

3 Key trends

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This chapter highlights key trends in the use of representative deliberative processes for public decision making from 1986 to October 2019 across OECD Member countries.

It presents an overview of two waves of interest in the use of representative deliberative processes over time, their use at different levels of government, the popularity of different deliberative models, types of policy issues that have been addressed using these processes, average cost, and types of organisations that were commissioned to implement them.

Introduction

Drawing on the new empirical research collected for this report, this chapter highlights key trends in the use of representative deliberative processes (referred to interchangeably as deliberative processes for shorthand) to better understand their workings and impact. This chapter is mostly descriptive, with more in-depth analysis in Chapter 4.

It covers key international trends regarding representative deliberative processes in the following seven dimensions:

- Their overall use in OECD Member countries
- Different waves of interest in their use over time
- Their use at different levels of government
- The popularity of each deliberative model
- Types of policy issues that have been addressed using these processes
- Average cost
- Types of organisations that were commissioned/assigned to implement the processes by public authorities.

Overview of key findings

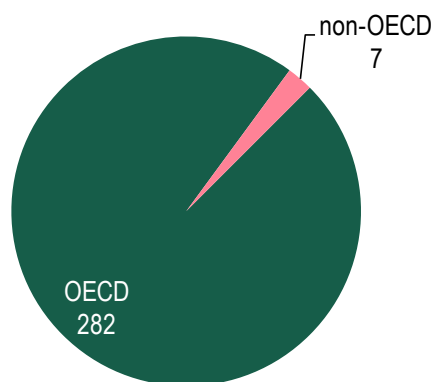
Overall, the evidence shows that:

- To date, OECD Member countries have been paving the way for representative deliberative processes in the international context.
- Since 2010, there has been a notable trend for public authorities to increasingly use representative deliberative processes for public decision making.
- Representative deliberative processes have been carried out at all levels of government, and have been most popular on at the local level (52% of cases).
- The Citizens' Jury/Citizens' Panel is the most widely used model of representative deliberative process to date (used 115 times, 41% of all cases).
- Europe is the region with the largest variety of models of representative deliberative processes used by public authorities for public decision making (amongst OECD Member countries and overall). All models have been used in Europe (Figure 3.7).
- The range of policy issues addressed using representative deliberative processes has been wide and increasing. The issues that are addressed most often are those that have a direct impact on citizens' everyday lives and those to which citizens can easily contribute their personal opinions and experiences: urban planning and health.
- Local and regional/state level representative deliberative processes are commonly concerned with urban and strategic planning, infrastructure, and health questions. National and international ones are most often about environment and technology policy issues.
- To date, the cost of representative deliberative processes varies greatly depending on the model chosen, the length of the process, and the number of participants. Based on available data, it ranges from 13 thousand to 1.8 million euros.
- Representative deliberative processes are most often delivered by a private sector partner specialising in citizen participation and deliberation (37%) or a non-governmental, non-profit organisation (29%).

The use of representative deliberative processes in OECD Member countries

Over the years, the vast majority (282 out of 289) of the representative deliberative processes collected for this report took place in OECD Member countries (Figure 3.1). The seven deliberative processes that occurred in non-member countries took place in Argentina, Brazil, China and Mongolia. All seven of these processes were Deliberative Polls.

