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THE CLIMENTINES YOUTH WORKER'S GUIDE TO CLIMATE ACTION

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Summary of the Project

The CLIMentines project aims to foster a new generation of young people in Europe who have the knowledge and tools to actively engage and impact climate action policies in their countries and at the European level. The project forms a partnership of seven organizations in six European countries covering all geographical areas. The specific objectives are to:

- Connect youth organizations and youth and strengthen knowledge sharing and mutual learning through building a transnational network.
- Strengthen the capacities of youth organizations, youth workers, and leaders by providing them with knowledge and concrete tools to apply in their work towards active citizenship, participatory and deliberative democracy processes, and climate action.
- Support the active engagement of young people, especially those with fewer opportunities or those who have been inactive.
- Empower young people by strengthening their competencies and rendering them more confident to participate in and influence policy.

Main Outcomes:

- The CLIMentines transnational network of youth organizations with 100 active members by the end of the project.
- A scoping study released in English.
- 18 Co-creation workshops were organised.
- The CLIMentines Toolbox released in 7 languages.
- The Youth Worker’s Guide to Climate Action in 7 languages.
- 3 "How to" webinars produced in English.
- Organization of international training for youth workers.
- Youth for Climate Action Starter Pack in 7 languages.
- 6 Local Task Forces in 6 countries.
- Transnational youth exchange.

The project will contribute towards increasing the level of youth participation in democratic life, rendering young people drivers of our European way of life, and driving forward youth policy with new evidenced methodologies for youth participation. The CLIMentines Youth Worker's Guide to climate action guidelines is designed to support youth participation in climate action by presenting principles, methods and tools of participatory and deliberative democracy. Its development was possible thanks to the collaboration of organisations from six European countries: France, Italy, Greece, Finland, Austria and Poland. This guide is intended for youth workers, organisations and educators committed to mobilising young people for climate advocacy, building their capacity to take leadership roles in climate-related initiatives and promoting collaborative action by providing them with theoretical and practical insights. Through this resource, we aim to ensure greater dissemination and awareness of democratic methods and tools to support youth participation, particularly from communities on the margins, and intergenerational dialogue in climate action. We are confident that this guide will help young professionals and young leaders generate shared ideas and proposals that can create a sustainable, just and equitable future for all.

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01

Introduction and Overview

Climate change provides an unprecedented challenge for modern democracies that requires deep rethinking of decision-making processes. In 2019, the European Commission introduced the European Green Deal, a new social pact to achieve 2030 and 2050 climate targets through a 'green transition' that respects the principle of 'Leave no one behind' (European Commission, 2019). This approach underlines the relevance of a fair and inclusive transition, where citizens are actively involved in the definition and implementation of climate policies.

As affirmed by numerous international and national norms, to participate in the design of climate policies is not only a right, but arises from the need to overcome the limits of representative democracy, which often ties participation to electoral moments, leaving out the voices of those who do not have the right to vote or those who, for various reasons, are in a vulnerable condition. Promoting inclusive and participatory climate action means setting up a space where everyone can contribute, bringing experiences, proposals and needs. According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), climate change requires rethinking governance models, often focused on the short term, to integrate a perspective of ‘intergenerational solidarity’, empowering present generations towards future ones (International Institute for Democracy , 2021). Moreover, citizen participation can help prevent the risk of ‘policy capture’ - when policies are influenced by private interests rather than the collective good - by ensuring that decisions reflect the priorities of society as a whole (OECD, 2017).

In other words, climate change invites us to rethink the way decision-making power is distributed within our societies. If the concept of marginality indicates remoteness from a point of reference, when we think about modern democracies, we can identify who is more or less marginal regard to power to influence a public decision (Hooks, 2014). The ‘CLIMentines Youth Worker's Guide to Climate Action Guidelines’ is a resource dedicated to empowering in the promotion of climate action and is aimed at contributing to the redistribution and sharing of power. This guide aims to provide theoretical frameworks to identify the main principles and methods of participatory and deliberative democracy (chapter 2).

A step-by-step guide is then provided for who want to organise a bottom-up process, supporting leadership roles in climate-related initiatives (chapter 3). The guide is completed by operational sheets for implementing methods (Annex I) and tools (Annex II) that can help in organising participatory processes. We are confident that this guide will help youth workers and young leaders generate shared ideas and proposals that can create a sustainable, just and equitable future for all.

02

Methods and Tools of public participation to climate action

'To participate' describes an action but is not an autonomous verb per se, as it needs to be paired with its object to gain sense ('what do we participate in?'). Because of this characteristic, the verb 'to participate' and its derived noun 'participation' can describe very different actions (Polvani, 2021).

'Participation' is expressed in different ways that can be promoted by public authorities or the public sphere (civic organisations, grassroots movements, media, etc.). Civic activism, in this sense, becomes an essential tool to urge institutions to respond to specific issues by calling for the construction of new spaces for the creation of shared policies that favour climate justice or by bringing examples of self-organised experiences that show the importance of rethinking existing rules and procedures.

This guide is designed to provide youth workers with a theoretical and practical framework on the methods and tools of participatory and deliberative democracy. The aim is to focus on the active participation of citizens, promoting the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and shared responsibility. The guide provides both a theoretical framework for understanding the differences and points of contact between participatory democracy and deliberative democracy and a set of practical tools for effectively implementing participatory methods with young activists.

To this end, in this guide we distinguish between 'methods' and 'tools'.

”**Methods”** refer to the structured processes and organisational arrangements that facilitate the involvement of citizens in political or social decisions. They outline the structure and principles governing how people participate in the process.
“**Tools**” are specific instruments or practices used within the various methods to facilitate participation, dialogue, reflection or information gathering.

According to this distinction, 'methods' are broader and more structured processes that establish the modalities of participation, while 'tools' are more operational techniques that facilitate discussions and decisions within methods (Grönlund, 2003; Kamlage & Nanz, 2018; Chilvers & Kearnes, 2020)

Methods, unlike tools, can in turn be categorized into two theoretical macro-frameworks on forms of democracy.

When we talk about **Participatory Democracy,** we refer to a system in which spaces and modes are created to contribute to public governance in its various forms: making decisions, making proposals, managing a public good, organising a service or monitoring and evaluating the implementation of public policies. The attempt is to go beyond the total delegation of power to elected political representatives, but this does not mean an exclusive exercise by citizenship. Generally, participation is open to allow as many people as possible to be present and discussions are mainly based on personal knowledge and experience. **Participatory methods do not necessarily lead to a decision**, which can be taken by simple majority rule (Council of Europe, 2024). In this guide, we will elaborate on the examples of *civic monitoring*, *policy labs* and *participatory budgeting*.

Deliberative democracy, instead, refers to a system in which decision-making processes are based on a argued exchange of opinions, participants listen to experts, experiences or stakeholder views, acquiring information that is used to discuss, weigh the pros and cons of the different options available and decide collectively, by unanimous consensus or by qualified majority, on proposals on a given issue. Unlike participatory methods, deliberative methods are based on the selection of participants by means of well-defined criteria: an attempt is made to create 'mini-publics', i.e. a group composed of the same socio-demographic characteristics as a reference population (local, regional, national, etc.) (Council of Europe, 2023). Within the guide we will elaborate on the examples of Deliberative Assemblies, European Awareness Scenario Workshops and Consensus Conferences.

Beyond the theoretical distinctions, it is worth remembering that there are numerous points of contact and blurred boundaries between the methods that will be illustrated. There is not a relationship of necessary otherness but of possible overlap whenever the modes of participation ascribed to one meet the theoretical requirements postulated by the other.

Quite simply, both refer to the involvement of citizens in the political process and can be hybridised with each other or adapted according to the needs of the context.

Participatory methods

Civic Monitoring

Civic monitoring is a method in which people evaluate the implementation of a public initiative (policies or projects), raising collective awareness and stimulating the authorities to respond to highlighted critical issues.

Monitoring consists of systematic activities of control, collection, verification and dissemination of data, carried out by a group of people or civic organisations independent from institutions. It does not replace administrative monitoring in any way, but rather complements the information held by the public authority (Buttiglione & Reggi, 2015; European Commission, 2023).

To start civic monitoring you can follow these six operational steps:

1. Take into account context and level of monitoring
Outline a clear and comprehensive overview of an area, project or issue, considering all main aspects and the connections between them. At this stage, it is important to understand the overall context ('the big picture') also in the light of the socio-economic situation, relevant policies or investment lines funding individual projects. Civic monitoring can also be a part of broader campaigning initiatives or give rise to journalistic enquiries.

2. Set up the monitoring community and choose the object of observation
Involve a group of people who are interested in carrying out monitoring activities and establish a monitoring community. Then choose together the object of the monitoring and set yourself objectives (e.g. improve the quality of the initiative, check the right implementation of a project or application of a law, make people more aware or change a policy). To carry out the activities, it is useful to involve people with multidisciplinary competences in the monitoring activities and to have everyone play a role (coordinator, storyteller, photographer, social media manager, etc.).

3. Identify the skills needed and organise training activities
Brainstorm with the group on the resources you need, involve the necessary people in the training and set up the training materials. Organize trainings on concepts and practices such as *civic lobbying*, *research methodologies* or on technical aspects relevant to the object to be monitored such as the functioning of policy, mechanisms for allocating public funds, procedures for carrying out a public work and on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (Gasco-hernandez, Martin, Reggi, & Pyo, 2018).

4. Do a desk data collection (desk analysis)
Collect secondary data, i.e. data that already exist for other purposes and are available online. You can examine funding procedures, official documents, institutional websites, research or civic organisation reports. Civic monitoring exploits open administrative data and, if these are not available, you can use dedicated transparency tools or organise lobbying actions to make them public, re-usable and re-distributable (Dawes, Vidiasova, & Parkimovich, 2016).

5. Collect and verify data through field visits or interviews
Check the information you have and gather information for monitoring purposes through field research (photos, videos, filling forms), interviews with stakeholders (policy makers, key persons, affected communities), survey or focus groups.

6. Report and provide public feedback of monitoring results
Write a final report and set up a digital platform to present the results of the monitoring to the public authority, media and affected communities. Even if you do not have the legal power to force the public authority to improve the outcome, you can present the results in an increasingly 'noisy' way to induce it to act.

The example of SIS.M.I.CO – Monitoring Information Collaboration System

As part of Disaster Risk Reduction, ActionAid Italy has promoted civic monitoring actions in the territories affected by the 2016 earthquakes with the aim of improving the social accountability of institutions(2). Through the SIS.M.I.CO programme, the first thing was to map the associative realities present within the 140 affected municipalities, and in the background, due to the impossibility of finding detailed data at municipal level, a context analysis was conducted on social, economic and demographic aspects. Following this, a 'Monitoring and Civic Action School' was organised in the town of Arquata del Tronto, and two workshops with a territorial focus in Amatrice and Camerino. During the three days of the Monitoring School, the participants acquired skills on open data, crowd mapping tools (such as Mapillary), platforms for archiving and monitoring data related to reconstruction, legislation on the transparency of public administration and post-earthquake, thanks to the support of experts from Universities, research institutes, law firms and associations active in the field of Open Data.

Prior to each of the two workshops, a collaborative analysis phase was carried out and questionnaires were administered, with which the team surveyed the needs of the associations active in the area, chose with them the object of monitoring and organised the new training activities in which the participants drew up the monitoring form both in a format compatible with an excel file and in a graphic version for field visit. After the training, Concentrico started monitoring the safety of buildings in the Camerino 'red zone'. Thanks to a desk analysis on the cadastral mapping of municipal practices and the request for authorisation for field visits, it was possible to carry out the monitoring and a mapping with the aggregation of the data collected to verify the overall progress of the securing. At the end of the project, a public meeting was organised to give back to the public authorities and citizens. In the light of experience, it is possible to affirm that in a context where certain basic needs (such as physiological, safety or stability needs) are satisfied, other types of needs, such as being informed and wanting to contribute to the choices that public authorities make in the area, are inserted among the people of a context that is still coming to terms with the impact of the disaster. Only in the presence of these types of needs does it make sense to start a civic monitoring process; otherwise, different paths and actions are needed that fall within the sphere of empowerment.

