



# Introduction to climate assemblies

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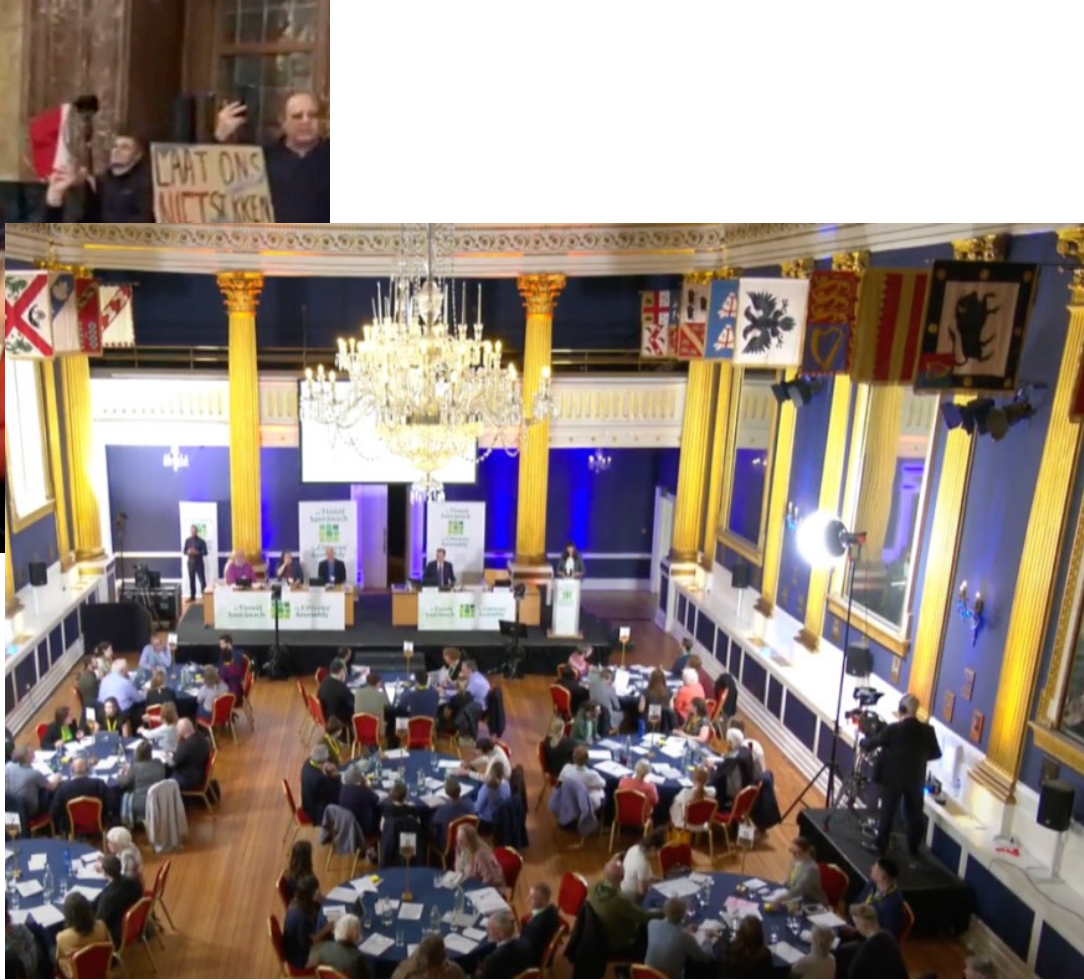
# As a brief reminder (or introduction): What is deliberative democracy (DD)?

- Random Representative Sample of Citizens
- Given a clear task and mandate
- Given enough time
- Balanced information
- Deliberate (thanks to facilitation)
- Make recommendations for policy

# What are then climate assemblies?

Climate assemblies bring together **everyday people selected by democratic lottery** to learn, **deliberate** and make recommendations on aspects of the climate crisis.

# There is a lot of participation...why some more?



# We make a “participation trade-off” in participation principles

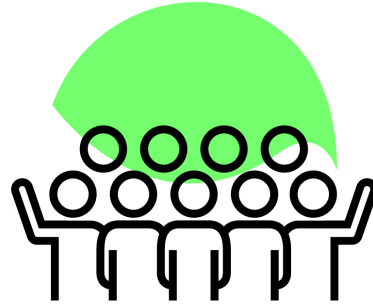
1. “Open”: everyone can participate
2. “Fair”: everyone should have an equal chance
3. “Transparent”: it should be visible to everyone how participants were selected and who was there.
4. “Rule-based”: things are done by following clear rules
5. “Representative”: the group should represent the wider population.

