Eight Ways to Institutionalise Deliberative Democracy

OECD Public Governance Policy Paper

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About

This guide for public officials and policy makers outlines eight models for institutionalising representative public deliberation to improve collective decision making and strengthen democracy.

Deliberative bodies like citizens' assemblies create the democratic spaces for broadly representative groups of people to learn together, grapple with complexity, listen to one another, and find common ground on solutions.

Increasingly, public authorities are reinforcing democracy by making use of deliberative processes in a structural way, beyond one-off initiatives that are often dependent on political will. The guide provides examples of how to create structures that allow representative public deliberation to become an integral part of how certain types of public decisions are taken.

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Introduction

This guide for public officials and policy makers outlines eight models for institutionalising representative public deliberation to improve collective decision making and strengthen democracy.

While delivering high standards of living for many and the benefits of free societies, the current democratic governance systems are failing to address some of the most pressing and difficult societal challenges of our time. As OECD and other studies have shown, in most countries, people today are less trusting of government than they were a few decades ago. At the same time, people are also more engaged on issues that affect them and their communities and have high levels of interest in politics. Many expect and would like to contribute constructively to addressing issues that impact them.

The desire for people to have a meaningful say in decision making has grown in tandem with an explosion of government consultations and opportunities to participate. Yet, consultations and participatory efforts are often designed in a way that end up engaging interest groups and people with a specific agenda rather than all relevant stakeholders. When poorly organised, they tend to result in the loudest voices shouting to be heard, and a list of complaints or impossible demands. In such contexts, politicians and public officials can be reluctant to be genuinely open to discussion, and everybody often ends up disgruntled.

However, there is another way. **Representative public deliberation** is designed to gather collective *public judgements*, rather than to aggregate individual people's top-of-mind *opinions* on complex issues. There is a great deal of evidence that people's participation can be productive if it is grounded in evidence and considered dialogue and deliberation (OECD, 2020[1]; Landemore, 2020[2]; newDemocracy Foundation and UN Democracy Fund, 2019[3]). More and more, public authorities are turning to citizens' assemblies and other representative deliberative bodies to help solve complex policy problems (OECD, 2020[1]; OECD, 2021[4]). The OECD has collected 574 examples from all levels of government, 101 of which are since 2019 alone (OECD, 2021[4]). There is ample evidence of 'what works' in this regard (OECD, 2020[5]).

Deliberative bodies like citizens' assemblies create the democratic spaces for broadly representative groups of people to learn together, grapple with complexity, listen to one another, and find common ground on solutions. They bring out **collective intelligence** – the principle that many diverse people will come up with better decisions than either individuals or homogenous groups. These processes also **strengthen democracy** by reinforcing people's agency and harnessing their collective capacity.

Increasingly, public authorities are reinforcing democracy by making use of deliberative processes in a structural way, beyond one-off initiatives that are often dependent on political will. Structural changes to make representative public deliberation an integral part of countries' democratic architecture is a way to effectively promote true transformation, as institutionalisation anchors follow-up and response mechanisms in regulations. Creating regular opportunities for more people to have the privilege to serve as members in citizens' assemblies not only improves policies and services, it also scales the positive impact that participation has on people's perception of themselves and others, strengthening societal trust and cohesion.

I. Representative public deliberation: What is it and why does it matter?

Glossary of key concepts

- **Representative deliberative process:** A process in which a broadly representative body of people weighs evidence, deliberates to find common ground, and develops detailed recommendations on policy issues for public authorities. Common examples of *one-off processes* are citizens' assemblies, juries, and panels. There are also examples of *ongoing deliberative bodies*, such as agenda-setting councils.

- **Deliberation**: Weighing evidence and considering a wide range of perspectives in pursuit of finding common ground. It is distinct from:
  - **Debate**, where the aim is to persuade others of one's own position and to 'win',
  - **Bargaining**, where people make concessions in exchange for something else,
  - **Dialogue**, which seeks mutual understanding rather than a decision,
  - and "**opinion giving**", usually witnessed in online platforms or town hall meetings, where individuals state their opinions in a context that does not first involve learning, or the need to listen to others.

- **"Rough consensus":** The aim is to find (as much as possible) a proposal or options that a large proportion of members can at least live with. When voting is used, it is either an intermediate step on the way to rough consensus, or a fall-back mechanism when consensus cannot be reached.

- **Civic lottery**: A process used by public authorities to convene a broadly representative group of people to tackle a policy challenge. It is based on the ancient practice of **sortition**, which has a history ranging from Ancient Athens to the Doge of Venice. Today, it is used to select the members of citizens' assemblies and other deliberative processes. The principle behind a civic lottery is that everybody has an equal chance of being selected by lot. There are two stages to a civic lottery (Figure 1). First, a very large number of people receive an invitation to be part of the process from the convening public authority. These randomly selected recipients can volunteer by opting in to the lottery. Then, amongst the volunteers, members are chosen by lot to be broadly representative of the public. **Civic lotteries aim to overcome the shortcomings and distortions of "open" and "closed" calls for participants**, which result in non-representative groups of people who do not mirror the wider population. (For greater detail, see Chapter 4 in OECD, 2020).

- **Rotation**: People take turns fulfilling their civic duty when chosen by civic lottery to participate.

Figure 1. How to conduct a civic lottery (two-stage sortition process)
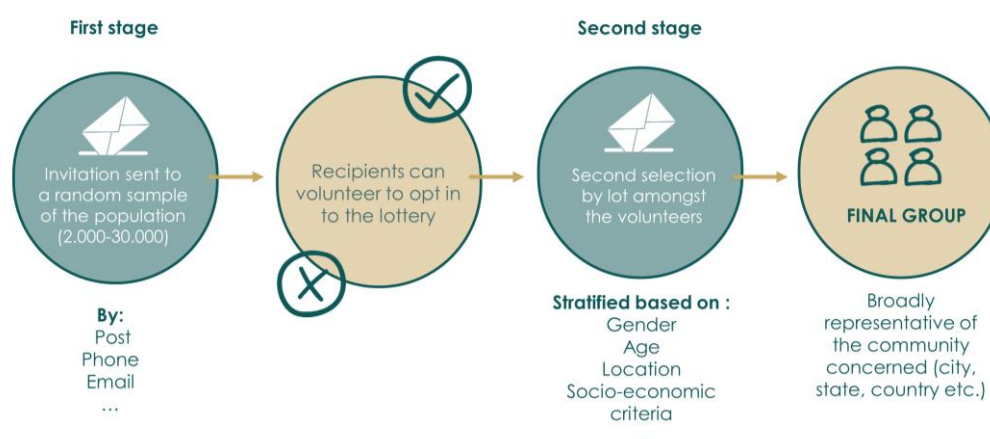
Source: Author's own creation.

Why is deliberation different?

Deliberative processes benefit politicians, public servants, members of the process itself, and the wider public. Drawing on the evidence collected for the OECD report *Catching the Deliberative Wave* (OECD, 2020[1]) and existing research in the field of deliberative democracy, the following are the main reasons why these processes help public decision makers take hard decisions and enhance trust:

1. **Better policy outcomes because deliberation results in considered public judgements rather than public opinions.** Most public participation processes are not designed to be representative or collaborative. Consequently, they can be adversarial – a chance to air grievances rather than find solutions or common ground. Deliberative processes create the space for learning, deliberation, and the development of informed recommendations, which are of greater use to policy and decision makers.

2. **Greater legitimacy to make hard choices.** These processes help policy makers better understand public priorities, and the values and reasons behind them, and identify where consensus is and is not feasible. Evidence suggests that they are particularly useful in situations where there is a need to overcome political deadlock and weigh trade-offs.

3. **Enhance public trust in government and democratic institutions by giving citizens a significant role in public decision making.** People are more likely to trust a decision that has been influenced by ordinary people than one made solely by government.

Moreover, these processes:

4. **Signal civic respect and empower people.** Engaging people in deliberation strengthens their political efficacy (the belief that one can understand and influence political affairs).

5. **Make governance more inclusive by opening the door to a much more diverse group of people.** Deliberative processes, with their use of civic lotteries, bring in people who typically would not contribute to public policy and decision making.

6. **Strengthen integrity and prevent corruption (as well as public perception of corruption)** by ensuring that those with money and power cannot have undue influence on a public decision.

7. **Help counteract polarisation and disinformation.** Empirical research has shown that "echo chambers" that focus on culture, identity reaffirmation, and polarisation do not survive in deliberative conditions, even in groups of like-minded people.

Why do representative deliberative processes work?

Usually, it is difficult for large groups of people to find rough consensus on complex decisions – but deliberative processes work due to the following features:

1. **Independence**: Due to the civic lottery selection procedure, the members of a deliberative body can avoid being 'captured' by interest groups or influenced by powerful or wealthy people and organisations. There are no elections, no campaigns, and no fundraising.

2. **Cognitive diversity**: The civic lottery process brings in a much more diverse group of people than currently found in any parliament or civil service. It reaches people who may have never voted or contributed to a consultation. Research has shown that, for developing successful ideas, such diversity is more important than the average ability of a group.

3. **Favourable conditions for quality deliberation – information, time, and skilled facilitation:** Access to broad and diverse information, and significant time to discuss it through skilled facilitation, leads to informed, detailed, and rigorous recommendations, which consider trade-offs.

4. **A focus on the common good**: The members are not there to represent any particular interest group, company, political party, etc. They are there to collectively develop recommendations for the common good.

5. **High levels of trust:** People have lost trust in politicians and experts, but they do trust everyday 'people like them'. At the end of a deliberative process, it is its members - a microcosm of the population - who will explain their recommendations to the public.

However, these processes only work if they are designed well. Design details are not mere technicalities: they have an enormous impact on the usefulness and trustworthiness of both the process and its outcome. The OECD **Good practice principles for deliberative processes** (OECD, 2020[5]) were developed to help guide policy makers in designing and delivering successful processes. They are intended to help improve the quality of public deliberation so that the resulting recommendations are useful to policy makers and the processes can be trusted by the public. Following these principles ensures that a wide cross-section of society has access to a broad range of information, has time to weigh this evidence, and deliberates with voice and authority. Additionally, the OECD *Evaluation guidelines for representative deliberative processes* build on these principles to help public authorities initiate and develop better processes by establishing a minimum standard for their evaluation (OECD, 2021[6]).

