COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

ENGAGE CITIZENS IN LOCAL DECISION-MAKING!

Council of Europe School on Participatory Democracy – Cres Island, Croatia

Introductory session: 19 September 2022 (online)
Five-day event: 3-7 October 2022 (in-person, Cres)

Training Documentation
Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy

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INTRODUCTION

The School on Participatory Democracy, a training cycle organised by the **Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy of the Council of Europe**, in co-operation with the University of Belgrade, Serbia, and the University of Rijeka, Croatia, is designed as an interactive learning, and sharing event for practitioners from local authorities and civil society from **Croatia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Türkiye**. The School comprises an initial one-day online introductory session on 19 September 2022, followed by a five-day in-person event with a total of 26 participants at Moise Palace, the University of Rijeka, in Cres, Croatia, on 3-7 October 2022, and will be completed by in-depth online trainings and a closure event in 2023.

This interim report refers to the first phase of the training cycle, the introductory online meeting, and the face-to-face training in Croatia.

During the face-to-face event, standards, and tools of the Council of Europe on participatory democracy were presented, and participants were able to learn about best practice examples, to share experiences, and to interact with other practitioners on how to effectively engage citizens in political decision-making.

The School on Participatory Democracy introduces participants to Council of Europe tools for citizens engagement.

SUMMARY OF TRAINING

The **Preparatory Introduction Meeting**, held online, familiarised the participants with concepts and values underlying civil participation in political decision-making, and introduced levels and models of citizens' participation and the agenda for the in-person meeting. At the School on Participatory Democracy in Cres, Croatia, participants met together for an event that combined tools, approaches, and models for inclusive citizen engagement with interactive group exercises and discussions. The sessions included exercises for designing public consultations plans, and tools and case studies on a range of themes pertinent to participatory policymaking, including public space planning, Open Government Partnership Action Plans, local transportation policy, anti-discrimination strategies, and participatory budgeting.

* All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions, or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

The School included presentations and discussions on:

- Council of Europe Standards and Guidelines on Civil Participation in Political Decision-Making
- Models, Mechanisms and Levels of Inclusive Citizens Engagement
- Models of Government-CSO Co-operation
- Examples of Practice in Participatory Tools and Deliberative Democracy in the Participating Regions
- Participants' own achievements and challenges in working to increase and strengthen civil participation.

Participants were able to apply the models and approaches presented in group exercises that simulated real scenarios on:

- Designing Plans for Public Consultations
- Community Assessment and Stakeholder Assessment (Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit)

Using innovative methods and game formats, participants worked in groups to simulate how they would apply tools developed by Council of Europe experts, namely:

- CivicLab
- UChange
- School Participatory Budget Tool
- Participatory Public Space Planning

Additionally, participants were presented with different aspects of a specific format of deliberative citizen engagement, Citizens' Assemblies.

There was a lot of interest in, and discussion around application of, the tools, and in learning about the tools in greater depth suggesting strong interest in follow-up immersive training on different tools, according to individual needs and context.

TRAINING AGENDA

Agenda
Cres, Croatia
3-7 October 2022

Day 1:	Define Individual Policy Focus/Objectives for the Week
	Models and Levels of Engagement
	Council of Europe Standards and Guidelines
	Participatory Tools and Deliberative Democracy in the Participants' Regions
	Participants' exchange of experience
	Design of Public Consultations
Day 2:	Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation
	Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit
Day 3:	Public Consultations and Citizens Engagement on Public Space Planning and Implementation
	CivicLab
Day 4:	UChange
	School Participatory Budget Tool
Day 5:	Citizens' Assemblies
	CSO-Government Co-operation Models
	Potential Application of Participatory Democracy Tools

PARTICIPATORY TOOLS AND DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY, INCLUDING CONTEXT, PRACTICE AND APPROACHES IN THE PARTICIPANTS' REGIONS

Council of Europe experts Gazela Pudar Draško and Irena Fiket presented examples of practice in the participating regions. Starting from the overview of the contextual framework of the Western Balkans political landscape, they emphasized the long-term distrust towards institutions and the effects of any participatory process, which is causing citizens' disinterest and inertia.

The causes of the distrust into institutions can be found in:

1) insufficient knowledge of the citizens, but also political actors,
2) low political accountability,
3) low political efficacy and finally,
4) the lack of participatory processes.

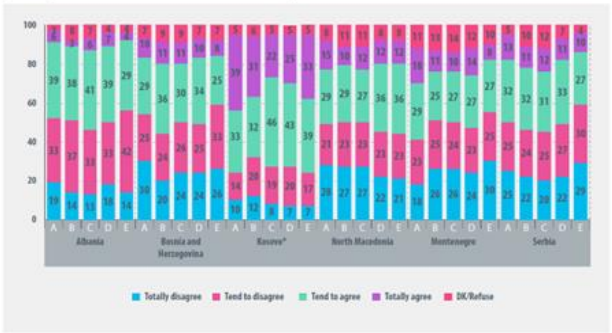
The institutional practice in the Western Balkans recognises several tools of more or less direct citizens' participation. Those are:

- Popular initiative
- Referendum (all types)
- Citizens' initiative
- Community assembly
- Citizens' assemblies
- Citizens' gatherings
- Public debate
- Public hearings
- Petitions
- Surveys

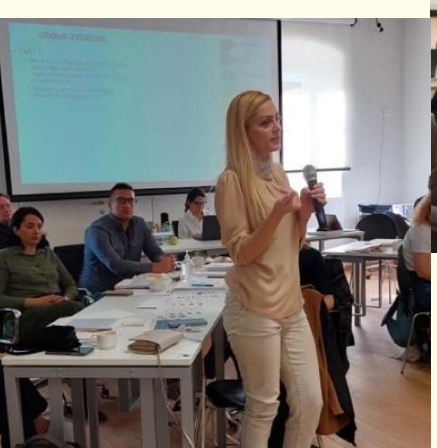
Figure 98: Do you agree that the following institutions can effectively scrutinise the government and make it accountable to citizens? (Results by economies)

A – Parliament; B – Ombudsman; C - Supreme audit institution; D - Citizens and civil society organisations; E - Media

(All respondents, N=6029, scale from 1 to 4, %)



Community assemblies, citizens' assemblies and citizens' gatherings have similar formats, with national specificities defined in laws and bylaws. Participants agreed that harmonisation of the different tools across the region would be beneficial for better understanding and implementation of these tools.



CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE ON CIVIL PARTICIPATION

As set out in the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process, adopted by the Conference of International NGOs of the Council of Europe, the engagement of citizens in political decision-making ranges from low-level, one-way communication right up to partnership (or "co-creation", the term used by the Open Government Partnership (OGP) for the co-operation between NGOs and government in the design of country-level or local-level OGP Action Plan commitments.

Levels of Participation

INFORMATION
A relatively low level of participation which usually consists of a one-way provision of information from the public authorities and no interaction or involvement with NGOs is required or expected.

CONSULTATION
Public authorities may ask NGOs for their opinion on a specific policy topic or development. The initiative and themes originate with the public authorities, not with the NGOs.