(2) Social Accountability refers to a communicative and dialogic process in which administrations, in accounting for their actions, engage with citizens through a public debate based on objective evidence, clear data and structured information. In this dialogue, citizens must have the opportunity to ask questions, obtain answers and make proposals for improving administrative action (Bovens, 2007).

Policy Labs

Policy Labs are public co-design laboratories involving citizens, experts and policy-makers (who, however, are only listened by and do not participate directly in co-design) to develop new policies on issues of public interest or to improve existing ones.

In the context of policy activism, they give a voice to often unrepresented individuals and communities, fostering awareness of their rights and defining ways to make them effective. Spread across many European states, Policy Labs have mainly been run by experts from public administrations, but there are also bottom-up examples based on local needs (Fuller & Lochard, 2016; Olejniczak, Borkowska-Waszak, Domaradzka-Widła, & Park, 2017).

To organize a Policy Labs follow these steps:

1. Existing policy analysis

Considering that the whole process is aimed at producing a new policy or improving an existing policy, it is important to analyse the context, examine gaps in existing policies and formulate relevant policy questions to best define the need and purpose of the workshops. At this stage you can involve stakeholders, researchers or experts who can help you outline the issues to be addressed

2. Stakeholder analysis and power map

Analyse the different stakeholders involved in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy you have examined and develop a power mapping exercise to identify who has the power to introduce, change or influence the policy that will be the subject of the workshop. This activity can be carried out in meetings with participants.

3. Planning the workshops

Prepare and plan the workshops, set the agenda and create a useful information pack for participants that summarises the analysis you have carried out and clarifies any controversial points of the policy to be discussed.

4. Intermediate emersion or empowerment workshops

In the first phase you can organise intermediate workshops on emerging needs, discussing with participants ‘why there is a need for a new policy’, or on empowerment. This phase is useful for a common basis of understanding on the topic to be addressed, allowing participants to reflect on the objectives and discuss their own experiences and concerns.

5. Multi-stakeholder workshops

In the second phase, participants work in multi-stakeholder, plenary and group sessions, with the number of meetings varying according to the complexity of the topic. The groups consist of a maximum of 8 participants expressing different interests, critical issues of existing policies. In the first meetings, the pros and cons of existing measures are analysed in groups and reflections are shared in plenary. In the same way, possible proposals are worked on. Before the last meeting, a draft of the proposals is circulated, which will serve as a basis for the last group work session and the subsequent plenary discussion to decide which proposals to bring to the attention of the policy makers.

Policy Labs

6. Final processing and endorsement of results

At the end of the process, the proposals flow into a document structured to be useful for policy-makers and the public. The most frequently used type of document is the White Paper, a report detailing a critical problem or situation and the proposed solutions to respond to it. Before having a final version of the document, it is possible to circulate a draft among participants to receive feedback and to organise a final meeting where follow-up and advocacy activities are defined, which are especially essential in the case of a bottom-up process.

The experience of #Sicuriperdavvero campaign

In 2019, the Sicuriperdavvero ("Safe for real") campaign promoted a series of bottom-up Policy Labs to develop disaster risk management proposals collectively through 11 events across Italy. The experience was divided into three pivotal moments: agenda setting, design and decision-making, followed by advocacy, lobbying and campaigning. At the same time, the website www.sicuriperdavvero.it was opened as a 'library' and a space for the elaboration of thought thanks to contributions, which were accessible to the community and from which each participant could draw or in which they could share their knowledge on the various areas of the risk cycle.

The agenda setting phase took place through preparatory work aimed at defining the thematic areas to be addressed and the actors to be involved. The application design phase took place in territorial workshops, each dedicated to the in-depth study of a thematic area. Before each meeting, supporting material was provided to deepen the topic under discussion. In all meetings, multi-stakeholder working tables were set up, aimed at elaborating a *critical* path on the topic under discussion: a logical path which, starting from concrete experiences, identified the main problems on the topic under discussion and possible solutions or indications for solving them. A series of guiding questions developed by the project team formed the thematic track on which the participants dialogued. Facilitators were present at each table to coordinate the discussion and verbalisers to summarise what was said in real time.

At the end of the table work, the facilitators drew up a report that was subsequently shared with the participants for further additions and validation of the content that emerged. After this step, the reports were published on the website and sent to all campaign participants (not only those present at the table) via a special mailing list. The material was then revised by the project team with the help of legal and policy experts so that it could be consistent with the characteristics of a public policy.

All this came together in the 'Guidelines for a national policy on prevention and reconstruction', which were presented to the Prime Minister's Office in 2020. Among the proposals contained in the guidelines, the one concerning an 'organic regulation on post-disaster reconstruction' was supported through various initiatives, such as the elaboration of a new document at the beginning of 2023, and mobilisation actions, such as the protest under the offices of the competent minister. Not receiving the desired answers, in June 2023, the Campaign again strongly demanded a process of listening and co-drafting of the law by organising a public institutional meeting and projecting the activists' video-message on the Colosseum. In 2024, after the start of the legislative process in Parliament, the realities of the Campaign brought their demands to the attention of parliamentarians in informal hearings.

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting is a method in which a public administration decides together with citizens how to invest a percentage of its budget, by having them identify spending priorities or by having them propose specific projects to be included in the municipal budget. Over time, it has been implemented with different variations to the point of incorporating theoretical assumptions of deliberative democracy.

Although most practices are developed in an urban context at municipal level, there are experiences at regional, state or school level, where school budgets are used to finance student proposals and projects. Any municipality can implement a Participatory Budget, however there must be a clear political will (Wampler, 2000; European Parliament, 2024).

Having checked this precondition, the process can be articulated as follows:

1. Launching the Participatory Budget
The public authority announces the Participatory Balance Sheet, defines the quota of the budget to be discussed and indicates the target area (the city, neighbourhood, district, etc.) in which the part of the budget under discussion is to be allocated. The call act contains the aims, objectives and duration of the process, as well as the technical criteria for admissibility and evaluation of the proposals that citizens can make. A coordination group and an evaluation committee are appointed. Finally, the criteria for selecting participants are defined: in the case of participatory budgeting, generally all interested persons in the chosen area can take part, in the case of deliberative budgeting, a representative statistical sample is selected.

2. Information about the process
Inform citizens about the initiative, the budget and the process. During public events, the budget as a whole and the individual expenditure items covered by the process and the technical criteria can be presented. In the case of a deliberative budget, the participants also listen to different stakeholders regarding the spending priority and define the spending plans together with the technicians.

3. Collecting proposals
Participants put forward project proposals that meet the needs of the community. The coordinating group determines the period for collecting proposals and facilitates their submission (online or paper forms), ensuring that they include details such as objective, target audience, estimated budget and potential implementing partners.

4. Evaluation Boards
An evaluation board (composed of public authority, technical and community representatives) receives proposals and assesses their technical and financial feasibility, aggregating similar ones. Conformity with technical criteria, long-term sustainability and adherence to the available budget are assessed. At the end, a list of proposals eligible for the co-design tables is drawn up.

Participatory Budgeting

5. Co-design tables

During the co-design tables, the people who have submitted projects meet with each other and also try to work out joint proposals. With the help of municipal technicians, they also try to better define specific objectives, success indicators, timeframes and detailed budgets for the proposals made.

6. Vote

The proposals of the co-design tables are put to the vote. In the case of participatory budgeting everyone entitled in the area concerned votes (even if they did not participate) and they are approved by a simple majority. In the case of deliberative budgeting only the participants in the process vote on the proposals and they are approved unanimously or with a qualified majority. At the end of the vote, the document that will be the subject of the final evaluation by the public authority is drawn up.

7. Final approval

The public authority assesses the final document and approves all or part of the proposed projects, giving reasons for any changes or refusal to implement them. A budget is then established and an implementation plan approved.

8. Implementation

The decision-making power is firmly in the hands of the politicians and the administrative apparatus. For the effective implementation of proposals, the support and interest of civic organisations and citizenship can be essential.

Participatory budgeting in Europe

Participatory Budgeting in Europe has been seen as a tool to improve transparency, efficiency and civic participation in the management of local public resources and has been widely disseminated among several countries such as France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Poland, where unique approaches have been developed in response to local needs (Allegretti & Herzberg, 2004).

In France, for example, Participatory Budgeting was promoted as an alternative to centralism and integrated into the existing structures of grassroots democracy, while in Germany it was mainly adopted to improve fiscal transparency and administrative efficiency, with an emphasis on informing citizens. In Spain, the associative participation model led to the creation of more open and structured decision-making spaces. The first pilots were developed in the early 2000s, particularly in the regions of Andalusia and Catalonia.

Poland has the largest number of ongoing practical experiences in Europe, thanks to a law passed in 2009 that introduced the Solecki Funds. These are special resource packages provided to local authorities to promote democratic instruments, including the implementation of co-decision in budgetary procedures. In Italy, interest in participatory budgeting has been growing since 2001 and, although adoption is still limited, several cities such as Bologna, Rome, Naples and Venice have introduced it at the local level (Sgueo, 2016).

In each experience, however, participatory budgeting has required strong political support, the active participation of local associations, and a strong administrative capacity also in terms of human and economic resources. Nevertheless, it is a dynamic and constantly evolving method. In fact, there are participatory budgeting experiences defined as 'community development' that are distinguished by the fact that projects are implemented by the community rather than by civil servants or institutions.
This type of experience tends to disassociate itself from local politics (such experiments often take place where governments are weak or have little presence) and is driven by both bottom-up and top-down dynamics. Civil society plays a decisive role here, especially when it advocates for the rights of disadvantaged or marginalised groups, and the challenge is to prevent such experiments from turning into 'para-public bodies' that provide services for local public institutions (Sintomer, Herzberg, & Allegretti, 2013).

Deliberative methods

Deliberative Assembly

A deliberative assembly is a method in which a representative sample of citizens drawn by lot discusses and evaluates social or political issues and makes recommendations to decision-makers. The essential ingredients of an assembly are the representative sample drawn by lot, the clear and specific subject matter on which citizens are called upon to decide, the availability of balanced and neutral information and sufficient time available to formulate recommendations and proposals with the assistance of facilitators (Smith, 2024; Council of Europe, 2023).

A deliberative assembly can be organised through the following steps:

1. Preliminary and planning stage

Define the theme that the assembly will address, setting objectives so as to plan the different stages. In choosing the theme, which should not be too broad, you can identify an issue of interest to a specific target group or relevant to the community that will be involved. During this phase you can also involve potential stakeholders through short surveys or interviews to find out which issues are of most interest. You can establish a steering committee and independent committees that can ensure the neutrality of the process or help you with the content.

2. Recruiting participants

The number of participants to be recruited depends on the geographical area involved (neighbourhood, city, country, etc.) and the organiser's economic capacity. Usually, assembly processes involve between 40 and 120 people drawn by lot to compose a statistically representative sample. Through a database of contacts (usually provided by registry services, built through an online form or in partnership with stakeholders). It organises preliminary meetings to introduce participants to each other and familiarise them with the working methods.

3. Information and learning phase

Taking into account the complexity of the chosen topic, organise information and learning meetings to provide participants with a useful knowledge base to understand and discuss the topic or to listen to relevant stakeholders representing different points of view on the issue at hand. You can involve, for example, experts, political representatives, companies or civil society organisations. During the process provide readings, videos or learning materials that can help participants in forming an opinion.

4. Dialogue and deliberation phase

Promote an in-depth discussion that facilitates the development of shared recommendations through the most responsive participatory tools. For instance, Open Space Technology can be used to bring out sub-themes or proposals that participants can then elaborate on in group work. It is important that the work does not remain within the individual group but is shared and validated with the entire assembly before the decision phase.

5. Decision Phase

In the decision phase, participants commit to finalizing shared recommendations and formally approving them. A **document containing the recommendations** that have emerged is drafted and shared with the participants before the final meeting. Qualified majority voting or approval by unanimous consent is used to approve the proposals that will form the final document.

