CITIZENS ENGAGED
I
A Toolkit for Communicating with Latvian Society about New Policies

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CONTENTS PAGE

SECTIONS

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this toolkit is to provide guidance on developing effective public involvement strategies to help Latvia ministries introduce new ways of engaging NGOs and citizens in policy-making. The Latvia government already involves NGOs in a positive way. For example, ministries and NGOs regularly use round-table formats, workshops and public discussions to conduct discourse. In addition some formal arrangements have been developed such as the capacity for established NGOs to send representatives to State Secretaries' meetings. Such forums for consultation have provided a firm base for channels of communication, which has lead to a positive dialogue between government and many NGOs.

1.2 It is now important to build on these positive relations and encourage the use of more diverse methods of public involvement (including e-consultation techniques) to engage a broader range of people and NGOs, and to do so effectively. *Citizens Engaged* aims to help ministries achieve that goal by introducing fundamental strategies for public involvement and providing a glossary of citizen engagement methodologies. In summary, *Citizens Engaged*:

1 Defines what is meant by consultation and public involvement.

2 Sets out the benefits of public involvement.

3 Gives advice on how to decide when public/NGO consultation is appropriate.

4 Provides guidance on the timing of public involvement; how to identify target groups; how to select appropriate methods, including a glossary of techniques, and a summary of e-participation approaches; and how to calculate adequate resources.

5 Shows how to undertake a stakeholder analysis and give feedback to participants.

1 Provides frameworks for evaluating the process and impact of public involvement.

6 Includes an easy to follow checklist for developing an effective public involvement strategy and some real case studies from the UK and internationally.

☛ There is a toolkit checklist in appendix 3 and case studies of public involvement activity from the UK and internationally in appendix 4.

2. What is public involvement?

2.1 This section briefly sets out a definition of public involvement. It is important to understand what is meant by public involvement when being given the task of engaging with citizens and NGOs about policy. There is often confusion about the language and without a clear understanding of the terms used, inappropriate approaches can be adopted.

2.2 Citizen/government relations take different forms and not all these relations can be described as 'public involvement'. It is helpful to think of citizen government relations falling into four broad categories: **'information', 'research', 'consultation' and 'participation'**. As the broad descriptions below illustrate, ***consultation*** and ***participation*** **are** forms of public involvement, ***information*** and ***public opinion research*** are **not**.

Information: *a one-way relationship in which government disseminates information to citizens. Information might be used when publicising a new policy initiative or change in procedures by featuring information on the Internet, distributing leaflets, advertising campaigns and exhibitions. This is not public involvement.*

Public Opinion Research: *a process by which policy makers capture the opinions of specific sectors or groups of the population through mainly quantitative methods to inform policy-making. Research might be used when testing public views on different policies under consideration, for example by canvassing through a survey. This is also not public involvement unless supplemented by more consultative activities.*

Consultation: *A form of public involvement consisting of a two-way relationship in which government asks for and receives citizens' feedback on* *policy proposals. Typically, consultation might be used when extensive responses are required to a specific policy proposal in order to gather views from the public and NGOs, for example, through publishing consultation papers, organising public meetings, or deliberative polling.*

Participation: *a public involvement relationship based on partnership with government in which citizens actively participate in defining the process and developing the policy. At their most involving, participation activities might see citizens involved directly to draw up policy proposals and develop solutions to a problem. They might include NGOs working with a government to help develop new operating frameworks by co-opting NGO representatives on to government bodies or stakeholder committees. Methods engaging the public include referenda, citizens' juries, citizens' panels, or direct delegation of authority to citizens to make decisions.*

☛ Citizens Engaged focuses the use of consultation and participation activities to involve the public in the processes of policy making.

3. Benefits of public involvement

3.1 Involving citizens and NGOs in the work of government has become an integral part of the policy-making process in most modern democracies. It is not simply about more open-government, although that is also important, it is about making policies more effective by listening to and taking on-board the views of all stakeholders. Furthermore, providing genuine opportunities for citizens and NGOs to influence democratic processes between elections is something that the present Latvian government wishes to encourage.

3.2 Public involvement also has a number of specific benefits that are summarised below. It:

- Allows government to tap wider sources of information, perspectives and potential solutions, and improves the quality of decisions reached.

- Alerts policy makers to any concerns and issues that may not be picked up through existing evidence.

- Helps to monitor the performance of current policies and whether there is need for change.

- Fosters working partnerships between stakeholder groups and the government in addressing issues and seeking solutions.

- Genuine public involvement symbolises the Latvian government's commitment to listening to the public and stakeholder groups when developing policy.

- Helps build public trust in government and the legitimacy of decisions reached.

4. How to decide when to consult

4.1 How do policy makers and communications officials in Latvia ministries decide if and when to consult NGOs and the public? The starting point is for officials to be clear about the issue and policy objectives. Second, they should examine the possible implications of a new policy or policy change. Third, they should identify the groups who are likely to be affected by particular proposals. In most cases policy changes will impact on society to a lesser or greater degree and therefore the generation and evolution of policy will benefit from incorporating input from concerned stakeholders, whether from a narrow group of individuals/NGOs or from the wider Latvian public. To further help you decide on whether it is appropriate to undertake public involvement, draw up a structured rationale framework based on answering the following key questions:

1. What is it that you want views on?

2. Is it about service delivery or policy?

3. Do you want to find out people's views to help develop new policy or legislation or to assist implementation?

4. Do you want to find out about new issues that may not have been

thought about previously?

5 Do you want to test support for a particular proposal, policy or service change?

6 Do you want people/stakeholders to set the policy or service agenda?

7 What parts of the ministry need the information gathered from public involvement and for what purpose?

8 Is it intended that the exercise will supplement other decision-making mechanisms (for example, state secretaries meetings, the practical annotation system)?

4.2 Another central approach that will help Latvia ministries make a decision as to whether public involvement is appropriate is to pin down the link that public involvement will have to the final decision. By identifying the aspects of a particular decision or service that is likely to be affected by public involvement, you can set firm parameters on the issues up for discussion and this in turn will help the ministry manage public and NGO expectations of what can be achieved through dialogue.

4.3 Finally, find out whether another part of the ministry or another Latvia ministry has consulted on a similar topic. Is it likely that views have changed? Even if a new consultation is needed, you may want to use the findings from a previous consultation to inform the content of a new one.

5. Timing of public involvement

5.1 Calculating and planning a realistic public involvement timetable from the outset is essential for ensuring:

1 That the consultation takes place over an adequate period.

2 The maximum possible numbers of Latvian citizens and NGOs are involved.

3 To ensure there is sufficient time for analysis and feedback.

5.2 Try to ascertain the best time to commence an exercise. Think about what point in the policy or planning process public involvement would be most likely to have an impact. Your choice will depend on the issue or service. A policy rarely has a beginning and end, and it is more helpful to think of it as circular. The diagram below and subsequent table illustrates the policy-making cycle and its relationship with public involvement approaches:

<u>The policy-making cycle</u>

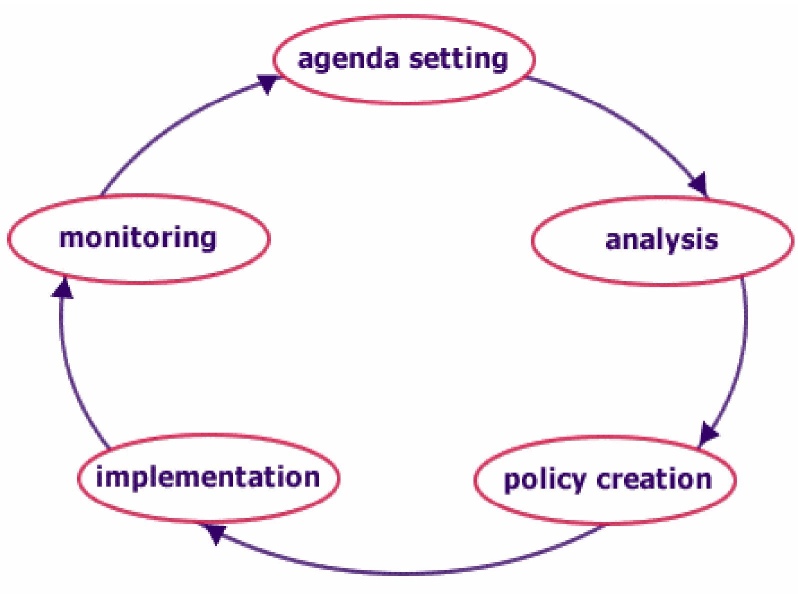

Table 1: The Policy-making cycle explained

Policy-making stage	Function	Appropriate public involvement approach
Agenda setting	Establishing the need for a policy, or a change in policy, and defining what the problem to be addressed is.	Useful techniques are those that provide opportunities for citizens and NGOs to develop their ideas and express viewpoints that government might engage in or respond to. Methods might include focus groups, visioning exercises and internet discussion forums.
Analysis	Defining the challenges and opportunities associated with a particular issue more clearly in order to produce a draft policy document.	Appropriate techniques are those that allow relevant people, stakeholders and decision-makers to come together to identify the challenges and opportunities presented by a specific issue. Methods include focus groups or workshops, citizens' juries and visioning events.
Creating the policy	Ensuring a good, workable, policy document.	Approaches that can provide the public with opportunities to learn and discuss the pros and cons of a range of policy options are appropriate here. Methods include citizens' juries, deliberative polls and internet discussion fora. Formal government discussion papers also provides opportunities for the public to have an input at this stage.
Implementing the policy	Developing legislation, regulation, guidance and a delivery plan.	Public involvement activity is less frequent at this point, which is about implementing a policy that has been agreed. Focus groups, however, can be used to refine the selected policy.
Monitoring the policy	Evaluation and review of the policy in action.	While not strictly public involvement, surveys and opinion polls can be useful for monitoring a policy in action. Genuine public involvement techniques, such as focus groups and Internet discussion forums can be used to gain deeper insights.