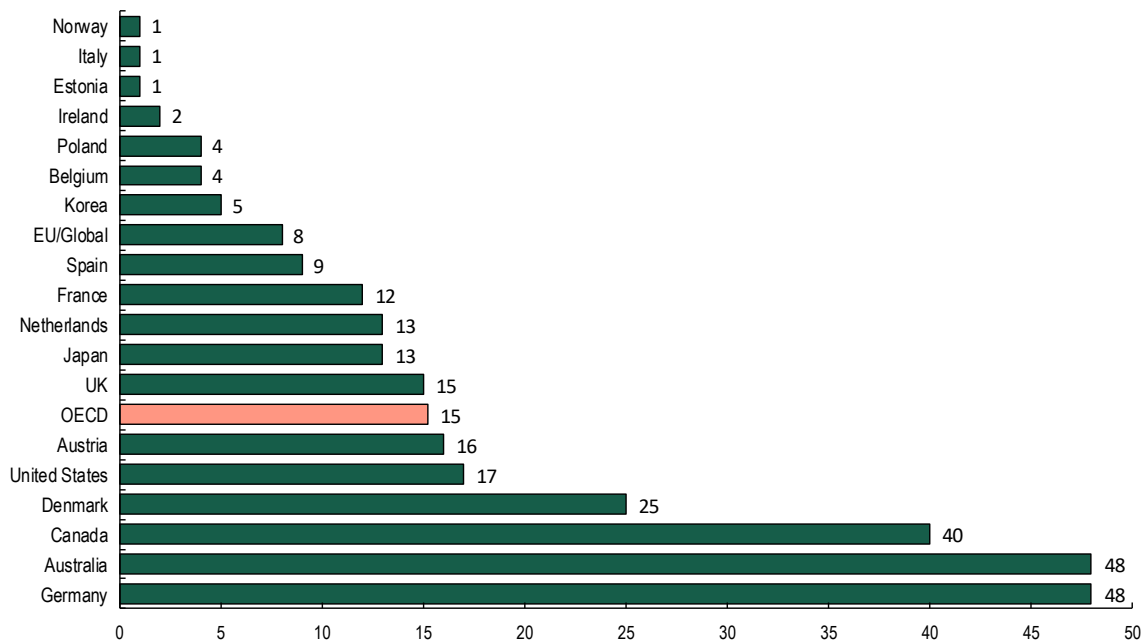
Figure 3.1. Number of representative deliberative processes in OECD Member and non-Member countries, 1986-2019



Note: n=289; Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union. Non-OECD countries are Argentina, Brazil, China, and Mongolia.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

The cases that the OECD has collected in this report are from the countries in Figure 3.2. This figure is not a ranking, nor is it representative of all the cases in a country. It is a graphic representation of the number of cases that the OECD has collected. The countries with the largest number of cases are also those in which a number of the deliberative models were initiated: the Planning Cell originates in Germany, the Citizens' Assembly in Canada, and the Consensus Conference in Denmark.

Figure 3.2. Number of representative deliberative processes per country, 1986-2019

Notes: n=282. Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union. This figure is not a ranking, nor is it representative of all the cases in a country. It is a graphic representation of the number of cases that the OECD has collected. Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Waves of interest in the use of representative deliberative processes over time