DIALOGUE
The initiative for dialogue can be taken by either party and can be either broad or collaborative.

Broad dialogue is a two-way communication built on mutual interests and potentially shared objectives to ensure a regular exchange of views. It ranges from open public hearings to specialised meetings between NGOs and public authorities.

Collaborative dialogue is built on mutual interests for a specific policy development. Collaborative dialogue is more empowered than the broad dialogue as it consists of joint, often frequent and regular, meetings to develop core policy strategies and often leads to agreed outcomes such as a joint recommendation or legislation.

PARTNERSHIP
The highest level of participation where NGOs and the public authorities co-operate closely together while ensuring that the NGOs continue to be independent and have the right to campaign and act irrespective of a partnership situation. Partnership can include activities such as provision of services, participatory forums, and the establishment of co-decision-making bodies.

The Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process, adopted by the Conference of International NGOs of the Council of Europe is available here: https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168022eed5c

TOOLS PRESENTED DURING THE TRAINING

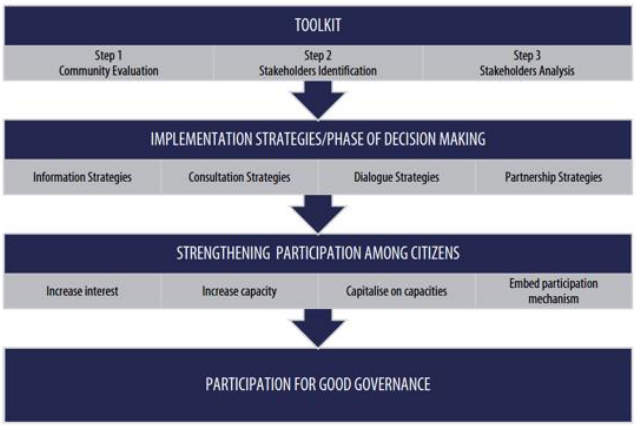
CIVIL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING TOOLKIT

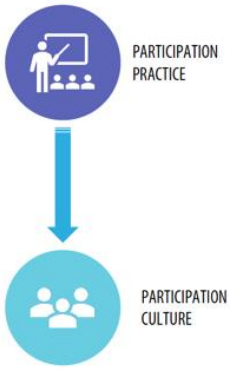
by Centre of Expertise for Good Governance, Council of Europe, in co-operation with the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG), Italy (most recent edition: 2020), presented by Darejan Murdashvili, Head of Gori Office of Civil Society Institute (CSI), Georgia, and Natia Aphkhazava, Head of the Batumi Branch, Ajara, of CSI.

https://rm.coe.int/civil-participation-in-decision-making-toolkit-/168075c1a5

The toolkit provides, through a step-by-step approach, an integrated framework to guide local authorities in the design and implementation of context-based strategies to identify local stakeholders to be engaged in local decision-making processes, and to increase a community's civil participation.

The toolkit serves as an operational tool to enable local authorities to:
contextualise the role of civil participation, understand the strengths and weaknesses of their communities to engage in participation, and identify the potential of actual engagement of each stakeholder in the decision-making process;
adopt strategies to overcome obstacles to effective and inclusive participation, including through the adoption of different levels of involvement at different stages of the decision-making process, and accompanying tools to enhance participation.



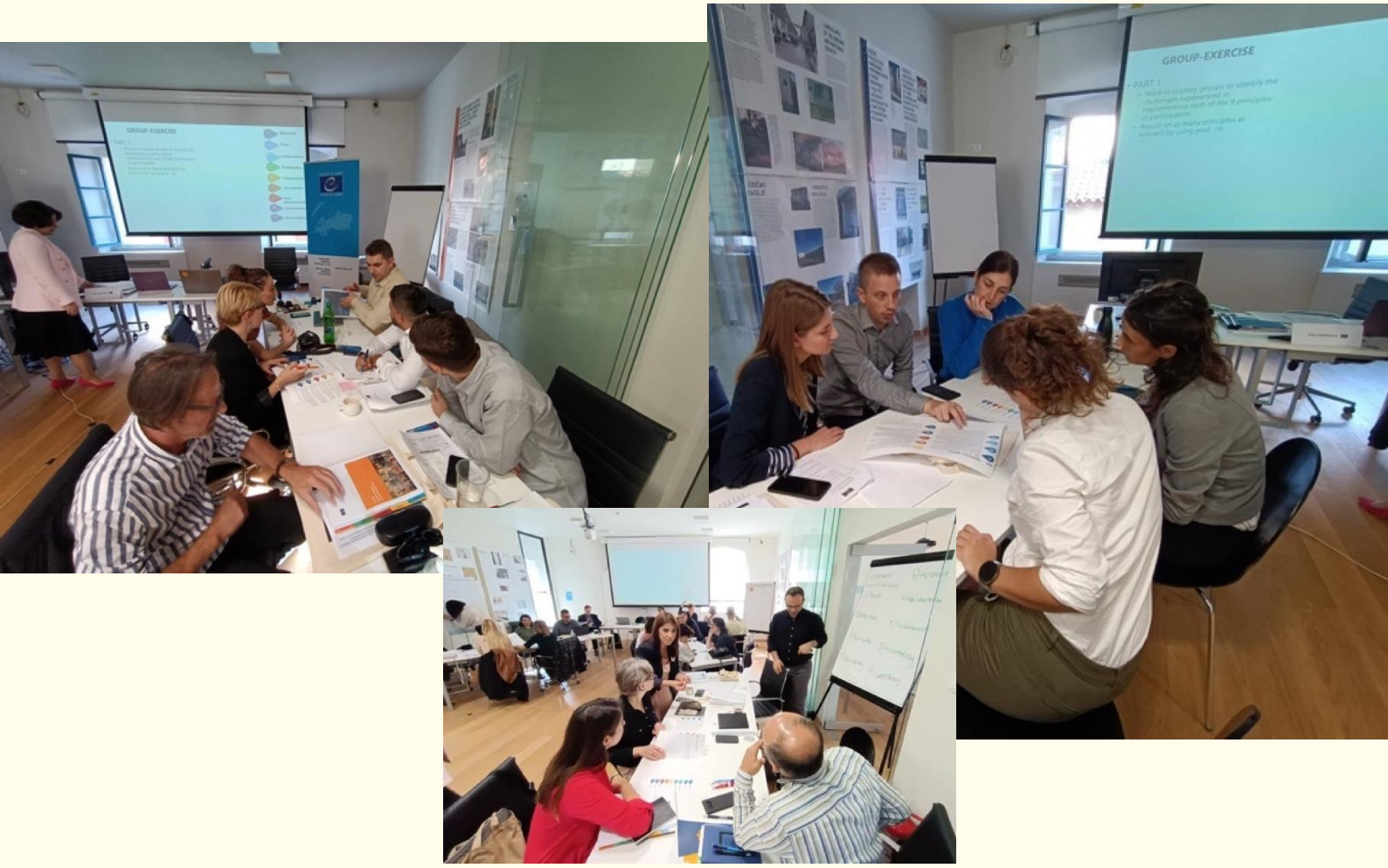


The tool is a three-step process:

Step 1. Community Evaluation - aiming at effectively contextualising a participatory decision-making process in line with the community's propensity to participation (including assessing social, economic, human, and political capital)

Step 2. Stakeholder Identification and Evaluation – to identify stakeholders' capacities and willingness to engage.

