from the involvement of all kinds of actors, even if they are “outsiders” since they may bring innovative solutions and points of view.

Learning from evaluation

A successful policy is based on a clearly defined evaluation process. The criteria to evaluate government action should be the:

- clear allocation of resources;
- clear relation between purposes and outcomes;
- real (and verifiable) increases in accountability;
- improvement of the skills and knowledge of the individuals and organizations involved ;
- effectiveness of risk management;
- relation between time and actions implemented
- relation to the mission and the vision

- strict relation to the overall information and communication strategy of the institution as a key point requiring constant fine-tuning with the targeted communities

A good evaluation needs to distinguish between the failure of a policy to impact on the problem and organizational or operational failures in implementation (back office issues are crucial here). Evaluation results should be highlighted through an effective programme of dissemination and communication, since they could create a positive effect of learning from experience and foster an open conversation about what worked and what did not. For example, evaluation results should be used to assess whether administrations have the appropriate skills to ensure social inclusion. This may lead to the identification of specific recruitment needs or the provision of training programmes to provide the knowledge and skills required. Finally, the dissemination of evaluation results will itself increase citizens' perceptions of the transparency and openness of the administration, fostering greater trust and sense of belonging.

GLOBALISED DEMOCRACY

Edward Andersson and Richard Wilson, Involve (UK)

The state we're in

It is ironic that we talk of a crisis for democracy today. After all, there have never been more nations on earth that allow their citizens regular, free and competitive elections than now. On paper democracy has never been stronger. However if the last decade of the 20th century saw the widespread adaptation of representative democracy across the world, then the first decade of the new millennium has been characterised by widespread concern that our democratic institutions are neither fit for purpose or indeed, democratic enough.

The long term trend across most western democracies is that of declining involvement in formal politics and lower turnouts in elections.

Another stark paradox has been uncovered by the recent 'State of the Future' report, produced by the World Federation of United Nations Associations. It is claimed in this report that as a global population we have never been wealthier, healthier or better educated but at the same time we increasingly feel insecure and out of control of our individual or collective destinies.

To this we need to add the new challenges that face us and which cannot be solved by the state alone. These 'wicked issues', such as climate change, the 'obesity epidemic' and others require either consensual behaviour change amongst citizens as a whole; or much stronger leadership, or the kind you rarely see from western national governments.

These factors help explain why we see an increased interest in opening up policy making to different voices. On the one hand because people believe this will increase the integrity and legitimacy of government; and on the other because it might drive greater efficacy on these critical wicked issues.

In the 20th century we built institutions to tackle the challenges we then faced; the Health Services to raise life expectancy, Highways Agencies to move us around, in the UK we even created a national broadcaster to keep us well informed and make sure our democracy worked properly.

Today's challenges are similar but increasingly complex. We now have an aging population, congested transport networks, and information overload. It is clear that the current institutions alone cannot solve the problems of the modern era.

The age of democratic experiments

We are currently living through an interesting period of intense experimentation as we strive to create new solutions, fit for the citizens of the new millennium.

The experiments are numerous and have taken varied forms, ranging in scope, scale and focus. Some involve thousands of citizens simultaneously, for example in the mass involvement mechanisms run by AmericaSpeaks in the US. Others take place on a more modest scale, such as the citizens' juries which the UK's prime minister Gordon Brown has supported in recent months. Some are closely integrated with the institutions of representative democracy, such as the participatory budgeting initiatives pioneered in Brazil and now utilised across the globe.

What is clear is that there is no one answer to the challenges of 21st century governance. Undoubtedly many of these experiments will fail, but the ones that succeed offer us a chance to both strengthen democracy and perhaps more importantly help us meet 21st century challenges.

Differences matter

This does not mean that the same experiments will succeed across the world; there are important differences between the OECD countries which influence how these new participative mechanisms work on the ground.

One such factor is where impetus for more participation comes from and the capacity of civil society to scrutinise this development. In the USA foundations and trusts are often key in funding and encouraging the use of participative mechanisms whereas in the UK this role is largely provided by government. Consequently in the US public participation tends to prioritise giving citizens a platform to be heard; in the UK greater emphasis is ensuring the processes are compatible with government. In the US there is high levels of innovation and limited political purchase, and in the UK visa versa. One commonality between the UK and US are the thriving independent civil society movements which underpin the participation sectors. It is these sectors which have thus far provided the public participation capacity across the Anglo Saxon world. A capacity which is less developed in much of continental Europe.

In France we recently we could have had a situation where had Royale won, we would have had the world's first Premier elected on a participation ticket; but in a country with very limited civil society capacity to deliver on the promise. There are different challenges in Germany and Scandinavia where civil society groups are often state funded and thus potentially constrained in their role as citizen advocates.

That said we are now enjoying a time of democratic blossoming and growth across the world. The key is how we manage this 'field'. How we ensure we innovate in ways that enable resolution of wicked issues; how we make good use of citizens limited time and how we learn effectively from each other.

Below we outline some of the key drivers, threats and challenges that we think will be key to achieving this

Drivers

In the next decade the following trends are likely to drive and shape the development of more participation:

- On-going failure to tackle global challenges such as climate change, disparities in wealth and forced migration.
- The ongoing decline in collective identities which is lowering both membership rates of formal political parties and electoral turnout rates;
- An increasingly educated and vocal citizenry who have higher expectations of public services and their ability to influence them;

- The increasing importance of policy issues which are complex and require behaviour change from wider groups in society;
- Opportunities for increased participation provided by new technologies.

Threats

There are however a number of countervailing trends which can counteract the drivers for more participation. These include:

- Citizens are increasingly feeling stressed and ‘time starved’, leaving them with less time and inclination to take part.
- The growth of opportunities without sufficient capacity and resources has often led to tokenism and bad practice, which undermines the legitimacy of public participation in the eyes of citizens across the board;
- Unfortunately conflicts between democratically elected representatives and the institutions of participative democracy are not uncommon, often elected representatives can feel threatened by these new initiatives;
- Increased public participation often challenges entrenched expert cultures within government. These cultures have strong incentives for protecting the status quo;

Key challenges ahead

If the above barriers are to be overcome there are a number of important challenges that need to be addressed. These are some of the key areas that involve issues that should be a priority in the years ahead:

- Increasing focus on doing better rather than just more participation. Realisation that more is not necessarily better;
- Developing a clear focus and purpose for each initiative which is clearly communicated to the intended participants;
- Encourage elected representatives to work with rather than against new forms of participative democracy;
- To deal with the large scale issues that we face we need to develop larger scale and more visible processes of public participation;
- Developing a stronger evidence base of what works.

As an increasing number of issues that face us cut across national barriers it is likely that there will be increasing calls for participation at the level of transnational governance. There are significant barriers and problems with this, but in the longer term these will need to be overcome. The OECDs interest in the area of open policy making is therefore very welcome, both in terms of providing space for sharing good practice across countries but also as an arena for pioneering participation at a global level. Which is after all where so many of the real challenges lie.

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORLD:
THE VIEW FROM CANADA**

*Donald G. Lenihan
Advisor on Public Engagement to the
Government of New Brunswick*

The Public Engagement Initiative

New Brunswick is a Canadian province of 750 thousand people. In April 2007 its government launched the Public Engagement Initiative to learn more about how to engage communities, stakeholders and citizens more effectively.