Figure 2. OECD Good Practice Principles for Deliberative Processes

Source: OECD (2020), Good Practice Principles for Deliberative Processes, https://doi.org/10.1787/339306da-en.

II. Why institutionalise deliberative democracy?

There is a large and growing number of one-off examples of public deliberation (OECD, 2020[1]; OECD, 2021[4]). But there is also a rising "wave" of institutionalised deliberative bodies. These new bodies also have a broader set of functions beyond developing policy recommendations for decision makers.

Making representative public deliberation a regular part of democratic governance can yield important benefits, such as:

1. **Allowing public decision makers to take *more* hard decisions *better,*** as well as more decisions with long-term impacts (such as on climate change, biodiversity, emerging technology, urban planning, infrastructure investment, and other issues of this nature).

2. **Enhancing public trust.** Public trust has been declining for decades. A one-off deliberative process can make a difference, but it is the regular practice of public deliberation that gives people and decision makers the opportunity to build mutual trust.

3. **Making representative deliberative processes easier and less expensive**. Costs and resources are saved by not starting from scratch every time.

4. **Strengthening society's democratic fitness.** Adding public deliberation and civic lotteries to democracy extends the privilege of representation to a much larger group of people. It also exponentially increases the positive democratic dividend of participation. These processes strengthen people's agency, harness collective capacity, and awaken a collective consciousness that connects people to one another and to something bigger than themselves. There is ample evidence how participation in a deliberative process has a transformative effect on those involved. It often leads to increased levels of political efficacy not only amongst members of deliberative bodies, but also the broader public. People strengthen their "democratic muscles" through participation. Seeing 'people like me' participating in complex public decision making can have a similar effect on those not directly involved but aware of the process. Institutionalisation creates more opportunities for more people to be able to have such a transformative experience.

III. Eight models to consider for implementation

There are numerous examples across OECD Member countries of representative public deliberation being structurally added into public decision-making processes and democratic institutions at all levels of government. This section presents eight different models and examples of how they are being implemented.

The models are similar in that they all create the opportunity for everyday people to provide a substantive contribution to addressing complex issues. These models embed public judgement into the public decision-making cycle by ensuring that a broadly representative group reflecting the diversity of society has access to a breadth and depth of information and ample time for deliberation.

The eight models are distinct in that they are:

- **Connected to various public decision-making bodies** (e.g. parliaments, councils, planning authorities);
- **Have a diversity of mandates given to the deliberative bodies selected by civic lottery** (e.g. agenda-setting, providing policy recommendations, monitoring, statement of facts for voters, or providing ongoing informed input on policy issues);
- **Initiated by a variety of actors** (e.g. by citizens themselves via petitions, by MPs, by councillors, by parliament); and
- **Used at a range of levels of government** (local, state/regional, and national).

Each model has its strengths and weaknesses to be considered. Contextual factors will matter when choosing a model. The level of government, the number of parties in parliament, the number of governing parties, the extent of governing competencies of the convening institution, the time needed for implementation, the budget, and other factors also need to be considered when deciding whether a certain model is appropriate. These considerations for each model are described, and are also available in a comparative table in **Annex A**, which additionally provides information about time needed for design and implementation, as well as costs.

In most models, certain considerations are recurring. For instance, having all-party support for implementation is important for ensuring longevity and avoiding politicisation or association with only the government or one/some political parties. Political support from senior leadership is imperative, as well as operational support from a team that is able to manage implementation. Avoiding politicisation of evaluation is also important. In models that bring everyday people to the same table with politicians, having skilled facilitation is particularly crucial. Figure 3 provides an overview of the eight models. Table 1 provides a comparison of the defining characteristics of each model, where they have been used thus far, at what level of government, linked to which public decision-making body, and for what mandate.

Figure 3. Overview of eight models of institutionalised deliberative democracy

Table 1. Characteristics of eight institutionalised deliberative democracy models

Institutionalisation model	Linked to	Mandate	Who initiates	Level of government	Countries
1. Combining a permanent citizens' assembly with one-off citizens' panels	A legislative body	• Agenda setting • Initiating citizens' panels • Monitoring implementation of recommendations • Asking written questions	Embedded into law/ongoing	Local, regional/state	Belgium, France
2. Connecting representative public deliberation to parliamentary committees	A legislative body on a working level	• Providing recommendations • Voting on recommendations	Citizens MPs	Regional/state	Australia, Belgium
3. Combining deliberative and direct democracy	A referendum/ballot measure	• Drafting a collective statement of key facts for the voters pamphlet	Public authority	State	United States
4. Standing citizens' advisory panels	An executive body on a working level	• Providing ongoing citizen input on a specific issue	Public authority	Local, regional/state	Canada
5. Sequenced representative deliberative processes throughout the policy cycle	A legislative body	• Different and evolving mandate for each assembly in the sequence (proposing objectives, developing recommendations, evaluation)	Public authority	Local	Colombia
6. Giving people the right to demand a representative deliberative process	A legislative body	• Providing recommendations	Citizens Public authority	Regional/state	Austria
7. Requiring representative public deliberation before certain types of public decisions	Type of decision	• Providing recommendations	Legal requirement	National	France
8. Embedding representative deliberative processes in local strategic planning	Planning stage of the policy cycle	• Providing recommendations	Legal requirement	Regional/state	Australia

Note: The data is descriptive based on the existing examples of these models.

1. Combining a permanent citizens' assembly with one-off citizens' panels

Ostbelgien model

How it works

On 25 February 2019, in Ostbelgien, the German-Speaking Community of Belgium, the parliament unanimously voted in favour of legislation that establishes three new democratic institutions in what is called the citizen dialogue process (*Bürgerdialog*):

A permanent citizens' council: It is composed of 24 citizens selected by civic lottery, who have a mandate to represent fellow citizens for one and a half years. One-third of the members rotate every six months. Its mandate is twofold. First, it has an agenda-setting role. It initiates up to three *ad hoc* citizens' panels during its term and decides the issues the panels should address. Second, the council has an oversight role, ensuring that the recommendations from the citizens' panels are presented and debated in the parliament and receive a response from the relevant parliamentary committee and minister. The citizens' council met for the first time on 16 September 2019.

Citizens' panels: There are between one to three panels per year. Each citizens' panel is composed of 25 to 50 citizens selected by civic lottery, who meet for a minimum of three times over three months. The citizens' council decides the number of participants and the length of the citizens' panel. Citizen proposals that have the support of at least 100 citizens, as well as proposals of parliamentary groups or the government, can also be submitted for the consideration by the citizens' council (Parliament of the German-speaking Community of Belgium, 2019[7]).

A secretariat: This consists of full-time officials who are responsible for carrying out the civic lottery for the citizens' council and citizens' panels, servicing the citizens' council, and organising the citizens' panels.

A decree establishing the permanent participatory process can be found here in English.

Figure 4. Ostbelgien model

The model of institutionalised deliberative democracy in the German-Speaking Community of Belgium
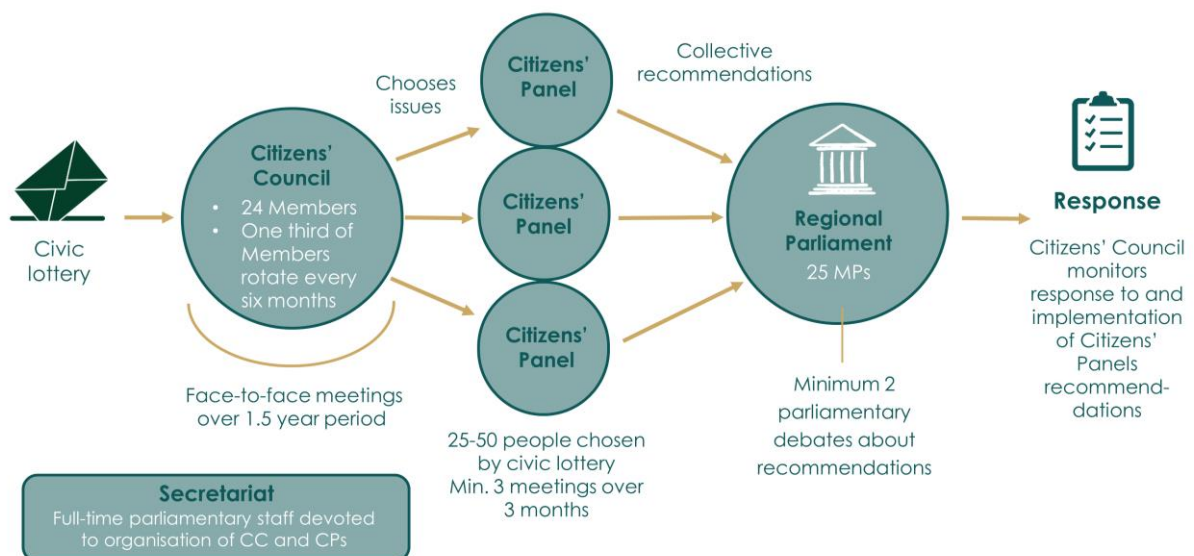
Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

How it came about

The Ostbelgien model was developed after the German-Speaking Community had already experienced a citizens' dialogue in 2017. Initiated by the president of the parliament, it was focused on early childhood policy. The positive experience of this initiative led all parliamentary groups to conclude that more reflection on citizen participation was needed. Shortly thereafter, the Minister-President of the German-Speaking Community met David Van Reybrouck, the author of *Against Elections* and co-founder of the G1000, a Belgian platform for democratic innovation whose name is inspired by the 2011 G1000 Citizens' Summit. This encounter led to an eventual co-operation between the parliament of the German-Speaking Community and the G1000, which established a group of international, national, and regional experts on deliberative democracy (including Claudia Chwalisz from the OECD) to draw up a proposal for permanent public deliberation in Ostbelgien.