Step 3. Stakeholder Plotting – The "Stakeholder Evaluation" results in 2 scores (one for RELEVANCE of the stakeholder for the process and one for INTEREST of the stakeholder to engage. Scores are automatically plotted by the tool on a graph, divided into four quadrants. Each quadrant represents a different level of potential involvement of the stakeholder. Based on the quadrant where the stakeholder is located, the Local Authority will have the possibility to implement different strategies to allow its engagement.



CIVICLAB

Developed by the Council of Europe within the framework of the Council of Europe project, "Promoting Civil Participation in Democratic Decision-Making in Ukraine", in co-operation with Oleksii Kovalenko, expert of the Council of Europe, leader of the "Kyiv Civic Platform" Association of NGOs (most recent edition: 2022).

https://rm.coe.int/civiclab-a4-web/1680a729a1

CivicLab is a toolkit for a participatory approach to the development and design of policy options in decision-making. It is designed to assist central and local authorities and non-governmental organisations in promoting civil participation in decision-making at local, regional, and central government levels.

The tool includes a set of matrices (development and analysis of policy options) that can be adapted to the needs of the chosen policy topic and specific audiences.

The tool can be used for the development of national development strategies, proposals for action plans (e.g. Open Government Partnership commitments), regulations and local decisions, draft laws, and for adopting good practices in citizen engagement.

The CivicLab methodology offers four application components:

1) Digital component – a tool for developing policy proposals and analysis (including assessing realistic feasibility) of the results of decisions during consultations;

2) Educational component – "learning through action", where participants engage in practical exercises using real examples of best practice;

3) Game component (UChange game) – which allows for gamification of the consultations process, making it user-friendly and adapted to the needs of participants;

4) General component – qualitative assessment of audience needs and expectations, and methodology of inclusive selection of participants in the consultation process.

UCHANGE

Developed by the Council of Europe within the framework of the Council of Europe project, "Promoting Civil Participation in Democratic Decision-Making in Ukraine", in co-operation with Oleksii Kovalenko, expert of the Council of Europe, leader of the "Kyiv Civic Platform" Association of NGOs (most recent edition: 2022).

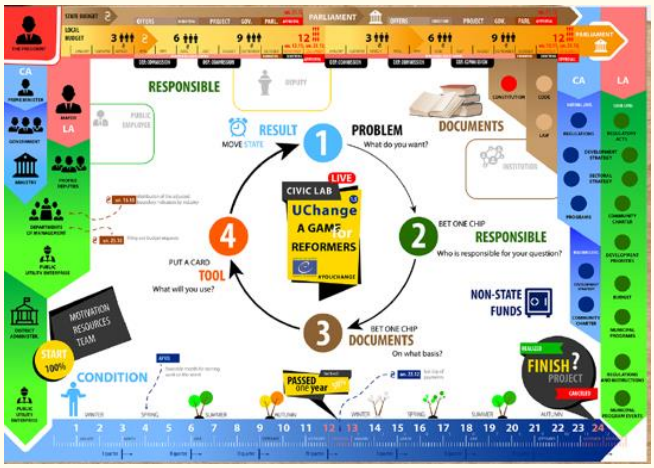
https://rm.coe.int/prems-005722-gbr-2541-uchange-web-bat-a4/1680a86b61

UChange is a tool for teaching the fundamentals of public participation in a game format. UChange can be used in combination with CivicLab, combining CivicLab's educational format of "learning through action" with the UChange game component, which puts this format into practice.

In the context of civil participation, UChange helps citizens learn how to influence the work and decisions of public authorities in a constructive way. Likewise, it helps the representatives of the authorities to engage members of the public on topical policy questions.

Players learn how to interact with public authorities, how to design a model for advocacy and communications in the promotion of their policy choices, and how to assess the impact on the community of the proposed policy. They learn how to advocate for a policy using the civil participation tools and how to engage in meaningful interaction with different levels and branches of the public authorities in accordance with existing legislation and available strategic documents and plans; and take the first steps towards realisation of the proposed policy or decision.

UChange is a game format that makes civil participation in policy-making a user-friendly exercise that can be adapted to the local context and decision-making framework and tailored to the needs of the participants regardless of their age and knowledge and skills levels. Potential uses of the UChange game range from appeals, information requests, questions to elected representatives, petitions, public consultations, citizens' initiatives, and participatory budgeting programmes.



SCHOOL PARTICIPATORY BUDGET TOOL

Developed by the Council of Europe within the framework of the Council of Europe project, "Promoting Civil Participation in Democratic Decision-Making in Ukraine", in co-operation with Oleksii Kovalenko, expert of the Council of Europe, leader of the "Kyiv Civic Platform" Association of NGOs (most recent edition: 2020)

https://rm.coe.int/school-participatory-budgeting-toolkit-eng/1680a091db

School participatory budgeting is a civil participation tool designed to involve schoolchildren and students in decision-making and allocation of funds in schools, while simultaneously developing a sense of active citizenship among young people. The toolkit puts significant emphasis on ensuring a high level of inclusion in school participatory budgeting, ensuring equal opportunities for boys and girls, and outreach to socially disadvantaged schoolchildren. It also stresses the need for students to participate in the development of the rules for the school participatory budgeting scheme.

With the help of step-by-step methodological recommendations, the toolkit incorporates the following steps:

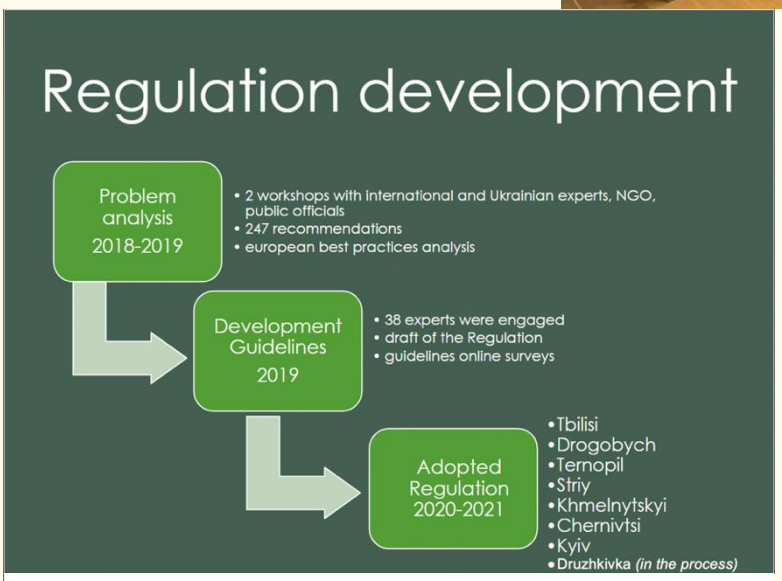
Step 1. Selecting the basic model and developing own model (selection criteria are included in the tool);
Step 2. Developing the regulation on school participatory budgeting and its parameters (a matrix and criteria are provided).