6. Follow-up

Deliver the final document to institutions, relevant stakeholders and the general public. It may be useful to organise an event or press conference to disseminate the results. In general, in institutionalised processes (i.e. commissioned by the public authority) the political decision-maker is obliged to give a response in which he approves the document or rejects the proposals with justification. In the case of bottom-up processes, on the other hand, the final document may be supported through mobilisation or advocacy actions.

Deliberative experiences in France and Austria

Climate deliberative assemblies represent an innovative method of involving citizens in the decision-making process on complex and highly debated issues such as the climate crisis and have had a very diverse impact on policy and public opinion, especially when convened by institutional actors. Social movements such as Fridays for the Future and Extinction Rebellion have often played a key role by demanding the establishment of these experiences from their political referents or by supporting and amplifying the recommendations that emerged from ‘official’ assemblies. For example, in France, civic movements and organisations urged the government through various protests to promote the deliberative assemblies that subsequently convened the Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat. Similarly in Austria, the Citizens‘ Climate Assembly was organised by the Ministry for Climate Action in response to a citizens’ referendum that had strong public support.

The Assembly operated without formal government response mechanisms and the role of movements was significant. Fridays for the Future (F4F), Extinction Rebellion and Mehr Demokratie, together with Klimavolksbegehren, formed an alliance to support the assembly's recommendations by organising demonstrations and petitions in support of the assembly to get the government to seriously consider its outcomes. Such actions demonstrate how movements can not only push forward the recommendations, but also raise awareness among the population, creating a stronger link between institutions and civil society (Felicetti, 2023). In addition, the organisation of bottom-up assemblies, led by civic organisations or movements, is increasing in number. They are often financed through crowdfunding, funding from charities or through Europlanning and tend to offer participants more freedom to influence both the content and direction of the process. This allows movements to pursue more radical goals, challenging established powers and advancing climate justice issues. However, bottom-up processes also present challenges, as they often lack a clear link to official institutions, often risking generating recommendations that are likely to have limited impact without formal approval from institutions (Bussu & Fleuß, 2023). From the promotion of independent assemblies within the community to the use of mobilisation actions to broaden participation, young activists have the possibility of adapting deliberative tools to the most diverse needs or creating alliances with other actors to foster an ongoing dialogue with institutions.

European Awareness Scenario Workshop (EASW)

The European Awareness Scenario Workshop (EASW) is a method that promotes dialogue between various stakeholders to address common problems, explore future scenarios and define long-term change objectives, identifying priority actions in the short/medium term.

Participants, usually divided into four stakeholder categories, develop shared future visions and generate ideas with two key questions in mind: 1. Who is responsible for solving the problems? The local authority, individual citizens, or a combination of the two? 2. How can the problems be solved? Are the solutions predominantly traditional or innovative? (MedStrategy Project, 2016; European Commission, 1997).
Below are the operational steps:

1. Planning and preparation

Identify the main issue, define the results you want to achieve and identify between 24 and 40 participants representative of the community, dividing them into four main groups: citizens, technicians or experts, public administrators and private sector representatives. During the preparation phase, develop four reference scenarios representing different combinations of solutions (the *"how"*) and alternative management responsibilities (the *"who"*): in other words, between technical and social components.

Each scenario should then offer possible solutions to the problems of the local context and give an idea of the various perspectives to be considered.

2. Introductory session and presentation of scenarios

In the first session, explain the objectives of the process and the EASW methodology. Then present the programme and main steps, giving a brief overview of the topic and challenges. Then introduce the four reference scenarios with the aim of getting participants to compare possible alternative futures and make them reflect on their possible role in promoting change.

3. Vision Making phase

For the Vision Making session, divide the participants into their four groups and ask them to discuss and develop a future vision for the topic, imagining solutions to local problems. Start with one of the scenarios presented at the beginning of the session, and with the guidance of a facilitator, the groups reflect on two main questions: 1. How can the identified problems be solved? 2. Who is responsible for solving them? Each group summarises its vision and identifies key points to be presented in plenary. After each presentation, a discussion opens to compare them and highlight points of convergence and differences. The session concludes with a vote to select the key elements of a 'common vision', containing the shared aspects, which will be the basis for the generation of ideas, and the elements of divergence that need to be explored are recorded.

4. Idea Generation Phase

Reorganise the participants into mixed groups that are formed by thematic expertise related to the common vision (e.g. waste management, renewable energy, sustainable mobility). Each group, starting from the common vision, has the task of formulating up to five practical ideas to realise the vision, specifying the actions to be taken and who is responsible for implementing them. Before returning to the plenary, the groups summarise their proposals for presentation and final discussion, which focuses on how the proposals will be implemented and who the key players will be. At the end of the session, the ideas are voted on and those approved are incorporated into an action plan drawn up by the coordination team, which contains a list of actions and the responsibilities of each actor.

5. Follow-up and implementation of the Action Plan

The co-ordination team drafts a final report that includes the common vision, the approved ideas and the action plan. This is shared with participants, institutions and key actors identified in the plan.

The application of EASWs in the Agenda 21 experience

EASW was born to promote initiatives on environmental issues, particularly within Agenda 21 programmes, but has since found application on a wide variety of topics. Its methodology originated in the 1990s within the Values Interfaces Research-Society initiative of the European Commission's Innovation and Small-Medium Enterprises Directorate. Its experimentation took place in dozens of European cities, the most important being conducted by the Danish Board of Technology within a project called Barriers to Urban Ecology, and involved the participation of more than 30 people from four different categories: residents, policy-makers, technology experts and private sector representatives in a one- or two-day meeting.
Specifically, participants were asked to:

1. Identify and discuss the differences and similarities between the problems and solutions perceived by the different groups of participants;
2. Identify and discuss the main obstacles to a sustainable urban lifestyle;
3. Generate new ideas and guidelines for future actions, policies and initiatives at local, national and community levels;
4. Promote a public debate in the local community on sustainable urban lifestyle in the near future and the role of technology.

Consensus Conferences

Consensus Conferences are a method in which a group of 10-30 citizens, drawn by lot, examine a controversial issue and develop a ‘consensus declaration’ to guide political decisions. During the process, citizens pose questions to a panel of experts and discuss with each other to produce a report for policy makers. The aim is to broaden the debate and include ‘non-expert’ perspectives to influence meaningful policy decisions.
This method is used to stimulate public awareness and foster dialogue between different stakeholders. Consensus conferences can also be used to combine different forms of knowledge (e.g. local, traditional, technical) or include subjective knowledge in scientific, technological and other developments (Nielsen, et al., 2006).

1. Conference planning and preparation

Define the conference theme and set up a coordination team that will take care of the organisational aspects. This is supported by an advisory committee, usually consisting of 5-6 members with specialist knowledge or expertise related to the conference theme. The advisory board supports in defining objectives, selecting experts and monitoring the impartiality of the process. Finally, get the facilitators involved, decide on the number that will make up the citizens‘ panel (between 10 and 30) and form a group of about 20 experts with different opinions and expertise on the topic and who will have the task of answering participants’ questions.

2. Recruitment and selection of the Citizens Panel

Selects the representative group of citizens by drawing lots in order to ensure demographic diversity (age, gender, education and profession) and sends them a preliminary information packet with materials on the topic prepared by the Advisory Board to ensure neutrality with respect to the experts' opinions.

3. Study weekend ahead of the conference

Prior to the Consensus Conference, participants take part in 2 study weekends. During the first session, they are introduced to the topic and the method, develop basic skills through intensive theoretical study, and identify areas of interest or concern in order to formulate questions for the panel of experts. To facilitate the process, working groups are formed so that everyone can take the floor and analyse the various facets of the topic. At the end, the agenda for the second weekend is co-designed. During the second session, citizens continue to explore the topic and define questions, selecting the necessary experts who will take part in the conference. At the end, the conference agenda is co-designed together with the coordination team.

4. Public Consensus Conference

The Consensus Conference lasts three days and sees the direct involvement of the citizens' panel and the expert group; the external public can only observe and ask questions at the end. On the first day, experts present their views and answer questions developed by the panel in the study sessions. After the experts' speeches, citizens prepare further questions for the following day. On the second day, the experts answer the new questions and citizens start working internally on drafting a report containing recommendations and justifications. On the third day, the citizens' panel presents the final report to the external audience and experts, answering any questions. The document is then closed, where the panel of experts can only make changes on factual errors without affecting the draft.

5. Follow-up and dissemination

The final report is called a ‘consensus declaration’ and is presented to the press, policy makers and relevant stakeholders. The report is shared as an input on public policies that affect the topic of the conference and can stimulate further discussion and policy action.

The first consensus conference in the US: Citizens Panel on Telecommunications and the Future of Democracy

The first consensus conference in the United States was held in Boston in 1997 and was entitled ‘Citizens’ Panel on Telecommunications and the Future of Democracy". This event aimed to broaden citizen participation in technological decisions by improving public understanding and promoting informed debate.

The consensus conference involved 16 experts selected from academia, government, non-profit and corporate representatives, with six of them also taking part in the steering committee, sponsored by universities, non-profit organisations and the National Science Foundation. To select the 15 citizens for the panel, 1,000 people were contacted by telephone in the Boston area, resulting in 127 interested parties, from which participants were selected based on ethnicity, age, education and technological familiarity. Participating citizens took part in two preparatory sessions and a three-day public conference, during which they interacted with experts, asked questions and produced a final consensus statement. The evaluation of the conference covered four criteria: direct impact, influence in policy-making, skill-building, and interaction between expert analysis and citizen knowledge. The latter was the most significant, enriching the dialogue between experts and citizens, who reported that they learned a lot and increased their awareness. The experts appreciated the citizens' perspective, which was different from their usual context. However, no direct impact on policy was observed, as in fact the main objective of the conference was awareness-raising (McDonald, Bammer, & Dean, 2009).

Cross-cutting issues of methods

As also highlighted in the CLIMentines D2.2 Scoping study (CLIMentines, 2024), there are several cross-cutting issues that may influence the value of these methods in fostering a fair and inclusive transition where citizens and, in particular, young people are actively involved.

Top-down vs Bottom-up approach

The dichotomy between “Top-Down” and “Bottom-up” approaches is often understood in relations to the actors who initiate the process and determine the characteristics and follow-up of the application of the individual method. More specifically, “Top-Down” refers to those processes initiated and implemented by public authorities, while “Bottom-up” refers to processes closer to the local level and often promoted by civic organisations.

Although in the first case one is often faced with institutionalized processes, for both approaches it is necessary for institutions to be committed to taking the outcomes of participatory processes seriously and to also consider the proposals emerging from Bottom-up processes. To adequately support and encourage the involvement of young people, institutions should also respond in the event of rejection by giving reasons and opening a discussion table with those involved.

Limited funding
The application of the methods illustrated often entails the involvement of large human and economic resources. Therefore, insufficient financial resources may hinder youth-led initiatives and projects, limiting the scope and impact of their involvement in climate action. To create the right conditions for bottom-up initiatives to flourish, it would be advisable to provide the funding (through eligibility criteria adapted to the nature of youth realities), the necessary infrastructure and technology, and to activate appropriate training courses.

Access to information and availability of Open Data
The application of the methods illustrated often entails the involvement of large human and economic resources. Therefore, insufficient financial resources may hinder youth-led initiatives and projects, limiting the scope and impact of their involvement in climate action. To create the right conditions for bottom-up initiatives to flourish, it would be advisable to provide the funding (through eligibility criteria adapted to the nature of youth realities), the necessary infrastructure and technology, and to activate appropriate training courses.

Recruitment and inclusiveness
In order to provide more space for people who are usually excluded from public debate to speak out, it is also possible to oversample specific underrepresented groups so that they are present in greater numbers than the official demographic sampling. In any case, it is important to reflect together with these groups on how to circumvent any barriers to participation or how to make information more accessible, such as providing material in language or easy-to-read format.

03

A Practical guide to Climate action: how to put in practice any democratic approach to climate action in 5 steps

As we have seen, the Democratic Methods offer different approaches to climate action and lay the foundations for effective initiatives that can actively involve young people in order to promote a sustainable future and empower the next generation to deal with environmental challenges. Structured approaches provide frameworks for young people to understand complex climate issues and actively participate in decision-making. By creating inclusive spaces where young people can voice their concerns and collaborate on solutions, organisations improve climate awareness and instill a sense of responsibility.