5.3 Many Latvia NGOs have complained about not having sufficient time to comment on draft legislation. In the light of this, if you want to consult about changing a policy or new legislation it may be better to consult prior to the legislative phase itself so that the draft policy reflects the public/NGO views for consideration by elected representatives. If you want to consult in order to discover fresh perspectives or uncover hidden issues (emerging issues or problems over a service or policy may not be obvious), you could undertake public involvement prior to developing a preliminary solution or policy position. Public involvement at that stage will help identify the demand for change, help to review existing policies or services, and pinpoint the key issues to be addressed.

5.4 If you want to consult as a way of monitoring new policies or services, you will need to make sure that sufficient time has elapsed for meaningful judgements to be made by the Latvia public and NGOs. Try to avoid consulting over vacation periods or when you know key stakeholders may be overloaded or particularly busy. If this is unavoidable, try making the consultation period longer and/or build in additional methods of involvement (for example, clear signposting of the main issues in consultation documents, easy to complete response forms, face-to-face discussions with stakeholders, website discussion forums and acceptance of views by e-mail).

5.5 Take account of any existing formal consultative arrangements in calculating response times (for example, the Ministry for Agriculture's CCAO meeting schedules, State Secretaries' meetings). In extraordinary circumstances it may be necessary for shorter timescales, such as a pressing legislative programme or if the exercise is re-consultation.

6. Identifying target groups

6.1 As well as being clear about why you are consulting and the timescale, you need to think about the individuals and groups to involve. This process will help ensure that all key people have a say and will assist you in deciding what methods you use. An effective structural methodology is to draw up a *target matrix*. The first two columns show the categories of groups/individuals and the third summarises how they might be affected by the new policy. You could also use this to set out appropriate methods in a fourth column. The example target matrix below demonstrates how this works:

Table 2: Target matrix

Example policy issue: Funding of local training programmes

Group	***Target type***	***How effected***	***Public involvement methods***
Riga Training Forum	Local community group	Organises local training – recipient of funding	*[See Section 7 – Selecting Methods]*
Women under 30	Gender/age segment	Currently low take up of training places	
National Training Association	NGO	Represents local training projects throughout country	

6.2 In developing the target matrix, try to make sure that it is flexible, so that you do not inadvertently omit people or Latvia NGOs that could make a valuable contribution. While it is wise to involve NGOs, do not assume that a single major body can cover a specific category on its own. Often different NGOs or other groups, even if they represent similar interests, may have divergent views. There may also be conflicting views within an NGO, which is why it is important to target directly people affected by a policy or service, as well as through representative organisations. Maximising the net of potential participants from across Latvia will make the results of public involvement more convincing and legitimate.

7. Selecting methods

7.1 This is the focal point of any good public involvement strategy. Latvia NGOs have variable and often limited capacity. This makes it all the more important that innovative methods of consultation are used to widen the net of groups and people involved and to make it easier for NGOs, even those with restricted resources, to contribute. At the same time, the most apt methods should be employed and in the right way, otherwise the ultimate effectiveness of the exercise will be undermined. So, what are the factors you need to consider when selecting methods? Being clear about the issues you are consulting about will be central, as these will influence which sections of society you decide to involve, i.e. your target groups. That in turn will help you to ascertain appropriate techniques, as certain approaches are more effective in reaching specific groups than others.

7.2 The sort of data and insights you seek will also determine choices on techniques. Some methods are more suitable to gathering particular kinds of information and opinions than others. The degree of resources available for public involvement will also determine the appropriate range of methods. You will need to balance the outsourcing of consultation exercises against internal capabilities i.e. staffing, time, budgets (see section 8 on calculating resources). Decisions about methodology will also be framed by whether the public involvement is a single exercise or the development of an ongoing participation process.

7.3 Once you have selected the appropriate methods, incorporate them into the *target matrix* (table 1). That will help you gain an overall picture of your strategy and enable you to monitor and eventually evaluate the effectiveness of your approach by benchmarking whether you reached the target groups.

☛ The glossary in appendix 1, details a range of methodologies, summarising the purpose of each technique as well as setting out their respective advantages and disadvantages.

☛ Appendix 2 summarises some e-participation methods.

8. Calculating resources

8.1 Given the limited resources in all Latvia ministries, a key issue to assess is the overall value for money benefit that public involvement is likely to yield for the wider policy or service. In practice this means that the amount of resources put in to public involvement should be proportionate. The exercise should not become overblown and drain resources beyond any real impact it might have. Conversely, if the resources allocated are insufficient, this will undermine the effectiveness of the public involvement and thus its valuable contribution to policy development – in other words it will be a false economy. The resource strategy must therefore be underpinned by a balanced assessment of the role that Latvia citizen and NGO engagement will play in the context of other policy and service development tools; organisational pressures; and decision making arrangements.

8.2 At a micro level the resources will depend on the scope of the public involvement exercise or programme. They will also be determined by the methods used to consult. For example, a small one-off meeting with key Latvia NGO representatives can be achieved at negligible staff and finance costs. The setting up of a Citizen's Panel or a major written consultation exercise that is supplemented by a range of other methods (e.g. focus groups, public hearings; web discussion forum) is likely to have significant resource implications. You will therefore need to make a resource impact assessment based on the methods chosen. For example, if you decide that a web discussion forum is the most effective way to reach a target group, you will need to factor in resources for a moderator, this is someone who can help facilitate and manage on-line discussions. Can this be done within existing staff resources or will you need to outsource for a specialist? If you opt for open/public meetings, what will be the material costs (e.g. venue, publicity, professional chair)? Many ministries are less likely to have in-house expertise and consideration will need to be given to outsourcing if that is the case.

8.3 It is not just the 'front end' methodology resources to consider. You will also need to ensure that there are sufficient resources for the post public involvement activity, specifically: the analysis of responses; the provision of feedback to respondents; and, if you want to learn from experience and improve public involvement, an evaluation of the exercise.

9. Stakeholder analysis

9.1 Any strategic approach will require a system for analysing responses effectively so that the exercise makes a meaningful contribution to a new policy. The foundation of such a productive analysis is that you must forecast from the outset the type of information you require and expect. This will help you to devise the best form of analysis by linking it to the public involvement objectives. For example, if the objective is to gather detailed written comments on a proposal, the analysis will need to involve studying responses thoroughly and identifying, classifying and assessing options. If the objective is to understand the public's perception of an existing policy or service, the analysis you will have to establish any key themes emerging from citizens' input, whether this is directly through e-mails, letters etc or via group methods (e.g. citizens juries, workshops, public meetings).

9.2 The precise analysis will depend on the type of methodology used, but there are some basic ground rules that need to be taken into account when developing a strategy. Make sure that comprehensive and reliable information and data is maintained of individuals, groups and organisations and their contributions to an exercise or ongoing dialogue. Sift contributions into categories (and sub-categories where there is a large and disparate response). For example, depending on the issue, you may want to sort one particular group, say welfare NGOs, into sub-sectors that represent particular interests. Likewise you may want to do the same for businesses, trade unions, agriculture, environmental and other representative NGOs. This will help you to identify differential view trends between groups. Draw-up an analysis grid that cross-references a summary of perspectives and options against group categories [see table 3 below]. It will enable an accessible overview of the key themes and emerging proposals.

Table 3: Example of analysis grid

Group and type	*Interest*	*Summary of participants perspectives*	*Summary of participants proposal proposals*
Riga Training Forum - Local community group	Organises local training – recipient of funding		
Individual responses from women under 30 - Gender/age segment	Currently low take up of training places		
National Training Association – NGO	Represents local training projects throughout country		

9.3 Distinguish the realistic ideas from the unrealistic, being careful not to dismiss an idea that at first sight may appear unworkable but may have potential on closer inspection. Make sure that you keep a record of your rationale, as participants and NGOs may want to know why certain options were not taken up. Examine the viable proposals in detail, in particular study the implications for the policy or service under review. Ascertain whether follow-up work is needed to test new thinking. Incorporate the analysis results and the implications for the policy into a single document, pulling together all the issues and pinpoint options. Finally, discuss the outcome options with all relevant ministerial and external stakeholders, including those who will be responsible for delivering the policy or service. That should ensure that whatever decisions are made full account has been taken of all perspectives.

10. Communicating feedback

10.1 One of the main ways in which public involvement could be undermined in Latvia is if inadequate feedback is given on both the **responses** from the process and the **decisions** taken resulting from the dialogue. It is, therefore, important for feedback to feature prominently in any public involvement strategy and to be followed through in practice. Ideally, this should be done as soon as possible after an exercise (or in the case of on-going dialogue arrangements, such as committees, on a frequent basis).

10.2 There are many ways in which feedback can take place but the strategy should include the following key elements: Ensure that public involvement feedback is an integral part of the organisation's continuing communications strategy. If you have published a timetable for consultation, make every effort for feedback to be delivered within it. Make sure the timetable realistic. If you cannot give commitments on timing of feedback keep respondents updated on progress. The form of feedback will be determined by the public involvement methodology and communications strategy. Usually it should take the form of a published statement or document (included on the internet), summarising responses and giving reasons for accepting some options and not others. You may want to use the analysis document referred to in Section 9 to form the basis of the feedback.

10.3 While publishing a document is the best way of reaching a broad audience, it is also quite passive and should be supplemented with more active approaches. These could include: follow-up meetings with representatives and individuals; direct mail-outs to respondents and other interested parties; articles in relevant Latvian publications; and ministerial road shows. The aim must be to maximise coverage of feedback so that as many people as possible are aware that views have been listened to. A final important element of feedback is that following public involvement the new policy is clearly set out.