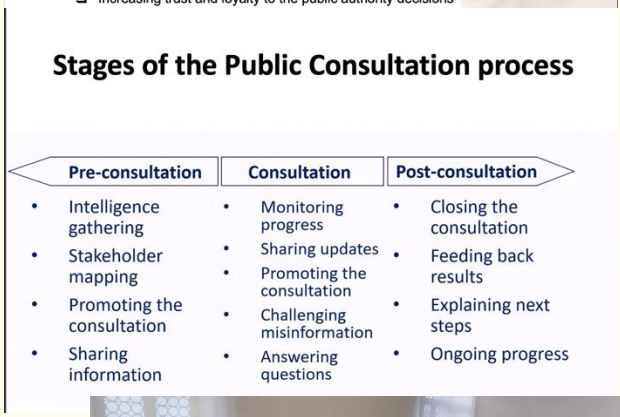
Guidelines are also provided on:

- allocation of funding for respectively small and large budget projects;
- how to raise awareness in schools about school participatory budgeting;
- proposal requirements, including submission requirements and collection of signatures of support;
- voting mechanisms, procedures for evaluating proposals, and supervision of the implementation of selected projects.

PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING METHOD

Tools for Civil participation: planning public spaces were presented by Natalia Chornogub, Council of Europe expert and Head of NGO "Park Natalka" in Kyiv. She has worked to bring together public authorities and citizens to foster greater citizen engagement in public space planning and revitalisation of public spaces in more than 20 cities throughout Ukraine.





Step by step mechanism of public consultation terms
(depends on concrete Regulation)

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES

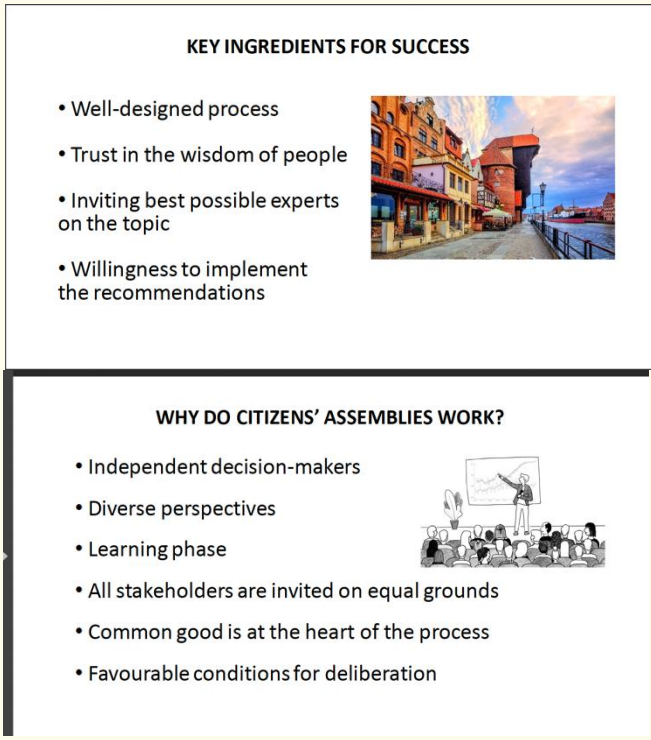
A Citizens' Assembly is a representative group of citizens who are selected randomly from the population to learn about, deliberate upon, and make recommendations in relation to, a particular issue or set of issues. It comprises a representative sample of the population – of, for instance, a municipality, a region or even the whole country and meets to deliberate on important policy challenges. Weighing evidence and considering a wide range of stakeholder perspectives, participants deliberate together to design proposed solutions rather than just aggregating the opinions and perspectives they themselves bring to the Assembly at the beginning.

Marcin Gerwin, co-ordinator of the Centre for Blue Democracy, Poland, and designer of citizens' assemblies in Poland and internationally, presented the key elements of a citizens' assembly (see the two slides on the right), including organisational requirements.

For a citizens' assembly to be credible and meaningful, it needs independent preparation and mediation, but for follow-up and implementation it is equally important that there is a prior commitment from government to give serious weight and consideration to the resulting proposals.

Citizens' assemblies propose rather than enact, as the participants do not have the mandate or powers to make or implement policy. Nevertheless, it is important that their proposals are seriously considered, that feedback is subsequently provided on what is/what is not going to be adopted, and why.

In recent years, citizens' assemblies have increasingly been implemented at all levels of government across Europe and are considered a valuable method to engage citizens in political decision-making.



A Citizens' Assembly:
• **deliberates on important issues**
• **assesses the facts**
• **considers available options**
• **formulates recommendations which are then forwarded to the appropriate authority.**
Assemblies aim to:
• **educate the participants, providing access to experts and politicians**
• **produce a vote or result representative of the educated public interest**
• **use independent facilitation of deliberation, seeking to mitigate misinformation.**

TOPICS IDENTIFIED AS PRIORITIES IN GROUP WORK ON THE RESPECTIVE TOOLS

The participants working in groups from the same country/territory identified the following policy themes to be relevant for work during their training:

- Croatia – social housing
- Kosovo* – waste management
- North Macedonia – non-discrimination
- Serbia – air pollution
- Türkiye – urban mobility (public transport)

For CivicLab, two groups worked on respectively Urban planning and anti-discrimination. During the online tabulation simulation, the **anti-discrimination group** found across the countries that a common challenge lay in the need for an effective anti-discrimination strategy (even though forms of discrimination ranged from gender inequality and patriarchy to language barriers and discrimination against refugees), and ideas/initiatives included educational programmes, regulations, and sanctions for officials failing to apply anti-discrimination policies.

PHASE 1. CRITIQUE			#REF!		#REF!	PHASE 2. PROPOSAL	#REF!	PHASE 3. REALITY		
1. Priority (1-5)	1. PROBLEMS What are the issues / challenges of public participation in your country?	2. CAUSES OF PROBLEMS What are the possible causes of these problems?	3. COUNTRY	4. CATEGORIES OF PROBLEMS What are the policy issues?	2. Priority (1-5)	1. IDEAS Identify ideas / suggestions to solve the identified problems. Write an idea for each problem. Discuss with all participants, not just those who identified the problem.	1. Is the sphere of powers of the authority?	2. Is there a regulatory framework ?	Output	3. Priority (1-5)
	lack or representatives	lack of time, lack of knowledge how to participate, barriers to take part,	TURKEY	non discrimination strategy		organise educative workshops explaining the law of non discrimination	Yes	Yes	really	4
	language barriers	not appropriate implemantion of laws that providesofficial languages of different languages, not included ammendments for minorities	NORTH MACEDONIA	non discrimination strategy	4	establish a citizens assembly	Yes	Yes	really	2
4	attitude the people	inability to participate, lack of education, lack of awerenss a nd willingless of stakeholders to rise awareness	NORTH MACEDONIA	non discrimination strategy	3	implement a special exicting regulation	Yes	NO	unrealistic	
3	gender inaquality in focus group	refugees, woman cant express their attitude, patriarchal behaviour and mentality, inaquity (woman do a lot of unpaid work - houses, childrens, they cant express their intention	TURKEY	non discrimination strategy		punish institutions who are not implement the law (for example eccess tp certain media)	Yes	Yes	really	5
2	assesibility for quality eduction in this sphere	different incomes and different opportunities	NORTH MACEDONIA	non discrimination strategy		to establish independant watch dogs to implement	Yes	NO	unrealistic	
5	domination of some NGO in participation - monopolia of space	influance of interest groups, networl with powerful groups	TURKEY	non discrimination strategy	2	advocasy reporting, policy brief to make recomendations for institutions	NO	NO	unrealistic	
1	there is no priority from institutions	lack of interest - people usualy take part in discussion that affect them personaly, but they do not interest in general problems	KOSOVO	non discrimination strategy	1	education for civil cervants, for citizen, (not to panish - first educate)	Yes	Yes	really	1
					5	civic observatory instituation for annual report on the level of discrimanatory practices / For influance	NO	Yes	unrealistic	
						update the regulation to meet the strategy, to be in compliance with internation regulations	Yes	Yes	really	3