During a three-day meeting in Eupen, these experts heard a presentation about the history, institutions, and societal dynamics of Ostbelgien, met with the six political group leaders and all parliamentarians to understand their perspectives and concerns, and then worked on a design for a permanent deliberation model that took into account the context and their expertise of deliberative democracy. The experts' deliberations were accompanied by a lawyer from the German-Speaking Community to ensure any proposals were constitutional and legally feasible.

On the basis of the consensus reached during this meeting, the G1000 drafted a report that was presented to the extended bureau of the parliament in October 2018. The bureau sought in-principle agreement from all parties on this proposal, adapting it based on points of contention. The parliamentary administration drafted a first version of the decree on this basis. The bureau discussed it three times, after which a final text was submitted for a parliamentary vote, which took place on 25 February 2019. It was unanimously supported *(Niessen and Reuchamps, 2019[8])*.

Considerations for this model

As the previous section highlights, the preparation and design of the Ostbelgien model involved **significant efforts to ensure that the proposal was aligned with the institutional and social context of the region**, and that there was **all-party agreement** to ensure longevity and avoid association with the government or only one/some parties.

In terms of how the model works, there were additional considerations needed for the workings of a permanent deliberative body as opposed to a one-off process. The **rotation of a proportion of citizens' council members every six months** helps ensure that it remains depoliticised and does not become subject to the same issues as an elected chamber that has a longer mandate. The **separation of roles** between the citizens' council (agenda-setting and monitoring) and the citizens' panels (developing policy recommendations) ensures that each body's work is focused and there is enough time for each respective task. Finally, the **size** of the citizens' council was chosen to be relative to the size of the parliament.

The Ostbelgien model in practice

In February 2020, the citizens' council set the agenda for the first citizens' panel – how to improve the working conditions of healthcare workers. The 25 panel members presented their recommendations to parliamentarians in October 2020 during a public committee meeting of the Ostbelgien parliament. So far, the responsible parliamentary committee approved implementation of eight of the panel's 14 recommendations. For refused proposals, the committee gave other solutions such as consultations between stakeholders and public authorities. At the time of writing, this first citizens' panel is being followed up and will be evaluated by the citizens' council in early 2022. The citizens' panel's recommendations (in German) are available here. The committee's opinion is available here. The process organisation details are available here and here.

The citizens' council has initiated a second citizens' panel about inclusive education. They also followed the implementation of the first citizens' panel recommendations. The panel met for the first time in early March 2021, and the panel members presented their 31 recommendations to parliament in June 2021. The second citizens' panel's recommendations in German are available here. The committee's opinion is available here.

On 30 October 2021, the third citizens' panel met for the first time. The chosen topic was how to create sustainable and affordable housing for all. The third and final session will take place in December 2021.

The process organisation details for the entire Ostbelgien model are available here and here.

Paris Citizens' Assembly

How it works

On 14 October 2021, the Paris council voted to adopt internal regulation that institutionalises a full-scale model of representative public deliberation, with a permanent citizens' assembly that has multiple competencies, including the possibility of initiating one-off citizens' juries. It has a direct link to the council, which receives the assembly's outputs without filter, and is required to provide a written response to them at the time of submission, as well as one year later.

The Paris council has the powers of both a municipal council and a departmental council, as it is the only territorial collectivity in France to be both a *commune* and a *département*. The mayor of Paris presides over the council and has the powers of both mayor and president of the departmental council. At the time of writing, there are 163 councillors for Paris.

The regulation establishes the **permanent Paris citizens' assembly** in connection to the Paris council. It is composed of 100 residents of Paris selected by civic lottery above the age of 16. The assembly has a year-long mandate, which can be extended by six months. Assembly members receive a stipend of 44€ for every half day of work. The assembly has multiple competences:

- It can **propose current affairs questions** to the city council, based also on input from other citizens, ensuring the citizens' assembly is a voice of Parisians towards the representative institutions. These are requests that do not have legal consequences.

- It can **initiate an evaluation mission to evaluate an existing public policy in Paris** once a year. The theme and issue at the heart of this mission can be proposed after an exchange with all political groups in the Paris council, with the permission of the executive. An evaluation mission entails holding hearings with the district mayors and vice-mayors, the City of Paris directorates, and experts. The assembly also has the right to initiate a deliberative process called a citizens' conference (*conférence citoyenne*).The citizens' assembly submits its recommendations to all of the political groups at the Paris council.

- It can submit a ***vœu*** ("wish") to each Paris council session by the intermediary of the vice mayor for participation. The *vœu* must first be voted on by the citizens' assembly in plenary, and the vice mayor submits it in the exact formulation received. The *vœu* formulates a request but has no legal basis.

- It can **initiate a one-off citizens' jury**, setting the question for its remit, which must be within the competences of the Paris council. The citizens' jury is composed of 17 residents of Paris selected by civic lottery. It has up to three months to complete its work. The duration of meeting days is not defined in the regulation. The citizens' jury produces a report of its recommendations that is submitted to the citizens' assembly. The citizens' assembly debates the jury's recommendation in a plenary session, and can endorse some or all of its recommendations. **The citizens' assembly submits the jury's recommendations as a local bill (called a *délibération*)** to the vice mayor for participation so that it can be put to a vote by the council. If voted, the bill becomes law and should be implemented as such.

- It can **choose the theme(s) of the following year's participatory budget**, influencing the city's investment priorities.

Figure 5. Paris Citizens' Assembly
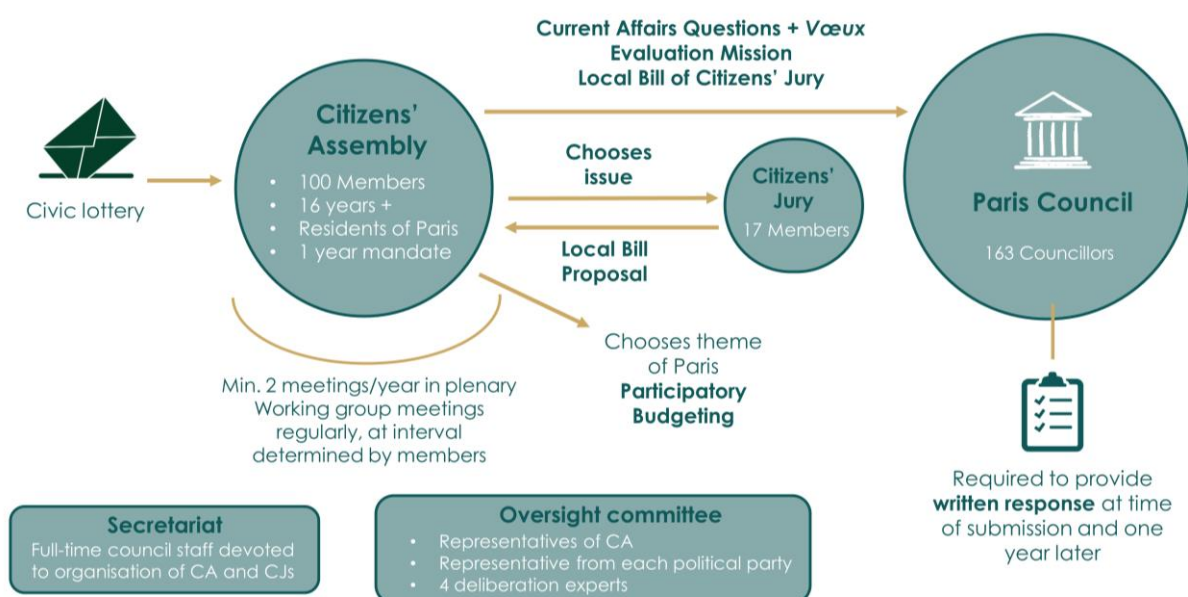
Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

There is a multiple-day welcome and training seminar to explain to members how the citizens' assembly functions and their role as members. The citizens' assembly **meets at least twice a year in plenary, and it has the possibility of setting up its own working groups** dedicated to its various missions. The members have autonomy in deciding which working groups they would like to join. Each group is represented by one or two spokespeople, who are interlocutors between the groups, the secretariat, and the other assembly members. During the plenary sessions, the assembly's decisions need to be taken on the basis of consensus. If consensus is difficult to achieve, it can resort to a secret vote by simple majority. For the vote to be valid, at least 40% of the assembly members need to be present. A plenary vote can also be organised using an online voting tool, in which case the same threshold for participation applies.

The citizens' assembly also has a relationship with the existing citizen participation bodies in Paris – the Council of Future Generations, the Council of Europeans, the Council of Associations, the Council of Young People, the District Councils, and Citizens' Councils (non-exhaustive list). The secretariat organises a meeting between the members of these various bodies and the Paris citizens' assembly at least once a year. Beyond that, the citizens' assembly should regularly, with the help of the secretariat, consult these bodies as it carries out its various missions. These bodies are also able to submit evidence to the citizens' jury if the remit concerns them.

The regulation also establishes a secretariat that is staffed by a full-time employee of the City of Paris administration. It is responsible for organising the work of the citizens' assembly, liaising with relevant agents working for the city of Paris, providing relevant documents, and enabling citizen consultations to inform the assembly's work.

The secretariat is also responsible for establishing an **oversight committee**, composed of representatives of the citizens' assembly, a representative from each political group in the Paris council, and four experts of citizen participation. The oversight committee should be neutral and is available to answer any questions of the citizens' assembly and help the assembly to overcome any potential issues in carrying out its missions. A summary record of each citizens' assembly meeting is provided to the oversight committee.

The citizens' assembly produces a yearly activity report that provides an overview of its actions. This report is distributed to all Paris councillors and made publicly available. One or two members from the citizens' assembly presents this report to the Paris council in a special session.

The vice mayor has committed to an evaluation of the citizens' assembly after one year to learn from how the process is working and adapt it if needed.

How it came about

The request to establish a permanent citizens' assembly in Paris came from the people during a deliberative process that the city had organised in the context of the French "Great Debate" (*Grand débat*) in early 2019. Thirty people selected by civic lottery were convened to provide recommendations on how the Paris administration could improve citizen participation in city policy. One of the group's proposals was the creation of a permanent assembly representing everyday people in policy making – an "Assembly of Parisians" (*Assemblée des Parisiens*).