# We do this because it can improve climate governance!

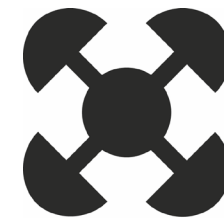
- ✓ More robust and ambitious climate policy that reflects the interests, needs and attitudes of citizens (public judgment)
- ✓ Break political deadlocks, increasing confidence and willingness of political leaders to act on climate
- ✓ Increased legitimacy and public acceptance of social action on climate, especially as transition begins to impact people more directly
- ✓ A more climate aware and politically confident citizenry that will take action on climate at individual and collective level

# Some more benefits (DD in general)

- Make governance more inclusive by opening the door to a much more diverse group of people.
- Strengthen integrity and prevent corruption by ensuring that groups and individuals with money and power cannot have undue influence on a public decision.
- Help counteract polarisation and disinformation.
- focus on long-term solutions beyond electoral cycles (e.g. MacKenzie & Caluwaerts, 2021, "Paying for the future: deliberation and support for climate action policies")



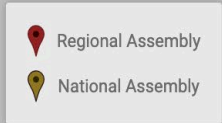
**DER KLIMARAT**



**Global Assembly**







# What do we know?

Everyday people are willing and able to learn, deliberate and come to robust recommendations on climate policy...

.... often proposing more progressive solutions than current policy

... but impact has been limited (but not insignificant!)

# Variety of impacts

## On policy

- Irish Climate Action Bill (2020) incorporated majority of recommendations from Citizens' Assembly 2016-18
- Climate and Resilience Bill (2021) translated some of the French Convention measures into law, although many modified – e.g., partial ban on domestic flights

## On institutions

- Climate Change Committee used CAUK recommendations to frame its Sixth Carbon Budget
- Joint Parliamentary Committee on Climate Action established to consider Irish recommendations made permanent
- Danish Climate Assembly given same status as (sectoral) social partnerships

## On public

- French Convention stimulated extensive public debate on climate transition raising salience amongst politicians
- Experimental and survey evidence suggests higher levels of trust and confidence compared to other political institutions

## On participants

- Strong and consistent effects on attitudes and behaviours (even on expert speakers...)

# Limitations in current practice

Past processes have not fully delivered on their promise.

Limitations tend to be connected to 4 main issues:

- The **definition of a relevant remit** – mandates too broad, trade-offs not identified, limited to “citizens’ issues”, non alignment with policy windows
- The **robustness and transparency** of the process - limited investments for recruitment, lack of accessible information, little scrutiny of the process, weak communication strategy
- The **scepticism of climate actors** - lack of understanding, challenge to established positions
- And/or its **integration in the political system** – lack of political will to integrate into decision making, lack of attention to the follow-up process

# Current debates

**Embedding participation** – as much attention (resources) on how the process will land within public administrations as on the engagement of citizens

**Institutionalisation** – moving from one-off processes to permanent climate assemblies that can be responsive to changing circumstances and policy opportunities – e.g., Brussels Capital Region, Milan, Bologna,...

**Radical potential** – social movement actors see sortition as method of challenging entrenched interests

# How to create the best conditions for this to succeed (no limitative...)

- Ambition! (you can take a slow start, but shift gears...)
- Follow-up needs to be serious and planned
- Think about your question (remit)
- Think about how this will “land” in your administration.  
Take them on board asap
- Budget the needed resources (not only money...)

# Use expertise (or consult information as much as you can)



SAVE THE DATE!



## ORGANISING A DEMOCRATIC LOTTERY

FIDE - POLICY RESEARCH



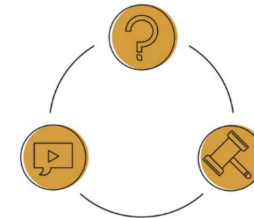
## HOW TO LINK RECOMMENDATIONS OF CITIZENS ASSEMBLIES TO POLICY MAKING ?

--- FIDE POLICY NOTE 01



## INCLUDING THE UNDER-REPRESENTED

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### Key drivers of impact

*How to unleash the potential of climate assemblies*