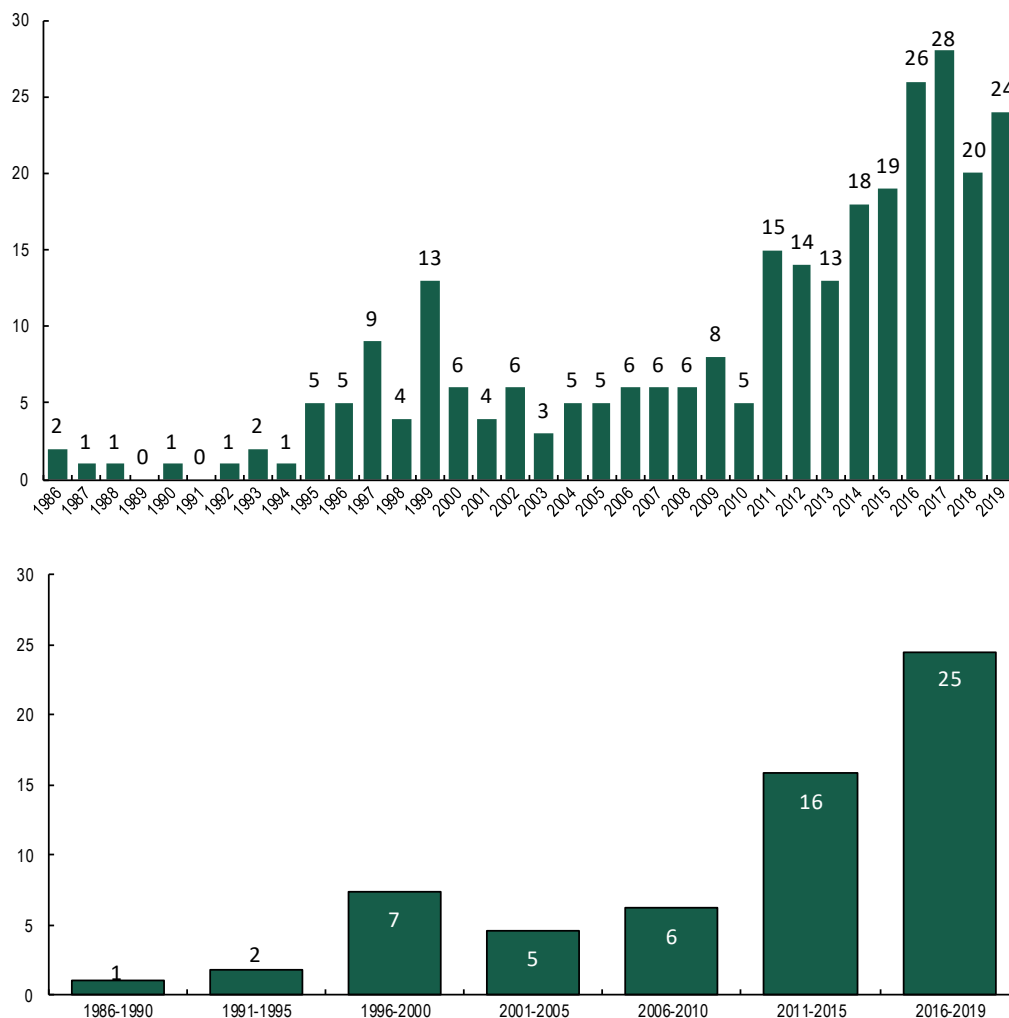
Interest in representative deliberative processes has been increasing across OECD Member countries. A first wave of interest took place between 1996 and 2000 and was characterised by a high number of Planning Cells in Germany and a peak in Consensus Conferences in Denmark. Since 2011, the number of deliberative processes has been steadily increasing. Between 2011 and 2019, there have been 177 representative deliberative processes in total, with an average of 25 processes per year in the period of 2016-2019 (Figure 3.3).

The first graph shows the numbers of deliberative processes that took place each year. The second one indicates the averages of the number of deliberative processes per year over the five-year period.

Since the data collection cut-off date is the end of October 2019, the data for 2019 does not cover the entire year, and the number of processes that were thus initiated (though not necessarily completed) in 2019 is higher than indicated.

Figure 3.3. The deliberative wave has been building over time

Number of representative deliberative processes over time (total annually and on average per year), 1986-2019



Note: n=282; Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union. Processes that spanned over multiple years are noted by the year of their completion (except for permanent ongoing processes).
 Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Use of representative deliberative processes at different levels of government

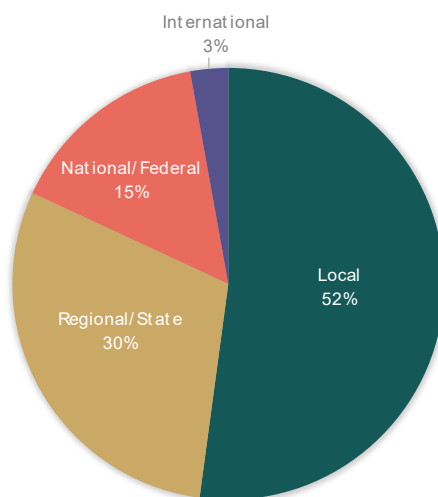
To date, deliberative processes have been carried out at all levels of government. Half of the processes (52%) took place on at the local level. This could be explained by several factors. Local governments often deal with policy issues that are close to people’s everyday lives, hence citizens can more easily participate and express their opinions and experiences compared to national level issues. Local governments also tend to be in closer proximity and in a more immediate relationship with citizens and residents, which provides motivation for citizens to participate in higher numbers. The costs of organising a deliberative process are also lower, since participant travel is less expensive for short distances and accommodation costs are not necessary. Deliberative processes that are used at the local level are also usually of a smaller scale (with an exception being the G1000), as citizens are brought together to represent a smaller

community compared to the national level. There are also far more municipalities than regions or nations, so there are naturally more opportunities for experimentation.

