

Best Practices

Citizens' consultation hour

The *Citizens' consultation hour* is a mechanism for direct dialogue, either in person or by telephone, between residents of a municipality and local political decision-makers. Its aim is to strengthen citizen participation by providing a space for listening where residents can express their questions, suggestions, or concerns in a respectful and confidential setting.

During the *Citizens' consultation hour*, residents are welcomed individually by members of the mayor and aldermen's board, either in person at municipal premises or through a telephone interview. These exchanges make it possible to address a wide range of topics related to local life, ongoing projects, or any other matter of general interest. Topics may be defined in advance to allow for appropriate preparation of the discussions.

For the municipality and its representatives, the *Citizens' consultation hour* is a valuable tool for active listening and participatory governance. It enables a better understanding of residents' expectations, helps anticipate local issues, and allows municipal policies to be adapted, while strengthening trust, transparency, and the quality of dialogue between elected officials and the population.

Objectives

- Encourage residents' engagement in community life
- Establish direct and regular dialogue between the population and political decision-makers
- Offer residents the opportunity to express their questions, ideas, and concerns
- Strengthen mutual understanding of local issues and municipal governance
- Ensure a respectful, confidential, and constructive framework for dialogue
- Support the co-creation of municipal projects and decisions



Methods

- Appoint a person responsible for coordinating and organizing the *Citizens' consultation hour*
- Define a clear framework prior to implementation (open exchanges or discussions around predefined themes)
- Offer regular dates over an extended period to ensure continuity of the initiative
- Set up an appointment booking system to organize individual exchanges
- Inform residents about how the Citizen Hour works and the topics that can be discussed
- Use various communication channels to promote the initiative
- Ensure the presence of members of the mayor and aldermen's board to welcome and engage with citizens
- Guarantee a respectful, confidential, and supportive setting for constructive dialogue

Budget

The implementation of the *Citizens' consultation hour* does not require any additional budget. It mainly relies on the time commitment of the members of the mayor and aldermen's board, as well as on municipal administrative staff, making use of existing resources.

Materials

- Chairs and tables to welcome participants in a comfortable setting
- Note-taking materials (paper, pens) to record discussions and proposals
- Information materials (municipal documents, explanatory sheets, forms)
- If necessary, a projector or screen for presenting themes or general information
- Beverages (and possibly light refreshments) to create a friendly atmosphere
- Basic IT equipment (computer, tablet), if needed
- Communication tools for organizing and managing appointments

Periodicity

- Once a month, preferably on a fixed day, in the late afternoon, in the evening, or on weekends, in order to be accessible to as many people as possible, especially those who are professionally active.



Evaluation indicators

- Number of participants
- Number of individual exchanges conducted
- Number of topics discussed
- Number, quality, and relevance of proposals made
- Feedback from residents and members of the board of aldermen

Practical advice - DO's

- Ensure a respectful and confidential environment that allows each person to express themselves freely
- Allocate an appropriate duration for each individual exchange (e.g., 15 minutes per appointment)
- Organize sessions at times accessible to residents
- Facilitate access for people without personal transportation
- Thank the members of the board and municipal staff for their commitment to the initiative

Practical advice - DONT's

- Do not get discouraged in case of limited participation during the first sessions: the *Citizens' consultation hour* is part of a long-term process
- Maintain continuous communication and promotion, including after the first editions
- Persevere in case of low initial participation and adapt the format if necessary
- Ensure careful follow-up of requests and proposals expressed by citizens

Contact person/Possible partners

<http://- Heure citoyenne - Sandweiler>

<https://www.leudelange.lu/fr/la-commune/vie-politique/permanence-citoyenne/>

<https://www.niederanven.lu/fr/politique/le-bourgmestre>

<https://www.steinfort.lu/la-commune/college-echevinal>