The initiative consisted of five pilot projects that developed and tested a new model of public engagement.⁴⁶ In addition, we held a dozen workshops across the country to share the learning with other governments and get their feedback.⁴⁷ Our final report, due in April 2008, will describe the new model, its rationale and some of the findings from our pilot projects.⁴⁸

A key conclusion is that effective governance requires a new relationship between citizens, communities and stakeholders, on the one hand, and government, on the other. The basic reason is that many public goals, such as protecting the environment, ensuring safer streets, renewing the workforce, or building healthy communities, cannot be achieved by government alone. The public have a role to play. If they do not assume a new role in making choices, developing plans and taking action, goals such as these will not be achieved. ***Public engagement therefore is not just desirable; it is a condition of effective governance.***

Our model provides a systematic approach to realigning the relationship between governments and the public. It helps stakeholders, communities and citizens assume these new responsibilities. As space prevents us from fully describing the model here, we will confine the discussion to why traditional consultation is fast becoming an obstacle to good governance and why an approach based on deliberative dialogue is needed to overcome this. Finally, we will conclude with some comments on what an effective engagement model for the future must achieve.

⁴⁶ The five projects are: Skills Development: Reckoning with the New Economy; the Wellness Project; the Climate Change Action Plan Initiative; the Miramichi Action Committee; and Sustainable Communities in a Self-Sufficient Province: Planning our Future Together.

⁴⁷ The PEI is itself based on a recent book entitled *Progressive Governance for Canadians: What You Need to Know*, by Don Lenihan *et al.* The study contains the distilled learning from a 10-year, national research and consultation project on governance entitled *Crossing Boundaries*. It is available for download free-of-charge at www.crossingboundaries.ca.

⁴⁸ The report will be available on the Government of New Brunswick's website at www.gnb.ca.

The Consultation Model

If we are proposing a new model of public engagement, some people will reply that there are already many models out there, from local town-hall meetings to public hearings; from government chat-rooms online to telephone surveys. Do we really need another one?

But this is deceiving. Notwithstanding all the different *tools* for engagement, there is basically one *model*, which gets used for just about everything. It works more-or-less as follows.

Some sort of government panel is given the task of finding solutions to an issue. The public is invited to express their views. This can happen in many ways, from town-hall meetings to online chat-rooms. Once the submissions have been made, the panel reviews them, deliberates, reaches conclusions and finally makes recommendations to government, which then decides how it will respond.

We can call this *the consultation model*. If it has served us well enough over the years, it now often does more to divide the public than to contribute to good decision making. Consider a consultation on tax reform. If I represent small businesses, my basic goal will be to convince the committee that my position, say, cuts to payroll taxes, will best serve the public interest and so it should act on my advice. Other groups seeking to influence the committee can quickly become my competitors, such as anti-poverty organizations, who fear that such cuts will weaken social programs. To convince the committee that my views are the real priority, it is in my interest to create a sense of urgency or even crisis around the issue, seek out studies or shocking statistics that support my position, sharply distinguish it from others, and bring competing claims into disrepute.

The guiding principle is clear: the squeaky wheel gets the grease. This, in turn, creates distrust, tensions and rivalries between the different groups.

The use of such tactics has intensified in recent years, especially around big public issues. In part, this is due to the influence of communications experts who advise organizations and individuals how to make their views heard. Consultants like these have learned that the process often rewards bad behaviour—especially on high-profile issues. Exaggeration and grand-standing attract media attention, which puts pressure on governments to respond.

They have also learned that the process rewards intransigence. Because each speaker's role is limited to stating their view, there is little cost in holding firm to it, even in the face of conflicting evidence or counter-claims. Advocates know it is unlikely they will actually have to defend it. On the contrary, when the media want a counter-argument, they turn to someone else. The two positions are then presented as equally viable possibilities that the viewer must choose between.

From the media's perspective this looks like unbiased reporting. From the advocate's view, it is a reward for intransigence. As a result, advocates see little gain in modifying their position in response to evidence or argument. Most have come to view their job as one of getting their message into the public space at every opportunity. They are not there to engage in genuine debate or to discuss, but to broadcast a message.

There is yet another consequence of the model. Not only is it making real public debate all but impossible, it is undermining government's relationship with the public. In effect, the committee leading the consultation ends up with a shopping list of recommendations and positions, many of which are incompatible. So when it sits down in private to deliberate, choose between them, and make recommendations, someone's ox will be gored. Committee members know all too well that when they

announce their decisions, many of those same advocates will open the curtain on Act II of their communications script and lash-out at the committee for ignoring their demands.

Not surprisingly, committees are increasingly secretive about their rationale and defensive about their choices—which, in turn, makes the public even more suspicious of the process and the advocates more strident in their criticism. The clear lesson is that, when it comes to controversial issues, our over-dependence on traditional consultation is becoming a downward spiral that too often works well neither for the public nor government.

Dialogue as an Alternative

In assessing this situation, we should be careful not to confuse the symptoms with the cause. The problem is not just the communications consultants or the media. The real problem is the process. It creates a competition for influence that pits one interest against another. Consultation is a zero-sum game where one group wins only if another one loses. This encourages exaggeration, grandstanding and intransigence.

There is an alternative. Government does not always have to present itself as the impartial decision maker sitting at the front of the room, especially when the issues are ones that cannot be solved by government alone. When governments are dealing with complex issues, such as economic growth, low unemployment, a skilled workforce, safer streets, a healthier population, a tolerant society, or clean air, land and water, they should start by declaring their inability to solve them on their own.

Instead, they should focus on their ability to provide the kind of *leadership* needed to get a group of stakeholders or a community or province working together to achieve these goals. In such cases, it may be far more helpful for government to engage in the process more as a *facilitator* than as the problem-solver.⁴⁹ In this new role, government's primary task is to get the stakeholders or citizens *engaging one another*, rather than competing for influence. They need to listen to one another and learn about each others' views, discuss their similarities and differences, weigh evidence and arguments for the various claims, and work together to find common goals and joint priorities, make choices and compromises together, and propose common measures. The process thus rests on the recognition that the public (or some subgroup within it) has a real stake in the issue and some role in resolving it.⁵⁰ It aims to bring them together around their common interests, rather than divide them by making them compete for government's ear.

Finally, we must note that in such a process dialogue and decision making often will not be enough. For the solution of many complex issues, the participants must move to the next stage—*action*. Thus, if the issue is how citizens can promote wellness in their families or communities by reducing obesity rates, they need to do more than discuss or deliberate, say, on the importance of exercising. They need to get on their

⁴⁹ We recognize that government also brings important powers and resources for the solution of these problems to the table. In our model, it therefore plays not only the role of a facilitator, but also a *participant* in the process and an *enabler* of solutions. This relationship between facilitator, on the one hand, and participant and enabler, on the other, is complex and goes beyond the scope of this article.

⁵⁰ In our model the public is not a monolith, but a complex entity made up of different subgroups, including governments, stakeholders, opinion leaders, ordinary citizens and communities, all of whom can and should be engaged for different purposes. Moreover, if the public is a complex entity, so is public dialogue. Different kinds of dialogues should be used for different tasks; and different subgroups are suited to different kinds of dialogue. At present, all these things get entangled in confused and confusing ways—sometimes intentionally. As a result, public dialogue is often far less ordered, coherent and disciplined than it could be. A satisfactory model of public engagement must provide us with a systematic way of disentangling these threads.

bicycles or go to the tennis courts. In practice, this means once the participants have reached agreement on goals, the dialogue must continue so that participants can develop and commit to a *plan of action* aimed at achieving those goals. Moving to and completing this critical next stage in the dialogue process allows for the transfer of responsibility and ownership needed to ensure productive action takes place.

Public Engagement: A Systematic Approach

Now, given what has been said, it may sound like we are simply opposed to traditional consultation or that we think deliberative engagement is always a good thing. Neither is correct. Let us be clear. *There is nothing wrong with consultation processes.* Many consultation processes still do very good work on a wide range of issues, from searching for and testing new ideas to showing responsiveness.

