



Project: The Citizens Climate Assembly



Place: Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, and Scotland

Dates: January 2016 – December 2017

Type of cooperation: European cooperation

Partners:

Region of Wallonne, Belgium
APERe network, Belgium
LAG Beaujolais Vert, France
DEeNET, Germany
Community Energy Scotland, UK
RURENER

Key Numbers: 500 citizens directly affected by the project

Project's objectives:

The Citizens Climate Assembly is a participatory democracy initiative around environment issues. It is intended to contribute to a more just and sustainable world. For this, citizens debate issues around the environment and climate change (adaptation, mitigation in the territory. There are two innovative components to this project:

- Participants are randomly selected ensuring a diverse assembly.
- The articulation of public policy. Assembly resolutions and recommendations are presented to the local and regional councils. These debates thus help the territory work towards goals (example: energy neutrality by 2025)

Unanimously adopted by the Provincial Council in November 2014, the foundation for the debate is based on the TEPOS charter under the auspices of their energy neutrality goal for 2050. Joining the Assembly will be experts who will help make the connection between daily civilian activity and environmental challenges in the region. In addition to the experts, the Assembly will also be connected with politicians, businesses, and organizations.

Operational objectives:

- Constitute a new method of engaging citizens around environment, and climate.
- Ensure the diversity of citizen opinions by randomly selecting participants
- Host citizens' debates, nourished by information provided by experts, in a manner that connects the daily practices of the community with the environmental challenges in the region and helps identify common interests.

- Involve politicians, businesses and organizations in the process.
- Formulate concrete proposals for local and regional councils, develop action tools
- Share results with other territories to build a model for territorial dialogue.

Actions:

- Training for European partners by original organizing team in Belgium.
- Organisation of 10 Citizens Climate Assemblies in member countries: over the course of two weekends, citizens will engage in a debate around climate issues and work to produce a list of suggested ways to address climate change in their region
- Organisation of two European Citizen Climate Assemblies uniting citizens from each Assembly in Brussels (June 2016) and Germany (Fall 2017).

Levers:

The successful Belgium experience of Citizen Climate Assembly serves as a good illustration of the impacts that can have such project. The operational team of the experiment in Belgium will also be involved for training the new territories involved to the method.

Barriers:

The main difficulty for this project was to mobilize elected representative to support the project in order to have the other stakeholders on board. Territorial dialogue relies on the involvement of all the stakeholders. Barriers at the political level prevented the project to be successfully implemented, even though some representatives were involved and supporting.

Added value of cooperation:

- Addressing the question of citizen’s involvement in energy projects through a cooperation project reinforces the legitimacy of such an innovative project and motivates the stakeholders.
- Build a European framework for territorial dialogue on energy issues

Budget:

INDICATIVE BUDGET OF THE BELGIUM EXPERIMENT

Budgeted Expenses for Citizens Climate Assembly 01/01/14-15/11/15		
Types of expenses	Descriptions of expenses	Amount
Citizens	Meals, Lodging, Compensation	12 071
Random selection	Sonecom	17 000
Experts		2 400
Staff	Moderation, coordination	57 000
	Site	496
Administration	Letters of Invitation	1 000
	Copies, transportation, other	4 750
Publicity/Communication		2 320
TOTAL EXPENSES		100 233