The group continued their work in playing the UChange game, where the focus was on achieving the adoption of a Parking and Pedestrian Strategy. Tools chosen by the participants included petitions and public consultations. Within the one-year time framework, the choice of tools and solution emerged as a realistic one.

*All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions, or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

The group working on **urban mobility** addressed problems ranging from transportation in cities to lack of bicycle lanes, lack of parking spaces, and lack of transportation to schools in rural areas – with challenges such as lack of finance, poor infrastructure, and bad urban planning. Solutions proposed ranged from park-and-ride policies to urban mobility plans and a new investment strategy for public transport.

PHASE 1. CRITIQUE			#REF!		#REF!	PHASE 2. PROPOSAL	#REF!		PHASE 3. REALITY	
	1. PROBLEMS	2. CAUSES OF PROBLEMS	3. COUNTRY	4. CATEGORIES OF PROBLEMS		1. IDEAS	1. Is the sphere of powers of the authority?	2. Is there a regulatory framework ?	Output	3. Priority (1-5)
5. Priority (1-5)	What are the issues / challenges of public participation in your country?	What are the possible causes of these problems?		What are the policy issues?	2. Priority (1-5)	Identify ideas / suggestions to solve the identified problems. Write an idea for each problem. Discuss with all participants, not just those who identified the problem.				
1	**no good quality public transportation**	lack of finance	MONTENEGRO	urban mobility - transportation	1	public tranport investment strategy	Yes	Yes	really	1
2	no public transportation in urban areas	lack of road infrastructure for transport	KOSOVO	urban mobility - transportation	2	E-Bike	Yes	NO	unrealistic	
	lack of bike lane	bad urban planning	CROATIA	urban mobility - transportation		urban mobility plan	Yes	NO	unrealistic	
4	lack of parking	bad urban planning	SERBIA	urban mobility - transportation	3	providing transport to certain villages	Yes	Yes	really	3
5	side wlak are occupied	pure managmnet	KOSOVO	urban mobility - transportation	4	park and ride policy	Yes	Yes	really	2
3	students in rural areas do not have transport to school	lack of priority policy	SERBIA	urban mobility - transportation	5	protecting sidewalks from cars	Yes	NO	unrealistic	

When the group then played the UChange game, they set the goal of creating 30 accessible facilities for special needs/disabled people. The tools chosen were petitions, a citizens' assembly, requests for information, and appeals to the Mayor.

Some participants moved to a third group for the UChange game to focus on social housing, where the focus was the lack of money for social housing on the island of Cres, and the need to increase the budget allocation for social housing. Tools chosen included a referendum, public hearing, and expert workshop, targeting the Mayor, city council, the private sector and the island's business association. The result of the game indicated that the goal was achievable in 10 months.

PLANS FOR APPLYING TOOLS FOR PARTICIPATION

The final day included group work to draw up plans for applying the tools presented at the School to projects, initiatives, and challenges in the participants' own local contexts. Examples of some of the proposals included the following:

Tool/process	Application	Locality
Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit	Selection of stakeholders for consultations, e.g. for consultative gatherings	**North Macedonia**
	Revision of inclusiveness of advisory working groups	**Türkiye**
CivicLab	Development of citizens' initiatives and evaluation of the work of local authorities	**Croatia**
	Development of citizens' initiatives	**North Macedonia**
	Impact analysis	**Türkiye**
UChange	Education	**Croatia**
	UChange could be used to generate interest in civil issues and public policy during planned civic education classes in high schools, an important issue as only 17% of 18–20-year-olds vote in elections in Serbia.	**Serbia**
	Raising awareness of young citizens and the policymaking capacity of civil society organisations	**Türkiye**
School Participatory Budget	Introducing children to the concept of budgeting	**Croatia**
	Working with schoolchildren with a view to increasing citizens' engagement	**Kosovo***
	Tool for youth officials before budget debates as an exercise focused on improving school budgets	**North Macedonia**
	For use in local schools with a view to funding the education of children about circular economy.	**Serbia**
	If a portion of a municipal participatory budgeting scheme was devoted to children, then the tool could help explain the process to children.	**Türkiye**
Public Space Planning tools	Park planning and organising stakeholders to assess their wishes and interests.	**Serbia**
Citizens' Assembly	Raising awareness about active citizenship	**Croatia**
	Pirot's capital investment plan is revised every five years. In response to an open call, citizens submitted 150 proposals, and a public debate is needed on these. A citizens' assembly would help and should include the participation of architects, service providers, the municipal budget department, elected councillors and citizens to decide on the proposal(s) to select.	**Serbia**

SPEAKERS, FACILITATORS, AND PRESENTERS

SPEAKERS AND HOSTS	
MARKUS ADELSBACH	Head, Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy, Council of Europe (Online Introduction)
CORNELIA PERLE	Senior Programme Adviser, Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy, Council of Europe
SANJA BOJANIĆ	Executive Director, Center for Advanced Studies - Southeast Europe, University of Rijeka, Croatia
MARIN GREGOROVIĆ	Mayor of Cres, Croatia
FACILITATORS AND PRESENTERS	
JEFF LOVITT	Chair, New Diplomacy. Co-designed and facilitator of Council of Europe Winter School on Participatory Democracy (2021-2022), and Participatory Democracy Academy in Ukraine (2019); author of two Council of Europe books on Civil Participation in Political Decision-Making in the Eastern Partnership countries.
GAZELA PUDAR DRAŠKO	Director, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. Gazela is an Executive Board member of the Institute for Democratic Engagement Southeast Europe (IDESE) and a member of the Network for Academic Solidarity and Engagement (MASA).
IRENA FIKET	Research Fellow, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. Her research topics include citizen participation, democratic innovation, deliberative democracy, European identity, European public sphere, European Higher Education, and the Western Balkans. Irena is one of the founders and a member of the Standing Group on democratic innovation at the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR).
DAREJAN MURADASHVILI	Council of Europe expert, Georgia, and Head of Gori Office of Civil Society Institute (CSI), Georgia. Presenter of the Council of Europe's Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit, authored by the Council of Europe's Centre of Expertise for Good Governance in co-operation with the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG), Italy.
NATIA APHKHAZAVA	Council of Europe expert, Georgia, and Head of the Batumi Branch, Ajara, of Civil Society Institute (CSI), Georgia. Presenter of the Council of Europe's Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit, authored by the Council of Europe's Centre of Expertise for Good Governance in co-operation with the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG), Italy.
NATALIA CHORNOGUB	Council of Europe expert, Ukraine, and Head of NGO "Park Natalka" in Kyiv. She has worked to bring together public authorities and citizens to foster greater citizen engagement in public space planning and revitalisation of public spaces in more than 30 cities throughout Ukraine.
OLESKII KOVALENKO	Council of Europe expert, Ukraine, head of Civil Society Development Forum, Kyiv. Main author of Council of Europe's Civic Lab Toolkit, UChange tool, and School Participatory Budget toolkit, and one of initiators of All-Ukrainian Public Budget, a participatory tool supported by Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine.
OLESIA ARKHYPSKA	Council of Europe expert, Ukraine, co-chair of the Open Government Partnership Coordination Council in Ukraine, and expert on governance, NGO Civil Society Development Forum, Kyiv.
MARCIN GERWIN	Co-ordinator, Centre for Blue Democracy, and designer of democratic processes, including citizens' assemblies and participatory budgeting processes. Author of *Citizens' Assemblies: Guide to democracy that works.*