The real point of our comments is to underline just how blunt an instrument consultation is in the search for solutions to complex issues. The fundamental flaw lies in its failure to recognize the public's role in solving these kinds of issues. Indeed, it sends the reverse message. By assigning the tasks of deliberation, decision making and action to government, it sends the message that the problem belongs to government and so the solution too must come from government. This is wrong and needs to change. There is a role for the public in making choices, developing plans and taking action for the achievement of important social goals and government needs to sit down with them and work it through.

This is what we did in our pilot projects. We did not set up a table at the front of community halls around the province and invite the public to come and advise us on what government should do to prepare New Brunswick's workforce for the future, revitalize the communities of the region of Miramichi, or promote wellness in towns and villages. Instead, we asked them to sit down with us and *discuss* what each of us—government, citizens, stakeholders and communities—could do to resolve the issues. We asked them how we could learn to work together better. In short, we tried to engage the public in ways that required the stakeholders, citizens and communities we met to assume *ownership* of some of the responsibility—and therefore the action—required to achieve the outcomes.

Our goal now is to take the next step and recommend the approach become the basis of government policy in New Brunswick so that it will become the normal way of doing business on complex issues. While it is true that in New Brunswick and elsewhere there have been good examples of this kind of engagement in the past, it is equally true that they usually appear and disappear like shooting stars. Successes tend to be short-lived, few and far between. More often than not, they are led by some remarkable individual with the right combination of disposition, vision, will and leadership skills to make collaboration work—often in spite of huge countervailing forces. Unfortunately, once that individual moves on, the arrangement usually falls apart.

If a more deliberative approach to public engagement is to become government policy, we need a model that can be systematically applied across a government to change how it interacts with communities, stakeholders and citizens. Such a model cannot be a simple cookie-cutter. There is no single answer to the question: How should government engage the public? On the contrary, this is a complex, multi-faceted task. Unlike consultation, such a model must be:

- able to resolve complex issues into simpler parts;
- more respectful of the interests that may be at stake in finding solutions; and
- more mindful of the fact that stakeholders and citizens often have a role to play in making the solutions work.

At the same time, if the model is to be applied across government, it cannot be so complex that it requires years of study and high levels of expertise to master. An adequate model therefore must be:

- relatively simple to understand and apply;
- robust enough to truly realign public relationships, without tying the hands of government; and
- flexible enough to accommodate very different circumstances.

We know of no jurisdiction where such a model is being applied across the whole of government. The model we have developed for the Government of New Brunswick through the Public Engagement Initiative, and which is set out in our final report, aims to fill this gap. Insofar as we are successful, we hope it will be of interest and of use to governments elsewhere.

FORMALITY OR REALITY? PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE POLICY PROCESS IN KOREA

Professor Jong-Dae Lim, Board Member, People's Solidarity For Participatory Democracy (PSPD), Korea

"The Republic of Korea shall be a democratic republic. The sovereignty of the Republic of Korea shall reside in the people, and all state authority shall emanate from the people."

- Article 1, 1948 Constitution of the Republic of Korea

1. Introduction

Public participation in the policy-making or implementation process is both reasonable and essential in the light of the constitutional concept cited above. In recent years, various legal systems have been introduced to ensure people's participation in Korea.

However, most public participation systems in Korea are designed to legitimate many governmental policies that have already been established, rather than to make people's participation easier in the policy-making or implementation process. In this regard, it is crucial to find a way to facilitate more active and effective people's participation in the policy-making or implementation process in Korea.

This paper briefly reviews some elements of the legal framework which fosters transparency and people's participation. It also raises some issues for future agendas and provides some suggestions for the enhancement of transparency in the conduct of public affairs and for the increase of people's participation in the policy-making and implementation process.

2. Korea's participation framework

The Freedom of Information Act, the Residents' Recall Act, the Residents' Suit Act and the Participatory Budgeting System are among the main laws and practices underpinning public participation in Korea.

- The Freedom of Information Act of January 1998 requires that the administrative institutions, local governments, and the like should openly disclose their information and archives to the public. According to the 2006 Annual Report on Information Disclosure, a total of 150,582 items of information were requested of which 106,423 (70.5%) were disclosed.
- The Residents' Recall Act of May 2007 allows the public to claim a recall vote when local officials, mayors, provincial governors, or local assemblymen make unlawful decisions or when they are corrupt. The results of the vote determine whether they will be expelled from public office or not. The Residents' Recall Act took effect in July 2007 and the first recall vote was conducted in December 2007, in Hanam City, Gyung-gi Province. This vote led to two local assemblymen being recalled.
- The Residents' Suit Act of January 2006 also allows local residents to check the illegal budget execution of their local governments. It is based on public interest litigation and thus admits local residents as plaintiffs. Local residents are able to deal with illegal civic affairs in court, regardless of whether their individual rights and interests have been infringed. In this way, local residents can protect the common interests of the community from local governments.

- The Participatory Budgeting System ensures public participation in the budget preparation process of local government. It allows local residents to exercise the right to make local budget plan, which were once the exclusive preserve of local governments. The first case of Participatory Budgeting was conducted by the Northern District (Buk-gu) of Gwangju Metropolitan City in 2004 [see case study, Section 2]. To date, about 40 local governments have adopted this system.

3. Future Agendas

Although some institutional changes have been introduced, it can definitely be said that the prerequisites for both participation and transparency are still far too complicated and strict. It is also true that people's participation has tended to end up more as a formality than a reality. It is, thus, necessary not only to adopt new institutional arrangements but also to complement and reinforce the current systems. The systems to be mended or to be newly adopted are as follows:

1) Strengthening Freedom of Information in practice

The 1998 Freedom of Information Act in Korea has greatly enhanced the transparency of the policy-making process. In spite of its remarkable success, much important and critical information has yet to be disclosed. This hinders transparent policy-making processes. The lack of information on the policy-making process especially thwarts people's participation. The scope of the closed and secret information should be curtailed and the Act's vague provisions on this crucial aspect should be reviewed.

2) Adoption of a Taxpayer's Lawsuit and National Participatory Budgeting

It is expected that a Taxpayer's Lawsuit would check the illegal budget execution of the central government. As mentioned before, it is also based upon public interest litigation that acknowledges the right of taxpayers to act as plaintiffs for the protection of the public interest. In addition, Participatory Budgeting has so far been practiced only at the local level. It should be extended to check the waste and illegal budget execution of the central government. Finally, the conditions for the Residents' Suit must be lightened in order to ensure more participation of local residents.

3) Adoption of a National Recall Act

It is, now, possible to recall local assemblymen, mayors, and the provincial governors in Korea based upon the 2007 Residents' Recall Act. But the possibility of initiating a recall against the members of the national assembly has not yet been enacted. A National Recall Act would be an additional democratic measure that would partially address the imperfections of representative democracy. It is crucial to adopt the Act, not only to expand people's participation but to check corruption and unlawful decision-making by National Assembly members.

4. Conclusion

In Korea, several legal elements have been introduced to ensure people's participation and to improve the transparency of the policy-making and implementation process. However, in reality, the systems tend to bestow legitimacy upon governmental policies that have already been formulated, rather than to ensure effective public participation in the policy process. It is clearly meaningless to solicit public input after the bureaucrats and the members of the National Assembly have settled all the important decisions. The most critical challenge is to change the attitude of the authorities in charge of the policy-making process.

In Korea, the adoption of complementary programmes is greatly needed in order to give greater substance to people's participation in the policy process. The substantial participation of the people must be guaranteed through the introduction of direct democratic measures such as those indicated above.