In September 2019, the Paris council voted to implement this proposal. It consulted experts, local politicians, and other participatory bodies in the city to prepare a draft outlining the functioning and competencies of such an assembly. The vice mayor for participation, Anouch Toranian, convened a group of local and international experts in spring 2021 to receive initial feedback on this draft. She then commissioned the Federation for Innovation in Democracy Europe (FIDE) to take this input and turn it into a proposal for a model (Claudia Chwalisz from the OECD is also on the advisory board of FIDE and was part of this expert group). Over the course of numerous online meetings and a full-day meeting in Paris in July 2021, FIDE met with the vice mayor and her team, members of the city administration responsible for citizen participation, and representatives from all political groups to understand the specific institutional, political, and societal context of Paris, ensuring that the final proposal incorporated the contextual specificities and brought in expertise about deliberative democracy and how to ensure high quality and good practice.

Drawing on FIDE's report, the vice mayor negotiated with other parties and drafted a bill that was voted in favour by a majority at the Paris council on 14 October 2021.

The welcome session of the first Paris citizens' assembly took place on 27 November 2021.

Considerations for this model

As the previous section highlights, the preparation and design of the Paris citizens' assembly involved **significant efforts to ensure that the proposal was aligned with the institutional and social context of the city**, and that **all parties were part of the conversation in its design** to ensure longevity and avoid association with the government or only one/some parties. It will be important for the evaluation to be depoliticised.

It has similar additional considerations as to the Ostbelgien model, which are needed for the workings of a permanent deliberative body as opposed to a one-off process. The **separation of roles** between the citizens' assembly and the citizens' jury ensures that each body's work is focused and there is enough time for each respective task. The **size** of the citizens' assembly was also chosen to be relative to the size of the parliament.

There are other considerations that are specific to the Parisian model. Due in part to the assembly's relatively large size of 100 members and its numerous competences, it is able to self-organise into working groups. This is not a common approach in one-off deliberative processes, which typically have more structure for their working methods and rules surrounding random allocation into sub-groups. On the one hand, it democratises the inner workings of a citizens' assembly, and on the other hand it presents an opportunity for unequal dynamics to emerge among the assembly members. It will be important for the secretariat to monitor the development of the latter scenario and potentially introduce new rules that could prevent this from occurring.

2. Connecting representative public deliberation to parliamentary committees

Deliberative committees in the three parliaments of Brussels (Regional parliament, French-speaking parliament, and Common Community Commission)

How it works

In December 2019, the parliament of the region of Brussels in Belgium adopted a set of internal regulatory reforms to **strengthen citizen participation in its legislative work by establishing deliberative committees, which bring together citizens and parliamentarians to work together on an issue across party lines.** The same regulatory change was approved by the French-speaking parliament in Brussels (officially called the French-speaking Community Commission – Cocof), the body responsible for regulating the French-speaking Community in the Brussels-Capital Region (Reuchamps, 2020), as well as the Common Community Commission, which is responsible for all issues that are common to both the French Community and the Flemish Community and affect everyone in Brussels. It is considered to be the first institutionalised mechanism of its type.

The deliberative committees are comprised of **15 parliamentarians** (members of the corresponding thematic permanent committee – 12 French speakers and 3 Dutch speakers) and **45 citizens selected via civic lottery.** They are Brussels' residents who are over 16 years old. Stratification is on the basis of gender, age, education level, language, and, if the scientific committee chooses, also on elements relevant to the deliberation topic.

The deliberative committees **can be initiated either by parliamentarians or at the request of at least 1,000 Brussels residents** (1,200,000 inhabitants), although the final decision lies with the parliament. **There can be up to three deliberative committees per year.**

Figure 6. Deliberative committees
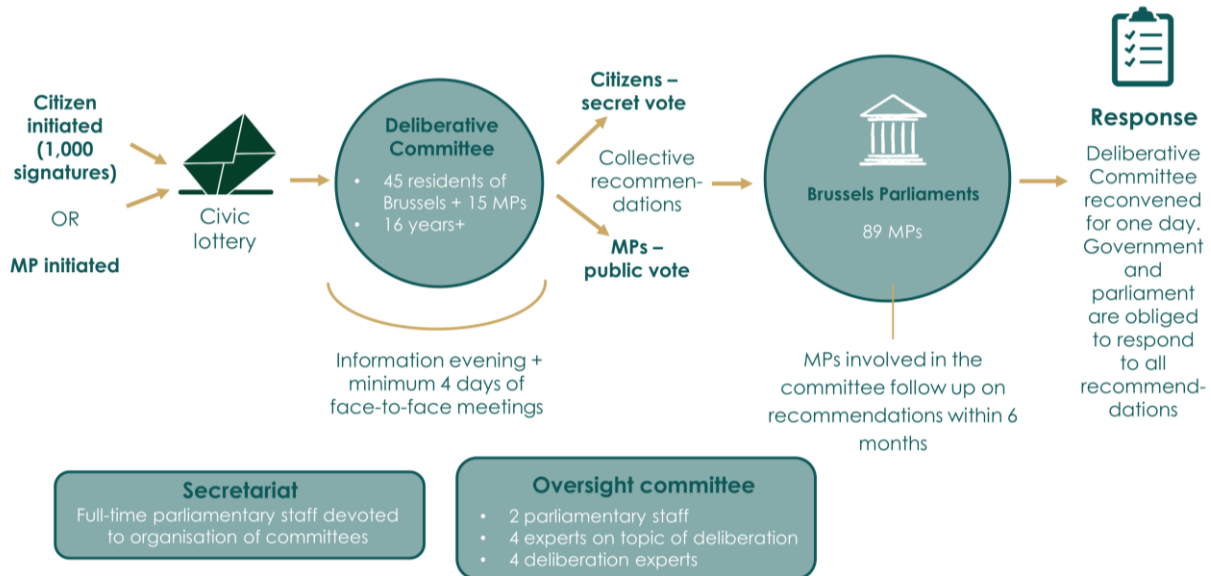
Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

The topics must meet three conditions: **(1) the question for the proposed committee cannot ask for a "yes/no" response; (2) it cannot violate human rights, and (3) it must be a topic that is within the parliament's competencies.**

As of May 2021, three questions have been addressed by deliberative committees:

1. 5G is coming to Belgium. How do we want 5G to be implemented in the Brussels-Capital Region, taking into account the environment, health, economy, employment and technical aspects?
2. The Brussels-Capital Region has at least 4,187 homeless and poorly housed people. What measures do we want to take to resolve this situation in the long term?
3. To what extent and in what way do the citizens of Brussels envisage their role in the prevention, communication, management, and evaluation of a crisis?

The deliberative committees' reports are all being studied by parliament and government. The first set of responses will be shared with the committee members and the public from early 2022.

The mandate of the deliberative committee is to publish a report with recommendations for the parliament on a specific issue. To achieve this, the committee has a preparatory session to familiarise the citizens and the parliamentarians with the process. The committee then meets for at least four full days, spread out over numerous weekends. At least one day is dedicated to information provided by experts and stakeholders, with opportunities for questions and answers, followed by numerous days of deliberation to develop the final recommendations. The committee then delivers its report to parliament.

The corresponding permanent parliamentary committee, and other committees if needed, study and discuss the report. **There is a six-month deadline for the parliament and the government to respond in writing to the original report, addressing each recommendation and explaining why they are accepted or rejected.** The deadline is nine months if the recommendations also concern other committees.

The deliberative committee has a support body that has oversight of the process and evaluates it to ensure learning and improvement for future deliberative committees. It is made up of two parliamentary staff, four experts/academics on the topic of deliberation, and two people experienced with public deliberation. Each committee is evaluated by this oversight group, with changes made to the process of the following committee based on the lessons learned.

There are numerous criteria in place to ensure the deliberative committees are inclusive. The committee members are paid 70 euros per session to defray the costs of participation, and there are free activities provided for 0-12 year olds. The invitation letters are sent out in the two official languages of French and Dutch, with links available to access the invitation in the top five other languages spoken in Brussels. It is also possible to listen to the invitation being read out loud. For people who do not speak French or Dutch, they are able to attend the meetings with a buddy (for example a family member) who will interpret for them in real time. This person also receives the same defrayal. There are measures in place to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities, such as ensuring a fixed schedule to enable those requiring specialist transport to be able to plan to attend easily as compared to more open ended community participation.

Considerations for this model

As a result of evaluations, numerous changes to the functioning of the deliberative committees have been implemented. For example, during the first deliberative committee that took place in autumn 2020, the experts came only on the first day devoted to information and learning, but were not present for the days of deliberation. However, numerous questions arose during the phase of deliberation and when the committee members were drafting recommendations. The process was changed so that **now the experts are also present on the deliberation days**. They do not take part in the deliberations themselves, but they are on hand and available whenever questions arise.

Another change is related to the maximum number of recommendations in the committee report. The first committee resulted in a very large number of recommendations, making it difficult to follow up, and also leading to a wide breadth but less depth in the recommendations. **A change was initiated to cap the number of recommendations** at 30, with an emphasis on each recommendation being developed in greater detail and in consideration of all relevant trade-offs.

Additionally, during the first two deliberative committees, it was found that the parliamentarians in the committees were participating through the lens of their political party, and in a way that reflects the role that they are used to playing with citizens: listening. According to the observers, the parliamentarians tended to hold back during the deliberations, and only made their views clear during the voting phase. The citizens were therefore sometimes surprised by amendments and votes that had not been discussed during the deliberation phase. Ahead of the third committee, there was more attention thus paid to **preparing the parliamentarians for participation ahead of time, explaining the process and how it differs to a standard parliamentary committee**. Their role is not a passive one of listening, but to participate in the conversations on an equal footing, which of course entails listening, but also entails proposing ideas and justifications for them.