11. Evaluation

11.1 Building evaluation into the strategy will enable Latvian ministries to examine and improve their public involvement performance and share best practice. But often evaluation is relegated to a low priority or even ignored. There are understandable reasons for this, in particular the pressure to deliver the policy or service once public involvement is over. There are also limited resources in Latvia ministries. But the simple evaluation tools set out below should enable evaluation without putting too much additional stress on limited capacities. Most important, by evaluating practice, Latvian ministries can learn about best use of resources and improve public involvement efficiency. It will also help you to understand the impact that public involvement has had on a policy, so that future exercises can be calibrated. There are two aspects to public involvement evaluation, appraising the **process** and the **impact**.

Evaluating process

11.2 The starting point of evaluating the process is to measure the extent to which the aims and objectives of the public involvement were met. This will involve addressing some key questions as part of an evaluation framework:

1. Was sufficient time given for all participants?
2. Were the target groups reached?
3. Which methods were most/least effective in getting high qualitative and quantitative responses?
4. What proportion of the target groups responded?
5. Was the timetable kept to and realistic?
6. If not, what were the reasons?
7. What resources were allocated and how?
8. Could resources have been deployed differently?

9 Were the results of the public involvement disseminated to all relevant individuals, sections of society, NGOs and other stakeholders?

10 How was feedback received?

11.3 In addressing these questions organisations will need to ensure that they have kept adequate information. You may also want to ask participants directly for their views on the process, perhaps through a survey or meetings. Produce a 'lessons paper' so that future public involvement activity can be improved upon.

Evaluating impact

11.4 Gathering evidence on the degree of influence public involvement has had provides positive evidence that Latvia citizens and NGOs views are both listened to and acted upon. Providing evidence of impact also helps to manage public expectations about the extent to which public involvement determines outcomes. But measuring impact is not an exact science, as many factors will contribute to decisions on policy and services. The views gleaned from public involvement will usually form part of the equation; they will not necessarily be the decisive factor. Nonetheless, there are ways of gauging impact, again by addressing some key questions:

1 Did the public involvement meet the criteria set for influencing final outcomes?

2 What were the balances of influence between public involvement and other decision-making mechanisms?

3 What aspects of the policy or service changed as a result of views or solutions offered by participants?

4 Was the influence direct, or subtle?

5 Were new ideas pursued as a result of information from public involvement?

6 Were any organisational changes made, or systems altered as a result

of public involvement?

11.5 As with evaluating the process, you may also want to seek the views of the public and stakeholders on their perceptions of impact.

11.6 **Finally, make sure that you let other Latvian ministries, and others within the ministry, know the results of the evaluation. Spreading best practice will help to improve public involvement across all government.**

Appendix 1 – Glossary of methods

Method	Purpose	Advantages	Disadvantages
Consultation Document: Written document setting out policy or service proposals.	For seeking detailed views on a range of options.	Good for getting informed and thorough opinions and insights from representative organisations/ groups and individuals.	Document may not reach all sections of society unless complimented by more ‘hands on’ methods, such as face to face meetings and workshops.
Public (open) meetings and road shows: Open forum where members of the public can attend and express opinions.	Gaining an overview of a range of opinions and encouraging discussion in immediate and open circumstances.	Demonstrates transparency of process. Give opportunity for public to express views and hear at first hand alternative perspectives.	Danger of unrepresentative ‘activist’ participation. Contributions likely to be general rather than detailed. Must be handled well to give feeling of openness and fairness.
Questionnaires: The public are asked a set of questions; their responses are collected and analysed. Consist of	To elicit the opinions of the public and NGOs. May cover a statistically representative sample of the	Good for finding out what large numbers of people or NGOs think on particular issues as part of a public consultation	Limited form of public involvement. Need to ensure questions are are not leading. Can restrict agenda too tightly.

‘closed questions’ (public choose between pre-determined options) and/ or open questions (public freely respond).	public or a particular group of citizens.	exercise.	
Face-to face interviews: Individual structured interviews.	For exploring views and values of individuals in greater depth	Useful for gaining views of individuals from groups who might normally be excluded. Good for exploring personal/sensitive issues.	Any views expressed cannot be relied upon to be representative of a particular group or section of society. Not good for statistical data. Can be expensive.

Focus groups: Group of about 8-10 people, usually to discuss specific topic/issue as one-off. Facilitation.	For finding out what groups and categories of people think.	Good for discovering both what and why people have particular opinions and perspectives. With skilled facilitation, can enable groups from all backgrounds to offer contributions.	Not good for statistical data. Group can sometimes be steered to take a particular stance. Need to ensure facilitation that avoids this. Facilitation needs to ensure full participation.

Re-convening groups: • Similar to focus groups, except that participants are invited to reconvene as a group on one or more occasions having had time to read information, debate the issues with others outside the group, and reflect and refine their views. They meet for up to 2 ½ hours, allowing for a more in-depth discussion than focus groups.	Designed to revisit or build on previous discussions.	Good for enabling participants to continue their discussion and develop their thinking in between meetings.	As with focus groups. Not good for statistical data and requires skillful facilitation.

Workshops: Events taking a variety of formats e.g. government may introduce the issue for discussion and invite participants to debate different aspects of it in a mixture of small group and plenary sessions. They usually last between half-to-two days.	For policy-makers to engage in a dialogue with a group of citizens or stakeholders on a specific issue.	Good for providing opportunities to assess an issue in some depth with NGOs, for example, problems, policy priorities and solutions.	Can be a limited and convetional form of involvement. Not good for seeking wider views of citizens.
Deliberative polls: Involve 250-600 people, who are brought together at a conference centre for 1-2 days. Participants are recruited to be representative of the attitudes and demography of the wider population. They are divided into small	Used to measure the opinions of citizens before and after they have had an opportunity to become informed about and discuss a particular issue.	Good for providing the informed views of a wide section of the population.	Requires skillfull facilitation so that key issues can be brought out.

groups: they discuss issues, hear evidence and question experts.			
Citizens juries: 12-16 members of public (not experts or representatives) who hear and deliberate on evidence and witnesses presented to them on a topic or issue.	For obtaining detailed and considered views.	Allows thoughtful consideration. Good for testing how new policies or service changes might play once up and running.	Will not be representative. Can be expensive. Not a useful format for all users. Some jurors might dominate.
User panels: Small group of users who meet on a regular basis with service providers to give views.	Gaining constant feedback on service and new proposals.	Ensures organisation keeps in touch with user concerns. Encourage and test new ideas.	User panel may become too cosy with organisation. Needs to be independent and critical where necessary. Limited opportunity for importing new perspetives.

Citizens Panel: Representative sample of the public (ideally between 600-2,500) usually maintained over a period of time.	Sounding board on specific issues.	Can track views over time. Costs generally lower than one-off surveys as no need to gain demographic information from scratch each time.	Debatable if it is real public involvement – closer to opinion surveys, although groups within the panel can be used for focus groups, citizens juries etc. Regular replacement of Panel members required ensuring it remains representative.
Consensus conferences: A panel of 15-20 people, recruited through random selection techniques. At its first meeting, at which discussion is facilitated, the panel is briefed on the subject and identifies questions that it wants to address. At the second meeting the panel begins to investigate the topic and	To develop an understanding of a specific topic through briefing materials and in dialogue with experts.	Good for opening policy-making to direct public scrutiny.	Not good for later stages of policy development.

identifies witnesses to cross-examine. The panel questions witnesses at a public hearing lasting a number of days. Following the hearing, the panel prepares a report setting out their views on the subject and presents this in public session at the Conference.			
Issue Forums: Ongoing bodies with regular meetings, but focussing on a particular issue.	On-going dialogue with the public on particular issues to help formulate policies.	Effective for tracking views on a specific issue and responding to changing circumstances and events.	Have mostly been used at local rather than national levels.
Visioning exercises: A large group of stakeholders (around 60), selected because they have decision-making authority, an understanding of,	To assess a policy proposal from a senior/expert or affected group perspective.	Good for putting a policy through rigorous testing and reaching firm conclusions. Best for very	May appear elitist or exclusive to public. Need to ensure it is supplemented by wider consultation.

or are affected by, the topic under discussion. Participants take part in a structured meeting, taking up to two and a half days, where they develop a shared vision for the future and commit to action towards the vision.		early or later stages of policy-making.	
Planning for real: Often initiated by local communities on planning matters, a three dimensional model of a particular neighbourhood is created. At a public event displaying this model, the public is invited to attach cards to identify problems, issues of concern and possible solutions.	Mainly used at local level to identify and deal with provincial issues, but can be transposed to the national level.	Good for opening up discussion for wider citizenry: emphasis on visual materials encourages a range of people to participate in the events.	Not an effective method for reaching firm conclusions but useful for flagging up issues from the publics' perspective.

E-participation: For example: web discussion forums; responses submitted by e-mail; public kiosks; use of DVDs/CD-ROM.	Reaches public and and representative groups quickly. Used also for seeking detailed views.	Makes access to involvement more immediate and dialogue potentially more fluid. Convenient for consultees. Access to more sectors of society increases as new communications media becomes available. Can access large numbers relatively cheaply.	Not everyone has access to new communication tools or likes to use them. Internet not widely used by individuals in Latvia. Without a lead/facilitation, discussions can become unfocussed.

Appendix 2 - Summary of E-participation techniques

Electronic letterboxes

Email addresses on websites or documents give citizens opportunities to feedback to government.

Email distribution lists

Lists used to circulate consultation documents to interested parties.
Citizens can registers for these lists via a website. Their comments can be forwarded to government.