THE NEXT CHALLENGE FOR CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT: INSTITUTIONALIZATION

By Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, Ph.D
President and Founder
AmericaSpeaks

Two years after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans – decimating the city’s infrastructure and exposing deep racial and economic disparities – the city remained without a recovery plan to guide rebuilding efforts and leverage government recovery funds. Early planning efforts were met with anger and protest as the community struggled to distribute resources and revive an entire city in an environment where the public’s trust in government had been severely abused.

In December of 2006, thousands of current and former residents of the city were invited to an unprecedented Community Congress that took place at 21 meeting sites across the United States (half of the residents of New Orleans had not yet been able to return home.) More than 2,500 people, representing the demographic diversity of pre-Katrina New Orleans, took part in the deliberative forum. Linked together by satellite and the Internet, residents struggled with the tough choices facing the city and articulated a set of collective priorities for rebuilding their home city.

One month later, 1,300 people came back together to review a recovery plan that had been developed based on their priorities. Support for the plan was overwhelming; ninety-two percent of participants agreed that the plan should move forward. For the first time, community leaders had a public mandate to act. Building off of this support, the city’s recovery plan was soon approved by the city and the state and has begun to be implemented.

Whether you look to this experience in New Orleans or the countless other examples that have occurred around the world, the value of authentic citizen engagement has become abundantly clear. The issues that confront all of us in the 21st century can no longer be dealt with by government or the private sector on their own. To find and implement sustainable solutions to our most urgent problems, the public needs a seat at the table.

The good news is that after decades of experimentation and research, we know a remarkable amount about what works; about what it takes to convene diverse groups, to support informed deliberation, and to position public discussions so that they can make an impact. Citizen Assemblies, Participatory Budgeting, Citizen Juries, Deliberative Polling and 21st Century Town Meetings work. They have proven track records and are being used around the world.

The sobering challenge before us is to take these practices that have been employed episodically and find ways to institutionalize them. The way the public’s business is done needs to become more inclusive and participatory as standard practice, especially at the national level. Only by institutionalizing these practices will we rebuild trust in our governing institutions and transform what it means to be a democracy.

More so than almost anywhere else, Europe is home to a wide and deep set of cases where government has actively sought to bring the public into the governance process. For example, the European Union has

invested substantial resources into experiments with public participation and electronic governance. Great strides have also been made in Britain recently to provide citizens with opportunity to be involved at the local and national levels.

Unfortunately, however, the number of successful examples of institutionalization of public deliberation are few and far between. The Danish Board of Technology has served as a mechanism for soliciting public opinion on critical issues in Denmark for more than a decade. Participatory budgeting has enabled tens of thousands of Brazilians to shape local budget priorities since the early 1990s. In the United States, most institutionalized participation is limited to small communities, like the New England Town Meeting. A proposal to create regular national discussions was recently made by a major candidate for the Presidency, but such an idea remains just a proposal.

In order to meet the challenge of institutionalization, it will be critical to raise the visibility of the successes that have been achieved at engaging the public in governance in order to recruit more advocates to the cause of open and inclusive policy making and build a constituency for the policy reforms that must be put in place. Only when people understand what is truly possible will there be a great enough demand to realize our goals.

We must also do more to fully conceptualize the infrastructure that will be required to sustain participation over time. Embedding public involvement and deliberation into the policy making process will require a host of formal policies and institutions. But, it will also require shifts in the culture of our communities and the creation of informal organizations to educate the public and ensure that the public process maintains its vitality. The time to begin to comprehensively think through what this infrastructure will look like is now.

As we work to transform our governing institutions and practices, it will be critical that we remain aware of the failings of past reform efforts. We must write into the legislative statutes that authorize these mechanisms processes of cyclical review to ensure that they remain ever-green. At the same time, we must create safeguards to prevent these new venues for public voice from being captured and co-opted by special interest groups.

The global movement to create open and inclusive policy making has come a long way over the past decade. Opportunities to transform our governance processes that I never thought I would see in my lifetime now seem to be within our reach. It is truly an exciting time for those of us who care deeply about the state of democracy. I am hopeful that in the coming years we will all have a chance to experience democracy as it was envisioned so many years ago; as a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

THE FUTURE OF OPEN AND INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING: A CIVIL SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE

Kumi Naidoo, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Introduction

Governments are increasingly being called upon to be more inclusive and open when formulating policy and to have viable channels through which government institutions can be accessed by citizens. The issue of open and inclusive policy-making means that governments are transparent in decision-making processes that they can be easily approached and hence are accessible to their citizens and they respond adequately to the views and concerns of the citizens. This in effect calls for greater engagement between governments and their constituencies and such a relationship will enhance democracy, transparency, accountability, ownership of national priorities and development. It is becoming evident that governance is no longer the domain of national governments alone, but increasingly involves contributions from additional political actors and other stakeholders. One such stakeholder is civil society. While governments remain powerful, there are many ways for citizens to engage in decision-making processes.

In this brief paper I want to highlight a few disturbing trends or what I call democratic ‘deficits’ that have constrained spaces for inclusion in policy-making processes, the responses by citizens and civil society to some of these trends and the prospects for the inclusion of citizens and civil society in policy-making and our findings are then summarised in the conclusion.

Disturbing Trends

The first disturbing trend relates to the fact that elections may be held regularly, but fewer and fewer people are choosing to vote, and meaningful interface between citizens and the elected is minimal between election periods. Surveys reveal declining levels of citizen trust in public institutions and a shift away from regular engagement in democratic processes. In many democratic systems, ‘form’ has largely overtaken the ‘substance’ of democracy. The influence of monied interests in many traditional systems is also turning citizens away from traditional engagement in favour of new forms of participation. This waning of faith in traditional political institutions should not, however, be understood as a sign of citizen apathy. Citizens are finding new ways of becoming involved in public life and decision-making, marking a shift from representative democracy to new forms of participatory governance.

The second disturbing trend is that participatory governance processes are not inclusive enough, if one takes into consideration the three levels of governance processes which occur at the “macro,” “meso” and “micro” levels. These three processes translate into governance policy, implementation, and service delivery respectively. Experience shows that most governments are comfortable with the micro role which is the delivery of services; even so, governments can do more to create more enabling environments in order for these micro-level activities to actually flourish and be more effective. Governments also need to engage civil society and citizens on issues at the macro level and it is important for governments to recognise that civil society can add value to improving governance processes, improving policy and also contributing to delivery. Failure to recognise these three roles and only acknowledging the delivery role makes a negative statement that the only thing civil society can contribute is cheap labour.

The third disturbing trend is that in the name of the war on terrorism, there has been a reduction of civic space and democratic space in many countries as certain governments use the war on terror as an excuse to pass legislation that restricts the rights (and work) of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and fundamental rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression.

Responses from citizens and civil society

Civil society and citizens are actively coming up with responses to the challenges highlighted above. The erosion of national decision-making capacity through the process of globalisation has brought timely responses from civil society. Increasingly decisions that affect citizens are being taken by supranational institutions that are in most cases neither accessible to citizen engagement nor accountable to citizens. Though governments still serve as key political players in most countries, their primary centres of power are gradually being eroded. Because of the constraints inherent in participatory governance processes, citizens are increasingly joining civic movements to foster public participation, transparency and accountability in governance.

Historically, much of the work of civil society organisations has been at the micro level, where they are involved in providing important services to vulnerable communities in areas as diverse as health care, education and professional training, humanitarian relief, the empowerment of women, technical assistance and environmental protection, to name a few. Increasingly, civil society groups have stepped into the uneasy vacuum of post-conflict situations and have compensated for the state – admittedly not without controversy – even though in the growing number of instances where vital public services have been rolled back, this has largely been as a result of macro economic reforms.