Empowered youth can catalyse change, inspiring communities to adopt sustainable practices and support effective policies. Initiatives such as the European Climate Pact and the European Union Youth Strategy underline the importance of structured engagement, highlighting the potential of young people in driving impactful action. This chapter emphasises their critical role in shaping a sustainable future through active participation.

This guide aims to contribute to a greater awareness of how democracy can be deepened and to provide food for thought to generate shared ideas and proposals on climate action. In no way is it intended to propose an 'orthodoxy of democratic methods or tools'; on the contrary, it is essential to approach the content presented as a source of thought with the awareness that the key words in organising participatory processes are listening, adaptation and improvisation. In this chapter we propose a 'working method' through five operational steps for those who intend to organise a participatory process and be an agent of change beyond the democratic method chosen. The indications contained in the chapter can be complemented with the operational sheets on Methods (Annex I) and Tools (Annex II). However, it is vital to remember that depending on who participates, the outcomes of the process and the more operational aspects of the process itself may change. This is why it is always necessary to ask 'who is missing' and to listen to feedback on the design proposal from the people who will take part in the process.

3.1. Setting up the scenes: policies, stakeholder and power analysis

In the initial stages, even before choosing the most suitable method, it is important to analyse the context in which one moves, taking into consideration the needs of communities or territories and policies. In particular, when we talk about Public Policies we mean those decisions taken by institutions that intend to address a problem of public interest by identifying the most appropriate tools, such as regulations, economic and human resources or educational campaigns (Birkland, 2019; Howlett & Ramesh, 2003).

In the context of climate action, it is possible to define climate policies as the set of strategies, regulations and actions taken to reduce emissions, prevent and minimise the effects of climate change through adaptation, or promote a just transition to a more sustainable society (UNDP, 2023).

Alignment with Climate Goals

It is vital to evaluate that policies align with broader environmental objectives, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A prime example is the European Union's Green Deal, which aims to make Europe climate-neutral by 2050. National and local policies should support this goal by promoting renewable energy, enhancing energy efficiency, and protecting biodiversity. However, the problem is that climate action is often exposed to what is known by the OECD as 'policy capture risk', when policies are biased towards a private interest instead of the public interest, hindering the success of initiatives (OECD, 2017; Transparency International, 2024).

Identifying Barriers and Opportunities

This step involves pinpointing policy gaps or obstacles that hinder climate action. Key aspects include:

- Barriers: Identify outdated regulations or those lacking proper enforcement. For instance, a policy may not effectively incentivise the transition to electric vehicles.
- Opportunities: Highlight areas for improvement, such as increasing funding for renewable energy projects or creating incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices.

To conduct a thorough policy analysis, stakeholders can utilise various resources:

- Legislative Databases: These databases provide access to regional and national policy documents, allowing for comprehensive reviews and analyses of relevant laws and regulations, such as the EU's database

- Policy Briefs and Research Articles: These resources help understand broader climate frameworks and provide context on how policies are developed and implemented. They may highlight successful case studies or lessons learned from other regions.

Stakeholders

Recognising all stakeholders involved in climate action and understanding their influence is essential to ensure that diverse interests are considered and effective collaboration can take place. This involves identifying various groups that have a vested interest in climate issues.

Governmental Agencies: These are local, regional, or national bodies responsible for implementing environmental policies and regulations. For example, in the EU, the European Environment Agency plays a critical role in assessing and reporting on environmental data.	**Corporations:** Businesses, especially those in industries like energy, transportation, and agriculture, can significantly impact climate change. For instance, renewable energy companies are key players in the transition to a low-carbon economy.
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): These groups advocate for environmental protection and sustainability. An example is Greenpeace, which actively campaigns for policies that combat climate change.	**Local Communities:** Residents who are directly affected by climate issues, such as those living near polluted areas or vulnerable to climate-related disasters, should be included in the discussion.

Assessing Influence and Interests:

Once stakeholders are identified, it’s important to evaluate their influence, resources, and potential contributions to climate action. For example, a local government may have regulatory power and access to funding, while an NGO might bring expertise and community support. Understanding these dynamics helps determine who can lead initiatives and who needs to be involved to ensure successful outcomes.

Understanding the circumstances

Additionally, power dynamics among stakeholders can significantly impact climate initiatives. Assessing how different stakeholders' interests and levels of power interact is crucial for managing these dynamics effectively. This understanding fosters collaboration and helps mitigate conflicts that may arise during the implementation of climate actions.
By integrating policy analysis with stakeholder mapping and power analysis, this approach provides a comprehensive framework for initiating and sustaining impactful climate action efforts within democratic settings. Through these steps, we can work together to create a healthier environment for our communities and future generations.

3.2. Design of activities and planning

After identifying methods such as Deliberative Assemblies, Civic Monitoring or Policy Labs (see chapter 2 on methods), it is essential to conduct a first assessment to confirm if the method is suitable for your context and target audience. This process should include:

- **Identifying objectives:**

Define the primary objectives of the action. Is the goal to inform, consult, collaborate or empower stakeholders? A Deliberative Assembly may suit objectives around in-depth dialogue, while Participatory Budgeting might be suitable for actions seeking community decision-making.

- **Resource assessment:**

Consider the financial, human, spatial and time resources available. Some methods, such as Consensus Conferences, may require more resources than others.

- **Stakeholder needs:**

Evaluate the method’s capacity to engage stakeholders effectively. Think about what their objective and motivation for participation might be and which method suits those aspects best.

By carefully aligning the method with your and potentially also your stakeholders´ specific goals and available resources, you set a foundation for a successful activity.

Setting short-, medium-, and long-term objectives

To maximize impact, it is helpful to set objectives on different levels that go beyond the immediate activity. This will support both immediate goals and sustainable engagement.

- **Short-term objectives**:

Focus on immediate outcomes, such as gathering elementary data, raising awareness or informing a specific group on a climate action related topic.

- **Medium-term objectives**:

Set objectives around increasing community or stakeholder involvement, ensuring intermediate action steps are achieved and building capacity (i.e. strengthening the skills of individuals or groups so they can support climate action over time).

- **Long-term objectives**:

Consider broader impacts like influencing policy, fostering ongoing stakeholder engagement or creating long-term structures for continued climate action.

Setting these layered objectives allows your project to make both immediate and lasting contributions, creating a clear plan for ongoing climate advocacy. The SMART Objectives tool is a helpful resource to define specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals for your climate action activities.

Setting a timeframe

A clear and realistic timeframe is essential to ensure progression of an activity (for more information on the timing of each methods or tools see Annex I and II). Setting a timeframe that includes short-, medium-, and long-term goals can help to manage resources and expectations efficiently. In order to set a timeframe, it can be useful to create a Gantt chart. This Gantt chart maker can help you visualize and manage your project timeline.

- **Define phases**:

Break down the project into phases, with each phase representing a significant milestone or change in focus. For example:

  - **Preparation phase**:
    - This includes stakeholder engagement, finalizing objectives, and logistical planning.
  - **Implementation phase**:
    - This focuses on carrying out the chosen method, such as hosting a deliberative session or launching a policy lab.
  - **Evaluation phase**:
    - A post-implementation period to evaluate outcomes, gather feedback, and document learning.

- **Buffer periods**:

Allow for flexibility by including buffer periods within your timeline to accommodate unexpected delays. This way you can ensure that the project can adapt to unforeseen challenges.

Defining these phases and setting specific timelines for each helps keep the project on track and facilitates smoother transitions between activities.

Engaging stakeholders effectively

Engaging a diverse group of stakeholders is critical to implementing any democratic method in climate action. Steps to consider include:

- **Stakeholder identification**:

Identify stakeholders who have a personal interest in the climate action initiative or who could be affected by its outcome. Think about what kind of influence they could have on the project´s outcome.

- **Early involvement**:

Engage stakeholders from the beginning on to foster a sense of ownership. This can involve consultations before the actual project or a common kick-off event to introduce the project's goals and establish a collaborative foundation.

- **Tailored communication**:

Adapt communication to different stakeholder groups. Take into account their interests and the level of engagement they are comfortable with. Provide clear, accessible information to ensure alignment and understanding.

Stakeholder engagement should be a continuous effort throughout the project. Regular check-ins and feedback sessions can help maintain involvement and encourage ongoing participation. You can use the Chapati Diagram tool to map and analyse power dynamics and relationships among stakeholders involved in your project.

Training of facilitators

Trained facilitators are essential to the successful implementation of any democratic method. The facilitator's role can be to guide discussions, manage group dynamics, and ensure that all participants have an equal opportunity to engage.

- **Core competencies**:

Facilitators of climate action methods not only need to have vast topic-related knowledge and an understanding of the chosen democratic method but also possess the specific communication skills needed, like conflict resolution. For example, a facilitator for a Deliberative Assembly should be skilled in fostering balanced discussions and balancing power dynamics.

- **Training sessions**:

Organize training sessions focused on these competencies. These sessions can be structured as workshops that combine theoretical understanding with hands-on exercises and role-plays.

- **Continuous support**:

Provide ongoing support, feedback, and opportunities for facilitators to reflect on their experiences and improve their skills.

By investing in facilitator training, you help to ensure that activities remain inclusive, focused, and effective. Seeds for Change provides tools for practical advice and exercises for developing facilitation skills tailored to participatory approaches.

Continuous evaluation and adaptation

As you implement activities, it is important to evaluate progress and make adjustments as necessary. This is particularly important in climate action, where changing political or environmental circumstances may influence the relevance or feasibility of certain actions.

- **Feedback loops**:

Create regular feedback loops with participants, stakeholders and facilitators to assess what is working well and where adjustments may be needed.

- **Improvements when necessary**:

Use feedback to make changes when necessary. This way you can ensure that activities remain aligned with objectives and responsive to the needs of participants.

A flexible approach to evaluation supports the dynamic nature of climate action and ensures that your project remains relevant and impactful.

3.3. Implementing your methods through different tools

Each method for democratic participation has unique goals, whether to facilitate dialogue, build consensus, or generate innovative solutions. By selecting tools that match the specific goals and audience needs of your method, youth workers can enhance engagement and make the outcomes of their climate initiatives more impactful.

1. **Deliberative Assembly**
   - **Objective**: Create a structured, in-depth discussion platform to bring participants together, allowing them to exchange views and work toward consensus on specific issues.
   - **Suggested Tools**: The **World Café** and **Open Space Technology (OST)** are both highly effective in Deliberative Assemblies. The World Café facilitates inclusive, small-group discussions that allow ideas to circulate naturally, while OST enables participants to set their own agenda and explore topics they feel are most relevant.
2. **European Awareness Scenario Workshop**
   - **Objective**: Help participants envision possible future scenarios and discuss strategies for resilience and sustainable action.
   - **Suggested Tools**: The **Scenario Workshop** tool is closely aligned with this method, as it enables participants to analyze various climate futures and collaboratively plan for challenges. In this way, youth workers can guide groups in envisioning positive and constructive paths forward in climate action.
3. **Consensus Conferences**
   - **Objective**: Provide a platform for diverse participants to share perspectives and work toward a group consensus on complex climate issues.
   - **Suggested Tools**: **World Café** and **Reflection-Action** work well in Consensus Conferences. The World Café encourages broad participation and idea-sharing across groups, while Reflection-Action guides participants through cycles of reflection and planning, supporting thoughtful and actionable consensus.
4. **Civic Monitoring**
   - **Objective**: Encourage participants to evaluate and monitor policies or projects, offering insights that can lead to continuous improvements and accountability.
   - **Suggested Tools**: The **Focus Group** tool is ideal for Civic Monitoring. This tool allows youth workers to guide small, focused discussions on specific topics, gathering detailed feedback on policies or projects to inform improvements.

5. **Policy Labs**
    - **Objective**: Facilitate collaborative problem-solving and policy development through experimental approaches to climate challenges.
    - **Suggested Tools**: **Open Space Technology (OST)** and **Reflection-Action** both work effectively in Policy Labs. OST allows participants to set their own agenda, encouraging innovative ideas, while Reflection-Action enables continuous reflection and action, helping groups refine and adapt policy solutions as they evolve.
6. **Participatory Budgeting**
    - **Objective**: Enable participants to take part in decision-making around budget allocation for community or project needs, ensuring that resources are directed to where they will have the most impact.
    - **Suggested Tools**: **Scenario Workshop** and **Reflection-Action** enhance Participatory Budgeting by helping participants envision the implications of budget choices and adjust plans based on ongoing feedback and evaluation.

