PERITIA

Policy, Expertise and Trust

Working Paper and Guidelines on Holding Citizens' Fora in 5 Capital Cities

Deliverable 11.1

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1   CONTEXT

We organised citizens' fora for small groups of 30-35 participants to discuss the question 'What urban transport policy changes are citizens prepared to accept in the context of climate change?' across five capital cities. Each forum engaged three experts: an academic, a journalist and a non-governmental organisation (NGO) representative. Each gave presentations on the topic of urban transport and climate change, and provided three policy options that could be implemented. Participants debated the evidence in small groups and prioritised the recommendations that they wanted to see. This format was built upon the experience of David Farrell and Jane Suiter from University College Dublin in running deliberative mini-publics (DMPs) that directly involve members of the public with experts on policy decisions. The aim was to bring together citizens and experts to engage in information exchange, public reflection and deliberation on topics that are of general concern and significance – in this case, transport and climate change. In doing so, these mini publics were intended to inform and engage the public directly in decision-making regarding one of the most pressing but also controversial topics confronting society – climate change. By combining experts' presentations, group discussions and voting, these workshops were designed to both unpack the basis of trustworthiness of different types of experts and evidence and to assess the impact of such encounters in informing how people understand and prioritise policy solutions to c*limate change.*

2   DESIGN & DELIVERY

2.1   Developing a Discussion Guide

Participants began the day by discussing their levels of concern about climate change and those who are responsible for addressing the climate crisis. This included prompts on where they get their information from, their views about key actors in the sphere of climate change, what they see those actors' roles as being in addressing the crisis as well as what motivates them.

After this introductory session, participants heard from three expert presentations in plenary (for description of content, see "Experts"). Each talk was followed by a Q&A (in plenary) with the expert. Participants were then split into smaller breakout groups to discuss the evidence presented, with the experts joining each table for around 5 minutes each to answer any specific questions from that table. In the breakout discussion, participants were asked to react to the evidence presented (e.g., did they trust the information provided? Did they find any facts surprising?) and how credible they found the expert to be. They were also asked to share their views on the policy changes proposed and how practical those would be to implement in their city.

Where possible, experts were asked to send summaries of their presentations in advance, so that key facts could be made available on a handout on each table, for reference. Where this was not possible, key points were summarised in the discussion guide so that the moderator could refer back to them, should queries arise. As such, it was essential to approach the experts well ahead of time so that, optimally, we could receive the presentations at least a week in advance to feed this information into stimulus. This also ensured that presentation topics would not be duplicated, and, in the case of Warsaw, a single presentation template was used. Equally, the suggestion was made after the Dublin workshop to have every presenter use PowerPoint slides as participants found it harder to engage when experts spoke without visual stimuli.

After the presentations, participants were asked to work together to prioritise which policy would be most effective and equitable in addressing climate change in turn, and were given the option to suggest their own if they had an idea that hadn't been covered. In prioritising their favourite policy, they were asked to consider the trade-offs involved and how they should be balanced, as well as to reflect on who would be responsible for enacting the policy and whether they trusted them to do so.

Throughout the day, the discussions were also interspersed with two snap polls via 'Mentimeter' and a sticker voting exercise. This encouraged participants to make a choice between different policy options, to see how their preference related to that of their peers, and to ensure quieter participants felt their opinions were heard. This included:

- How effective do you think changes to urban transport would be in reducing the impact of climate change? (Mentimeter poll)

- How practical would the changes proposed be? (Mentimeter poll)
- Which policy will have the biggest impact on climate change? (Sticker voting)
- Which policy will cause the most disruption for society? (Sticker voting)
- Which is your preferred policy? (Sticker voting)

Participants also completed pre- and post-workshop surveys, which enabled us to capture attitudinal shifts across the day. This covered:

- Concern about, and levels of knowledge and awareness of the climate crisis
- Dispositions towards policy action on climate change
- Their own behaviours in relation to the environment
- Trust in institutions to give accurate information, along with assessments of competence, honesty, self-interest and following rules
- Assessments of the speakers
- Which groups are positive/negatively impacted by the policy ideas proposed
- Support or opposition for policy ideas discussed

2.2 Training Facilitators and Notetakers

Training was provided to both facilitators and notetakers to ensure that the series of smaller group discussions would run smoothly on the day. A key element of facilitation is setting up the ground rules for the discussion and the tone for the day in order to create a safe environment where all participants feel confident and able to contribute their thoughts and opinions. Facilitators were also briefed on the five stages of group formation, and how their role will change throughout the day as the group dynamic develops. They were also given some practical tips on how to deal with particularly dominant or quiet participants as well as conflicts or questions that they personally cannot answer.