In the 1980s, the slogan “think globally but act locally” was made popular. Behind the slogan was a call that greater consideration needed to be given on how global discourse, global thinking, global processes and global institutions determined what was achievable at the local and national level. Ironically at this point in history when most countries have achieved or returned to electoral democracy, including countries in Eastern and Central Europe, Africa and Latin America, the real power around fundamental issues such as the economy, monetary policy, the environment and HIV and AIDS does not respect national boundaries. The reality is that even if we have national political leaders who are imbued with integrity, who strongly pursue anti-corruption agendas and are pro-poor in their orientation; the extent of progress that can be made is increasingly determined by policies and practices of global and multilateral institutions. In recent years, civil society groups have therefore recognised the need to rethink this slogan. Experience has shown that in and of itself, acting locally will not get to the root causes of many social and economic problems if the real locus of power remains global. There is thus the need to think “locally and act globally” as well. To this end, a growing number of civil society organisations have become actively engaged in transnational advocacy work, campaigning and policy formulation.

Prospects for the future

By not engaging civil society on their policy formulation processes, governments risk depriving themselves of reservoirs of information that can assist in the drafting of better policy. It is self-defeating for political leaders to deprive themselves of the policy knowledge that civil society actors acquire from working directly with vulnerable communities. For example, civil society will be better placed to inform the drafting of a domestic violence law since it works with survivors of violence.

In many countries, there are high levels of interaction on specific issues between governments and their citizens. However, there is also increasing pressure on governments to involve citizens in the decision-making processes at all levels. As civil society has matured, its credibility with outside audiences has

grown. This is most clearly evidenced by the fact that civil society groups generally enjoy a high level of public trust: A recent survey revealed that among 17 institutions, ranging from national governments to educational systems to media and the legal system, NGOs are the institution most trusted by average citizens after their country's armed forces. The work of civil society has moved from the direct provision of services to constituencies, at the local or national level, to advocacy aimed at addressing the policies which impact upon their particular area of work.

Conclusion

There is continued pressure on governments in most countries to be open and inclusive in the decision-making processes because this supports democracy, accountability and transparency, and fosters development. It is likely that this may be the way forward in the future but first the current governance practices have to be reviewed. As such, there should be renewed engagements between civil society especially and governments on the governance policy and implementation levels and not just at the level of service delivery. Governments also need to be compliant by implementing the policies they formulate and adopt. With the transfer of decision-making processes from national to global levels, governments and civil society should increasingly be conscious of the fact that if they truly want to understand the underlying causes of the economic and social problems facing their citizens they have to 'think local but act global.' If current governance processes can be reviewed and both governments and civil society understand that they have to operate on the basis of global development trends, then we will witness a greater degree of inclusiveness in the formulation of national policies and implementation of government priorities.

AND THE WINNER IS TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

Arne Simonsen, former Director General of the Central Information Service, Norway

Trust is in trouble. Trust between citizens and government, between ethnic and religious groups, and between genders. It is in trouble in many countries in Europe and in the rest of the world.

Trust is a cohesive element in multicultural societies, supplying and supporting necessary ties that can bind a society together. One way of creating trust is to have an open and inclusive policy making. But on the other hand, trust is crucial to get people to engage in the government's invitation to an open and inclusive policy making. Openness and inclusiveness may foster trust. Yet trust is necessary to generate inclusiveness. So what comes first?

Maybe a good start for governments is to re-evaluate and revitalize its communication. Too many governments engage too much in PR and less in communication. In a world of spin, there is no place for real communication. When governments spin, communication gets in a squeeze. And so do openness and inclusiveness.

We have to ask: Open and inclusive for whom? Too many groups feel marginalized in the policy making processes in the society they live in, not at least at the local level. (And some groups often feel stigmatized too.) How can we reach those who normally don't engage themselves – so to speak in anything – and certainly not in policy making, or are we happy to include those who always do?

Open and inclusive policy making faces challenges in terms of trends that may cause worries, but also hopes. One of them is the demographic "bomb", the dramatic increase of elderly people. Another is the climate and environmental challenge, a third is migration and constantly more multicultural populations. These present topics for policy making.

Trust and credibility

In this essay I am mainly concerned with communication, trust and credibility as a foundation for open and inclusive policy making. Primarily trust between "citizens and government", and a credible government that does not pretend to be better than it is, but that delivers its promised products and service in a customary way.

Public service, as well as government agencies, needs to have legitimacy and support by the citizens. The public must have faith in the government. This depends highly on the whole government's reputation. It is in the contact between the public and the government that the reputation emerges. Reputation is the impression that remains in the public's minds after that kind of contact. The image that government agencies wishes to present themselves with, must be in accordance with the agency's behaviour, how it acts towards its users, clients and customers.

If not, the credibility weakens, the trust is reduced and its reputation is hurt. Then an invitation to engage in an open and inclusive policy making process may seem rather hollow. This is in accordance with findings

from research on the credibility of organizations. One major insight that comes from the credibility research, is the significance of harmony between words and behaviour, between image and reality. (1)

When participation projects becomes show off, because they are not followed up by the government, that too can lead to loss of credibility and public trust. As pointed out in your issue paper (Mind the gap...): “Stop conducting consultations on issues that cannot actually be changed solely in order to “tick the box”. Concentrating efforts and resources on meaningful public participation would be a good start.”

Open and inclusive

What kind of openness are we talking about here? The usual one is access to and insight into government documents. Another, and equally important in this connection, is openness in the form of being frank and honest, playing with open cards and not to have any hidden agenda.

According to the so called Nordic model of government the citizens are to be involved both in the policy making and in the implementation of policy decisions. It is emphasised that before policies are developed and policy programs are carried through, the affected publics shall have the opportunity to express their opinions on the matter. The citizens should also be involved when programs are put in concrete terms before the actual implementation, so that the way the authorities carry out the programs and service is as fit as possible according to the citizens’ needs and requests.

Open and inclusive policy making processes must be assessed against the background of the representative democracy and its decision processes, its authority, and right and duty to make decisions. On the one hand the government must live up to the intention behind programs that includes the citizens and take the outcome into account. On the other we have the fact that the final decisions in the matter, as a rule, is made by the decision-making bodies acting on behalf of the representative democracy. It must be made clear to the participants in open and inclusive policy making projects that in the end the outcome will be evaluated or assessed by the relevant decision-making body, and that in most cases the outcome of such policy making projects is consultative or advisory. This may represent a motivation problem in the long run.

Information – communication – participation

An important condition for open and inclusive policy making, is good communication. Trust is dependent on credibility, and they both depend to a great extent on good communication.

We must decide what it is we really want to achieve with communication. Do we merely wish to inform the public and increase knowledge on a matter, or do we want them to act, do something for themselves and for the society, for example participate in policy making? The answer to this question makes demands on the methods of communication.

If we want participation in policy making programs, we must use methods of communication that allows active participation also in the communication process itself. Representatives for the target groups we want to reach with our communication efforts, must partake in the development of goals, target group analysis – how to reach them, messages, strategies, choosing communication channels and production av information materials. The way we inform and communicate becomes a part of the message we want to convey to the citizens.

If the goal is participation, then the medium is the message (*Marshall McLuhan*). But all too often public information is message.

If we employ methods of communication that do not give the public's opportunity to participate in the communication process, this will indirectly give the impression that we are not really interested in their participation in policy making.