The dynamic was notably different during the third deliberative committee about the role of citizens in crisis management, according to Magali Plovie, the president of the Francophone Brussels Parliament. One potential reason for this is that **no political party had a pre-existing stance on the issue**, allowing the parliamentarians to deliberate openly and be willing to find consensus. Whether this was a key factor for helping overcome partisanship divides, or whether the preparatory session on its own is enough, will be something to be evaluated in future deliberative committees.

Finally, following the experience of the first committees, during the third deliberative committee there was an **additional phase of deliberation to discuss proposed amendments before they were voted upon**. This has reinforced the collaboration between the citizens and parliamentarians, giving them additional space to justify their amendments and listen to the rationale of their peers, making their recommendations truly a joint effort.

The Brussels deliberative committees have numerous benefits. The process of nominating the topic and the opportunity of being selected by civic lottery offer people in Brussels a direct and meaningful opportunity to interact with parliament and influence public decisions affecting them. Parliamentarians and members of the public working together is also helping to build trust between the two groups, helping to tackle a problem that is part of a much larger global trend of mistrust between everyday people and elected officials. The process is also helping parliamentarians to find agreement across party lines, creating the conditions for them to work together and find compromise.

Other parliaments in Belgium are now considering replicating the Brussels model, including at the federal level. With ongoing evaluations, the process will also likely evolve and improve. The evaluations from the first series of deliberative committees show that participating in the process has improved citizens' view of parliamentarians, and vice versa.

The enacted modification to the internal rules of the regional parliament can be found here (French) and here (Dutch). Further information about the first deliberative committees can be found here.

Three options for adding representative public deliberation to New South Wales parliamentary committees

How it works

The newDemocracy Foundation has published a paper outlining three options of adding representative public deliberation to New South Wales parliamentary committees at the request of the Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. All three options are in line with the OECD Good practice principles for deliberative processes (OECD, 2020[5]) and are designed to produce high-quality deliberation and results for the committee chair, committee members, members of the deliberative processes, and the wider public.

Each of the three options includes **a citizens' jury comprised of 42 people chosen through a civic lottery** to be broadly representative of the population from New South Wales (stratified according to age, gender, education, and geography). The committee chair chooses eight members of the committee to accompany the citizens' jury.

The three options are:

A. Considered input from citizens

The eight MPs work alongside the citizens' jury in an opening 90-minute session. This takes place in the first of two meetings over two weekends. During those meetings, the everyday people develop a short report that outlines the experts, information, and questions citizens would like the committee to consider to feel greater assurance it made an informed decision on the issue.

B. **Balance of submissions**

The eight MPs work alongside the citizens' jury at up to four meetings over four weekends. The aim is to reach agreement on where a balance can be struck between expert and 'special interest' proposals (committee submissions). They co-author a report supported by their reasoning and evaluation criteria.

C. **A citizens' jury in partnership with the committee**

The eight MPs work alongside the citizens' jury at several intervals during six full-day meetings over several weekends. The aim is to find common ground on recommendations that answer the remit asked of them by the committee chair. At the end, a representative group of everyday people will be able to stand alongside Members of parliament supporting the recommendations included in the report. They will be able to publicly explain their reasoning and rationale for taking difficult trade-offs and offer the evidence they used to support these decisions (newDemocracy Foundation, 2021[9]).

Figure 7. Three options for adding representative public deliberation to New South Wales parliamentary committees
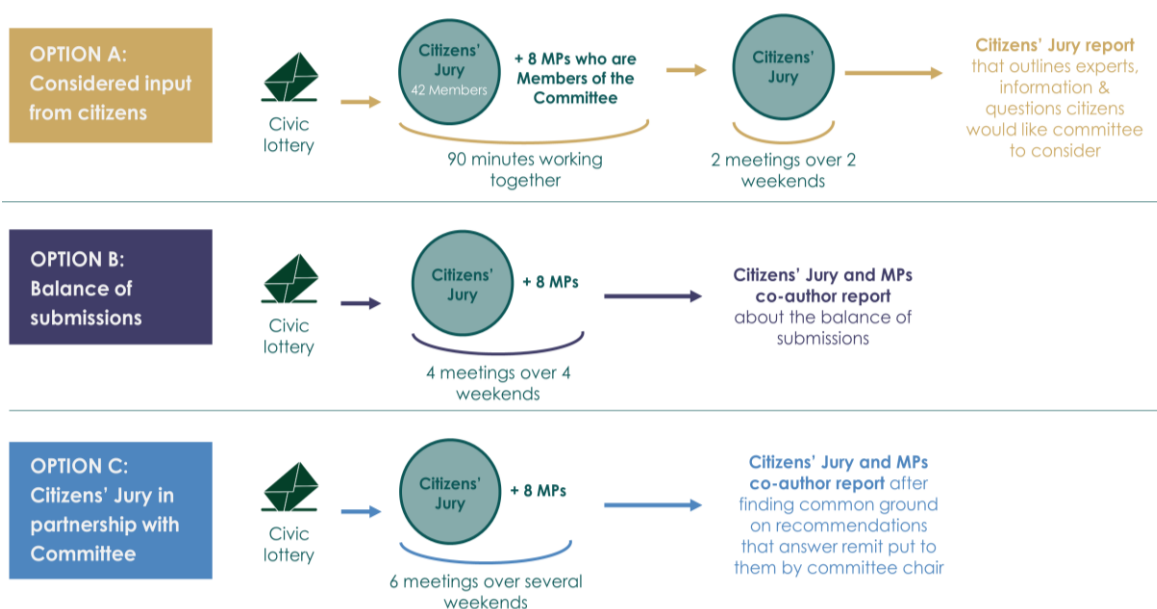
Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

3. Combining deliberative and direct democracy

Citizens' Initiative Review

How it works

The Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR) is a deliberative process that was designed for a representative group of citizens to evaluate a proposed ballot measure. It provides informed arguments for both sides of the issue to all voters with their ballot papers.

Citizens' Initiative Reviews typically gather 24 people selected by civic lottery for four days (either consecutively or spread out over numerous weeks). Prior to the first meeting, citizens have no information regarding the policy question they will be addressing. Due to political pressures, organisers do not prepare briefing documents in advance. Rather, citizens receive all testimony directly from campaigns and experts during the review. The process begins with a training programme about the fundamentals of deliberating and evaluating information.

The following stage is learning and evaluation. Members assess written evidence submitted by opponents and proponents of the ballot measure, and question both campaigners and independent experts. They then add to, edit, deliberate on, and prioritise all the evidence collected. The editing and refining information phase is carried out in smaller groups where members are invited to discuss and draft evidence statements, examine costs, benefits, and trade-offs of the proposed ballot measure. Finally, **they draft a collective statement that includes the most important information for all voters to know. Members also select the strongest evidence for and against the measure, and then explain why each piece of evidence is important to one side or the other.**

Their final statement is presented publicly in the press conference to the wider public and is included in the voters' pamphlet, which reaches every voter across the state. The final result of the CIR is not addressed to the government, but rather to fellow citizens, helping them make better informed choices for a ballot measure vote. The method can be a powerful tool to help counteract the spread of misinformation and disinformation ahead of a vote (Healthy Democracy, 2019[10]).

The CIR model has been used in at least five states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Massachussetes, and Oregon), as well as in in Korsholm, Finland (Academy of Finland, 2019[11]), and in Sion (Demoscan, 2019[12]) and Geneva, Switzerland (Demoscan, 2021[13]).

Figure 8. Citizens' Initiative Review

Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

Considerations for this model

The CIR's design enables a broadly representative group of people in a community to produce accurate information to help fellow voters make a more informed decision ahead of voting on a ballot measure. It is seen as legitimate because the agenda is set by an issue being put on the ballot, and the **CIR members have 100% control over the final wording of the citizens' statement**.

In its current design, it is a **reactive process** (a CIR occurs after a ballot measure has been put forth) rather than proactive or creative. It is also confined to binary choice issues. However, it **could be envisaged to be used in combination with a preferendum** – a more elaborate ballot measure featuring multiple options that also allows people to rate the strength of their support or opposition to each measure *(Van Reybrouck, 2021[14])*.

It could also be envisaged to give citizens a proactive role in deciding which questions should be put to a ballot measure in the first place. The Special Procedure Order deposed by the Agora MP Pepijn Kennis in the Brussels Regional Parliament in April 2021 suggests the establishment of a permanent citizens' council, which would have a mandate to decide on which ballot measures should be organised. This would then be complemented by another deliberative body that would draft a collective citizens' statement to be distributed to all voters following the CIR model *(Parlement Bruxellois, 2021[15])*.

4. Standing citizens' advisory panels

Toronto Planning Review Panel and Metrolinx Standing Panel on Transportation

How it works

Between 2015-2020, three sets of two-year standing panels were held in Toronto and the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Region on planning and transportation issues. In both instances, they were **designed following the same set of principles for a one-off representative deliberative processes, but with a wider remit covering numerous issues, and longer time-span for learning and providing informed input on an ongoing basis**. The panel members thus had 12-16 meetings over the course of two years (the first three to four meetings being purely about learning), which allowed more time for people to become familiar with the context and issues, and to also have a 'behind-the-scenes' understanding of how different policies work (e.g. being able to visit the control room of the central train station). The evidence from the three panels is that the attrition rates are no different from those of a one-off citizens' panel, despite the much longer time commitment of two years.

Toronto Planning Review Panel, 2015-2017 and 2017-2019

The Toronto Planning Review Panel was an ongoing deliberative body, embedded into the city's planning division, which enabled ongoing citizen input on the issues of planning and transportation. Its members served two-year terms, after which time a new cohort was randomly selected to be representative of the Greater Toronto Area. A group of 28 residents selected by civic lottery from all parts of the greater Toronto area met for 11 full-day meetings from 2015-2017. Prior to deliberation, participants met for four days of learning and training. A similar panel was appointed for the period of 2017-2019, this time consisting of 32 people selected by civic lottery *(City of Toronto, n.d.[16])*.