Internet based fora

These can be limited to certain individuals (eg a core group of stakeholders) or open to anyone. These can be designed to allow citizens to: respond to government proposals on-line; read and view the comments of all participants; and engage with other citizens in a dialogue on the proposals.

Generally internet based forum have taken one of two forms: *Issue-based forum;* and
policy-based forum.

Issue-based forum

They are typically organised around a policy issue and questions related to the issue. To better inform the target audience position statements, links to topic-related websites and other background information may be provided on the website hosting the fora. Key stakeholder groups or individuals can also be asked to provide the online witness/position statements.

Policy-based forum

The Policy-based forum could be organised around themes, questions or sections of a consultation document, where feedback from the public is sought. Participants respond quantitatively and qualitatively on-line. Participants might be encouraged to submit alternative ideas and suggestions but the format implies that what is being sought is an indication of how far the participants agree (or not) with the proposals, and why.

On-line live chat events

Participants exchange views, within a fixed period of time (usually 2 hours), with Ministers, members of parliaments etc. These can take place during the time period of an internet discussion forum.

On-line surveys

These are surveys conducted through emails or on specific websites.

Interactive games and scenario planning

These can be used to engage citizens in developing policy options or proposals.

Appendix 3 – The Toolkit Checklist

Stage 1 Checklist: Define why

✔	Is there a need to consult (e.g. any statutory requirements)?
✔	Is the final outcome going to be influenced by public involvement?
✔	Draw up a list of reasons for public involvement:
✔	•1 What is it you want views on?
✔	•2 Is it about service delivery or policy?
✔	•3 Do you want to develop a new policy/service or implement?
✔	•4 Do you want to uncover new issues?
✔	•5 Do you want to test support for a proposal/policy ideas/service change?
✔	•6 Do you want people/stakeholders to set the policy agenda? •7 What parts of the organisation need the information from public involvement and why?
✔	•8 Will the exercise supplement other decision-making mechanisms?
✔	•9 How will the findings feed into the policy or service?
✔	Find out if there has been public involvement on the same issue by another part of the organisation or another body. If so, ensure outcome informs new exercise.

Stage 2 Checklist: Timetabling

✔	Ascertain best time to commence public involvement.
✔	If consulting about new legislation, do so early on rather than running it concurrently with the legislative process.
✔	If trying to uncover hidden issues, hold the exercise prior to developing a preliminary policy position or solution.

✔	Give sufficient time for a policy or service to run before engaging citizens' views.
✔	Try not to hold an exercise over a vacation period or when you know participants are likely to be busy.
✔	Find ways of making it easier for people and NGOs to become involved if an untimely or short exercise is unavoidable e.g. clear signposting of issues; easy to complete response forms; use of internet; direct meetings with key stakeholders.
✔	Find out if any formal guidelines on consultation periods.

Stage 3 Checklist: Deciding who to involve

✔	Draw up *target matrix* identifying: groups/types of individuals to involve, their broad category of interest – target type (e.g. community group, ethnic minority, young people, representative organisation); and how they are affected by policy or service.
✔	Ensure matrix is flexible so as not to omit key citizens and groups: maximise the range of potential participants.
✔	Try to target citizens directly as well as through representative organisations, who may not be completely representative.

Stage 4 Checklist: Select methods

✔	Research material on range of possible methods.
✔	Try not to stick to a single method – multitude of approaches more likely to maximise citizen and NGO input.
✔	Use the most appropriate methods and in the right ways.
✔	Be clear about the issues you are consulting about to help you identify best methods.
✔	Decide what kind of data and information you need from public involvement, as this will also influence your choice of methods.
✔	Calculate the resources available, as this will determine the range of possible methods (e.g. is it a one off exercise or an ongoing process?).
✔	Incorporate selected methods into the *target matrix*.

Stage 5 Checklist: Assess resources

✔	Estimate the value of public involvement to policy development or service improvement so that resources committed are proportionate.
✔	Calculate the likely balance of influence on the policy or service public involvement will have against other decision mechanisms.
✔	Find out what resource impact particular methods are likely to have (e.g. a one off meeting with key stakeholders is likely to cost less than an ongoing Citizen's Panel).
✔	Ascertain whether public involvement can be done within existing internal resources or if additional or external capabilities are required.
✔	Ensure there are sufficient resources for analysis, feedback and evaluation.

Stage 6 Checklist: Analysis

✔	Forecast from start the type of information you need and expect in order to help devise the best form of analysis.
✔	Make sure that comprehensive and reliable information and data is maintained from public involvement.
✔	Sift contributions into categories of themes and group types.
✔	Draw up an analysis grid that summarises perspectives against group categories.
✔	Distinguish realistic ideas and options from those that are not, being careful not to dismiss less conventional ideas/views offhand.
✔	Keep a record of your rationale for taking on board certain views and options but not others.
✔	Examine viable ideas/options in greater detail and decode whether further public involvement or research is needed to follow up.
✔	Incorporate analysis results and implications for policy or service into a single document.
✔	Discuss results and implications with key stakeholders.

Stage 7 Checklist: Feedback

✔	Ensure public involvement feedback is integral part of the ministry's communications strategy.

✔	If a timetable for public involvement has been published, make sure that feedback is delivered within it, or that updates are given.
✔	Feedback should usually include a published statement or detailed document summarising: the views given in the exercise; reasons for opting for certain solutions; and next steps.
✔	Supplement a statement or document with more active methods (e.g. meetings with participants, direct mail outs, articles in publications, road shows).

Stage 8 Checklist: Evaluation

	Evaluation: General
✔	Ensure proper records are kept to inform the evaluation.
✔	Try to canvass the views of participants (and non-participants) as part of the evaluation.
✔	Produce a 'lessons' paper to help improve future public involvement strategy and practice across all Latvian government.

	Evaluating process: framework questions
✔	Was sufficient time given for participants?
✔	Were the target groups reached?
✔	Which methods were most/least effective in getting high qualitative/quantitative responses?
✔	What proportion of the target groups responded?
✔	Was the timetable kept to and realistic, if not why?
✔	What resources were allocated and how?
✔	Could resources have been deployed differently?
✔	Were the results disseminated adequately?
✔	How was feedback received?

	Evaluating impact: framework questions
✔	Did the public involvement meet the criteria set for influencing final outcomes?
✔	What were the balances of influence between public involvement and other decision-making mechanisms?
✔	What aspects of the policy or service changed as a result of views or solutions offered by participants?
✔	Was the influence direct, or subtle?

✔	Were new ideas pursued as a result of information from public involvement?
✔	Were any organisational changes made, or systems altered as a result of public involvement?

Appendix 4 - UK and International Case Studies

United Kingdom

Appendix 4.1
Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: using 'on-line' and 'off-line' involvement mechanisms to consult on its sustainable development strategy

DEFRA has involved a wide range of people – stakeholders, the public and DEFRA staff – using a range of on-line and off-line consultation techniques in developing its Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy. They ran a series of stakeholder seminars, an online discussion forum involving around 40 organisations; a number of 'reconvening groups' with members of the public, and an on-line discussion forum for staff on DEFRA's internal website.

Appendix 4.2
Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology internet discussion: Floodforum.net

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) commissioned the Hansard Society to run an on-line discussion to examine perspectives on flooding. The purpose was to stimulate debate on the causes, consequences and approaches to alleviating and preventing flooding to inform parliamentary debate on this issue.

<u>Key points</u>

- The discussion ran for one month on a dedicated internet site. Methods used to publicise the consultation and recruit participants included issuing invitations, local media coverage (including local radio and newspaper interviews and articles), sending emails, websites and word-of-mouth.

- The organisers alerted participants to public internet access points (eg available at local libraries) and also accepted written submissions from those without ready email access.

- The discussion was moderated by the Hansard Society. Some messages were posted on the website at the start of the discussion to stimulate debate on key issues the consultation sought to address. As the process unfolded, participants were able to introduce new areas for discussion, although it was the moderator's role to ensure that these were relevant to the overall purpose of the process.

Results
532 individuals registered and logged in to the discussion. 157 participants posted a total of 571 messages. It is important to note that it was possible for individuals to log in to the discussion and read other individuals contributions, without posting messages.

Appendix 4.3
National Consumer Council: an innovative project to involve low-income consumers on food and farming issues

The NCC held two 'Weekend Away for a Bigger Voice' workshops to explore the views of low-income consumers towards the future of food and farming. Each workshop took place over one-and-a-half days. The findings fed into the NCC's submission to the Government's Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food.

The workshop facilitation employed a variety of techniques, including Reflect, citizens' juries, scenario workshops and discussion drama. These were designed to fulfil the twin aims of empowerment and qualitative research. The workshops aimed to explore participants' own experiences and aspirations, rather than define areas for discussion.

Appendix 4.4
Department for Education and Skills: gathering the views of a mix of children and young people

A consultation event was held with children and young people across England to obtain views on the main themes from the *Schools – Achieving Success* White Paper. The event brought together 114 children and young people from a range of primary and secondary schools (including independent, grammar, comprehensive schools and a pupil referral unit), from different socio-economic backgrounds and with special educational needs.

Appendix 4.5
Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners and Northern Ireland Stratagem: effectively publicising involvement

Organisers of the public consultation on the redevelopment of a former military site in Northern Ireland were successful in widely promoting the initiative. Coverage in the local media, the use of a huge banner around the site with the address of the website hosting the consultation, and writing to 2,500 organisations were approaches employed to alert the initiative to the public and invite their comment. At the end of the consultation period a total of 5,500 hits were recorded on the consultation's website.