In participation processes several methods can be taken into account, for instance continual fora for dialog between citizens and government, and administering opinion polls amongst users of public service etc. Maybe the most effective method is to use the social network method, or mouth-to-mouth-method. People influence people. We can inform and communicate via people's social network. One kind of network method is to use "ambassadors" that seek out or visits groups that we want to include but who otherwise is hard to reach and engage. The ambassadors may or may not come from the groups we want to reach. Many persons consider it equally important how and by whom they are informed, as to what the content of the information is. Therefore it may be a good idea to let the information flow from those concerned to those concerned. That means for example to let youth inform and communicate with groups of youth, or let retired persons inform and communicate with other older citizens about participation in programs for open and inclusive policy making.

Dialog – to ways communication is in accordance with the principle of communication in the Norwegian government's communication policy: "The principle of communication has a close connection to openness and inclusiveness. The principle of communication means that government communication is a two-ways process in which sender and receiver should be on equal terms. Dialogue may be initiated by citizens as well as by government. The main goal is to secure active participation in the democratic process. This principle is intended to advance participatory democracy by giving the individual a greater sense of closeness to decision-makers and of ability to influence decisions. Confidence is created among other things by keeping citizens informed of the background for government decisions, and by showing that they can influence decisions."

State of mind or mind activity

It is, of course, fully acceptable for public authorities to use information as an instrument for achieving results and specific goals towards groups of the citizens. Then the aim is to achieve a certain condition or state of mind, often the case in connection with social campaigns. It can be awareness of new traffic rules, changing attitudes towards immigrants, new diet habits etc. Acceptable goals, but onesided emphasize on these kinds of aims, can be an obstacle to influence and participation, because it is – in a way – treating human beings as objectives that is to be moved in certain directions. It is as if the government says: "Trust is good, but control is better."

Instead governments ought to make more use of activity-goals, that is, getting the citizens to think and make up their own minds, react critically, seek more information, discuss, make a point of view, participate. (2) To achieve that the government must arrange for dialog and possibilities for feedback from the citizens to the government, and ascribe importance to the views and statements coming from the different publics. (3)

Internet communities

A special challenge is where and how to reach younger people and get them interested in participating in policy making projects. We have to be where they are, on their social meeting places, which is to a large extent social internet-communities.

Today Internet is more and more of a meeting place for the young (and the not quite so young) where they "hang out with their mates", and it is no longer primarily a channel to surf and seek information and entertainment. It is a universe and a world live in for a good many individuals. Several of them spend hours

on the net every day, and many are members of net communities, assemblies of friends and other who share their interests. These social net communities have a potential for being useful in connection with open and inclusive policy making programs.

For instance on Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Friendster etc. it is possible to establish groups who can discuss and work with policy making in fields that relates to them or just interests them. Usually an individual lays out a personal interests profile on these net communities to generate friends. The government can do the same thing, for instance make a consequence profile for certain political issues for example policy for the climate and environment, for the future situation for youth, student policy, and so on, and invite members of the net community to check if this matches with their own interests. If so ask them to participate in the policy making.

Municipalities (and other public authorities for that matter) who are in the beginning of a planning process in a specific field, for instance sports and culture policy, urban development, school policy, etc., can start a blog where the citizens can comment on policy proposals, present views, make broader contributions and so on continually. The municipal can also open a chat room on internet where representatives from the municipal can converse with citizens in true time. There are of course many other possible ways to use the net societies.

Consensus model?

The concept of open and inclusive policy making may seem based on a harmony (consensus) model. Some will say that is naïve, especially in a multicultural society. But is there any other way? Sometimes the best we can hope for is to get disagreement clearly and distinctly on the table. That may prove useful and be a good start for open and inclusive policy making.

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INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AS THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION

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Open and inclusive policy making is the response to a growing concern about the position of governments in our countries. If policy processes are not developed together with (a diversity of) citizens the result of these processes run the risk of becoming ineffective. Governmental measures, not adapted to social, cultural and economic realities and are accepted by citizens. In these cases the implementation falls short. A government gets unproductive.

There are many routes invented to overcome this problem. One way might be to change the democratic process of voting and representation, by which citizens can feel themselves closer to their political leaders. Another way is to invest in education. Citizenship is not just a bundle of rights and obligations, it is related to real work: activities in the neighbourhood, the community of a higher level, the society as a whole. Children and youngsters have to learn to practice citizenship. By this they will become more involved in the welfare of the social system and will join easier the democratic process that follows naturally from these activities.

In our contribution we will point at another route, related to communication. A lot has been said about the external communication of authorities, how new technical opportunities (e.g. internet) urge for new ways of thinking, more in terms of consultation and interaction, and less in terms of delivering messages, from the government to the public. We will not deny the merits of these new communication concepts, as these seem clear enough, but would like to comment their practical usability. A government that decides to design new policy in an interactive way has to rethink its strategy not only in the realm of their external communication. It is in our eyes the internal communication part that is often the hindering factor.

By this we will look not only at the readiness to incorporate the rationality of groups of citizens in the process of policy development, where this rationality meets the rationality of the political process, and where coalitions of political parties have to compromise (the giving and taking in the period in which these parties are in charge). We will concentrate on a very fundamental mechanism of constructing drafts for a policy proposal, in which policy advisors are involved, apart or not apart from the affected citizens.

Starting point is therefore the working environment of such a policy advisor in a department of a ministry working on his or her dossier. By doing so this advisor is thinking, not only about the subject matter but as well on the persons that are involved here. On which persons is he/she thinking? The answer must be: on the actors in society how they relate to problems and solutions, how they suffer or how they have to change their behaviour in a desirable direction, in a given social, cultural and economic context, what their perceptions are, or their expectations, what they already do to solve a problem, and what hinders them in this attempt, or how they actively block such a solution. Also: what the dynamic process is between societal actors, what is happening in their interactions, on the diverse scale levels?

Basically this is what in practice doesn't occur at a sufficient level. The thinking of policy advisors is often much more oriented to their colleagues, to their superiors, to the policy process that is going on above their heads.

This internal referential thinking is quite understandable. With these people a policy advisor shares a lot of contacts, these people are lively represented in their minds, also if he/she is working alone in his/her room, writing on a plan. His/her thinking can be looked upon as an internal dialogue, following or anticipating

earlier or later interactions with precisely these people. The citizen is, compared with these co-workers, an abstract phenomenon, a vague subject, far away, and mostly not directly available.

The direct working environment has moreover a strong influence in terms of direct sanctions. Co-workers can praise and punish, they can include or exclude a policy advisor in formal or informal meetings about relevant internal developments. It is here where 'political correctness' counts; you belong to the dominant circles, or not.

Open and inclusive policy making can only flourish if the internal communication is changed in order to change this process, leading to self-referentiality. Contacts with groups of citizens are helpful for a better adapted and accepted policy plan, but these voices from abroad have to be heard somewhere, at the place where those plans are constructed. Therefore the external communication platform needs an internal pendant, where policy advisors are actively engaged to share their experiences, based on the encounters outside. These experiences have to be explored, analyzed, interpreted, questioned, compared, combined with other information sources, synthesized and translated to practical recommendations.

It is this discursive work internally, that is lacking. Policy advisers are often for much individually linked to one (part of the) dossier. They are accountable for a specific subject, and not for the problem/solution as a whole. To speak about issues in the working domain of the colleagues, on the base of information one has got, is not done. What is perhaps most lacking is an internal free discussion forum, in which voices from abroad can be dealt with jointly.

Governments are held to be 'out of tune' with society. Intensive communication with citizens is the solution. However, the music from society never will ring without a sounding board.