Practical Overview of the Tools

Each tool offers unique strengths and can be adapted to support multiple participatory methods. The following is a brief overview of each tool's purpose and practical application. Detailed, step-by-step instructions for each tool are provided in Annex 2.

- **World Café**: This tool organizes discussions in rotating small groups, fostering idea-sharing in an informal setting. It's particularly useful in **Deliberative Assemblies** and **Consensus Conferences** for generating a diversity of perspectives and building consensus (Brown, 2002).
- **Scenario Workshop**: This tool is designed to guide participants through structured discussions on future scenarios, making it especially suited for **European Awareness Scenario Workshops** and **Participatory Budgeting**, where collaborative visioning is needed (Interacts, 2003).
- **Open Space Technology (OST)**: OST allows participants to self-organize around topics they care about, creating a flexible environment for tackling complex issues. It's ideal for **Policy Labs** and **Deliberative Assemblies** where participant-driven engagement is essential (Owen, 2008).
- **Focus Group**: A structured discussion tool for gathering in-depth feedback on specific topics, making it a strong choice for **Civic Monitoring** where detailed participant insights are required (Breen, 2006).
- **Reflection-Action**: This tool combines reflection and action cycles to engage participants deeply in issues, helping them to assess and adapt their strategies. Reflection-Action is effective in **Participatory Budgeting** and **Policy Labs**, where continuous feedback and refinement are important (Archer & Cottingham, 2012).

3.4. Outcomes processing (or which outcomes you'll achieve from this process)

Deliberative and participatory democracy are two complementary approaches to involving citizens in governance and decision-making, each with specific objectives and benefits. In this section, we will take a closer look at what is possible to achieve with deliberative and participatory methods and what actions can be taken afterward.

Deliberative democracy is based on open dialogue and the face-off of different perspectives, with the aim of reaching informed and shared decisions. One of its main effects is an increase in trust in institutions, thanks to transparency and a willingness to involve citizens. This approach favours consensus solutions that are more widely accepted, stimulates civic participation and encourages innovative ideas to tackle complex problems. The recommendations that emerge from deliberative processes are often well thought out and based on a range of opinions and evidence. Moreover, these methods can reduce polarisation, deepen collective understanding of the issues at stake and promote dialogue between people from different backgrounds. Finally, such processes provide opportunities for networking, raise awareness of the complexities of social challenges and help develop viable future scenarios and policy recommendations (Curato, Dryzek, Ercan, Hendriks, & Niemeyer, 2017).

Participatory democracy, on the other hand, emphasises the direct involvement of citizens in decision-making, going beyond just voting. This approach allows neglected needs to emerge, promoting greater transparency and accountability on the part of institutions. Indeed, citizens can monitor government activities, pushing for improvements in public services and identifying inefficiencies. Active participation not only strengthens community ties and a sense of belonging, but also fuels creative ideas for local projects. By collecting data and evidence, citizens can contribute to evidence-based decision-making, improving the effectiveness of policies. Moreover, participatory democracy fosters collaboration across disciplines, creating innovative solutions and identifying obstacles and opportunities for more effective and accountable government (Bherer, Dufour, & Montambeault, 2016).

From achievement into concrete actions

After recognizing the achievements from deliberative and participatory processes, there are various ways through which they can be fostered into concrete actions. For example, you can:

- **Communicate Results**: Share the outcomes with all participants, stakeholders, and the broader community. *Look at Climentines Toolbox section 5 "Communication and Advocacy" for instructions on communicating about climate change*.
- **Educate and Inform the Public**: Use the findings to educate the broader public on the issues discussed, helping to raise awareness and stimulate informed public discourse.
- **Engage with Policymakers**: Present the findings to relevant policymakers and stakeholders, advocating for the implementation of recommendations and ensuring decision-makers understand the conclusions and community support.
- **Incorporate into Policy Frameworks**: Work with policymakers to integrate e.g. scenarios and recommendations into their strategic planning and decision-making processes.
- **Monitor Implementation**: Establish mechanisms to track the progress of recommendations, to assess progress and address any challenges. *Look at Climentines Toolbox section 6 "Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for instructions on monitoring"*.
- **Evaluate the Process**: Conduct evaluations of the deliberative assemblies, workshops, or conferences themselves, gathering feedback from participants about what worked well and what could be improved.
- **Develop Action Plans**: Use the outcomes to create concrete action plans that outline specific steps for addressing identified challenges and opportunities. *Look at Climentines Toolbox section 5 "Communication and Advocacy" for instructions on communicating about climate change and the instructions on creating an action plan.*
- **Build a Continuous Dialogue**: Use the outcomes as a springboard for ongoing community dialogue, organizing follow-up events or forums to discuss progress, emerging issues, and additional topics of interest.

- **Foster Further Participation**: Encourage participants to stay engaged in civic matters by providing information about other opportunities for involvement in community decision-making and governance.

3.5. Follow Up (What do you do with your outcome)

Now that you have gathered important outputs, it will be important to decide what to do with it. There are three main elements that are included in the follow-up, these are the *strategic implementation of results*, *monitoring and evaluation*, and *sustainability*. Each of these will help guide youth organizations in the most impactful and effective way to use their outcomes leading to concrete changes and a lasting impact.

Strategic Implementation of Results:

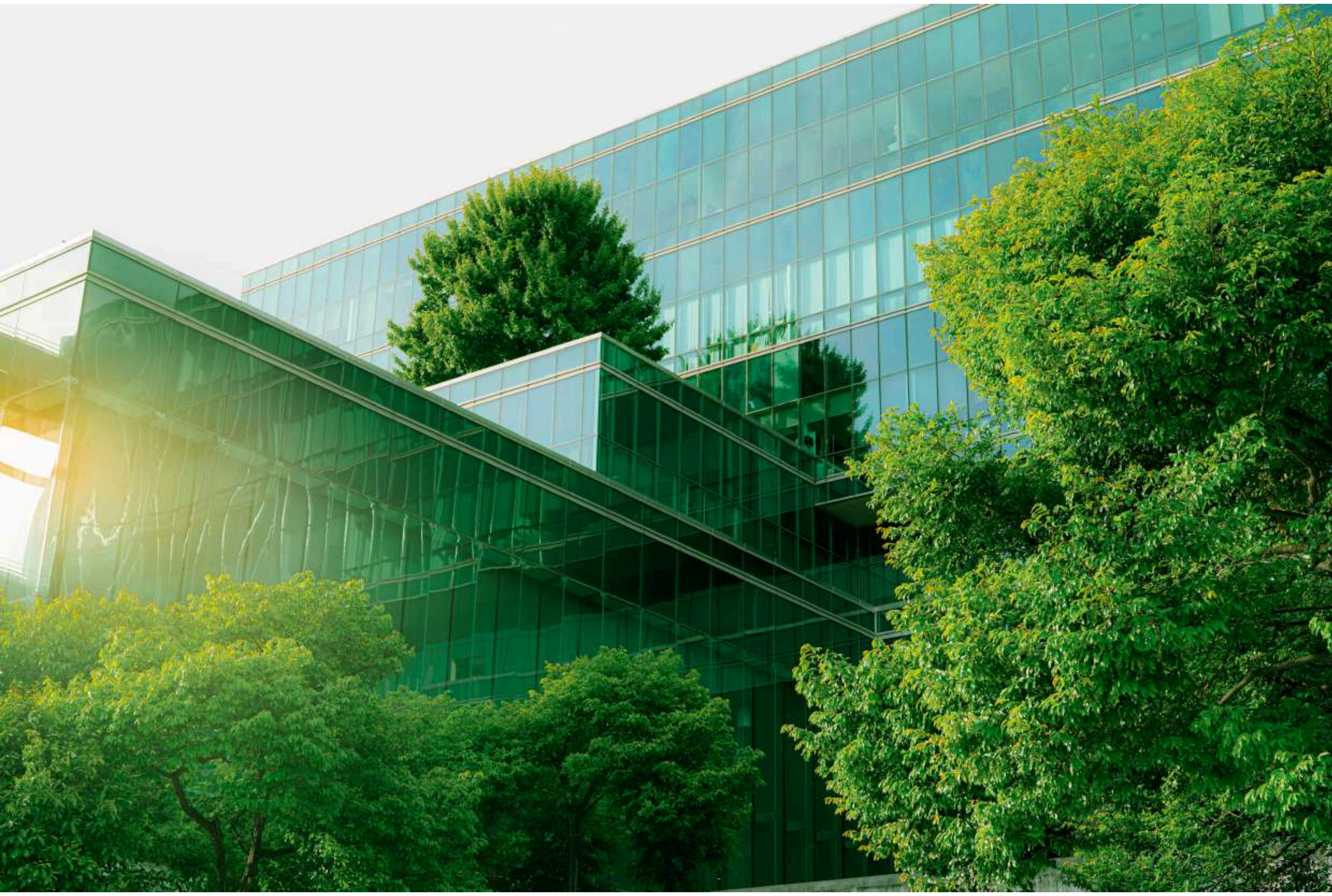
- **Build an Awareness Campaign**: another way to make good use of the outcomes is to transform them into elements of a larger awareness campaign. For example, you can make infographics, posters and videos. You can consult the CLIMentines Toolbox to help you create communication and advocacy tools with step-by-step guides to build your campaign.
- **Form partnerships with stakeholders**, including local government, NGOs, youth councils, and private sector entities to support collaborative implementation.
- **Mobilize youth to organize initiatives** or events where they can make meaningful contributions. Additionally, you can consider organizing a protest as an impactful option. For guidance on how to effectively plan one, refer to the "How to Organize a Protest" section in the CLIMentines Toolbox.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- **Set indicators for success** to measure the impact of the participatory process. For example, metrics could include community engagement levels, or improvements in youth climate action awareness. You can consult the Indicative List of Indicators and the Indicators and pathways towards meaningful youth participation in the UNDP guidelines to Elevating Meaningful Youth Engagement for Climate Action (2022).
- **Conduct regular progress reviews** to evaluate the implementation progress. These could be in the form of bi-monthly or quarterly check-ins to assess alignment with goals and identify any adjustments needed.
- **Gather feedback** from stakeholders, participants, and the community. You can include surveys, focus groups, or online feedback forms on Google Forms to assess the effectiveness of the follow-up actions.
- **Document and report progress**, challenges, and lessons learned. A report can contribute to transparency and also serve as a valuable resource for other organizations.

Sustainability:

- **Build or reinforce the community** where youth workers and participants can continue exchanging knowledge and collaborating on future projects related to climate action.
- **Organize follow-up meetings with policymakers** and distribute your results to them.
- **Develop workshops and webinars** to raise continued awareness on climate action and democratic participation.
- **Do not forget to bring joy to advocacy**. You can organize periodic reflection sessions where the participants can celebrate achievements, analyze what went well, and share successes with the community, fostering a sense of accomplishment and motivation.



04

Annex I - Practical sheets of the Methods

What is Civic Monitoring?	Civic monitoring is a method of participatory monitoring and evaluation through which citizens and civil society organisations directly monitor the implementation of public policies or publicly funded projects with systematic data collection.
Who are the participants?	Participants may be all those subjects independent from the public authority who are interested in the impacts of the public initiative to be monitored. The development of the monitoring community can be self-organised or stimulated through training initiatives. It is important that the group represents multiple voices and perspectives to ensure that monitoring is inclusive and representative.

How is the Civic Monitoring organised?

How to structure the governance?	• The Coordination Team supports activities and organises training activities; • Operational and supervisory decisions are made collaboratively; • Each participant has a specific role;
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• Use clear language and make the data understandable even to those without technical expertise; • Provide listening and feedback sessions for participants; • Organise co-planning and needs identification activities so that monitoring benefits the community;
How does the process look like?	**Timing**: 4-12 months **Process overview** **1. Context analysis (1-2 months)** *Who has decision-making power over this public initiative? Are there related issues or is it a virtuous example to be replicated? How can communities prevent negative impacts on their territories? Is civic monitoring the most suitable tool?* **2. Introductory phase (1-2 meetings)** Establishment of the monitoring community; choice of object to be monitored (interest, possibility of alliances, feasibility); understanding of objectives, context and methodology.