Figure 9. Toronto Planning Review Panel
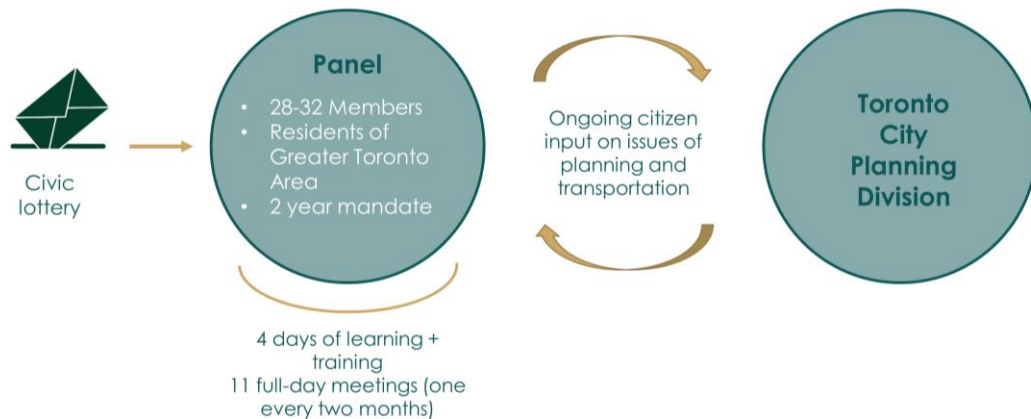
Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

Metrolinx Standing Panel on Transportation, 2018-2020

Similarly, the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) transport authority, Metrolinx, established a Regional Reference Panel to give 32 residents selected by civic lottery the mandate to provide informed advice on managing the growing transport demand over the next 25 years and achieving Metrolinx's goals in a manner that reflects the values and priorities of all residents. The Regional Reference Panel met for 11 full-day meetings between October 2018 and May 2020 *(Metrolinx, 2021[17])*.

Metrolinx's Planning and Development Department sought the Panel's recommendations on:

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

Considerations for this model

The two-year design allows for panel members to become quite informed. It also has a **significant democratic dividend:** the experience has had a lasting, formative impact on the members, who have become much more knowledgeable about the public authority and the issue. After participating in such a process, some of the members have been inspired to go back to university or to change careers; one of them became a facilitator at MASS LBP (the organisation that implemented the two panels), while others continued to volunteer with the public authority.

The experience showed that **having sustained leadership within the convening public organisation is imperative**. It has been suggested that there is a need for at least three terms for such a process to become embedded properly, and to become part of the working culture of the organisation rather than an initiative spearheaded by a champion.

Moreover, due to the length of time, these processes are **also susceptible to the impact of changes in project managers within the convening public authority**, so **having a high degree of understanding about how the panel fits into the organisation's strategic decision making** is also crucial. The significance and stature of the exercise need to be recognised with **buy-in at the senior leadership level, with consistent and appropriate project management.** Having the issues for at least the first year of the panel's work identified before it begins is also helpful, and indicates that the convening organisation takes the Panel seriously.

Both panels provided informed recommendations and influenced important decisions. In the case of the Toronto Planning Review Panel, there was a change of leadership within the city's planning department following the two initial panels. The Metrolinx Panel came to a close during the first wave of Covid-19. At the time of writing, it is not clear when or if a new group will be convened.

5. Sequenced representative deliberative processes throughout the policy cycle

Bogotá's Itinerant Citizens' Assembly (ICA)

How it works

In 2020, the Bogotá city council, through its public innovation lab DEMOLAB, launched a sequenced representative public deliberation through the itinerant citizens' assembly (ICA). This is an interconnected series of representative deliberative bodies that is attached to the city council. The resolution that anchors the establishment of the ICA in Bogotà is available here in Spanish.

The ICA involves multiple citizens' assemblies (called 'chapters') occurring sequentially with different functions, at different stages of the policy cycle. Each chapter involves a different group of people selected by civic lottery to be broadly representative of the population. For example, one citizens' assembly will explore broad objectives, a second develops policy recommendations, and a third conducts an evaluation.

Figure 10. Bogotá Itinerant Citizens' Assembly (ICA)
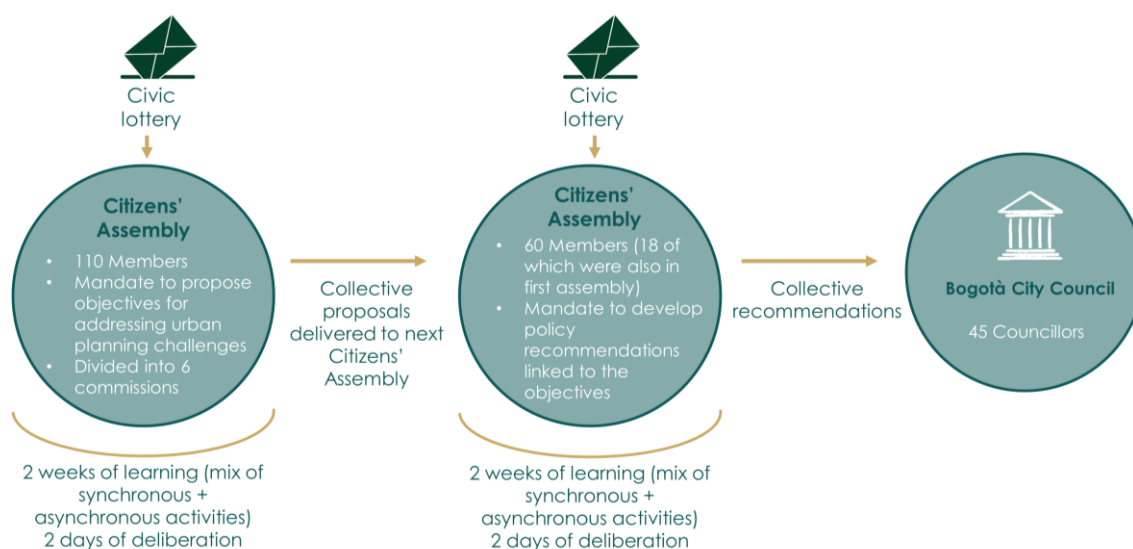
Note: The graphic is based on the data from the first ICA. However, the number of members in each deliberative body can vary.
Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

Considerations for this model

The ICA model can be useful when there is both **time available and political will** to launch a long-term representative public deliberation. It can also be helpful when a policy issue is too complex to be tackled with a single one-off representative deliberative process. An ICA can also be a good model **when a policy question is of great uncertainty and evolves over time**.

The implementation of an ICA model leads to the **involvement of large numbers of everyday people in public decision making over time**. While each chapter involves a relatively small group, the sequential design and rotation of members means that many thousands of people will have an opportunity to be selected to participate over the long term.

The ICA model also gives everyday people **other roles to play in public decision making beyond providing recommendations on a specific policy issue.** By extending the potential remits to agenda-setting, identifying broad priorities, and conducting evaluation, it allows for public decision makers to tap into the public's insights in many more ways. It could also encourage a more recursive dialogue between the ICA members and decision makers.

The sequenced approach also introduces a **new form of accountability between everyday people involved as members in the assemblies,** as they pass on their recommendations to fellow citizens as well as the public authority. It also allows for the organisers of each assembly chapter to take an **iterative design approach**, adapting to what has worked well and what could be improved (Westminster Foundation for Democracy and newDemocracy Foundation, 2021).

ICA in practice

The first itinerant citizens' assembly has had its first two chapters take place in December 2020 and October 2021 respectively, connected to the same theme of how to address the main urban planning challenges the city is facing to make Bogotá a better place to live. **The first chapter was focused on identifying the broad objectives, while the second turned these objectives into concrete policy recommendations**. The first chapter had 110 members selected by lot, and the second chapter had 60 members (18 of which were from the first chapter for some continuity). They were stratified to be broadly representative of Bogotá in terms of gender, age, socio-economic status, and locality.

In both cases, there was a two-week period of asynchronous and synchronous learning activities (such as background information documents, infographics, relevant legal documents, and videos by as well as dialogue with planning authorities and other experts). This was followed by two full days of deliberation. The first deliberation session was opened by the president of Bogotá city council to signal the importance of the assembly.

Both chapters took place online, using a mix of tools including WhatsApp, Facebook, and Miro. Prior to the process beginning, to help spread the word and provide information to people in Bogotá, experts gave presentations via Facebook Live, and were able to answer people's questions using the platform. This part of the process was open to a wider public. The main deliberations took place via WhatsApp, with facilitators, note takers, and technical support staff. Tools like Miro were used to map the members' contributions.

As the topic was rather broad, the assembly members were divided into six commissions that tackled more specific themes, such as environmental services, mobility, public space, and urban land use and expansion. The report of the first chapter is available here.

To help ensure inclusion, each assembly member received 40,000 Colombian pesos (9 euros / 10 USD) for each 6-hour day of work.

In November 2021, the second chapter delivered its report to the city council at a public presentation to the council commission in charge of urban planning. They also had individual meetings with the 45 council members. Their recommendations are connected to specific articles of Bogotá's existing urban plan, as well as "POT holes" – aspects that are completely missing from the urban plan. At the time of publication, the city council was debating the plan and the citizens' recommendations. The third chapter will take place in 2022, and its purpose will likely be to evaluate the impact of the plan.

6. Giving people the right to demand a representative deliberative process

Vorarlberg Citizens' Council on Land Use Rights

How it works

The Austrian state of Vorarlberg has a long history of public deliberation; experimentations with citizens' councils go back to 2007. The state also has a long history of constitutional reforms that favour direct and participatory democracy (Palermo and Alber, 2015: 225-28). Article 1, paragraph 4 of the Land constitution of Vorarlberg was amended in 2013 to include a reference to direct democracy initiatives, referendums, public consultations, and supporting other forms of democracy, notably *Bürgerrät*, which literally translates to "citizens' council".

Citizens' councils can be initiated in three ways: if 1,000 or more citizens sign a petition asking for one, by a decision of state government, or by the state parliament. Citizens used this right of initiative for the first time in 2017 to deliberate on land use rights (Vorarlberg, 2020[18]).

The citizens' council is a model of representative deliberative process. It is typically composed of 15 people selected by civic lottery and lasts 2 consecutive days on average. During the first part of the process, members of the citizens' council identify issues of public interest related to a clearly-defined problem. The members engage in facilitated deliberation, develop solutions to the problems identified, and produce collective recommendations.

