Best Practices

Citizen workshop

Citizen workshops are an opportunity to invite all residents to take part in collective consultation or decision-making. Organised by the local authority, the workshop brings together decision-makers, citizens, committee representatives and associations to co-create/co-design solutions for living together in their community. Participatory methods and appropriate workshop facilitation guarantee high-quality results.

Objectives

- Discuss with the citizens.
- Listen to their ideas and concerns on various topics.
- Discuss plans that interest them and that can be achievable in the short, medium, or long term.

Methods

Each citizen workshop should be facilitated using participatory methods, allowing every citizen to freely express their opinion.

The elements that can facilitate the process are as follows:

- A defined timing (e.g., 1 hour, 2 hours, etc.);
- Facilitation by a competent moderator who can capture the essence of the discussions and ensure that all participants have the opportunity to speak;
- Work in small groups (e.g., 4 people around a table);
- The possibility to change groups;
- Choice of languages (official languages and/or English);
- A variety of methods to allow participants to express themselves (a mix of speaking, drawing, presenting, etc.).

Budget

- Costs for room rental as well as for providing drinks and meals.
- Promotion costs (flyers, announcements on social media, etc.).
- Cleaning fees (room, premises).

Materials

- **Materials:**
  Chairs, tables, drinks, light meals, projector, flipcharts.

- **Locations:**
  A venue, communal refreshment stands, cultural centers, alternative public cafés, community parks, etc.

Periodicity

1-2 times a year

Evaluation indicators

- Feedback from participants
- Feedback from moderators
- Number of ideas proposed
- Quality of the ideas proposed

Practical advice - DO's

- Send personalized letters in multiple languages to properly inform the citizens.
- Identify the target audience to whom you want to send these personalized letters.
- Clearly indicate the location and date of the workshop in the invitation.
- Provide drinks and food during the workshop.
- Ensure you have the necessary materials for your type of workshop (projector, pens, writable surfaces, movable partitions, etc.).
- Arrange childcare (in collaboration with the community center, youth center, etc.) to increase participation rates.
- Follow up and inform the attending citizens about the workshop results and the next steps.

Practical advice - DONT's

- Avoid inviting homogeneous groups of people.
- Avoid always inviting the same participants.
- Don’t forget to send the workshop report to the participants.
- Keep the results confidential and do not inform participants about what happens with these results.

Contact person/Possible partners

Intercultural Living Together Advisors,

The Advisory Commission on Intercultural Living Together and possibly other commissions,

Other institutions (steering committee of the Gemengepakt, youth center, etc.).

Additional information

Within the framework of the Gemengepakt vum interkulturelle Zesummeliewen, citizen workshops are usually organized once a year.