	3. Training (1-3 meetings) Training sessions to develop the necessary skills such as data collection and analysis, stakeholder mapping and thematic insights. **4. Data collection and verification (2-6 months)** Desk analysis and field monitoring activities and data collection, conducted through direct observation, interviews or questionnaires. **5. Analysis and synthesis (1-2 months)** Evaluation of collected data and identification of critical issues. **6. Report and return (1-2 meetings)** Drafting and dissemination of the final report with recommendations and public presentation of the results.
What are the outputs	Independent monitoring and evaluation report on a public initiative highlighting successes, critical issues and areas for improvement
Strenghts (max 3)	1. Strengthens accountability and encourages transparency of public authorities 2. Promotes civic protagonism in public initiatives by generating data-driven public debate 3. Improves access to public information and provides the community with a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of policy decisions.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Access to public authorities' data, their transparency and their readiness for civic dialogue are essential elements of the process 2. Subject-specific or procedure-specific expertise is often required 3. High motivation and time to search for data or exercise access rights to information through the available transparency tools

Further reading

Graeff E. (2019). Monitorial citizenship. The international encyclopedia of media literacy, 1-15Zuckerman E (2021). Mistrust: Why Losing Faith In Institutions Provides The Tools To Transform Them. New York. New York: W.W. Norton & Company
https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118978238.ieml0169

Monithon Europe E.T.S. (2022). Metodologia e prospettive di sviluppo. Disponibile su
https://www.monithon.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Metodologia-Monithon-ver1.2.pdf

What are Policy Labs?	Policy Labs are participatory co-design workshops for developing new policies on issues of public interest or improving existing ones. Founded on the principles of policy activism, they amplify the voices of often underrepresented communities, creating an inclusive space where different perspectives can contribute to policy development.
Who are the participants?	20-40 participants from various sectors of society, including citizens, civil society organisations, experts, local government representatives and other relevant stakeholders. The selection is geared towards ensuring a variety of perspectives.

How are Policy Labs organised?

How to structure the governance?	• The coordination team supervises the workshops and ensures the achievement of objectives • Decisions are made collaboratively by majority or consensus vote • Facilitators, experts, verbalisers and technical support persons are required
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• All information and materials are shared on a digital platform • Alternating plenary discussions and group work gives everyone the opportunity to express themselves • The use of posters, blackboards or digital tools can stimulate conversation
How does the process look like?	**Timing:** 2-3 days per workshop, 3-5 sessions **Process overview** Session 1: Introduction to the topic and context, work on stakeholder analysis Session 2: Emergence of needs workshop Session 3: Comment on existing measures and work on recommendations in subgroups Session 4: Review of proposals and plenary sharing Session 5: Finalisation of proposals (e.g. recommendations or white papers)

What are the outputs	Final report providing details of the problem addressed, the context, proposed solutions and recommended actions for policy makers to introduce or improve a policy
Strenghts (max 3)	1. Inclusiveness of marginal groups. 2. Creation of policies based on real needs. 3. Fostering collaborative relationships between stakeholders and developing a climate of trust around proposed solutions.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Adequate resources and realistic timelines to ensure high quality output. 2. Management of participants' contributions so that they can be effectively considered 3. Logistical and resource issues to ensure inclusive and continuous participation.

Further reading

EUPAN (2018), Innovative Policy Labs in Public Administration. https://www.eupan.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2018_1_BG_Innovative_Policy_Labs_in_the_Public_Administration.pdf

L. Kimbell. Applying Design Approaches to Policy Making: Discovering Policy Lab (2015) https://researchingdesignforpolicy.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/kimbell_policylab_report.pdf

What is Participatory Budgeting?	Participatory Budgeting is a method in which a public administration decides together with citizens how to invest a percentage of its budget, by having them identify spending priorities or by having them propose specific projects to be included in the municipal budget.
Who are the participants?	In the case of participatory budgeting, all interested persons in the chosen area take part. In the case of deliberative budgeting, a representative statistical sample of the area is selected.

How is the Participatory Budgeting organised?

How to structure the governance?	• The coordination team, usually composed of the public authority and facilitators, supports the process and organisation • The main roles are facilitators, experts, technicians, and representatives of local communities
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• Clear and timely dissemination of information • Information based on the different types of participants
How does the process look like?	**Timing:** 2-6 months **Process overview** **1. Initiation of participatory budgeting** The share of the budget to be discussed and who participates is defined. **2. Information** Citizens are informed about the initiative, the budget and how it will be carried out. **3. Gathering proposals** People send in their projects 4. **Evaluation Tables** Municipal technicians assess feasibility and aggregate similar proposals 5. **Co-design tables** Different project proponents meet to plan together with municipal technicians 6. **Vote** The different projects from the previous phases are put to the vote

	7. Final approval The administration evaluates and most voted proposals and defines the budget 8**. Realisation** The project approved in the municipal council are realised.
What are the outputs	Better alignment of local policies with the needs of the population in a given geographical area and strengthening of the relationship between citizens and administration.
Strenghts (max 3)	1. Fosters greater trust and cooperation between citizens and government. 2. Provides a clear view of public expenditure, the distribution of funds and their management 3. Very malleable and adaptable method depending on objectives
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Risk of exclusion (or self-exclusion) of certain less represented or active population groups 2. Scope of funding on which citizens decide 3. Risk of disillusionment of citizens if proposals are not implemented
Further reading Go vocal (2024). The beginner's guide to participatory budgeting. https://www.govocal.com/guides/beginners-guide-to-participatory-budgeting Participatory Budgeting Project (2021), *Participatory Budgeting in Schools.* https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/pb-in-schools/	

What is a Deliberative Assembly?	A Deliberative Assembly brings together a representative sample of citizens, drawn by lot, to discuss and evaluate social or political issues, with the aim of making recommendations to decision-makers
Who are the participants?	40-120 participants selected by lot to ensure statistical demographic representativeness of the population. Minorities or specific social groups that are often excluded from decision-making processes may be oversampled. The number of participants depends on the resources available and the scale of the initiative.

How is the Deliberative Assembly organised?

How to structure the governance?	• The coordination team supervises and organises the process • Facilitators play a key role in guiding the discussion towards a shared agreement • Decisions are made by consensus or qualified majority voting • Additional committees composed of experts or professionals in specific fields may be set up to support the process or ensure its impartiality.
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• The information materials provided must be balanced and verified by independent experts • External observers and an assurance committee can monitor the process to ensure that procedures are followed and documented in a transparent manner.
How does the process look like?	**Timing:** 2 days-12 months **Process overview** **1. Preliminary phase and introduction to the process** Presentation of objectives, working methods and expectations. **2. Information and learning** Learning and information sessions with experts, stakeholders and information materials to build a shared knowledge base. **3. Dialogue and deliberation** Open discussion in groups and plenary to develop ideas and perspectives to be fed back in the form of recommendations and proposals.

	4. Final decision Vote or consensus on the recommendations, with drafting of the concluding document. **5. Follow-up** Return of recommendations to policy makers and the public
What are the outputs	Final report containing recommendations and suggestions for policy makers.
Strenghts (max 3)	1. Inclusion of citizens from diverse backgrounds, offering a representative and authentic perspective on complex issues. 2. Access to neutral information and experts enables participants to form a well-founded opinion and improve their knowledge on the topic 3. The recommendations made can influence public policy and strengthen the legitimacy of political decisions.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Follow-up of recommendations 2. Organising an assembly requires time, financial resources and qualified personnel; 3. The sample must be carefully selected to reflect the demographic composition and ensure that all voices are heard equally.

Further reading

Gerwin M. (2023). Deliberative Café: An Easy to Organise Citizens' Assembly. https://citizensassemblies.org/deliberative-cafe/

Smith G. (2024). We Need To Talk About Climate: How Citizens’ Assemblies Can Help Us Solve The Climate Crisis. https://doi.org/10.16997/book73

ActionAid Italia, Osservatorio Assemblee Cittadine, Extincion Rebellion Italia (2024). Rapporto di valutazione dell’Assemblea Cittadina per il Clima di Bologna. https://s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/actionaid.it/uploads/2024/07/Rapporto_Monit-oraggio_Clima.pdf

What are European Awareness Scenario Workshops?	The European Awareness Scenario Workshops (EASW) is a method for participants to discuss, explore future visions, identify solutions to problems and be responsible for their implementation.
Who are the participants?	24-40 participants selected to represent the community in four main categories: 1. Citizens, 2. Experts or technicians, 3. Policy makers, 4. Each group can be constituted represented taking into account gender balance criteria or ensuring a variety of backgrounds.

How are the European Awareness Scenario Workshops organised?

How to structure the governance?	• The co-ordination team oversees the process, guides the discussion and prepares the scenarios to be addressed • Decisions are made collectively and a vote is taken at the end of the Vision Making and Idea Generation phases
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• Facilitators ensure that everyone has an opportunity to express themselves • Participants are provided with information material and a preliminary briefing before the work begins.
How does the process look like?	**Timing:** 1-3 days **Process overview** **1. EASW planning and preparation** **2. Introductory session and presentation of scenarios** **3. Vision Making** Group work by category on scenarios and plenary discussion to choose a common vision **4. Idea Generation** Mixed group work on the common vision to generate ideas, plenary discussion and final vote on ideas to be proposed in the Action Plan **6. Final Report, Follow-Up and implementation of the Action Plan**
What are the outputs	Final report including common vision, approved ideas and action plan to be shared with participants, institutions and key actors

Strenghts (max 3)	1. Involvement of different social groups enables the creation of alliances between different community stakeholders 2. The proposals generated are realistic and take into account local resources and expertise 3. Strengthens different stakeholders' awareness of their ability to influence local decisions
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Scenario preparation and adaptation to the local context; 2. Low representativeness of the process 3. Difficulties in translating ideas into action
Further reading Interacts (2003). Toolkit Scenario Workshop. https://wilawien.ac.at/interacts/interacts_toolkit.pdf	

What is a Consensus Conference?	The Consensus Conference is a method in which a randomly selected group of citizens assesses a socially or technically controversial issue in dialogue with a group of experts with the aim of developing a 'consensus statement' to guide political decisions.
Who are the participants?	10-20 randomly selected participants to ensure diversity make up the Citizens' Panel whose task is to explore the topic in depth, draft the questions to the panel of experts and write the final statement

How is the Consensus Conference organised?

How to structure the governance?	• The coordination team supervises and manages the process • The Advisory Board, consisting of 5-6 members with specialist knowledge of the topic, is responsible for ensuring neutrality, checking content and selecting a list of experts. • Facilitators lead the discussions among the citizens. • The panel of 20 experts answers questions from the citizens' panel and checks for factual errors in the final declaration.

How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• The advisory board verifies all materials, maintaining content neutrality with respect to the panel's opinion. • The coordination team provides logistical support and assistance to encourage participation. • Facilitators ensure that all participants have an equal opportunity to express their opinions.
How does the process look like?	**Timing:** 7-12 months **Process overview** **1. Preparatory phase (2-4 months)** Sampling and recruitment of citizens, distribution of information material and establishment of the expert group **2. Study weekend (4 days, 2 sessions)** - **First weekend (2 days)** Participants begin to explore the topic, identify key issues, start formulating questions and co-design the agenda for the second weekend. - **Second weekend (2 days)** Participants finalise the questions, choose the experts who will participate and co-design the conference agenda. **3. Public conference (3 days)** - **Day 1** Expert presentations and questions from citizens. - **Day 2** Follow-up questions and drafting of the final report. - **Day 3** Public presentation of the report, with clarifications and possible factual corrections by the experts. **4. Follow-up and dissemination of results** Dispatch of the statement to policy makers and media
What are the outputs	Consensus declaration including the recommendations and opinions of the citizens' panel to be sent to policy-makers and the media.
Strenghts (max 3)	1. Includes subjective knowledge in technical, complex or controversial issues2. Enables dialogue between non-experts and experts3. Allows complex issues to be made more accessible and relevant to the public

Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Time and financial resources can be significant and require careful planning 2. Neutrality of information materials and experts 3. Inclusion of citizens with different backgrounds
Further reading Slocum N. (2003). Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner's manual. https://archive.unu.edu/hq/library/Collection/PDF_files/CRIS/PMT.pdf	

05

Annex II - Practical sheets of the Tools

What is World Cafè?	The World Café is a dynamic, interactive and easy-to-use method for facilitating group dialogue and sharing knowledge. It's designed to create a collaborative space for participants to exchange ideas through rounds of small group discussions. This dynamic allows participants to share ideas and insights while staying connected to a larger conversation.
Who are the participants?	Describe who the participants are: • How are they selected? • Who are they? In which numbers? • Are there representation criteria to be met?