Appendix 4.6
Department for Trade and Industry: better consultation with stakeholders

The DTI held a half-day workshop involving stakeholders and officials from across the Department to consider existing consultation practice with stakeholders and to identify priorities for improvement in the future. The Department circulated a note of the outcome of a recent internal discussion on this theme in advance of the meeting as background material. The workshop also used a number of scenarios to enable participants to explore approaches to consultation in different policy situations. Following the workshop, the Department has initiated a better consultation project. A steering group with representatives from key stakeholder organisations will direct the project to ensure that key concerns are addressed.

International case studies

Appendix 4.7
Public Consultation on Education Policy in the Czech Republic

In 2000 the Czech Republic held a society-wide discussion in preparartion of theWhite Book on Education Policy, using a variety of consultation methods. These included a special bulletin for education professionals, disseminating information through the media, public discussion events and roundtables and the Internet. The case study illustrates the benefits of a multi-media approach, especially with the Internet. The Internet was used to disseminate key documents, starting with the original "Concept" posted on the website of the Ministry of Education. It also offered a means for on-line public discussion through a website. The site contains an introduction by the Minister of Education; information on how the public consultation was organised and how to contribute; full texts of seven backround studies; comments submitted on-line during the first and second stages of the public consultation; transcripts from the roundtable discussions; up-to-date information on events and contact details for further information.

Appendix 4.8
Share your views – an Internet discussion forum from Finland

The Finnish Government's Internet discussion forum 'share your views with us' aimed to provide citizens with opportunities to input their views on policies at the early stage of development.

Overseen by the Ministry of Finance, 2 to 6 discussions are run at one time on topics chosen by ministries. Ministries are responsible for running their own forums, for example, by providing background material on issues covered and moderating the discussion. They also publish a summary of responses received on the website and the expectation is that they take into account findings from holding forums when developing policies.

The website also hosted between 1-2 on-line chats between ministers and citizens each month, on subjects selected by ministers.

Appendix 4.9
Argentina: Provincial Meeting on Structural Adjustment Loans

A public meeting at the provincial level is one means of disseminating information. The public presentation /forum was held at a theater in the provincial capital. Details of the event were published in newspapers, and it was open to the general public, with some participants specifically invited. The three-hour meeting included a one hour presentation on structural adjustment loans, including the results of a survey and focus groups regarding the potential impact of the loans. The rest of the time was open for public questions and comments, with responses from senior key officials.

Appendix 4.10
Bosnia and Herzegovina: Social Policy. Protection and Practice Conference

Background: Poverty in B&H expanded dramatically in the 1990s largely due to the Yugoslav wars. The European Community Humanitarian Office convened a forum for assessing existing poverty trends and vulnerability, discussing the funding possibilities for social assistance and social care programs, and evaluating policy options and priorities. Two months prior to the forum a document was circulated describing the focus and themes for the forum. Over one hundred sub-meetings of participants served the dual purpose of preparation for the conference and needs assessment. This extensive process informed people of the upcoming conference, identified the relevant actors in a post-conflict situation, and laid the groundwork for subsequent policy debates. A number of key agencies were asked to participate in the conference and to ensure that the proposals and recommendations were implemented. From the local level, the final list of participants included representatives from a range of key sectors (women, children's homes, geriatric centers etc). The forum was a major success and played a defining role in the evolution of social policy issues in Bosnia, due in no small part to its inclusiveness. A Social

Protection Task Force was formed out of this process, co-chaired by the relevant assistant ministers, to continue the discussion and develop recommendations.

Appendix 4.11
Consensus conferences on genetically modified food in Norway

The Norwegian Biotechnology Board and National Committees for Research Ethics undertook a consensus conference which attempted to include non-experts in order to obtain the views of ordinary people on the genetic modification of food. The consensus conference was held over four days with the 'laymen's' panel consisting of 16 people, 8 men and 8 women, aged 18-72, drawn from various parts of the country and with different backgrounds. Members were not to have close links with occupations or organisations with established policies in this area. The aims of the panel's work were: to give co-ordinated advice on genetically modified food to politicians, authorities and the food industry; to establish a forum for dialogue between experts and non-experts; and to contribute to an all-embracing and well-informed public discussion of the subject. The most important benefit from the consensus conferencing was in terms of their contribution to raising public awareness. In addition to around 100 press clips, the participants were interviewed in 20 radio programmes, and the conference was presented in 4 television programmes.

Appendix 4.12
Peru: A Rural Roads Project

By using a consultative process a rural road improvement project in Peru was itself improved to meet the true needs of local communities. The project was created to give islolated towns better access to market centers and social services; help create jobs; and imrove the maintenance of rural roads through community-based initiatives. When the project was being prepared, leaders of local communities, road officials, and NGOs participated in consultative workshops to agree on key aspects ranging from the project design to its implementation. Over 40 workshops were held with local communities to make sure that the priorities are in line with their needs. Participants in the workshops, including both men and women , discussed preferences for pathways in certain areas, describing usage patterns which the original project had not encompassed. One outcome of the workshops was the cration of community-based micro-enterprises for maintenance of roads and pathways. With the help of local NGOs, members of the comunity were trained in bookkeeping and other skills and were assisted in getting identification cards needed to get small bank loans. Relationships were also changed, as the trust levels between local communities, NGOs and goverenment officials increased in part, at least, because of the consultative project and the road improvement project.

BUIILDING DIALOGUE WITH CITIZENS AND NGOs IN LATVIA
II

Guide to 16 citizen and stakeholder involvement techniques

This document contains material to be used in conjunction with *Citizens Engaged: A Toolkit for Communicating with Latvian Society about New Policies*

12.Introduction

This document supplements *Citizens Engaged: A Toolkit for Communicating with Latvian Society about New Policies* and ideally should be used with it.. In particular it supports Section 7 of that toolkit on selecting public involvement and consultation methods.

The techniques featured in the guide cover a range of mainly qualitative public involvement approaches. It gives a level of detail which is not over technical, so that policy makers and communications staff new to the subject can gain a broad understanding of the practicalities involved. In choosing to include the methods the guidance tries to take account, as far as possible, of the resource constraints of Latvian Ministries.

Some methods are more suitable for use only with NGOs (such as roundtable workshops), whereas others, (such as Citizens Juries and Panels) are exclusively for citizens.. But many can be useful for combining both citizen and NGO engagement (e.g. Future Search). The guide also includes information about how to conduct more traditional forms of involvement (for example, public meetings and surveys) in the most effective way. For some of the methods listed, approximate costs have been given (in Euros), these are only indicative and it may well be that the methodological functions can be undertaken in Latvia at a lesser rate (for example, because of the relative lower charges of indigenous consultants and social research companies).

Finally, *Building dialogue with citizens and NGOs in Latvia* is an information source about a range of involvement techniques that are appropriate for use by Latvian government Ministries. But using those techniques in isolation is not always adequate. They need to take place within the framework of the consultation strategies outlined in *Citizens Engaged*.

13.Focus Groups

Description

Around 8-10 people are led in a structured but open ended discussion on a given topic, by a facilitator.

Recruiting for focus groups

Usually external professional market research companies will select participants but the following information should assist in helping to manage the process.

The characteristics of the group will depend on the issue. If it concerns the policy as a whole, then all sections affected by the issue should be represented in one or more focus groups. The sort of criteria by which you might want to structure the groups are age, gender, social class, working status, ethnicity and geographical location. You may want to avoid putting younger people with older ones in case either group feels inhibited. Similarly, mixing genders, especially among younger groups, may distort their behaviour. On the other hand, making too many fine distinctions could lead to unmanageably large groups.

There are several ways of picking participants at random from a list. One is simply to pick every fifth, ninth, twentieth, or whatever necessary to obtain the number required. Another is to use a random number generator, for instance, if the names are already held on a database. If there is no list, it may be necessary to approach people at a particular location, from the street in a village, town or city , or by knocking on doors. Because of the technical expertise, this is probably best done by commissioning experienced researchers. Where participants are being recruited according to particular characteristics, a short recruitment questionnaire will be needed to obtain basic details, such as age, sex, occupation, and anything relevant to the particular piece of research. When potential participants are approached, as well as telling them about the research and checking on relevant demographic characteristics, it is a good idea to check on availability, including, particularly, holiday dates, time of day availability, whether available at weekends and any transport problems. It is a good idea to confirm the invitation to attend, with a letter. This should include thanks for agreeing to participate, date of meeting, time, place, with a map of the venue if appropriate, expected length of discussions, background to the research, aims, purpose, importance, what use will be made of it and so on plus the name and telephone number of someone they can contact with any queries.

Encouraging attendance

Money tends to be the best incentive to encourage people to come to a focus group.. This does not need to be a large amount, perhaps equivalent to 10-

15 Euros. Attendance is also helped by ensuring potential participants have all the necessary information and are clear what the focus group is all about. A reminder telephone call the day before is also very effective. It may also be appropriate to offer transport, particularly if any members of the group are likely to have difficulties getting about.

Venue

The venue for a focus group should be relaxed and informal. If a market research company is being used, they will probably be able to provide a suitable venue. A hotel could be used but can sometimes be too formal. Specialist studios may be available in the larger towns and cities, with facilities such as the ability to observe proceedings via video or through a one-way mirror. Participants should, of course, be informed of this being done and given the option not to take part.

Operation of groups

Facilitating or moderating a focus group is a skilled and specialist job and should not be attempted by anyone without the necessary training and experience. Having this done by someone outside also ensures a degree of neutrality and objectivity. The commissioning organisation should brief the moderator about the project and any background information about the subject under discussion. While one of the benefits of qualitative research is that new issues can be drawn out, you will nevertheless want some specific questions answered and general areas explored. A discussion guide therefore needs to be drawn up and agreed. If there's more than one focus group, this will also provide consistency, allowing results to be compared across groups. An official of the organisation or ministry should not normally play a role in focus groups. Focus Groups are intended to find what people really think and the involvement of anyone from an organisation or ministry may inhibit discussion. At most, one person can observe but they should not comment. But, the moderator may invite participants to ask a couple of questions of an official at the end. The sessions will usually be taped to allow more detailed analysis afterwards.