Thirty per cent have been commissioned by regional or state public authorities and 15% have been carried out at the national or federal level (Figure 3.4). Three per cent have been international processes initiated by international organisations or supranational bodies, spanning either across multiple countries globally or across various EU member states.

Figure 3.4. Representative deliberative processes have been used most often locally, though examples exist at all levels of government

Representative deliberative processes at all levels of government, 1986-2019



Note: n=282; Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union.
Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Popularity of the different representative deliberative models

The Citizens' Jury/Panel has been the most prominent choice of public authorities so far when choosing a model for deliberative processes. It has been used 115 times in a broad range of countries under various names (such as Reference Panel or Community Jury) and with variations in length, number of meetings and number of participants (Figure 3.5).

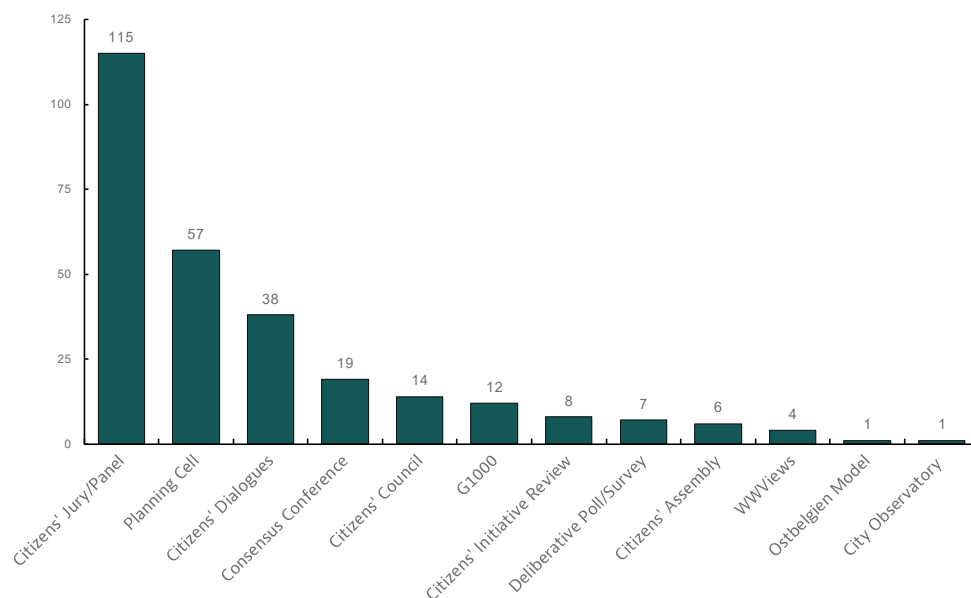
The popularity of Citizens' Juries/Panels could be attributed to several factors. It is a classic model of a deliberative process, one of the first ones developed, with a history of over 50 years. Consisting of a relatively low number of participants (on average 34), however long enough (on average four days) to provide policy makers with informed policy recommendations, it has been a common choice and a trusted option to start with when introducing deliberative processes in public decision making across various contexts.

Other shorter processes such as the Planning Cell (57 times), Citizens' Dialogues (38 times), Consensus Conferences (19 times), and Citizens' Councils (14 times) have also been used quite extensively. Longer, more complex models such as the Citizens' Assembly (six times), and international processes that require extensive co-ordination efforts such as World Wide Views (four times) have been employed less frequently.

New institutionalised deliberative processes – such as the Ostbelgien Model and Madrid City Observatory – took place only once.