Notetaker training focused on ensuring there was consistency across the notes for all smaller group discussions and maintaining anonymity of participants (notetakers were asked not to use names, but numbers that had been assigned to each participant). Audio recordings of all discussions were later used to supplement the notes with verbatim quotes. Notetakers were advised to include their own clearly designated observations of how the group was reacting or general themes that were emerging. The notetakers were also provided with a template to ensure consistency across the workshop, and to clearly indicate when during the day these discussions occurred.

2.3 Recruitment

For all workshops, recruitment was performed by third parties to ensure a wide variety of viewpoints and backgrounds contributed to the discussions. In order to do this, minimum requirements were set for certain criteria during the screening process, including concern over climate change, primary mode of transport, and demographic factors such as gender, and

ethnicity. Some local contexts precluded selecting for ethnicity due to legal, political and social conventions. In the cases of Germany, for example, the recruitment company could not ask for potential participants' ethnicity, due to sensitivities and tensions arising out of historical policies of racial and ethnic discrimination. The company instead asked potential participants to designate themselves as German, EU, or non-EU. Recruitment procedures are therefore highly variable and should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with consideration of local laws, customs, and historical tensions. Armenia and Poland, for example, also did not select for ethnicity.

Given that each workshop focused on transport systems within a particular city, all participants, regardless of local context, were either located in or nearby the city under discussion, as familiarity with the status quo was essential. In addition, the participant screener included questions regarding attitudes towards climate change and the current adjustments that citizens had made to help the environment, to ensure there was a mix of views present within the discussions. Unlike other DMPs or citizens' fora on this subject, we chose not to exclude 'climate deniers' or those that held extreme views against climate change, as the individuals who hold these views may be of particular interest when assessing trust or lack thereof in experts and actors in this sphere. The proportion of attitudes towards the climate and travel for each country were defined to reflect the country specific results of a parallel PERITIA survey data.

Where possible, we asked the recruiter to aim for a mix of people who use different transport modes, with at least six who walk or cycle, who use public transport and who drive as their primary or secondary mode of transport, to ensure different experiences of urban transport were represented. We also included a minimum of 10% of participants to have experience of a disability or long-term health condition as this may directly impact their ability to make adjustments to their travel behaviour. Again, this factor could not be included in recruitment in some of the local contexts.

2.4 Engaging Experts

Given the cross-country nature of this project, we needed to select categories of experts that were prevalent and held similar positions in society across five countries to provide differing perspectives on the subject matter. These experts were identified on the basis of being key actors in the discussion around climate change and its mitigation, who could be potential sources of information for citizens' engagement with the topic. These were defined as: an academic, to present how urban transport systems contribute to climate change and models of transport choices in cities; a journalist, to present the state of play for local transport policy and how it is supported by the state; and finally, a representative from a non-governmental organisation, to present three policy options for urban transport reforms to address climate change. The three expert presenters (who present in the order specified) reflect the three stages

of a deliberative mini public: the learning phase, the deliberation phase and, finally, the recommendations.

It should be noted that during the first DMP which took place in London, we opened the day with a video from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) covering the basics of climate change and approaches for mitigation to set the scene for the day. However, this was dropped after this workshop, as participants felt it was too much like a sales pitch. In the subsequent workshops, this video was replaced by the inclusion of basic climate change facts in the opening presentation by the respective chair. An exercise was additionally introduced following the London workshop, in which participants were asked to collectively sort various climate change actors by levels of responsibility and trustworthiness, to help add structure to the discussion of people involved in climate change and their role. This exercise (as opposed to the video) seemed to create greater momentum in terms of opening up discussions and assisting in group formation.

The table on the following page includes information on all of experts used across all five DMPs.