Costs

If running a focus group is contracted to an outside agency, you could expect to pay the equivalent of a 1000 to 2000 Euros for a group, depending on the circumstances, including recruitment, room hire, moderation, analysis, presentation and report.

14.Citizens' juries

Description

Citizens' juries are a way of getting informed feedback and of involving members of the community in decision making process. Those involved have an opportunity to become very informed on the issue, hearing evidence from a range of witnesses and experts. Members of the jury have the opportunity to examine issues in depth, to learn about the workings of the organisation and to make a real contribution to public affairs. A typical citizens' jury has between twelve and twenty-five people selected, as far as possible, to be representative of the community in terms, for instance, of the balance of men and women, the ethnic mix, and employed and non-employed. Of course, given the numbers, it cannot be guaranteed that the views are statistically representative of the population as a whole, but selecting a representative cross-section reduces the risk of bias or particular sectional views being included.

Selection

There are similar problems in selecting the jury as for selecting other sorts of panels or focus groups and extra encouragement and the provision of support may be needed to ensure the participation of people.

Operation

It is not a jury, in the legal sense, which tends to be a choice between two sides in confrontation, rather, the citizens' jury will hear presentations from a range of witnesses giving many different sides of the argument. Many will be 'experts,' providing factual information to help the jury make up their mind. There may also be representatives of pressure groups and others with a particular interest in the topic. The jury usually meets over four or five days. There is an independent moderator to help the jury process run smoothly and the jury sometimes has an advocate to assist the questioning and discussion. After it has heard all the evidence and had a chance to discuss it fully, the jury draws up its conclusions, perhaps with help from an advocate, in a report presented to the organisation. A final decision rests with the organisation, but they can commit to taking full account of the recommendations of a jury.

Use and cost

Citizens' juries have been very popular in the UK. However, they are relatively expensive (about 10-40,000 Euros), they are not suitable for all issues and they perhaps work best where organisations and ministries have already made substantial progress in their consultation and working with the public. However, in the right circumstances, they can be very effective, and they demonstrate the ability of citizens to become more involved in democratic decision making.

15.Citizens' panels

Description

Citizens' panels have been used for a number of years. They have several advantages, not least that the views of the same group of people can be tracked over time. A level of interest and knowledge in policies and services is built up. It is cheaper because the process of finding the sample does not need to be repeated each time, and those on the panel have agreed to their roles so are less likely to refuse to complete the survey. Any special requirements, such as to cope with language or reading difficulties, will be known about in advance so can be prepared for, so improving the response rate.

Variations

There are a number of variations between panels including numbers on the panel, usually between 600 and 1200. A larger number allows subgroups to be identified, e.g., to identify breakdowns by geographical areas. Secondly, if smaller samples are used, the whole panel does not need to be used on each occasion so more polls can be undertaken. It may also be possible to hold Citizens Juries and Focus Groups and other qualitative work with members of the panel.

Polling

Written, telephone or face-to-face polling can be used with a Citizen's Panel. The frequency of polling can be anything from monthly to three or four times a year.

Attrition and turnover

It will be necessary to change the membership of the panel on a periodic basis for two reasons: to ensure it remains representative and to remedy natural turnover.. While there are advantages in surveying people who are likely to develop an interest in the organisation, this may skew the results, since they will no longer be representative of the population as a whole, indeed, they may fall between two stools in not being as informed, say, as a citizens' jury, but not representative of the population overall. The average annual dropout rate from a citizens' panel is usually around 20%. Also, it is the youngest members who tend to drop out so the panel gradually gets older. If there are changes in the composition of the local community it will also be necessary to make changes to reflect those. There therefore needs to be a systematic way of gradually replacing the panel, for instance, by a third or quarter, each year. This also means that the burden on any individual panel member will not be too great. There may be particular circumstances where the panel is topped up.

Response rates

The response rates from a panel will depend on a number of factors, including interest in the particular topic and how well informed they are about the survey and the process in general. A response rate of 70% could be expected but it could be as low as 50 or 60 or as high as 80 to 90, depending on the particular circumstances.

Feedback

It is important to try to keep the panel informed and give them feedback on surveys. One way in which this is often done is through a newsletter.

Cost

It is estimated that the actual panel costs around the equivalent of 10,000 Euros a year, making it very cost effective in comparison with running ongoing separate surveys. The net cost can also be kept down by charging other organisations for including questions on their behalf.

16.Deliberative opinion polls

This is where a statistically representative sample is taken but its members are given the opportunity to learn more about the topic before being questioned. In this way, a more informed opinion can be gauged rather than sampling surface views. There are a number of ways in which this can be done. However, a popular approach is for a representative sample of around 250 to 600 people to meet, over two, three or four days, possibly over a weekend. There are a number of opportunities for discussions in small groups. Experts can be involved in answering questions with the answers then circulated to other groups. Opinion polls are taken at the beginning and at the end of the process. The technique has been used on several occasions in the UK, particularly during national election campaigns. One drawback of this approach is the potential high cost, a minimum of 200,000 Euros equivalent for a local poll and 2 million Euros for a national one.

17. Public meetings

Getting people interested

One of the biggest problems in consultation is apathy. Actually, this may be a perfectly reasonable judgement by individuals about how it is most productive and enjoyable to spend their time. But there may also be lessons from the fact that packed public meetings are common when certain interests are threatened, such as by an unwelcome policy. In short, people tend to attend public meetings in large numbers if they feel very strongly about a subject. A discussion needs to be of interest to both NGOs and the public. It is important that the title of any event reflects what it is about but is also welcoming. In addition, it has to be made as easy as possible for people to become involved, so local venues, comfortable facilities and personalised invitations.

Timing

Day time or evening and the specific time will depend on the issue and circumstances. Try not to schedule against other major national events, whether public, sport or entertainment.

Location and venue

Make sure it is accessible for the target audience, including those reliant on public transport. Cold halls in winter are not attractive, so paying for extra heating may be value for money. Light refreshments may help on occasion and will help make the event more comfortable and sociable.

Publicity

People often have to hear of something two or three times before it sinks in or they think it’s important, so it is crucial that the event is publicised vigorously and constantly (within budgets). Word of mouth is sometimes the most effective form of advertising, consequently, informal and formal networks should be used, including NGOs.

Make it useful

While is it important to make the occasion as attractive as possible, organisations which seems to have a lot of success attracting the public ascribe their success to the meetings being useful. Getting a complaint about policy dealt with, a question answered, or seeing positive action resulting from a meeting, seems to make people believe in them and want to come back. That can all be helped by having enough NGO representatives there from enough ministries at a high enough level to get things done.

Process and operation of the meeting

Public meetings do not usually give many people the chance to speak. That can mean they come seething with grievances which they bottle up and take home again with them. To combat this, public meetings can be run like training sessions, if possible with participants breaking into workshop sessions. If enough breakout rooms are not available, and it will be difficult to predict how many will be needed, then groups can find places within the hall. At the very least, people could be given ten minutes to talk to their neighbour or to the person behind them.

Reporting back is hard with a large number of people. Depending on numbers, flip chart paper can be made available and the results stuck up around the walls. Each group might be limited to their three most important points to make it manageable. Or everyone could have a supply of post-its on which they write their comments and stick them in the appropriate subject area. Again, on flip chart paper so it is easy to take away. If the budget allows, electronic voting systems can be used which allow everyone to have a say on the issue with resulting graphs projected onto a screen within seconds. This can be quite expensive, though, and can usually only cope with groups up to a couple of hundred. Nonetheless, with computers becoming cheaper, more powerful and more familiar to people, there are opportunities to input contributions straight into the computer, allowing rapid collation of the material, which can then be fed back within weeks or days or even as people leave the event.

Another approach to feeding back is to use a 'snowball'. Here, the total number is split into, say, four groups, then successively subdivided further until there are groups small enough for all to have a say, perhaps five to seven people. How this is done and whether top down or bottom up, depends on the particular circumstances and how easy it is, physically, to split people. The smallest groups discuss the issue and are invited to come up with a limited number of points. It is usually helpful if the groups, at each stage, nominate a spokesperson, that each feed back to the next larger group, say four groups of five, making a total of twenty. Duplications and overlaps in these points made are eliminated or absorbed to produce a new consolidated list. These groups then feed back to their parent groups and so on. There are clearly a number of times that this can be done to remain workable. Arrangements of a panel at desks facing the massed crowds in the audience, is not conducive to good dialogue. Chairs should be arranged in a circle for relatively small numbers.

18.Open days and exhibitions (an alternative to public meetings)

Given the public a longer period to choose when to attend and giving them something to see or do when they come may be a more positive approach than a public meeting. Messages can be got across through video, slideshows, computer generated graphics or information stands. Comments can be collected in a variety of ways from staff recording relevant points to the public posting comment cards into a voting box.

19.User panels

Description
There are a number of slightly different but related models for bringing together groups of citizens as consumers in user panels. At one extreme, these could be forms of market research similar to focus groups but concentrating on particular users of services. At the other, they could be forms of citizen involvement where participants are being involved in establishing and monitoring the process, operate more regularly as representatives and have more rights to be involved in the decision making process. There may also be differences in process, for instance, how much information is given, the form of discussion, how choices are raised and whether and how decisions are made. While it may be possible to move from one model to another, confusion and disappointment are likely to result from a lack of common understanding. Also, the panel may be seen to be, and may actually be, a creature of the organisation and may consequently lose some credibility. It is important, therefore, from the beginning, to be clear what is being proposed and to communicate this widely to all involved, including the participants.