PARTICIPANTS

CROATIA	
ANDREA NOVAKOVIĆ	Technical Director, Educo
MARIO ŽULIČEK	Adviser, Association of Cities
LUCIJA JUSUP	Adviser, Association of Cities
TEA DIMNJAŠEVIĆ	Associate Expert – Knowledge Transfer, University of Rijeka
TAMARA LAZAREVIĆ	Project Manager, Island Development Agency – OTRA, Cres
KOSOVO*	
ARMEND BEHLULI	Head of Municipal Office for Communities and Return, Municipal Office for Communities and Return, Gjakova/Djakovica
VALMIR ISMAILI	Executive Director, Democracy Plus, Pristina
URIM XHARAVINA	Executive Director, Let's Do It Peja, Peja
ENDRIT MAZREKU	Vice President, Local Youth Action Council, Malishevë
LINDA SHAHINI	Officer for European Integration, former Assembly member, Municipality of Lipjan
BLERTA HARXHI BEGOLLI	Senior Project Planning Officer, Tourism Sector, Directorate for Economic Development, Municipality of Peja
MONTENEGRO	
SONJA DRAGOVIĆ	Project Manager, KANA "ko ako ne architect" (who if not an architect), Podgorica
NORTH MACEDONIA	
SANJA MANCHEVA	President, Association for Education, Promotion and Social Entrepreneurship Development "CO-CREATORS", Stip
JONIDA METE KIKI	CEO and Founder, "Dritë Shprese" (Light of Hope) NGO, Skopje
SVETLANA GUGUCHEVSKA	Community Engagement Officer, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Skopje
NOVICA KOSTOJCHINOSKI	Head of Financial Affairs Department, Municipality of Vevchani
LUIZA ALEKSOVA	Local Economic Development Adviser, Municipality of Vinica

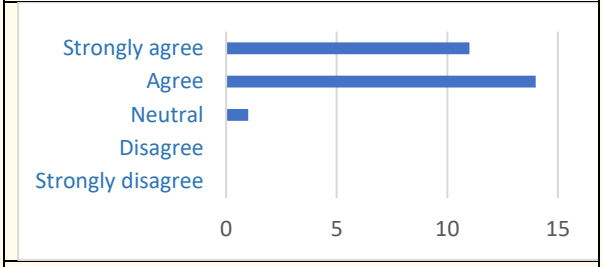
*All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions, or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

SERBIA	
DOBRILA LOLA JOKSIMOVIĆ	Councillor, Belgrade City Assembly, and Strategic Manager, Center for Cultural Decontamination
MILOŠ COLIĆ	Deputy Mayor, Pirot District, Grad Pirot
VUK LUKOVIĆ	Chief of Staff, Municipality of Priboj
JOVANA TIMOTIJEVIĆ	Programme Manager, Institute for Urban Policy (Ministry of Space), Belgrade
ALEKSANDRA ILIJIN	Senior Associate, OPENS, Novi Sad
TÜRKIYE	
İNAN İZCI	Researcher, Argüden Governance Academy, Istanbul
MELIS TÜRKER	Project Specialist, Argüden Governance Academy, Istanbul
TÜLIN HADI	President, Citizens Assembly, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality
MEHMET AKTAŞ	Director of Strategy Development, Sultanbeyl Municipality

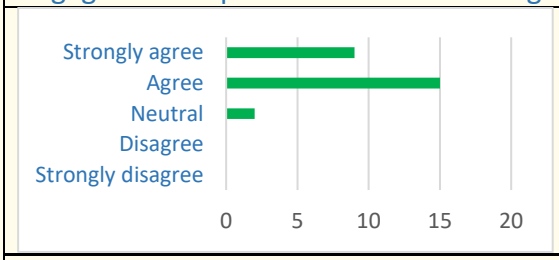
SURVEY OF PARTICIPANTS IN SCHOOL ON PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY, 3-7 OCTOBER 2022

Number of surveys returned: 26 (of 26 participants)

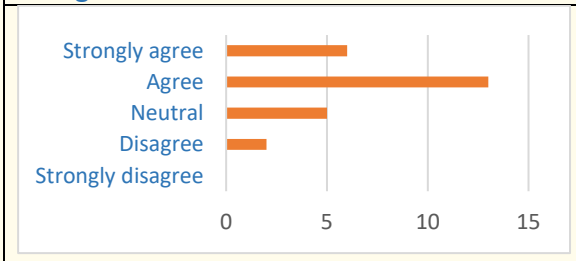
The School on Participatory Democracy increased your knowledge of international tools and practice in participatory democracy



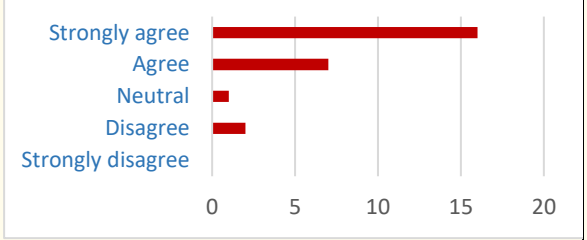
The School on Participatory Democracy increased your knowledge of Council of Europe standards and guidelines on civil engagement in political decision-making



The School on Participatory Democracy event contributed to strengthening mutual understanding between civil society actors and government officials



The School on Participatory Democracy gave you space for interaction and experience-sharing



FEEDBACK FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

"I will use the tools I learned in this school by adopting them in my day-to-day job, as well as with students and administration representatives and for working on public initiatives."

"I gained insights into different tools and most of them could be easily adapted to our local context."

"The event increased my ambitions towards involving citizens in politics and democracy."

"I have learned very useful toolkits to implement in my work in my municipality on strategic planning and interaction with stakeholders."