	Academic	Journalist	NGO
London	Enrica Papa (Transport Planning, University of Westminster)	Christian Wolmar (Freelance transport journalist)	Richard Hebditch (Director of Transport and Environment)
Berlin	Diego Rybski (Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research)	Jörg Staude (*klimareporter*)	Sandra Wappelhorst (International Council on Clean Transportation)
Dublin	Lisa Ryan (School of Economics at University College Dublin)	Kevin O'Sullivan (*The Irish Times*)	Oisín Coghlan (Friends of the Earth Ireland)
Warsaw	Anna Urbanek (University of Economics in Katowice)	Michał Jamroż (*Gazeta Wyborcza Trójmiasto*)	Hubert Różyk (Electric Vehicles Promotion Foundation)
Yerevan	Astghine Pasoyan (American University of Armenia)	Anahit Minasyan (*Urbanista*)	Hayk Zalibekyan (Architect and Civil Society Representative)

The experts were asked to prepare a 10-minute presentation according to the following briefs:

- Academic: present basic evidence towards climate change in an accessible way for participants to respond to, thereby establishing a baseline understanding of the topic that is consistent across countries, and provide a few case studies.
- Journalist: provide participants with the opportunity to understand the current situation locally with regard to urban transport planning and the future direction of travel.
- NGO: provide participants with information about possible policy responses and their intended impact, tailored to the local context.

Largely, experts delivered PowerPoint presentations, however, the precise format and the type of evidence presented varied greatly between experts and cities. Generally, academic experts presented statistics supported by graphs, supplemented by citations to other papers and

studies. In contrast, journalists tended to rely heavily on anecdotal evidence and on photography in their presentations, which particularly included images of areas known to the participants. Similar to the academics, NGO representatives incorporated numbers and statistics relating to specific policy measures, but with fewer references to the sources of their information.

2.5   Balancing Comparative and Locally-Specific Elements

Conducting the workshops across countries required a balance between elements that remained the same between countries to ensure we could make comparisons, as well as elements that were tailored to the different contexts for each city. We kept the approach and methodology for each workshop as consistent as possible, to allow for cross-comparative work that may reveal factors that are universal to trustworthiness, and those that are context specific. However, due to the practicalities of running five workshops in vastly different locations and ensuring relevancy for maximal participant engagement and successful deliberation, city specific adjustments to were necessary.

For example, while the experts were briefed with the same set of questions to address, the material they presented in each city varied. Hence the stimulus varied across all cities. Yet the prompts for breakout discussions were consistent across all workshops, enabling comparison of results across workshops, even if the ideas discussed were different. Moreover, the opening and closing sections of the day had the same stimulus across cities (i.e., the 'badge exercise' in the opening session and the prioritisation of reforms in the latter).

The questions asked in pre- and post-workshop surveys were also asked consistently across countries, except for the policies they would support (which were derived from the NGO presentation). And participants were also polled at multiple points throughout the day on common questions such as 'How effective do you think changes in urban transportation will be in mitigating climate change and its impacts?'.

2.6   Data analysis and processing

The workshops generated a wide range of data:

- Demographic data from the screening questionnaire (conducted via phone interview in advance of the workshop)
- Pre- and post-workshop surveys (conducted on paper and subsequently digitised)
- Transcripts of breakout discussions (transcribed from audio recordings by supplementing notes)
- Results from sticker exercises and Menti polls (conducted on paper and digitised or conducted online)
- Transcripts from follow-up interviews (transcribed or summarised from audio recordings)

All of the above data have been processed and analysed in structured ways.

Descriptive counts from the surveys, sticker exercises and polls were produced in Excel. Responses to pre- and post-workshop surveys were also linked using a unique ID, which allows us to cross-reference survey responses to each respondent's contribution to the discussions in the workshop and (if applicable) follow-up interviews. Responses to the pre-workshop survey were also analysed using the same Latent Class Analysis approach, as used in the cross-national PERITIA survey in D8.3, which means we will be able to use the qualitative insights from the DMPs to further inform our understanding of the mindsets detected in populations overall. In practice, this means that we can profile each participant as having one of the four mindsets we detected in the national survey: Engaged and alert, informed by unworried, concerned but complacent, and disengaged and disinterested.