As with other qualitative research, user panels allow you to start with the consumer perspective rather than imposing particular questions. It starts with the concerns and priorities of those who use the service, and if they are included, those who don't but might like to, they might provide early warning of problems. They can also be used provocatively to test out suppositions about how a service is operating or ideas for improvement. Before deciding whether to set up a panel, it is worth considering whether existing consumer representative bodies already exist.

Setting up a user panel: preliminaries

You need to decide on the purpose and type of panel. Is it for market research, consultation or participation? Early consultation with policy makers, service staff and representative groups, may produce useful ideas and help provide a foundation of support which will be valuable later.

Setting objectives and brief

The terms of reference need to be clear from the start. These may be more or less detailed depending on the purpose of the group. It could be as specific as to find a way of streamlining the service, form filling and administration or, more generally, to improving and developing the service within given budget constraints.. It should also be made clear who will consider the outcomes of the discussion, where discussions will be made and what sort of feedback to the panel there will be.

Selecting the panel: general criteria

A good number for discussions, where everyone can participate, is between six and eight people. You may need to go beyond this, though, to get a broad enough range of representation and/or if you want to include one or two officials in the group to hear the discussion at first hand - not something you would normally do in a facilitated focus group. You should try not to go above about a dozen people unless, perhaps, you will keep them all involved by spending much of the time in smaller groups. That may be a way of overcoming some of the inhibitions of talking in larger groups. It will usually be necessary to recruit more people than required to ensure enough actually attend. Panel members should be able and willing to put sufficient time into the panel over a relevant period. They could be asked to spend several years on the panel, but it should be time limited to that they do not become too knowledgeable or sympathetic to the host organisation as to be unrepresentative. They should be prepared to speak up and give their views, although most people will eventually do this, given the right environment and facilitation.

Selecting the panel: how to recruit

The panel may be selected by relevant consumer representative bodies and NGOs, by advertising or through external consultations. This depends largely on the nature of the body you are setting up. If you have an existing list of the population, such as a list of users of a service or the electoral roll you are trying to study, it would be easier to draw off a random list of names. Alternatively, you can use the kind of sampling that's used for focus groups.

Encouraging attendance

While a small financial payment may help attendance at a focus group, such an incentive may not be felt to be appropriate where people are participating as citizens or are representing a group. But expenses can be paid.

Operation of a panel

Depending on the objectives of the panel and the way it is set up, it may be appropriate for the organisation to provide the chairperson. However, it is worth considering whether credibility would be improved and more honest and objective feedback received if there was a neutral chair. Similarly, a neutral venue may put people more at ease and promote a sense of independence. Attendance by senior officials or ministers will demonstrate the organisation's/ministry's commitment to the panel and also ensure that its deliberations are fed back at first hand. It also needs to be considered if and how the results are to be written up and how they are to be reported back to policy makers, staff and key stakeholders in the organisation or ministry.

Reporting back

A common comment of those involved in any sort of consumer or representative panel or forum is the importance of giving answers to any questions raised, at subsequent meetings, or reporting back on progress. Sending notes of the meetings to all those who attended, and possibly all on the mailing list, is another good way of keeping in touch.

Costs

Much of the cost of a consumer panel may be in the hidden administrative and secretarial back-up, which should not be underestimated. There may also be direct costs such as hire of a venue, advertising and payment of travel expenses.

20.Issue forums

Issue forums have been developed in the United States as ways of promoting discussion and deliberation amongst existing small groups of citizens. Questions and supporting materials are provided to small groups, often based on civic and educational organisations, colleges and universities, libraries, and other membership groups.

There are a number of possible formats. One is based on study circles of between five and twenty people meeting a number of times. Other forums may meet only once.. They have a trained moderator to facilitate discussion. This approach has the advantage of working with pre-existing groups which may therefore have more stability and longevity. They are not designed to be representative so are therefore more useful in areas where that is not so significant, such as policy development or thinking through how a proposed new policy should work in practice. Thinking about how the idea can be translated into another context, there are various social and educational groups who might be interested in discussing a wide range of issues; civic organisations might also be interested in discussing particular policy issues relevant to the organisation.

21.Planning for real

Description
This is a technique where models are used interactively, often to allow the public to influence issues such as planning, development, environmental, housing. But it can also be used to map wider policy issues.

How it works
A 3D model kit of an area, service or policy is made on a large enough scale to identify detailed aspects. Moving around the model, taking a bird's eye view of it, people can see possibilities they had not thought about. Option cards are provided, around 250 suggestion cards, including particular policy, service or physical planning possibilities. People can arrange and re-arrange these option cards to explore different ways of getting what is wanted.

The process can be applicable to all levels of citizen and stakeholder involvement.

22. Consensus conferencing

This is where groups of citizens are brought together to hear the views of various experts that are trying to come to some consensual view. A panel of about ten or twenty is selected, based on applications. They will not necessarily be representative in the way a citizens' jury is. They spend two preparatory weekends learning necessary background scientific knowledge, preparing questions and considering any additional experts to call. They also send questions to the experts who provide written responses. There is then a final three or four day conference professionally facilitated. Responses to the questions and outstanding issues are considered and a final report is produced. For public organisations, the technique is likely to be most useful where there are complex professional and scientific issues to be resolved, such as environmental management problems. The cost of running a typical consensus conference can range from about 40-60,000 Euros per conference..

23. In-house Surveys

Unless expertise and facilities already exist in-house, when everything's taken into account, including staff time, it will usually be most cost effective to commission market research from experts. However, sometimes, that is not possible. The following suggests some of the main points to remember if ministries decide to do their own surveys.

Coming up the with the questions

Make sure that those who will use the information are involved. Start with the overall aims and objectives of the policy and the greatest problems with it, or areas with most potential for improvement. There is usually an almost infinite set of questions you could ask, so concentrate on what would be most useful. As you come up with questions, check each one by asking what you will do with the results. If you had 60% answering yes, what would that mean? What would the difference be if there were 20%, 65% or 90%? You can also do the same with the questionnaire as a whole. Try making up results for the whole thing. What do you expect the results to be? This is useful for assessing the actual results. It is all too easy afterwards to say, 'Well, they would say that, wouldn't they?' But is that actually what you predicted? The key question is what you will do with the answer. It is not enough for it to be interesting. What action will you take?

Further points to bear in mind are:

- Keep it short. People will be easily put off by a long questionnaire to fill in.
- Keep it simple. People struggling with a questionnaire may well give up.
- Only ask questions where you can act on the results.
- Make questions as neutral as possible. If you lead the respondents the answers are less likely to be meaningful and therefore useful. You also risk bring in the whole process into disrepute. Avoid ambiguity.
- Try to keep the questions as clear as possible using language that will be understood by respondents.
- Only ask one question at once. It is surprisingly easy to ask several things at once. If you asked a question like, 'Are you satisfied or do you think the office should be open for longer?' what would it mean if the answer was, 'yes.'
- Be as specific as possible. Rather than asking whether people are happy with a policy or service, why not ask about satisfaction with particular aspects.
- Maintain confidentiality and assure respondents of it. You make aggregate information publicly available but will not release anything which enables any individual respondent to be identified.
- Think carefully about the design and layout. Make sure the print size is large enough to be readable, particularly by those whose eyesight is not so good. Leave enough space to write in answers. Include a return address if it is to be returned rather than collected. Include a contact name and phone number in case the reply paid envelope is lost or in case of any queries.

- Pilot the questionnaire. Ideally, send it to a small sample of the overall population you are trying to reach. Ten to fifteen should usually be enough. Ask for their comments on how easy they found to understand it, how long it took to complete and so on. You can also learn a lot from how the questions are answered. Can you code and analyse them? Are the answers meaningful? Have they been answered with a different meaning understood or implied? Remember to revise the questionnaire accordingly.

Analysis

Do not underestimate the time needed for analysis, particularly if you want to explore the data in depth. Unless it is a very simple survey with not many replies, or if it is made up more of open responses that pre-coded questions, it is worth using a computer for analysis. Specialist packages are available which have the advantage of being tailored to the task. However, unless you're going to use them regularly, it is probably not worth spending the time to learn how they work. Common database and spreadsheet packages can generally do all that is likely to be required, but may take a little time to set up. They now often provide common statistical functions and it is unlikely that anything much more will be required for most purposes, but they do require some statistical understanding to make sense of them. Analysis will usually consist of giving the numbers answered in each category and percentages. You need to be clear and make it clear what the base of percentages is, e.g., respondents of that question or of all those who return the survey.

You may also want to show cross tabulations where a matrix shows the results of one variable against another, e.g., showing the satisfaction levels from each group band. Again, you need to be clear of the basis of any percentages given, e.g., would it be for the total in the age band or the total expressing that level of satisfaction. It is important to be aware of what you are measuring and how much it can reliably tell you. One person's idea of 'very important' may not be the same as another's, for instance. If people are asked to rank their opinion of the desirability of a particular policy proposal, as least desirable, to five, as most desirable, a score of four is not necessarily twice a score of two. You also need to be careful of very small numbers responding to a particular question, where the results are more likely to be influenced by chance. Reporting that 75% of those attending a public meeting thought the presentations were excellent, would be misleading if this was three out of four people attending.

24.Roundtable workshops

Description

These involve the key players from a policy area (including stakeholder NGOs) generating a policy vision and strategy over a relatively short time, as part of a longer term initiative to bring about change. The approach helps in exposing participants to ideas and perspectives from other organisations, building consensus and identifying areas of conflict for further consideration. The roundtable method brings together people to discuss issues of shared concern and brainstorm ideas for action in a manner that allows maximum participation.