A distinguishing feature is dynamic facilitation, where the facilitator encourages members to speak their minds without having to follow a strict agenda or process. Recommendations are then presented and discussed with the broader public in a citizens' café, open to anyone.

Finally, the citizens' council's recommendations are presented to the public authority and a small group of members are assigned to follow up with the government regarding the recommendations' implementation (Partizipation.at, 2021[19]).

The key elements of citizens' councils are set in the constitution, such as the use of dynamic facilitation, selection by civic lottery, and organising a citizens' café. Everything else is up to interpretation. The law gives the organisers enough space to adapt the design of a deliberative process to the issue at hand.

The regional government guidelines for convening and implementing Citizens' Councils can be found here (in German).

Figure 11. Vorarlberg Citizens' Councils

Source: Author's own creation based on data available about how the model works.

Considerations for this model

This model offers an **alternative way for people to be able to set the agenda** to the Ostbelgien model or the Paris Citizens' Assembly. It gives people an opportunity to demand a representative deliberative process if enough signatures are reached among the population. It allows for bottom-up demand regarding a certain policy issue to be addressed through representative public deliberation as opposed to the more common results of petitions being debate by elected officials.

For a petition to be valid, **the regulations need to specify that issues raised should be within the competencies of the public authority** to act upon. Additionally, there needs to be **political commitment** to establish the citizens' council if enough signatures are attained.

7. Requiring representative public deliberation before certain types of public decisions

French law on bioethics

How it works

Article 46 of the French 7 July 2011 law on bioethics institutionalises the obligation to organise public debates and deliberations for any change in the laws relating to bioethics. **The National Consultative Ethics Committee (CCNE), together with the parliament, is responsible for organising these public debates, which take the form of *états généraux*.**

The law defines *états généraux* as various forms of consultations and conferences comprised of citizens selected to represent the diversity of the public. Citizens participate via both traditional consultation methods, such as online submissions and online surveys, and representative deliberative processes where they learn, deliberate, and produce recommendations on policy questions. The 7th July 2011 law is available in French [here](#).

Considerations for this model

Ensuring robust public deliberation before new laws and amendments regarding bioethics **helps public decision makers ensure that before taking decisions on this difficult and controversial issue, it has heard an informed collective view from everyday people.** The same approach could be considered for other types of policy areas, notably those that meet at least one of the three characteristics for issues that are well-suited for public deliberation: (1) values-based dilemmas; (2) complex issues that require weighing trade-offs; and (3) long-term problems that concern multiple electoral cycles.

Another consideration is that the sequencing of the representative deliberative process with other forms of consultation and citizen participation is important. For instance, rather than having online submissions and deliberative processes running in parallel, an online submission process could be part of the evidence base considered by the members of the deliberative body. This helps to ensure that people have clarity about how their inputs will be used, and that there is only one final set of recommendations as a result, rather than competing sets of proposals from different processes.

8. Embedding representative deliberative processes in local strategic planning

Victorian Local Government Act 2020, Australia

How it works

According to the Local Government Victoria Act, enacted in March 2020, **all local councils must engage the community through deliberative practices to develop four strategic documents: the planning and financial management plan; the community vision; the council plan, and the financial plan.** This must take place during the year following a general election.

While the Act does not define deliberative engagement practices, allowing for a relatively broad interpretation, the Act specifies that the deliberative engagement practices **must follow key characteristics of good design, notably: clear scope and objective; access to information; representativeness; impact, and transparency** (Victoria Local Government, 2020[20])**.**

Figure 12. Victorian Local Government Act 2020, Australia

Source: Author's own creation based on content in the Victorian Local Government Act 2020.

Since the Act was enacted, Mosaic Lab, a deliberative democracy practitioner in Australia, has documented the implementation of 11 community panels in ten municipalities. The panels either developed a community vision and/or wrote a report that would be used to shape the future and develop council plans. In total, 348 people selected by civic lottery participated. Seven of these processes were conducted online, and four were hybrid (a mix of online and face-to-face sessions). The outputs were nine community visions, 50 principles, 29 objectives, and 118 recommendations (Mosaic Lab, 2021[21]).

It is possible, and likely, that other councils have also used deliberative processes to develop the four strategic documents identified in the Local Government Victoria Act, however information was not readily available at the time of publication.

Considerations for this model

Anchoring the need to engage the public through deliberative processes for their four key strategic documents sets up municipalities on a **path of continuous learning** for how to implement deliberative processes. With evaluation, a positive cycle of **continuous improvement** can emerge.

Moreover, it can also contribute to **changing the culture** among councillors and the municipality administration around the positive role everyday people can play in shaping their communities. It instils a **culture of participation and deliberation,** and helps public authorities to see the public as a resource rather than a risk.

The recurrent nature of the deliberation, not only for multiple strategies, but also after every election, can help to **build up deliberative infrastructure** over time.

IV. Where in the governance system to add representative public deliberation?

The examples in this guide are from all levels of government. The aim in this document is not to provide detail about every single configuration possible, but to give politicians and policy makers a sense of the many possibilities that exist for making representative public deliberation an ongoing part of democracy and public decision making. It is possible to do this in different parts of the governance system (at all levels of government):

- In legislatures (e.g. to complement the work of committees)
- In government (the executive)
- In the judiciary
- In combination with, or in place of, standing advisory bodies (e.g. boards, commissions, advisory committees etc.)
- In combination with, or in place of, existing public participation processes (e.g. town hall meetings)
- Where governance structures are currently missing (e.g. global level, multi-national regions)

V. What to consider and whom to involve when planning for implementation?

Just as there are numerous considerations for the successful running of parliaments and other democratic institutions, adding public deliberation and civic lotteries to democracy requires certain commitments and infrastructure to be effective:

1. **Sustainable political commitment:** It is important to plan in advance for how to sustain political commitment as new governing coalitions or administrations come into power.

2. **A self-governing and systemic approach that depoliticises as many aspects as possible:** An agenda-setting and/or oversight deliberative body that itself is a lottery-selected panel could be considered as "the gold standard", such as the citizens' council in the Ostbelgien Model. Many jurisdictions often have a general public engagement advisory committee, or something similar, that could be reinvented as a lottery-selected body to play this agenda-setting/oversight role. Process and policy evaluation could also be undertaken by bodies of people selected by civic lottery, or by independent experts.

3. **Measures to enable sustainable involvement of the public:** Elements that can support this include – but are not limited to – a special position for alumni of deliberative processes, maximum visibility through public communication, and paid leave from work to participate in these processes (such as is the case with jury duty in many countries).

4. **Support from and capacity of public servants to deliver ongoing, quality public deliberation and ensure follow-up:** A recommendation in the 2020 OECD report (OECD, 2020[1]) was that public authorities should establish an office permanently in charge of deliberative processes. Such an office could be funded by the public authority, but at **arm's length** to stay unbiased and trustworthy. There are a few examples of such bodies:

   o The **Scottish Parliament Participation and Communities Team** was established to commission, plan, and deliver deliberative engagement in-house.

   o **Secretariats** were established in Ostbelgien, Brussels, and Paris to organise and deliver the deliberative processes.

   o The French government established the **Inter-ministerial Centre for Citizen Participation (CIPC)** in 2019**.** The CIPC provides strategic and methodological advice to ministries and state agencies who want to involve citizens in policy making. In 2021, it also set up a network of ministerial representatives for citizen participation from every ministry to help ensure that citizen participation becomes systematic and mainstreamed, and that it is done with rigour following standards of good practice. The CIPC also launched an online platform –

participation-citoyenne.gouv.fr – which has all of the government's ongoing and past consultations and citizen participation and deliberation initiatives, with information about their follow-up and implementation.

Professional staffing of such an arm's length body might be by civil service employees or universally respected and impartial civil society organisations or universities under contract. In addition to running deliberative programmes, the remits of such an office could be:

o **Setting and ensuring compliance with standards** of good practice for deliberative processes for public decision making that are in line with the OECD Good practice principles (OECD, 2020[5]) and are adapted to the context.

o **Advising decision makers** who are considering the uses of public deliberation in their work;

o **Building knowledge** in the government and public institutions more broadly by **training civil servants** to be smart commissioners and neutral hosts. There needs to be a clear delineation of functions: those who initiate the process; those who organise and run it, and those who supervise it;

o **Monitoring and evaluating institutionalised deliberative processes and their impact** to ensure that collective learning ensues (for example, about which processes do and do not work well in particular contexts) and that the outputs are responded to and have influence on public decision making, using the OECD Evaluation guidelines for representative deliberative processes (OECD, 2021[6]);

o **Ensuring follow-up to the recommendations**;

o **Managing a budget** dedicated to funding deliberative processes;

o **Investing in the skills and capabilities of civil society organisations** that could be capable of organising, running, and facilitating a deliberative process, since institutionalisation implies a greater need for more operators;

o **Regularly reporting findings from representative deliberative processes to government and parliaments** to ensure the cumulative benefit of deliberative processes are related to the parliamentary or government cycles; and

o **Regularly reporting on the implementation of recommendations from deliberative processes** to its members and the public, as well as explanations for why action has not been taken.

In line with the consideration for a self-governing and systemic approach, some of the above remits of an office in charge of deliberative processes could also be shared with a self-governing body like the citizens' council in Ostbelgien or the citizens' assembly in Paris.

VI. Where can I find more information and who can help me?

Where can I find more information?

- **OECD Catching the Deliberative Wave report and Good Practice Principles for Deliberative Processes (**2020)

- **OECD Evaluation Guidelines for Representative Deliberative Processes** (2021)

- **OECD Trello board** of Further Resources for Representative Deliberative Processes

- **UN Democracy Fund and newDemocracy Foundation Handbook on Democracy Beyond Elections** (2019)

Who can help me?