Transcripts from the workshop and interviews are currently being analysed using NVivo, using a grounded theory approach. This means that we are capturing information that has emerged organically from the data, rather than imposing structures on it. We developed this code frame iteratively across five rounds of iteration, working with a team of two coders and a third adjudicator, who advised on items that were in or out of scope. As a result, we are capturing the following types of information:

- What is the frame of reference when participants contribute to the discussion (i.e., are they directly referring to evidence presented by the speakers, something they've read in the news or heard from a friend, something they've experience, or is it just a general assertion of opinion?)
- How do participants understand the climate crisis?
  - What is their level of concern? – including, severity of concern, timeframe referred to, reason give for concern (or lack of)
  - What sorts of examples do people give when talking about climate change? And in which countries / regions are they situated?
  - What causes do people associate with climate change?
- How do participants react to the evidence presented?
  - How do they react to each type of speaker and their style of delivery?
  - What points in the presentation resonate the most with them? And why?
- How do people feel about actions that are currently being taken to address climate change?
  - To what extent to people focus on their own individual actions or more structural actions when talking about addressing climate change?
  - In the case of their own actions, what do they say they should be doing to address climate change, in the context of urban transport? To what extent are they already doing it? What limits their own actions and why?

- o In the case of wider structural factors, what actions do people talk about? Where are they taking place? How do people judge their efficacy and what reasons do they give for this?
- o For both, what principles underly how they assess actions taken on climate change?
- Who do people see as being involved in addressing climate change? How do they feel towards them (ie sentiment)? At what stage of the policy cycle do they see their involvement as being most important? And how do they imagine their involvement?
- What policies do participants think are the most important to prioritise in the future? Which do they oppose?
  - o Why do they support or oppose this policy?
  - o What are the main areas of trade-off that they consider to get to this position?

Data collection is still underway for the follow-up interviews. However, the analysis (which will commence in May) will follow the same approach.

3 REFLECTIONS ON THE PRACTICALITIES OF DELIVERY

As indicated above, each local context faced challenges specific to the city in question that needed to be accommodated. Going through each context case by case, certain patterns do emerge, however, what is most striking is the need to adapt a broad set of characteristics of the DMP to the locality in which it is held.

3.1 London

Following the workshop in London, KCL and SAS concluded that the recruitment screener should include more obvious questions to identify climate deniers and potentially exclude them. Breakout groups were assigned to participants with the aim of containing a mixture of attitudes towards climate change, combined with demographic data collected during participant recruitment. Participants' views on climate change were determined by answers to the question 'How concerned are you about the environment?'. However, this question appears to have been misleading as one breakout group of participations contained multiple people who were climate deniers, which derailed some of the discussions. It was evidently an unpleasant experience for them to sit through the presentations and meant engaging with different policy options was quite difficult. Therefore the protocol for table assignment was indeed changed and further developed to ensure that the groups comprised people who held a variety of degrees of anxiety about climate change, and that no group contained more than one participant with an extreme 'denier' view.

It was further decided to shorten the length of the day, and shorten or remove the IPCC video, which was seen by some as an 'advert'. The question was also raised whether to include stimulus materials on the tables (drawn from the expert presentations), as they largely remained unused

by both the facilitators and the participants themselves until the last session, and possibly drew attention away from the speakers. Warsaw, however, found them to be very useful, so this is likely a factor to be decided upon by local partners. This also seemed to be missing from the Berlin workshop, as many of the participants couldn't recall facts or statistics they'd heard and wished they had the materials in front of them. It was also noted that engagement style needed to be tracked or analysed, as the quality and style of the delivery of the expertise varied greatly between the speakers. This was evident in the contrast between the veracity index that reflected very low levels of trust in journalists, and yet the fact that participants took up the evidence presented by the journalist, who had a very charismatic and informal speaking style.

During the workshop, particularly in the recommendations phase, participants were concerned about the upfront costs associated with technological solutions. The workshop took place right after the 'mini budget' was introduced in the UK, so cost of living and rising prices was at the forefront for many people.

3.2   Berlin

In comparison with London, the participants at the Berlin workshop were ethnically very homogenous, with broadly a greater and more aligned level of concern regarding the climate crisis, much higher levels of enthusiasm and willingness to be recontacted across a higher number of people, and a greater proportion of people who identified as being 'environmentally conscious', e.g., who conscientiously do not own a car. Table assignments were made on the basis of how participants answered, 'Do you donate time or money to climate change orgs?' as well as gender and age. It was also noted that more controls for the speakers might be needed – experts ran over time by quite a lot, while many of the participants shared that they found the discussions the most enjoyable part of the workshop. Indeed, the chair extended the first discussion round from 15 to 25 minutes, which yielded more fluid discussion and seemed to accelerate group formation.