How is the World Cafè organised?

How to structure the governance?	Ask one person to be the table host while the others will be "travelers" changing tables after each round. The travelers carry key insights, themes and questions to each new table and conversation. The table host, on his side, must welcome the travelers, debrief them from the previous discussions and facilitate the conversation.
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	• Choose your questions: find questions that are related and specifically relevant to the theme and the participants. • Material: workboard, A4 sheets or post-it notes per table, pens and markers • Venue: Choose a spacious and comfortable location to create an inviting atmosphere for conversation. A traditional setup with round café-style tables works best, as these facilitate group discussions.
How does the process look like?	**Number of participants**: 4-6 per table ideally **Time**: 2 hours or more depending on the number of rounds **Step 1: Introduction** Welcome participants and explain the World Café format, purpose, and guidelines. Present the questions or topics to be discussed.

How does the process look like?	**Step 2: Set Up the Tables** Seat people around the arranged tables for groups (4-6 people ideally per table, wiith the possibility to have more). Each table should count with materials to work. **Step 3: Conduct the First Round of Conversations** Participants will have a few minutes to reflect on the questions and write down their thoughts on a piece of paper. Following this, a discussion will take place for the remaining 20 to 30 minutes. The host will encourage everyone to share their thoughts and build on each other's ideas. He/She/They will also document the main ideas on paper for everyone to see. **Step 4: Rotate Tables** After the first round, the travelers will move to a different table. When they arrive, the host will summarize the previous conversation for them. **Step 5: Repeat** Repeat the process with new questions or the same question to go deeper into the subject. **Step 6: Harvest insights** After at least 3 rounds of conversations, each host will be the table's spokesperson responsible for sharing discoveries and key insights generated to the whole group of participants. **Step 7: Follow Up:** After the Café, gather and summarise the outcomes and share them in a document (chart, infographics or slides) with all participants.
What are the outputs	What is the expected result of the activity?
Strenghts (max 3)	1. Encourage the emergence of new possibilities and ideas for action. 2. Grow collective knowledge and enhance sharing practices. 3. Identify patterns and links between themes.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Precisely define the purpose of the meeting to guide conversations towards useful outcomes. 2.Formulate open, challenging and relevant questions that encourage dialogue and exploration. 3. Ensure a diverse mix of participants to encourage different perspectives and enrich the debate.

Further reading
Brown J., The World Café: A Resource Guide for Hosting Conversations That Matter, Mill Valley, Whole Systems Associates, 2002 Brown J., Isaacs D. et World Café Community,
The World Café: Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter, Berrett-Koehler, 2005
The world cafe official guidelines – http://www.theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf
The official internet site: www.theworldcafe.com

What is a Focus Group?	Focus groups are a type of qualitative research technique in which a trained moderator leads a small, diverse group of people in a discussion about a particular topic. Because of its widespread use in exploring attitudes, ideas and perceptions, this tool is particularly useful for gaining in-depth knowledge of new or complicated issues. The dynamic group interactions that focus groups rely on can show participants how and why they think in certain ways, adding depth to the feedback they provide.
What are the outputs	Focus group participants are selected according to pre-established criteria that complement the objectives of the study and ensure that they reflect relevant groups or viewpoints. A group size of six to twelve people - usually eight - is usually ideal, as it strikes a balance between manageability and diversity of input.

How is the focus group organised?

How to structure the governance?	Guiding the discussion and keeping the focus group on track is the moderator´s responsibility. The moderator controls the flow and makes sure that everyone has a chance to speak. Decisions during the focus group process are also often guided by the moderator, who ensures that the discussion remains productive and if neccesary neutral. The information gathered in focus groups often helps management to make informed decisions later on.

How to structure the governance?	Key Roles • The moderator: Guides the conversation and makes sure everyone contributes. • Participants: Participate in the conversation by offering their opinions and insights on the topic at hand. • Analyst/co-facilitator: Writes down, examines and evaluates the information gathered from the focus group conversations.
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	Maintaining **impartiality, transparency and high quality** in focus group sessions is crucial to the integrity of the research. The moderator plays a key role in ensuring neutrality by facilitating an open, unbiased discussion where each participant feels encouraged to share their honest views. By recording and transcribing discussions, the research team can accurately analyse participants' insights, contributing to transparency and allowing for thorough verification of findings. Careful planning, including session structure and participant selection, further enhances the quality of the data gathered and ensures that focus group results are both meaningful and actionable. **Accessibility and comprehensibility** are also essential for participant engagement. All information should be presented clearly, avoiding overly complex language. The facilitator has a responsibility to break down any complicated issues and make them accessible to all participants. This approach allows participants to contribute fully and supports the integrity of the data by ensuring that each perspective is both informed and clearly articulated. Moreover, to overcome **participation obstacles**, the environment must be inclusive so that all participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts without fear of judgement. The facilitator should be aware of social dynamics, such as status or relational contexts, that may affect the willingness to speak. Proactively addressing these dynamics can minimise silences or hesitations and foster a space where open, honest exchanges take place. Encouraging quieter participants and managing more dominant voices will ensure balanced contributions, allowing for a full range of perspectives to be captured.

How to ensure the integrity of the process?	Through active listening and structured questioning, the moderator can further ensure that all voices are represented. By using structured questions and active listening, they can encourage quieter participants and allow everyone to contribute meaningfully. This approach not only enriches the data, but also reinforces the inclusive ethos of the focus group, supporting a high-quality, representative collection of insights.
How does the process look like?	**Timing:** Focus groups may vary in timing depending on the complexity of the topic and the level of discussion required. Each session usually lasts between 1-2 hours. This length of time gives participants enough time to have fruitful conversations without getting tired. **Number of Sessions**: The objectives of the study and the diversity of participants will determine the number of focus group sessions required. Usually several sessions are held to ensure a thorough understanding of the topic. It is common to hold three to five sessions. This allows for the collection of different perspectives and ensures data saturation. However, for a well-defined topic, one session may be sufficient. **Structure of Sessions and Key Stages:** Introduction: The facilitator welcomes the participants, explains the purpose of the focus group and outlines the agenda. Ground rules are set to promote a respectful and open environment, covering confidentiality, active listening and encouraging everyone's contribution. Development of ideas: The meeting begins with warm-up questions to help participants feel comfortable and engaged. This is followed by the main discussion, where the moderator asks open-ended questions related to the research topic. During this central phase, participants share their thoughts and experiences while the moderator guides the conversation and ensures balanced participation. Formulating recommendations: Towards the end of the session, the moderator summarises key points to confirm accuracy and encourages participants to generate recommendations.

How does the process look like?	This step may involve brainstorming solutions or prioritising the issues discussed. Conclusion: The session concludes with participants sharing any final thoughts, after which the facilitator thanks them and outlines the next steps, including how the data will be used and when they can expect to hear about the results. Voting can be included in some focus groups, especially those that are intended to prioritise issues or make decisions. Participants may be asked to vote on the most important issues or the best proposals. This makes it easier to identify important priorities and reach consensus.
What are the outputs	The primary output is usually a report summarising the themes, ideas and recommendations from the session, including verbatim responses or paraphrased key points that illustrate participants' perspectives. In general, focus groups aim to produce rich, detailed data that can guide research and decision-making processes, although the expected outcomes can vary. They can provide deep insights into social issues, participants' perspectives and group dynamics, making them an effective tool for qualitative research. Researchers can gain important information that may not be available through other means by understanding the issues and viewpoints that emerge from focus group discussions.
Strenghts (max 3)	• Depth of insight: Focus groups allow for rich, detailed input on complex issues. • Group dynamics: interaction can generate new ideas and allow participants to build on each other's responses. • Engagement: Provides a platform for participants to feel heard and actively involved in the project.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	• Representation: Ensuring a representative, balanced group that reflects a range of opinions is known as representation. • Facilitation bias: The possibility that the moderator will inadvertently steer the conversation in a particular direction. • Time management: Although conversations may go off topic, it is important to maintain the focus and timeframe of the session.

Further reading
Breen, R. L. (2006). A Practical Guide to Focus-Group Research. *Journal Of Geography in Higher Education*, *30*(3), 463–475. https://doi.org/10.1080/03098260600927575
Fleetwood, D. (o. D.). *Focus Group: What It Is,Types, How to Conduct It & Examples*. QuestionPro. https://www.questionpro.com/blog/focus-group/
McQuarrie, E. F. & Krueger, R. A. (1989). Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research. *Journal Of Marketing Research*, *26*(3), 371. https://doi.org/10.2307/3172912
Teagan, G. (2023, Juni). *What is a focus group | Step-by-Step guide & examples*. Scribbr. https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/focus-group/
Wibeck, V., Dahlgren, M. A. & Öberg, G. (2007). Learning in focus groups. *Qualitative Research*, *7*(2), 249–267. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794107076023

Focus Group Guide – Implementation Suggestions for Youth Workers:

Note: The following steps are intended as a guide for the person conducting the focus group. They do not have to be carried out in exactly the same way or in the same order, but they are suggestions to help facilitate the process.

Steps:

1. **Preparation Phase:**
- Clearly define the objectives of the focus group
- Develop a detailed discussion guide with specific questions
- Select and invite appropriate participants
- Prepare necessary materials (e.g., consent forms, recording equipment)

2. **Introduction**
- Welcome participants and introduce yourself
- Explain the purpose of the focus group
- Outline ground rules (e.g., confidentiality, respect for others' opinions)
- Obtain informed consent from participants

3. **Icebreaker Activity**
- You can also conduct a brief activity to help participants feel comfortable

4. **Main Discussion**
- Begin with general questions, then move to more specific topics
- Use probing questions to encourage deeper discussion
- Ensure all participants have an opportunity to contribute
- Summarize key points periodically to confirm understanding

5. **Closing**
- Summarize main themes discussed
- Ask if participants have any final thoughts or questions
- Thank participants for their time and contributions

6. **Post-Focus Group**:
- Debrief with co-facilitator or note-taker (if applicable)
- Review and organize notes
- Begin initial analysis of key themes and insights

What is a Reflection Action?	Reflection-Action is a participatory approach that combines cycles of reflection and action to engage communities in addressing complex issues like climate change. This tool is valuable for fostering critical thinking and empowering young people to actively participate. Key features include group discussions, problem mapping, and collaborative action planning, all designed to enable participants to analyze their situations and take informed steps toward solutions.
Who are the participants?	Participants are young people interested in the topic, (for our case it is climate action) such as youth leaders, advocates, and community members. • Selected based on their interest and willingness to engage in community initiatives. • Ideally 10-20 participants to allow for active engagement and rich discussions. • A diverse mix of perspectives is better for enriching the dialogue and outcomes.

How is the Reflection-Action organized?

How do we structure the governance?	The Reflection-Action process involves facilitated discussions and group activities, where participants reflect on their experiences, analyze issues, and plan concrete actions. Each session builds on the previous one, allowing participants to dive deeper into their understanding and progress steadily toward action. • Key Roles: ◦ Facilitator: Leads discussions, ensures everyone has a voice, and maintains focus on objectives. ◦ Co-facilitator/Note-taker: Assists with recording insights and documenting outcomes. ◦ Participants: Engage actively in reflections and collaborate on solutions.
How do we ensure the integrity of the process?	A successful Reflection-Action process depends on a supportive, inclusive environment where all participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. The facilitator should remain neutral, encouraging open dialogue while managing dominant voices to ensure that quieter participants can contribute fully. Providing clear, accessible information and breaking down complex issues into manageable parts helps participants understand and engage with the process.