How they work

A workshop can be as short as half a day but ideally forms part of a series spread over a month or so, with the outcomes each feeding into the next. Workshops aim to build relationships between different ministries, NGOs and other policy sectors.. Participants are targeted from the government, NGOs, and other identified interested parties. Invitations are followed up to ensure key figures attend, so that the conclusions have the authority needed to change priorities. Each workshop can have a single theme, or several themes as part of a strategy. Participants who have often not been briefed in advance are seated in a single room at individual tables of seven to ten. Round tables are used to avoid hierarchies. Tables are allocated according to maximum mix. Each table may have an issue or topic in which participants have an interest, while coming from different NGOs and organisations. This ensures people meet new faces and cross boundaries.

The event begins with a brief introduction setting the context and aims of the event, which has three main stages:

1) Specialist presentations - maximum one hour. These provide technical information along with case studies and lessons from elsewhere to help generate ideas and new approaches.

2) Roundtable discussions, one and a half hours. Brainstorm issues or themes.. Participants write down any ideas on post-its which are grouped by

the reporter on a flip chart sheet, ensuring that every comment is recorded in the participants own words rather than paraphrased by the reporter.

3) Discussion and questions may follow before a short concluding session. The outcomes are usually worked into a draft for comment by participants and others. This is called the ‘report back from the groups’ and should last about one hour.

Resources needed

People
Consultants are generally used for initial organisation and briefing. The events need to be chaired and wrapped up by people who command general respect. Each table ideally has a convenor and a reporter. Specialist contributors are chosen to bring relevant experience, preferably using pictures as well as words to stimulate creative thinking.

Venue
The venue should ideally be at a neutral place. Seating should be a single large room with tables. The tables need to be spaced so that discussion is not disturbed.

Cost
The cost is usually between 5-6,000 Euros per event, and around 15-25,000 Euros for a series of events.

25.Future search

This generates action by building a shared vision among a diverse group of people (including NGOs and individual citizens). A future search conference is a way for an organisation or ministries working with NGOs to create a shared vision for a future policy. It enrols a large number of stakeholders, selected because they have power or information on the topic or are affected by the outcome. Ideally, there are sixty-four people who form eight tables of eight stakeholder groups. They can take part in a highly structured, two and a half day process covering five stages:

1) Activity. Each participant writes key events in the history of the policy, region and the country, onto three parallel time lines.

2) Explore the present

An enormous mind map is made of trends affecting the policy, country or region. Stakeholder groups identify important issues and what they would like to be done about them. Groups share what is good or bad about a policy, region or country.

3) Create ideal future scenarios

Mixed small groups develop visions, barriers to the vision are identified. Each group acts out its vision to everyone else.

4) Identify shared vision

First the small groups, then the whole group, work out what the shared vision is, what potential projects would achieve it and any unresolved differences.

5) Make action plans

Self selected action groups plan projects and publicly commit to their action. Several features are designed to empower participants. The principal is that people are the experts. There are facilitators but no other experts. The emphasis is on self management in small group.

Everything is written up on flipcharts and displayed. A future search is worth considering when there are influential people within the sponsoring organisation.. There is, or there can be, a steering group of people representing all parts of the policy or issue under review.

Resources

People

At least one facilitator is needed at the event plus a committed partnership group to plan and invite people beforehand.

Venue

A large enough room to hold sixty-four people in tables of eight, with room for presentations and plenty of hall space for displays.

Costs

The budget is usually between about anything from 3000 to 50,000 Euros Most events can be cost within the 8-14,000 Euros range.

26.Guided visualisation

This is where a script is used to take a group on an imaginary journey into the future. It is one of the few ways of eliciting what citizens and stakeholders actually want and what are thought to be real alternatives to current problems. Guided visualisation has several advantages. It can be adapted and used with a variety of groups, be used with different sized groups, be easily recorded, fit into a limited time slot of an evening, half a day, and access people's deepest hopes and dreams which are not often shared with others. It can be used with large numbers with enough facilitators and rooms, be done without using too many resources, be not too demanding of venues – although it is especially important to avoid interruptions during visualisation - fitted to a longer programme to inspire action. Guided visualisation involves the following steps.

1) Setting the scene

The facilitator sets participants at ease by outlining what is going to happen, and works with the group to agree group guidelines. These are confidentiality, the need to be non-judgemental, and encouragement to people to listen to each other. Some time is spent on getting to know each other and discussing the current situation.

2) Where we are now

A brief mapping exercise on current concerns and trends is conducted.

3) The guided visualisation

The facilitator helps the group to relax and get comfortable, then reads a script that involves travelling forward into the future. The facilitator then slowly talks the group through a day in the individual's life, starting with waking up and finishing with going to bed. The day is kept as open to individual interpretation as possible with the facilitators careful not to bring in their personal values or assumptions.

The facilitator reads slowly through the visualisation script, allowing enough time for people to build up their pictures of the future. This takes approximately fifteen minutes. The facilitator then slowly brings participants back into the present time and checks that everyone has arrived back. Steps are taken to protect participants during the process and help them prepare for effects afterwards, in case any are affected by the visualisation, e.g., by accessing usually hidden parts of their imaginations or being able to see negative aspects of the future. Emphasise that it is positive visions that are being sought.

4) Describing and recording

Participants take time on their own to record their imagined visions. They then share their images of the future with another person and then a small group, recording essential elements on post-it notes. These are displayed to help create a collective vision among the whole group.

5) Taking action

The facilitator helps participants to take the first steps towards realising their visions by becoming involved with a project.

Guided visualisation has been widely used, particularly in education and for developing a common vision. Numbers have varied from small groups to 160 with several facilitators.

Resources needed

People

The facilitator guiding the participants through the event should be experienced in facilitation and managing visualisation. It is important to have other experienced facilitators around, as well.

Venue

A comfortable room with natural lighting, warm, spacious, inviting and quiet. Each small group needs its own room and a facilitator.

Costs

Minimal apart from facilitator’s time and venue costs.

27.Open space

Description

Open Space is an intensely democratic framework which enables an unlimited number of participants to create their own programme of discussions around a central theme. It is particularly effective in generating high energy participation, learning, and commitment to action. Open Space is extremely flexible and needs minimal organisation. It can cater for almost any number of people and usually last between one and three days. Open Space works particularly well when there is an urgent issue needing quick action. Large and diverse groups are involved. There are complex and potentially conflicting issues. Open Space is unsuitable when the course of action has already been decided on, someone wants to control the meeting or event where there is an adequate follow through after an event.

How to run open space

Everyone starts in a circle, the fundamental geometry of human communication, and is invited to identify issues relating to a particular policy that they are passionate about and willing to take responsibility for. They write each of their issues on a sheet of paper and sign their name, saying, 'My issue is – my name is.' Each person announces the topic on which they want to convene a workshop session and sticks their sheet of paper on the wall with a post-it note from the prepared matrix of times and spaces available for the workshops. This continues until all the topics have been announced. Everyone then gathers around the wall and signs up for whichever topics they wish to discuss. The sessions take place.

The results are recorded and sometimes fed into a computer. There is a final plenary, also in a circle, with events lasting more than one day. The whole group get together at the start and close of each day, recreating a sense of community and providing a forum for news and announcements. The report of all the sessions is available as participants leave or soon after. Groups naturally form across more formal boundaries and frequently wish to continue working together after Open Space events. A specific action planning process can follow. Open Space has been used in health, universities and many local governments. World-wide, there have been tens of thousands of events, in townships in South Africa and in the US Forest Service. Events work well with numbers from five up to over a thousand people.

Resources needed

People

One facilitator is all that is necessary, even for events of several hundred people or more. However, the nature of the facilitation is crucial to the success of the event. The hands off approach needs the right kind of temperament and benefits from experience. In practical terms, the facilitator guides the opening and closing sessions, explaining the procedure and the guiding principles, and then stands back as far as it is possible.

Venue
A space large enough to hold everyone in a circle plus, ideally, smaller spaces for the discussion groups.

Budget
The usual costs for an Open Space are confined to the venue and any refreshments that may be necessary, plus minimal stationery and possibly a facilitator fee.

28.Action planning

This involves carefully structured collaborative events at which all sections of a particular policy community work closely with specialists from different disciplines to deal with special issues. Action planning is particular suitable for urban design and physical planning issues such as regeneration strategies for specific regions or neighbourhoods; development strategies for specific sites; and solutions to specific problems, such as traffic congestion. Events are normally hosted by a partnership of interests. They are facilitated by a multi-disciplinary team, usually of around ten to fifteen people with a range of relevant expertise in the policy area. Team members may also come entirely from outside the area, providing a fresh and independent perspective. Events typically last four to five days but may last anything from one to several weeks. During the event, the team will go through the following process.

1) Briefing by key stakeholders: Key NGOs, interested citizens and politicians.

2) Visits to the operational aspects of a policy or issue.

3) Topic workshops, open to everyone.

4) Design workshops, again, open to everyone.

5) Brainstorming.

6) Analysis and synthesis.

7) Report back presentation and proposals. Again, this is open to everyone. Published report of proposals, normally including organisational charts and action points. In addition there may be special events to organise for specific stakeholder groups. Preparatory activity before the event and follow-up activity are also vital parts of the overall action planning process. Typically, 150 to 300 people will take part in workshops and report back presentations, but larger events have taken place involving up to a thousand people.

Resources needed

People

A local steering group to facilitate and follow up the event and a multi-disciplinary team to facilitate it.

Venue

Main requirements are large space for presentations, workshop spaces, studio working area, administration office. All these need to be situated in the actual planning area.

Budget

Average cost, around 20,000 Euros, including professional organisers' fees.. Events can be run for under 10,000 Euros by securing support-in-kind. Large, professionally organised events can cost over 60,000 Euros.