"In my work I will use the knowledge gained about the different tools – especially UChange and the public space planning tool – as I see their potential for increasing active participation among students."

"Citizens' assemblies, UChange, the Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit and public space planning tools will help in my work in the municipality."

"We gained insight into new methods, became acquainted with a new network, and discussed experiences with colleagues."

"The School expanded my horizons and broadened my knowledge on different ways to engage people in decision-making processes."

"The School has been very encouraging for debating the current situation of participatory democracy with local authorities."

"Both the Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit and UChange will be a big help to public authorities in my home municipality."

"I am very happily surprised at how streamlined and structured the application of some of the tools can be (especially CivicLab and UChange). I wish I had been aware of UChange during our efforts at youth mobilisation."

"I will implement some of the tools (UChange, School Participatory Budget)."

"Useful tools for our daily work."

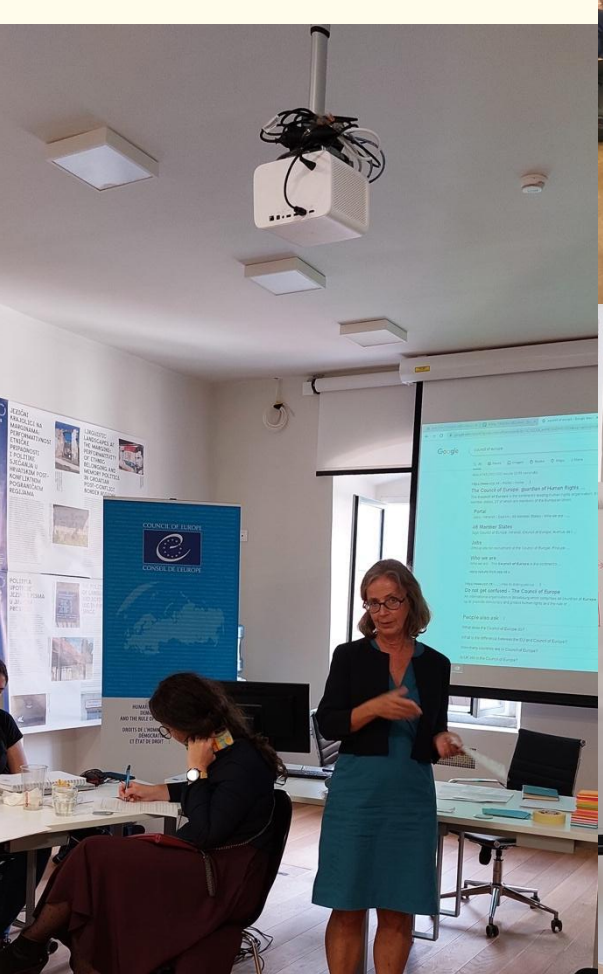
"As a result, I will make some changes in engaging citizens in public hearings and citizens' participation in decision-making."

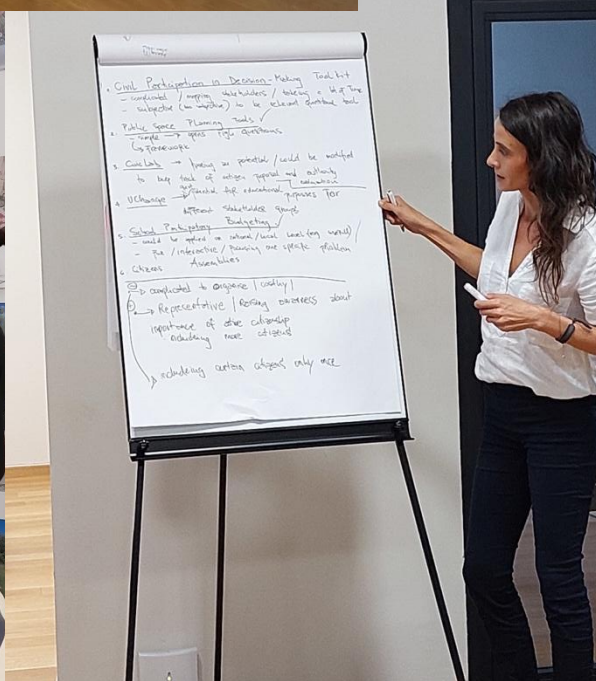
NEXT STEPS

The second phase of the training cycle will be tailor-made according to the needs of the participants. It will start with an individual training needs assessment and end with a closure meeting to reflect on the learning process and to share initial experiences with the practical application of the tools.

Planned schedule for the second phase:

- Training needs assessment (individually): November 2022
- Online focus group meetings (per country): January 2023
- 6 online courses: January - April 2023
- Closure meeting: April/May 2023





COUNCIL OF EUROPE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The following are the most relevant Council of Europe standards and guidelines regarding participation of citizens in political decision-making:

Guidelines for Civil Participation in Political Decision Making, Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2017): https://rm.coe.int/16807626cf

The Congress of the Council of Europe's Resolution and Recommendation on Transparency and Open Government, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (2018): https://rm.coe.int/16808d341c

The Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process, adopted by Conference of International NGOs of Council of Europe https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016802eed5c

European Charter of Local Self-Government, Council of Europe (1985): https://rm.coe.int/168007a088

The Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority, Council of Europe (2009): https://rm.coe.int/168008482a

Committee of Ministers Recommendation on the participation of citizens in local public life, Council of Europe (2018): https://rm.coe.int/090000168097e938