The suggestion was additionally made to incorporate into the facilitator's guide for subsequent workshops polling by facilitators of the table to gauge if the usage of informal second-person would be acceptable.

When groups were asked to vote via Mentimeter, the results were displayed only after the voting window had been closed, in contrast to London. Finally, the last plenary session was skipped/curtailed due to lack of time (summary by the chair of the most important points during the prioritisation exercise), so that participants could fill out their surveys.

A further point was raised in connection with the need for analysis of engagement style, namely, taking note of the difference between participants' reactions to the presentations and their engagement with the speaker and their expertise when that person was seated at the participants' table. There was a contrast between participants criticising or dismissing the

presentation and their apparent receptiveness to the expertise when the knowledge transfer happened interpersonally in small groups, in a peer-to-peer structure.

3.3   Dublin

While the Dublin DMP began smoothly with participants engaging in the process, after the lunch break one participant became disruptive by talking over other participants and dominating the conversation. Although this participant's contribution was relevant, the question was posed whether combative personalities should be screened out by asking for free form answers during the recruitment process. It was also advised to have designated back-up note takers and facilitators due to illness and, if feasible, create five smaller breakout groups rather than four larger ones where it may be easier for quieter participants to engage more. Additionally, an extra voice recorder was deemed necessary at each table to capture the full range of discussion and alleviate the possibility of only capturing participants near the recorder. The further suggestion was made to remove any mention of overwhelming scientific consensus to climate change (that 99.9% of climate scientists agree that climate change is human induced was presented to the participants at the beginning of the DMP), or to state, 'This is survey data, and people will differ on an individual level which is what we want to collect today' in order to make sceptics have a better experience.

Additionally, it was noted that there exists a need for a diversity of opinions for any kind of meaningful deliberation to take place, which is difficult to achieve through the recruitment process, although the recruitment agency was given guidelines for recruitment on attitudes to climate change and transport modal choice. Finally, it was observed that the sticker exercises were effective for participants to continuing to engage, as it broke up the day and got them moving around a bit. The participants also seemed to take their duties very seriously, and engaged meaningfully with the experts when they came to the tables during the breakout sessions.

The participants were grateful for the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion around the topics of the day and appreciated being 'heard' in this regard.

3.4   Warsaw

To incorporate reflections from the previous workshops, the local partners in Warsaw implemented certain measures including: condensing the opening introduction, having more robust indicators of climate change deniers to exclude them from participating, and shortening the length of the day.

Moreover, unlike London, Berlin and Dublin, participants did not use the Mentimeter tool; instead, they answered questions by selecting individual answers on printed boards (analogous to the sticker exercise). This form enabled the exercise to be completed more quickly, but on

the other hand, the visibility of the answers may have influenced decisions taken by individuals. Furthermore, the format allowed for discussions of the choices during the voting exercise.

Additionally, the recruiting company drew on its experience to avoid inviting people with a very extreme view of climate change as well as experts in the field. It was also reported that meeting with the recruiting company to discuss all organisational details greatly facilitated the implementation of the study. Thanks to this, organisers avoided duplication of the same information in the presentations, but also allowed the implementation of questions about each presentation to the discussion guide for facilitators prior to the workshop.

3.5 Yerevan

This occasion marked the first time a DMP had been held in Armenia. As Yerevan was the last of the five cities to hold a DMP, the organizers and the co-chairs greatly benefited from the lessons learned from sessions held in other cities. The lessons were integrated into clear-to-follow guidelines.

A high level of engagement by the participants was reported. The organisers were impressed by the participants' appreciation of the opportunity to understand and weigh into questions of both local and global significance; and that they felt included and empowered.

There appeared to be a low level of understanding of climate change issues. It was reported that the speakers were very successful at providing information. The breakout group discussions were also very useful. The participants were observed to be uninterested in the subject though stated they did not know much about it. However, after being provided with information on climate change and its connection with transportation, they were actively engaged in discussions on options and solutions.

Finally, a question was raised by participants on how their input will be used in policy implementation processes. One participant, a schoolteacher, asked if such processes can be conducted in schools. She believed that it introduced a useful approach to learning and applying knowledge to social change. Another participant wondered if a process like that can be done on TV, as a way of introducing a culture of deliberation and greater constructive public engagement in policy discussions.