Figure 3.5. The Citizens' Jury/Panel has been used most often by public authorities for public decision making

Total number of times each deliberative model has been used for public decision making, 1986-2019



Note: n=282; Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union.
Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Evidence also shows that the use of Citizens' Juries/ Panels is widespread across different regions of the world, dominating the deliberative scene (Figure 3.6). A bit less popular but still geographically widespread and applied to various contexts are Citizens' Dialogues, Deliberative Polls, and Consensus Conferences. Some models are used only in one country (Ostbelgien Model in Belgium, and City Observatory in Spain), and it is their country of origin. Europe is the region with the largest variety of models of deliberative processes used by public authorities for decision making. (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.6. Regional trends of different deliberative models

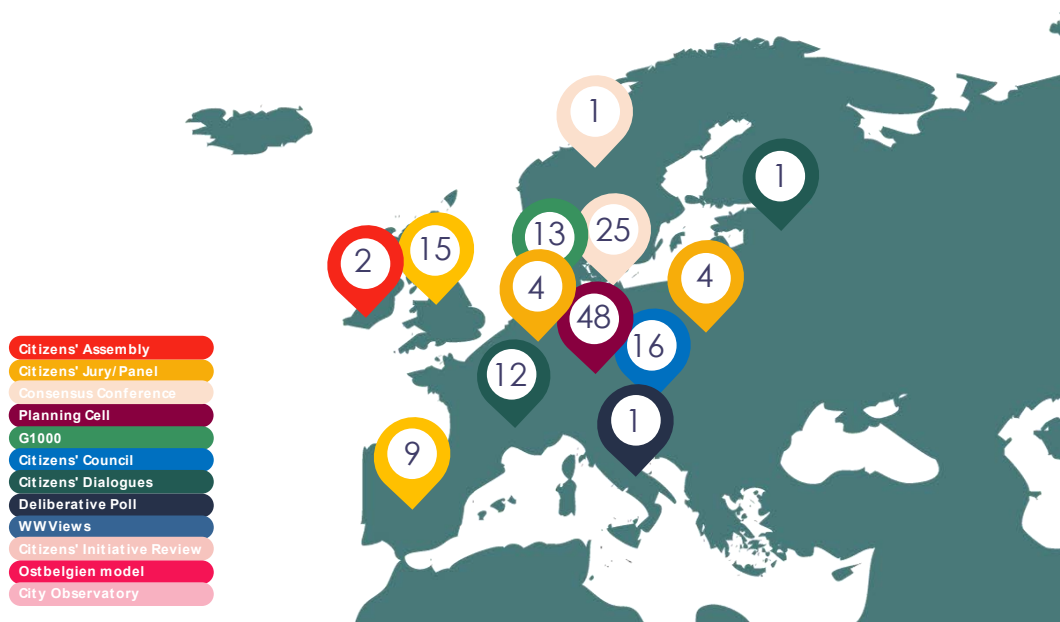


Note: The colour indicates the dominant deliberative model; the number indicates the total number of representative deliberative processes in a country. The map excludes international processes that took place in more than one country.*

*This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Figure 3.7. Regional trends of different deliberative models: Europe



Note: The colour indicates the dominant deliberative model; the number indicates the total number of representative deliberative processes in a country. The map excludes international processes that took place in more than one country.*