BePART Forum – A Tool from Practitioners for Practitioners

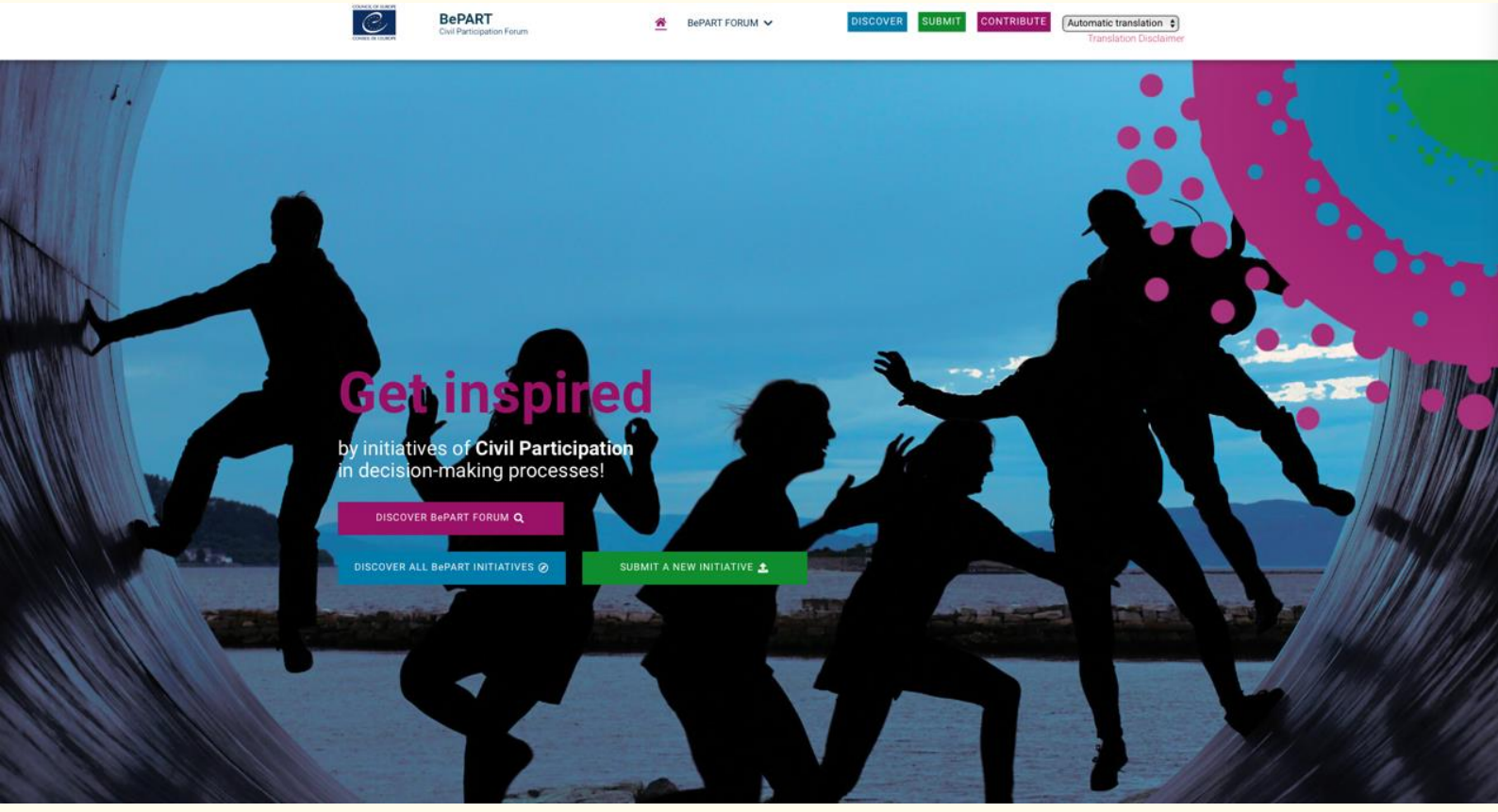
In order to share future experience of practical implementation of participatory initiatives, participants were introduced to the BePART platform and invited to use and promote it broadly.

https://bepartforum.org

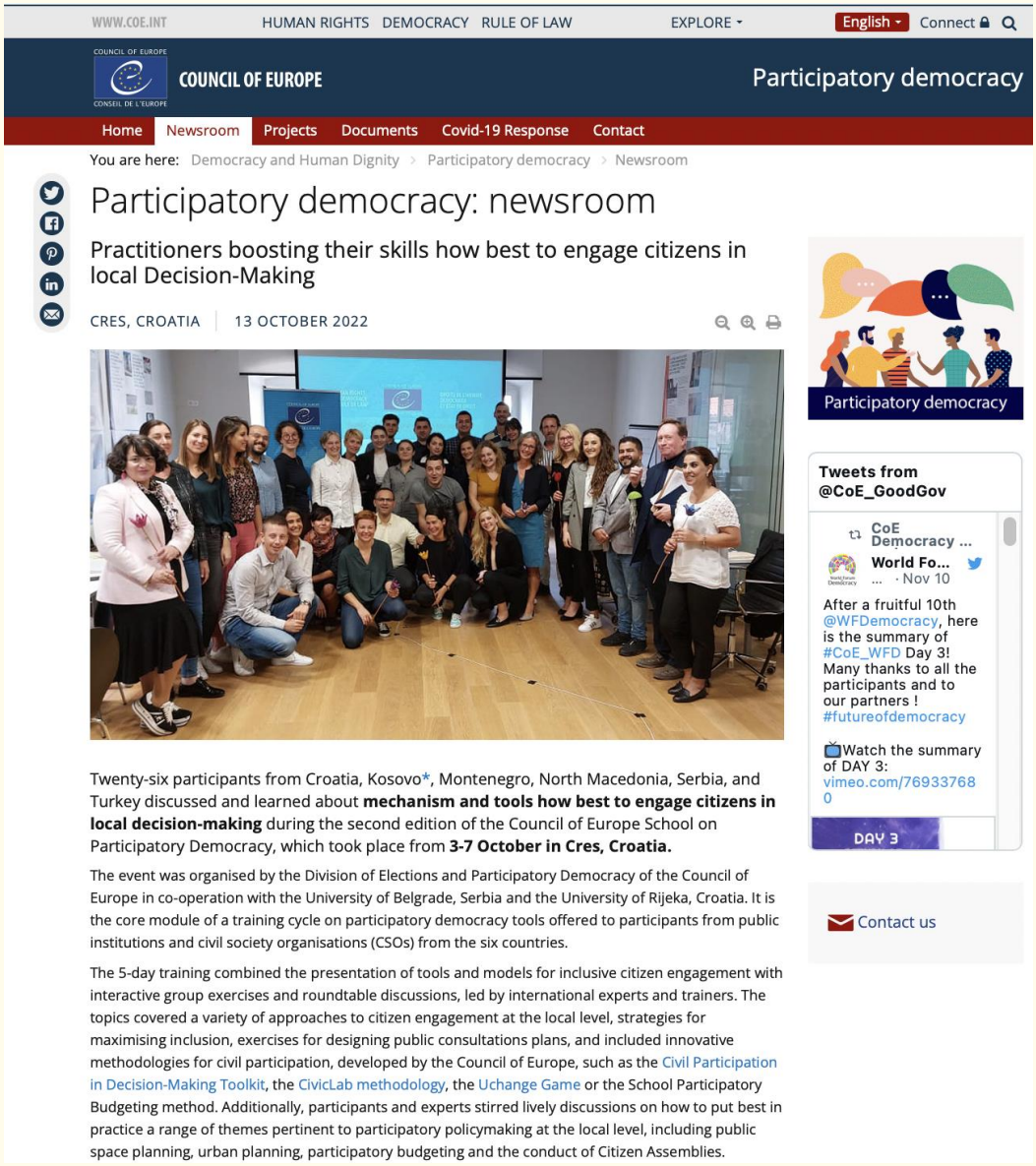
BePART provides an interactive overview of civil participation initiatives, collected from civil society organisations, public authorities, and researchers. It will help those who wish to develop participatory practices – for example on urban development, gender policy, environmental protection – and who wish to learn from challenges and lessons learned by others.

As an interactive online tool, it provides an overview of existing good practice examples, how citizens participate in political decision-making within their communities, and it allows civil society organisations (CSOs) as well as public institutions to feed in their experience. They can share their examples on the platform and give their views on other projects. The tool allows interested stakeholders to find initiatives from their region or field of interest to learn from the experiences or simply to network with their peers. BePART also provides links to the most relevant Council of Europe's standards and tools regarding civil participation.

The BePART Forum is a joint initiative of the Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity (DGII)/Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy, Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (CINGO) and of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.



DIVISION OF ELECTIONS AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY



https://www.coe.int/en/web/participatory-democracy