- **OECD Innovative Citizen Participation Team and Network**

    – Claudia Chwalisz, Innovative Citizen Participation Lead (claudia.chwalisz@oecd.org)

- **Federation for Innovation in Democracy in Europe** (FIDE) – A network of leading democratic innovators in Europe who advise governments and policy makers on how to involve everyday people in decision making

    – Yves Dejaeghere, Chief Executive (yves.dejaeghere@fide.eu)

- **Democracy R&D Network** – An international network of organisations, associations, and individuals helping decision makers take hard decisions and build public trust

    – David Schecter, Coordinator (david.schecter@democracyrd.org)

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Annex A. Trade-offs to consider

Table 2. Trade-offs among the eight models of institutionalised representative public deliberation

Considerations for the eight models of institutionalised public deliberation

		Considerations	Level of government where currently implemented	Size of representative deliberative body	Time needed for design* and implementation	Budget
1.	**Combining a permanent citizens' assembly with one-off citizens' panels**					
Ostbelgien model		- Works best if there is **an all-party agreement** to establish the model to ensure longevity and avoid association with the government or only one/some parties - The **rotation of a proportion of citizens' council members** every six months helps ensure that the representative deliberative body remains depoliticised and does not become subject to the same issues as an elected chamber that has a longer mandate - **The separation of roles between the citizens' council (agenda-setting and monitoring) and the citizens' panels (developing policy recommendations)** ensures each body's work is focused and there is enough time for each respective task - It is important that the **evaluation is not politicised** - **The length of the citizens' panel** is decided in relation to the complexity of the issue brought forth by the citizens' council - **The size of the citizens' council** will be relative to the size of the parliamentary body	Regional	**Citizens' council:** 24 members **Citizens' panels:** 25-50 members	**Design:** 8 months **Civic lottery for citizens' council and citizens' panels:** 3 months **Citizens' council:** 1.5 year mandate and 1 meeting per month **Citizens' panel meetings:** Minimum 3 full-day meetings over course of 3 months	**Secretariat costs:** One full-time salary **Annual cost of citizens' council:** 25,000 € **Average cost of citizens' panel:** 40,000 €

	Considerations	Level of government where currently implemented	Size of representative deliberative body	Time needed for design* and implementation	Budget
Paris Citizens' Assembly	- Importance of **involving all political party groups** in the design of the model to ensure longevity and avoid association with the government or only one/some parties - **The separation of roles between the citizens' assembly and the citizens' panels** ensures each body's work is focused and there is enough time for each respective task - It is important that the **evaluation is not politicised** - **The size of the citizens' assembly** will be relative to the size of the council - The **ability for the citizens' assembly to self-organise into working groups democratises the inner workings of the citizens' assembly, but also presents an opportunity for unequal dynamics to emerge** among the assembly members. It will be important for the secretariat to monitor the development of the latter scenario and potentially introduce new rules that could prevent this from occurring.	Local	**Citizens' assembly:** 100 members **Citizens' juries:** 17 members	**Design:** 1 year **Civic lottery and preparation:** 3 months **Citizens' Assembly meetings:** at least twice a year in plenary; working group meetings meet regularly, at an interval defined by their members **Citizens' jury meetings:** three months	Data unknown.
2. **Connecting representative public deliberation to parliamentary committees**					
Brussels' deliberative committees	- Bringing together a broadly representative and diverse group of everyday people and enabling them to understand the complexity of an issue offers an **informed collective view to committee members – a missing source in parliamentary work** - **Mixing MPs and everyday people will have its benefits and challenges** - Works best if there is an **all-party agreement** to establish the mixed committees at the outset (not a purely government initiative) to ensure longevity and to encourage MPs to deliberate openly rather than defend a party line - **Politicians from all parties**	Regional	45 people and 15 MPs	**Design:** 1 year **Preparation of each committee (civic lottery, agenda):** 3 months **Committee meetings:** Number of meetings determined by the advisory committee in relation to the issue, minimum 4 full days of meetings	**Per committee:** 120,000 € + 50,000 € (parliamentary staff costs)

	Considerations	Level of government where currently implemented	Size of representative deliberative body	Time needed for design* and implementation	Budget
	being part of the process increases the potential for implementation of recommendations in the parliament - A careful consideration of the **proportion of politicians in relation to citizens** is necessary - **Facilitation by skilled professionals** is particularly important in this model, given MPs will have greater confidence to speak than most people - There should be a way to **enforce the implementation of the rules and standards set out in a *vade mecum*** (guidelines) - It is important that the **evaluation is not politicised** - By working directly together, **MPs come to value the competence and insight of people, and people develop greater empathy for difficulty of taking public decisions** that require trade-offs				
Three options for adding representative public deliberation to New South Wales committees	- Similar considerations as for the Brussels' mixed deliberative committees.	State	In all three options, 42 people and 8 MPs	**Preparation and civic lottery**: 3-6 months **Option A:** 2 full-day meetings over 4 weeks **Option B:** 4 full-day meetings over 10 weeks **Option C:** 6 full-day meetings over 16 weeks	**Option A:** 47,100 € ($74,100 AUD) **Option B:** 105,683 € ($166,300 AUD) **Option C:** 154,617 € ($243,300 AUD)
3. Combining deliberative and direct democracy					
Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR)	- It produces **accurate information to help voters make a more informed decision** ahead of voting on a ballot measure - Seen as legitimate because the **agenda is set by an issue being put on the ballot**, and the **CIR members have 100% control over the final wording of the Citizens' Statement** - In its current design, it is a	State	24 members	**Preparation and civic lottery:** 3-6 months **CIR meetings:** 4-5 full days, usually consecutive (sometimes over two weekends)	**Per CIR on average:** 89, 250 €

	Considerations	Level of government where currently implemented	Size of representative deliberative body	Time needed for design* and implementation	Budget
	reactive process (a CIR occurs after a ballot measure has been put forth) rather than proactive or creative - CIRs are confined **to binary choice issues**				
4. Standing citizens' advisory panels					
Toronto Planning Review Panel (TPRP)	- **Requires sustained leadership within the organisations** (likely three terms to be embedded properly) - The process needs a **connection to and support of the senior leadership**, as well as **consistent project management** - **Identifying the issues that the standing panel will tackle for at least its first year ahead of time** can help ensure its strategic importance and usefulness - **Keeping members engaged during two years requires an ongoing effort by the 'civic concierge'** in the implementing organisation, and is as important as the policy impact - Given the two-year time commitment, there is **more time for learning and going 'behind-the-scenes' of the policy** - Members on the standing panel become quite informed and there is a **high democratic dividend**	Local	Iterations with 32 and 28 members	**Preparation and civic lottery:** 3 months **Implementation:** 12-16 full-day meetings over course of 2 years	**Civic lottery:** 20,370 € **Cost of running Panel per year:** 40,740 € ($60,000 CAD)
Metrolinx Standing Panel on Transportation	- Same as for TPRP	Regional	32 members	**Civic lottery:** 3 months **Implementation:** 12-16 full-day meetings over course of 2 years	**Civic lottery:** 20,370 € **Cost of running Panel per year:** 67,900 € ($100,000 CAD)
5. Sequenced representative deliberative processes throughout the policy cycle					
Bogotá Itinerant Citizens' Assembly	- This model allows everyday people to play a **meaningful role in all phases of the policy cycle,** and gives people other roles to play in public decision making beyond	Local	**First chapter:** 100 members **Second chapter:** 60 members (18 of which were	**Design:** 3-5 months **Civic lottery:** 3 weeks **Learning and meetings:** 2	**Total cost of the first chapter of the ICA:** 61,100 € ($68,500

		Considerations	Level of government where currently implemented	Size of representative deliberative body	Time needed for design* and implementation	Budget
		providing recommendations on a specific policy issue - The separation of work into a series of citizens' assemblies, each of which involves a new group of people selected by civic lottery, **allows for many people to be involved in public decision making over time** - The model can encourage a **more recursive dialogue between the ICA members and decision makers** - The sequenced approach also introduces a **new form of accountability between everyday people involved as members in the assemblies** - The organisers of each assembly chapter can take an **iterative design approach**, adapting to what has worked well and what could be improved		also part of the first chapter)	weeks, including at least 2 full days of deliberation	USD)
6.	**Giving people the right to demand a representative deliberative process**	-				
Vorarlberg Citizens' Council on Land Use Rights		- This model offers **an alternative way for people to be able to set the agenda** to the Ostbelgien model, by allowing them to demand a representative deliberative process if enough signatures are reached among the population - It allows for **bottom-up demand regarding a certain policy issue to be addressed through representative public deliberation** (as opposed to the more common results of petitions being debate by elected officials) - The regulations need to specify that **issues raised should be within the competencies of the public authority** to act upon - There needs to be **political commitment to establish the Citizens' Council if enough signatures are attained**	State/regional	27 members	**Preparation and civic lottery:** 10 weeks **Meetings:** 2 full days over 4 weeks	15,000 €

		Considerations	Level of government where currently implemented	Size of representative deliberative body	Time needed for design* and implementation	Budget
7.	**Requiring representative public deliberation before certain types of public decisions**					
French law on bioethics		- Ensuring robust public deliberation before new laws and amendments regarding bioethics **helps public decision makers ensure that before taking decisions on this difficult and controversial issue, it has heard an informed collective view from everyday people** - The **sequencing** of the representative deliberative process with other forms of consultation and citizen participation is important	National	Specific numbers not specified.		Data unknown.
8.	**Embedding representative deliberative processes in local strategic planning**					
Victorian Local Government Act 2020		- With evaluation, a **positive cycle of continuous learning and improvement** can emerge. - Changing **the culture among councillors and the municipality administration** around the positive role everyday people can play in shaping their communities. - It instils a **culture of participation and deliberation**, and helps public authorities to see the public as a resource rather than a risk. - The recurrent nature of the deliberation can help to **build up deliberative infrastructure** over time.	State	Specific numbers not specified.		Data unknown.

Note: *The time needed for the design refers to the amount of time that was needed in these specific cases to involve experts in developing a context-specific design, as well as the time needed for political negotiations and for putting in place the necessary staff support and infrastructure to carry out the process. The budget is in euros, and conversions are as of the conversion rate in December 2021. The information provided is descriptive in relation to these specific examples. However, the models could be applied at different levels of government besides those where they have already been tried.

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