*This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

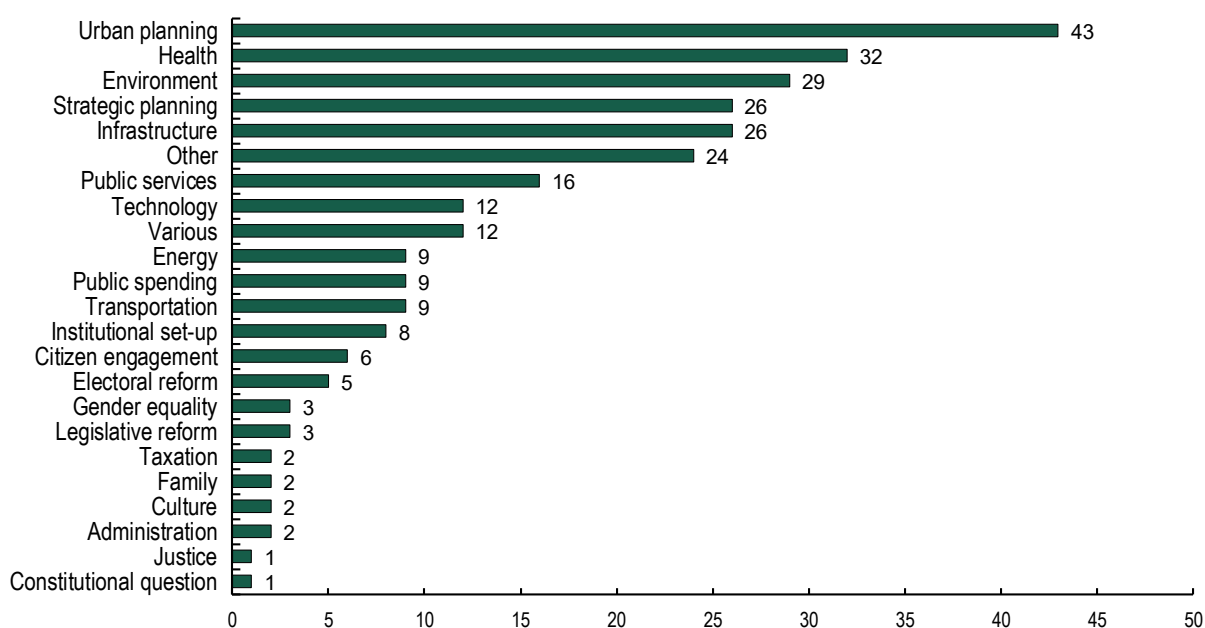
Types of policy issues addressed using representative deliberative processes

Deliberative processes are used to address various policy issues. However, some policy questions have been tackled more frequently than others. To date, the most prominent ones to be addressed have been urban planning (43 processes), health (32 processes), environment (29 processes), strategic planning (26 processes), and infrastructure (26 processes) (Figure 3.5). The trend shows that representative deliberative processes have been most popular in addressing issues that have a direct impact on a community's life, which represent shared problems, and those to which citizens can easily contribute their personal opinions and experiences.

There are twelve instances where one deliberative process has been used to address more than one policy question at a time. This has been the case in situations when participants were brought together from different countries, and the organisers were determined to make the most of their time together. For example, an international Citizens' Dialogue – "A Different Kind of EU Summit: Citizens' Dialogue in The Hague" – was used for citizens to deliberate on three dimensions of Europe: Social Europe, Global Europe, and Digital Europe. Permanent deliberative processes, such as the Ostbelgien Model or the City Observatory, have the mandate to explore and deliberate about multiple issues that are either of their own choice, suggested by citizens, or proposed by the government.

Figure 3.8. Representative deliberative processes have been used by public authorities most often for addressing issues that have a direct impact on a community's life, such as planning, health, and the environment

Number of times a policy issue has been addressed through a representative deliberative process



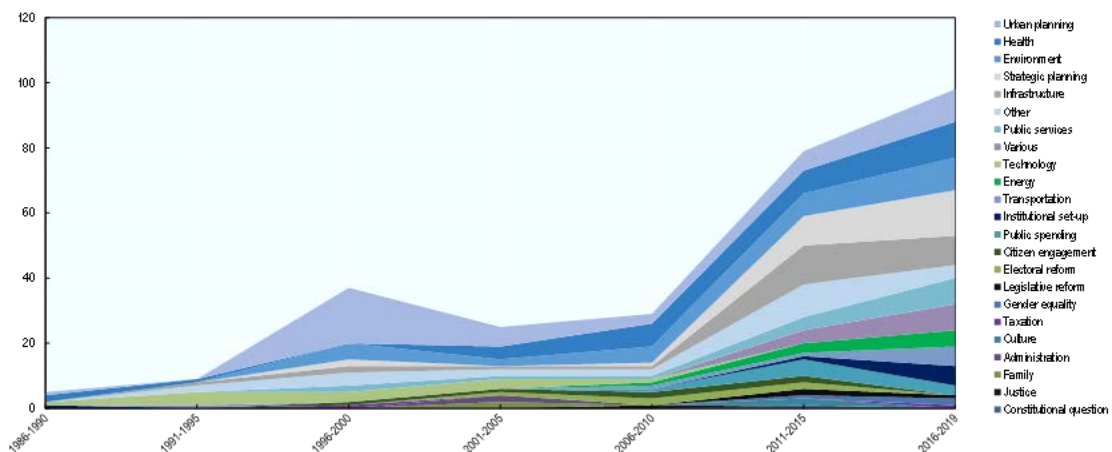
Note: n=282; Other policy issues include: constitutional questions; justice; culture; taxation; gender equality; legislative reform; migration; youth; sustainable development; water management; noise pollution; consumer protection; cooperative housing; firework use; socioeconomic development; gambling regulations; agriculture; safety; science; and research. Note: n=282; Other policy issues include: agriculture; constitutional questions; consumer protection; cooperative housing; culture; firework use; gambling regulations; gender equality; justice; legislative reform; migration; noise pollution; safety; socioeconomic development; science and research; sustainable development; taxation; water management; youth.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Over time, the range of policy issues addressed has been increasing and the dominant types of policy issues addressed has been changing. The use of deliberative processes for urban planning peaked in the year 2000. Questions of infrastructure, transportation, health, strategic planning, public services, environment, and energy are on the rise (Figure 3.9). Technology (assessing new technological solutions and their application from a citizens' perspective) is another issue area for which deliberative processes were used often between 1995-2005, but there has since been a decline.