IF POLITICIANS DON'T TAKE THEIR CITIZENS SERIOUSLY, THEIR ROLE WILL IN THE END BE MARGINALIZED

by Jacques Wallage, Mayor of the City of Groningen, The Netherlands

Why public engagement in policymaking is so important for governments

On the surface one might argue that not very much has changed. I started my career in the sixties in the middle of a movement against authority and the establishment.⁵¹ Before that, after the Second World War, people also believed that politics would never be the same. And yet, the discussion about a small ruling elite is still going on. We still have more or less the same parties in a reasonably functioning democracy. At least on the national level the electoral turnout is high, on the 80% level. The general level of trust has declined somewhat, but seems to recover a bit. So, what exactly is the problem?

If you ask people in Groningen about the service from the government, they will be quite positive, but much less so about the way they experience responsiveness from local politics. About their actual say in local policymaking they are quite negative.

So government does not so much have a problem as *a service organisation*, but as *a democratic organisation* it has a huge problem.

If you ask me, the problem now is the discrepancy between the content of the political discourse in the media and the existing mind frames with the people in the street. If the problems they experience daily are not mirrored in the parliamentary debate or in the policy-measures of government, they will turn their backs. This was the case around 2002, that was unmasked by Mr. Fortuyn, and it still is. Political debates are about macro idea systems, about The Islam or about a Mr. Wilders, not about drug needles in the streets. In this respect the problem might also be different on the local level from the national level. As I said, it is essential that people have a say in public affairs. In contrast to this we now see how swiftly in the Netherlands forms of direct democracy are being left behind (systems of elected mayors, and referenda are being abandoned by the present government). Most of the time politics finds it very difficult to handle direct influence by the people. At the same time the technological possibilities and the group that wants to participate are larger than ever.

In Groningen we organised a public Internet-vote about the selection of the architect and the design of the FORUM-building (a centre for information and history). This aroused a lot of energy; many people came to see the exposition of the scale-models; they did so because they were given the opportunity to give their say. In the end more than 20.000 people voted on an issue most experts had qualified as a technical matter for professionals only. The success of this example shows that more people are willing and able than is often believed and that government should take advantage of the modern facilities to mobilize public commitment.

⁵¹ Currently Mayor of the City of Groningen, The Netherlands, Mr. Wallage is a former MP (leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party) and secretary of state, chairman of the Dutch Commission for Government Communication 2001.

It is not easy for politicians to escape the ongoing macro political debate and the cycle of media sensationalism, eagerly looking for a scandal or a row. Government officials can hardly communicate authentically anymore. The answer, however, is often paradoxical. Politicians react defensively and show great fear of the crowd. Political parties realize that their position is no longer automatically legitimized as it used to be, but their response is again exactly the reverse of what it might be. They use spin doctors and hire PR-bureaus to manage their permanent campaigns. The result is that people observe their leaders as more interested in their votes than in their problems. You see, the urgency for change is evident.

Changing pattern of demand, the side of the citizens

For our report about Government Communication we had an inquiry done by the bureau Motivaction. This showed the obvious fact that THE citizen does not exist. There are numerous subgroups. Besides constructive and law abiding citizens, there are two interesting categories I want to point to.

The first large category of people is the cynic, who has long ago said goodbye to politics and government matters and only complain or throw mud. I don't know whether this group has really grown larger, but it is large in number. The second important group is very critical, evaluates government behaviour on its merits and its behaviour. It is like my mother said when she was making spice cake: you get what you put into it.

Now, what is essential is how the government reacts to these people. If THE citizen does not exist, there is not THE one communication strategy.

Angry Cynics need to get the best possible service and yet you will still get their hate mail. At this point government officials should take care; as long as these unpleasant messages are not anonymous, they should be answered properly. I always do and most of the time I get reactions of surprise: "You remain a bastard but at least you have the decency to reply. And, by the way, could you also tell me this.."

In my view the top priority for governments is to provide the necessary capacity to answer all mails and letters, to show citizens that they will be taken seriously as long as they sign their messages with name and address.

Critical Activists, group nr 2, must be offered more opportunities to participate, to voice their opinion. We must not be afraid to do so. Let me give you another example:

Our former alderman René Paas (now president of the national Christian Labour Union) initiated a large programme called 'The Back Yard' in order to select locations for unwanted provisions like Homes for Drug users, youth resorts etcetera. Most civil servants thought it a waste of time to consult inhabitants of the neighbourhoods under consideration about this. Because he presented the whole package at once, however, it was clear to everyone that these buildings had to be located somewhere and that they would be spread all over the city. The reactions he got from citizens were conditional: "OK, if you adjust your plan so and so, we might add this and that." In the end all the facilities were located successfully and relatively little protest was heard in the Council house when the plans were decided on. Again, people are not only negative and selfish, in contrast to what officials think.

Why are governments so hesitant when it comes to public consultation?

I see three reasons, in ascending order of sadness. All can go under the label professionalization. First, politicians think they know all the answers from their political program. Often this view appears to be mistaken, but this is how he or she was elected. In a way this evil seems inevitable. Even worse is when politicians and civil servants consider their knowledge to be superior to that of other people. They are paid to do the job and have learned to do it. Two or three civil servants are appointed to write a policy statement on health care, for example, they will ask around a bit at the NGO's they know, but that is it. I am certain that 500 general practitioners would be glad to sacrifice some of their scarce time on Sunday mornings to give

comment via the Internet. But these officials would never consider consulting the doctors in the field for a reaction to their draft-report. This may be because our politicians and government-officials are incredibly stubborn, but even more so, they do not even care! It might just produce trouble and dissent. The core problem is that our politicians and top-officials consider themselves competent and representative. In other words they think hierarchically. Many feel disdain for citizens.

When I was secretary of state for Education, I asked the deputy secretary general to arrange a weekly visit to a school. I wanted to hear directly about the living worries and to ask what people thought about the feasibility of our policy proposals. He replied: "What do you really think you might learn there we cannot tell you; of course we investigate all that."

What we need is a real paradigm-shift in politics. It is so much focussed on products, while it should be focussed on processes.

Political life is short and so it is understandable that many politicians consider it the chance of their lifetime to create a certain product for society. One result of their eagerness, is that they forget to take care of the appropriate process, to let contingent opportunities do the work and to be sufficiently detached from power and control to present themselves as authentic trustworthy persons. It is amazing that this shift in attitude, which reached the boardrooms of large companies long ago, does not seem to have reached most of our political leaders yet. Jan Timmer, CEO of Philips, launched the reorganisation of his company under codename Centurion, because he saw that they were losing sight of the client. Shell was awakened by the Brent Spar Affair and reached out to the public. What organisation strategists have discovered worldwide is exactly this. With the fragmented authority nowadays, with the overestimation of its own professional expertise and of products over process, political democracy really threatens its own sustainability and seems unaware of it. On the contrary, it sees openness and participation as a threat. We, with our feeble legitimacy, should be glad when people show some interest, but instead we show disdain for individual ('average') citizens and limit participation because we see it as 'interference'.

Closer look on the opportunities for governments to engage citizens

So many opportunities for democracy to mobilise valuable new forms of active citizenship are just thrown away now. Why don't we install a day in the week, say Thursday-evening, as polling day? At the same time every week a relevant policy matter may be put before the population (or specific groups). This will without doubt produce additional information for the policymakers.

Outside the realm of government policies, I see hopeful initiatives from civil society where otherwise governments would intervene. In the network society people and companies are getting used to forming all kind of alliances and many of them express social responsibility. I have great confidence in these developments.