	Recording outcomes and insights during sessions is essential for capturing the group's reflections and documenting their action plans. This transparency also supports a structured follow-up, allowing for monitoring and adaptation of the plans as necessary.
What does the process look like?	Timing: Sessions generally last between 1.5 to 2 hours. Several sessions may be required to explore issues thoroughly and reach actionable solutions, depending on the group's goals and the complexity of the issue. A series of 3-5 sessions often works well, allowing for both exploration and sustained engagement. Structure of Sessions and Key Stages: 1. Introduction: The facilitator welcomes participants, explains the purpose, and outlines the process. Ground rules are established for respectful discussion and active listening. 2. Reflection: Warm-up activities help participants start thinking about the climate issue at hand. This is followed by a deeper exploration through guided questions and problem mapping, where participants share personal experiences and perspectives. 3. Analysis and Action Planning: Participants work in small groups to brainstorm solutions, considering practical steps and potential obstacles. The group then prioritizes actions based on feasibility and impact. 4. Conclusion and Next Steps: Each session ends with a summary of key insights and agreed actions. Participants reflect on their progress and set goals for the next session or phase. Follow-Up: Reflection-Action sessions often involve follow-up to monitor progress, with the facilitator supporting the group as they implement and adjust their plans.
What are the outputs?	The primary outputs of Reflection-Action sessions include: • Action Plans: Concrete steps and timelines for implementing solutions to the issues identified. • Reflections and Insights: Documented perspectives and strategies developed through group discussions. • Recommendations: Ideas and priorities that can inform broader climate initiatives or policy advocacy.
Strengths (max 3)	• Encourages participants to take ownership of climate action in their communities. • Can be tailored to various community needs and issue complexities. • Fosters critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving.

Point of vigilance (max 3)	• Ensure balanced participation by encouraging all voices, particularly quieter ones. • Keep discussions focused on clear objectives to prevent confusion. • Regular follow-ups are necessary to sustain momentum and support action.
Further reading **Lloyd-Evans S., (2023). Participatory Action Research: A Toolkit.** https://research.reading.ac.uk/community-based-research/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2023/06/PAR-Toolkit-v10.pdf **Archer D., Cottingham S. (2012). Mother Manual. Regenerated Freirean literacy through empowering community techniques.** https://rhizome.coop/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Reflect-Mother-Manual-2012.pdf	

What is a Open Space Technology?	Open Space Technology (OST) is a participatory approach designed to facilitate group discussions and collaborative problem-solving in large groups. OST fosters creativity, innovation, and collective ownership of solutions. It is particularly useful in contexts where complex problems need to be addressed and diverse perspectives are essential.
Who are the participants?	• Participants are self-selected based on their interest in the topic. • They include stakeholders, experts, and citizens, typically ranging from 20 to 400 participants. • Inclusion criteria focus on ensuring diverse perspectives relevant to the discussion.

How is the Open Space Technology organised?

How do we structure the governance?	1. Responsibility lies with a facilitation team or lead organizer. 2. Decisions are made collectively during sessions. 3. Key roles include facilitators, note-takers, and logistics support.
How to ensure the integrity of the process?	Measures include clear guidelines, transparent communication, accessible materials, and ground rules for respectful communication. Efforts are made to address barriers, such as offering interpreters or multiple formats for materials, and to ensure all voices are heard.

What does the process look like?	Timing: from 8 hours to 2-3 days, depending on complexity. The process begins with an opening circle where participants introduce themselves and propose discussion topics. Groups form around topics, and discussions are self-organized. Key stages include introduction, agenda creation, discussions, and a closing circle.
What are the outputs?	Outputs include a prioritized list of ideas, actionable recommendations, and documentation of discussions for follow-up. Participants often leave with a shared vision and commitment to action.
Strengths (max 3)	• 1. Highly inclusive and participant-driven. • 2. Encourages creativity and innovation. • 3. Builds a sense of community and ownership of solutions.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	1. Risk of dominant voices overshadowing others. 2. Challenges in ensuring representation and inclusivity. 3. Requires skilled facilitation to maintain focus and engagement.
Further reading Holman, P., & Devane, T. (2018). *The Change Handbook: The Definitive Resource on Today's Best Methods for Engaging Whole Systems*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Owen, H. (2008). *Open Space Technology: A User's Guide*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Reference: Open Space World. (n.d.). *Brief user's guide to Open Space Technology.* Retrieved from https://openspaceworld.org/wp2/hho/papers/brief-users-guide-open-space-technology/	

What is a Scenario Workshop?	A participatory method encouraging local action with a mix of scenario and workshop which aims to solve local problems and anticipate future ones. Scenarios involve narrative descriptions of potential future problems that emphasize relationships between events and decision points. In addition, scenarios direct attention to causes, areas for development and the span of exigencies that may be met in a local community issue.

Who are the participants?	Four groups: • Residents (civil society) • Politicians (decision-makers) • Representatives of the economy (founders) • Experts of the topic in hand Typically selected from a group of 25 to 30 local government officials, technical experts, business people and knowledgeable community residents.
How is the scenario workshop organised?	Explain how the initiative is organised and managed by filling in two boxes on governance and integrity
How do we structure the governance?	Experts or facilitators, who have a deep understanding of the workshop topic, oversee the process. They guide participants through each stage, present the initial scenarios, and facilitate discussions, ensuring the process stays on track. Decisions are made collaboratively through group discussions, voting, and consensus-building. Each participant contributes ideas within their group, votes on the most promising ones, and the workshop as a whole narrows down the ideas through collective voting. Key roles include facilitators, scenario representatives for each group, and thematic group representatives. Facilitators guide the process, scenario representatives present each group's vision, and thematic representatives help refine and communicate the ideas in each theme.
How do we ensure the integrity of the process?	Impartiality and transparency are maintained by involving local participants, using structured group discussions, and holding anonymous evaluations at the end. Voting on ideas helps ensure decisions reflect group consensus, and open-ended questionnaire responses allow participants to provide candid feedback. Information is presented clearly by facilitators, and complex topics are broken down into manageable sections. Thematic discussions ensure participants can focus on one area, making it easier to understand and contribute meaningfully. Facilitators also clarify terms and encourage questions to ensure everyone grasps key points. Creating small groups allows quieter participants more space to speak up, and selecting representatives from each group ensures all viewpoints are represented. Facilitators actively encourage equal participation and are trained to manage dynamics to reduce dominance by any one person. Tips include setting ground rules for respectful listening, encouraging all participants to share opinions, and using anonymous voting to capture honest input. Facilitators can ask for ideas in writing or invite quick responses from each participant to ensure broad input on each topic.

What does the process look like?	**Timing:** 1-2 days, with 4 sessions of 60-90 minutes each. **Sessions Overview** 1. **Session 1: Introduction and Scenario Presentation (1 hour)** 2. Facilitators introduce goals, timeline, and topics. 3. Experts present four scenarios for analysis, and participants divide into groups with an elected representative. 4. **Session 2: Group Analysis and Vision Development (1-1.5 hours)** 5. Groups discuss their assigned scenario and develop a vision statement, which their representative will present. 6. **Session 3: Thematic Discussion and Idea Generation (1.5 hours)** 7. Groups present their vision statements, which are synthesized into a single “common vision.” 8. Four key themes are identified; participants regroup to brainstorm actions related to each theme. 9. **Session 4: Presentation, Voting, and Conclusion (1 hour)** 10. Thematic groups present top ideas, followed by anonymous voting to prioritize them. 11. Participants complete an evaluation questionnaire, and facilitators summarize outcomes and next steps.
What are the outputs?	• Refined Vision Statements: Each group produces a specific vision statement based on their assigned scenario. • “Common Vision” Document: A unified vision statement synthesizing the input from all groups, serving as a foundation for further idea development. • Thematic Ideas and Actions: Concrete, theme-based ideas and actions generated in small groups, addressing key areas of the common vision. • Prioritized Recommendations: A shortlist of the top ideas, selected through group voting, to highlight the most promising solutions. • Evaluation Feedback: Data from participant questionnaires, including both ratings and open-ended responses, assessing the workshop's quality and insights. • Summary Report: A final summary, prepared by facilitators, capturing key visions, recommended actions, and participant feedback, which can inform policy making and community action.

Strenghts (max 3)	• **Inclusive Decision-Making:** The process engages diverse local voices, ensuring that outcomes represent the community's varied perspectives and needs. • **Collaborative Visioning:** Participants work together to build a unified "common vision," which captures shared priorities and helps focus subsequent actions. • **Transparent and Democratic Voting:** Anonymous voting fosters fairness, letting participants select top ideas without bias, building trust in the final recommendations.
Point of vigilance (max 3)	• **Ensuring Representativeness and Inclusiveness:** There's a risk that certain groups or perspectives may be underrepresented, which can skew outcomes. Careful participant selection and facilitation are essential to ensure diverse voices are included. • **Risk of Manipulation or Bias:** Without clear, transparent procedures and anonymous voting, there's a risk of dominant voices or biases influencing decisions. Strong facilitation and structured voting help safeguard impartiality. **Time and Resource Constraints:** Organizing multiple sessions, managing group dynamics, and conducting thorough evaluations require sufficient time and resources. Planning realistic timelines and securing adequate support are crucial for maintaining quality and continuity.

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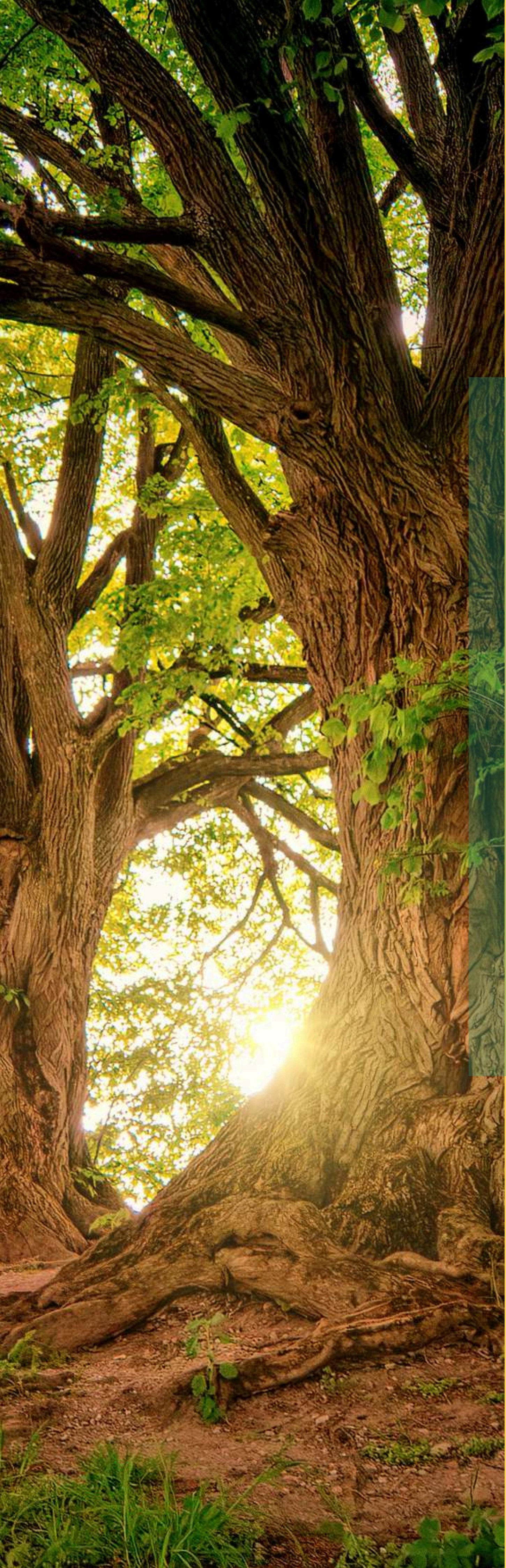

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