A professor explained to me an upcoming semi-collective system in the struggle against climate change, involving home-owners in a certain area. These people are able to buy shares in a private company that distributes emission rights for energy-use. Excessive use of energy is possible at a price. Revenues are invested in sustainability-projects. Houses that are fit to install solar panels do so for the benefit of the whole block, including houses with flat roofs.

What lessons can we learn from failures? Limits of citizens' engagement

After some positive examples I will now present a failure when it comes to citizens' participation.

The university recently wanted to create office buildings on the grounds of the former botanical gardens. The people from the neighbourhood were opposed and when it came to interaction, the

municipality obviously operated from a frame of the need for building. As a result, the officials were rightly considered to be partisan in the discussion between the university and the citizens. The municipality paid a high price, also in citizens' trust, for these tactics.

The lesson I draw is that governments would better just avoid engaging citizens in consultation than doing so with the intention of getting a predetermined outcome. There must be room for discussion and for new light to be shed on existing plans.

I see the limitations clearly, in both the topics that are feasible for consultation and in the methods that are used. I think the say of citizens should be limited to the scope of their interests. A neighbourhood cannot block facilities with a regional function. That must be made clear. Also we must be aware of demagogues and other misuses of power in interactive policymaking. Democratic rules for deliberation also hold in civil society. Finally, I would expand the idea of citizens' participation to all kinds of private initiatives that pursue (quasi) collective goods without government interference. Opportunities for this kind of self organisation are growing fast and generally I welcome them. As a Social Democrat, however, I would also discourage citizens' actions that jeopardize solidarity and equal rights for all on essential protections and services. If rich people take care of their own communities, education and healthcare, and leave the provision of public goods for the poor to the government, this is not my kind of society. I would not accept the hollowing out of the core business of the state. At the same time I realise that these developments cannot be stopped if governments are unwilling to introduce more openness or to leave more room for clever bottom-up solutions that fit the situation. So it is important that governments open up, and at the same time design frameworks for citizens' participation.

What remains of the role of the elected representatives?

Citizens' engagement will general take place in the realm of the administration, but that is not to say that we can dispense of elected politicians. At first no one wishes to go back to pre-medieval marketplaces, where whole communities were gathered for collective decision-making. Many decisions will remain on the agenda for councils and parliaments. But let me I come back to what I said earlier about the importance of process-orientation over product-orientation and about frameworks. Here I see a role for elected politicians. They should feel ownership of the process architecture. Not only in controlling the administration, but as every new subject comes up, their focus should be: "go consult stakeholder groups, we will watch carefully to see that you investigate ideas in certain areas and keep other preconditions fixed. Then come back to us with your report". If this lesson is not learned quickly, the dynamics of the network society will develop outside the sphere of politics and democracy!

Role of organisations like OECD

Institutions that are reflecting on governance have two important tasks: They derive their strength from the possibility to show the way: analyse best practices, stimulate governments' enthusiasm about alternatives. Yes we can! Secondly, knowledge institutions should also direct their efforts to the citizens and intermediate organisations, to empower them with know-how and inspiration.

Wrapping up: main challenge for the future

The main challenge clearly lies with politics, in the paradigm shift, that would make processes more important than products and in the paradox that, in the end, only detachment from power and control can provide hope for positively influencing the developments in society. If politicians don't take their citizens seriously, their role will in the end be marginalized

ANNEX 1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Open	An 'open' government is one that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transparent, in other words being exposed to public scrutiny; - accessible to anyone, anytime, anywhere; and - responsive to new ideas and demands
Inclusive	Building as wide a variety of citizens' voices into the policy making process as possible. The act of 'inclusion' means in practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lowering the barriers of entry to participation for the people that are currently willing, but unable to participate. - increasing the appeal of participation for the people who are currently able, but unwilling to participate.
Policy making	Includes <i>all</i> stages of the policy cycle: agenda setting, policy options, decision making, implementation and evaluation
Open and inclusive policy making	Policy making that is transparent, accessible and responsive and that builds upon as wide a variety of citizens' voices as possible
Transparency	The condition under which government actions, and the individuals responsible for those actions, will be exposed to public scrutiny and challenge
Accessibility	The condition under which government services and information on its activities will be readily accessible to citizens
Responsiveness	The condition under which government is responsive to new ideas, demands and needs.
Policy cycle	The entire sequence of (often iterative) activities and steps in making policy, ranging from agenda setting to evaluation. See also: policy making.
Information	A one-way relation in which government produces and delivers information for use by citizens. It covers both 'passive' access to information upon demand by citizens and 'active' measures by government to disseminate information to citizens.
Consultation	A two-way relation in which citizens provide feedback to government. It is based on the prior definition by government of the issue on which citizen's views are being sought and requires the provision of information.
Active participation	A relation based on partnership, where citizens actively engage in the policy making process. It acknowledges a role for citizens in proposing policy options and shaping the policy dialogue – although the responsibility for the final decision or policy formulation rests with government.
Civil society	"The arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power." <i>Source: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm</i>
Civil society organisation (CSO)	"Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups." <i>Source: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm</i>

Public engagement	Public engagement is associated with a set of actions and efforts – by citizens and governments - that enables citizens to participate in the policy making process. Governments may enhance engagement by providing citizens with the opportunity to interact with government on policy issues, be it through providing information, consultation or active participation.
Efficiency	Costs per unit of output (also: productivity)
Effectiveness	The relationships between, on the one hand, public sector structures and processes and, on the other, executive governance outcomes.

LIST OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS

Australia

- Heart Foundation of Australia
- The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory
- World Vision Australia
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Austria

- AGEZ - Arbeitsgemeinschaft Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (Working Association for Development Cooperation)
- Federation of Austrian Industry
- Österreichischer Seniorenrat (Bundesaltenrat Österreichs) Austrian Council of Senior Citizens (Federal Council of Elderly)
- ÄrztInnen für eine gesunde Umwelt (ISDE Austria) Austrian Society of Doctors for the Environment
- GLOBAL 2000/Friends of the Earth Austria
- Umweltdachverband (Environmental Umbrella Association, Austria)

Czech Republic

- Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic
- The Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (SP)
- Czech Chamber of Commerce
- Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic

Finland

- The Central Union of Tenants
- Central Union for Child Welfare
- The Citizen Forum
- Association of tenants and home owners
- The Finnish Association of the Deaf

France

- Amnesty International France
- National Union of Outdoor Sports Centres (UCPA)
- Civic and Social Women's Union (UFCS)
- WWF-France
- National interfederal union of private health and social organisations and programmes (NIOPSS)

Germany

- Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Foundation

Hungary

- Hungarian Trade Union of Civil Service Employees (MKKSz)

Italy

- Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (CISL)
- Cittadinanzattiva
- CONFINDUSTRIA

Netherlands

- Vereniging voor Openbaar Onderwijs
- Federation Dutch Trade Union (FNV)
- Dutch Council for Refugees

Norway

- The Federation of Norwegian Professional Associations (Akademikerne)
- Association of NGOs in Norway (Frivillighet Norge)
- Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
- POPULUS - Adult Association of Popular Learning
- Norwegian Railway Club
- Norwegian Red Cross

Poland

- Institute for Sustainable Development
- Polish Red Cross National Society
- NSZZ "Solidarność"

Slovenia

- Legal Informational Centre for NGOs (PIC)
- Peace Institute - Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies
- Focus Association for Sustainable Development
- Consumer Association of Slovenia
- Slovenian Association for Mental Health (ŠENT)

Turkey

- Turkish Industrialist's and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD)
- Economic Development Foundation (İKV)
- Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV)
- Independent Industrialist's and Businessmen's Association (İMÜSİAD)

- Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV)

UK

- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
- Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)
- National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO)

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