Figure 3.9. The diversity of public policy issues addressed by representative deliberative processes has increased over time

Types of policy issues addressed through representative deliberative processes over time, 1986-2019

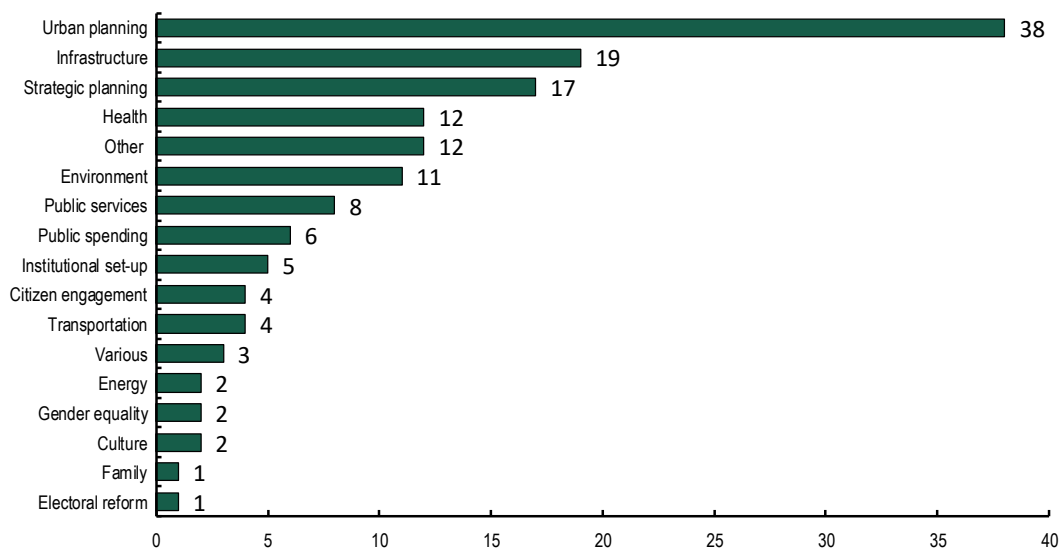


Note: n=282; Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union.
Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

At the local level, citizens are most commonly engaged on in urban and strategic planning (i.e. long-term plans or priorities for a community), infrastructure, health, and environment issues. Municipalities and local public institutions, such as hospitals, often initiate deliberative processes to understand informed citizen perspectives that take into account difficult trade-offs regarding new roads, bridges, and buildings, as well as to find new ways of improving health services and collectively plan cities' responses to climate change (Figure 3.10). These issues can often be beholden to “not in my backyard” opposition, where some individuals ‘lose’ for the greater community to ‘win’. Representative deliberative processes in these situations help to identify where there is common ground and strategies to help ensure a positive outcome for the entire community. Similar tendencies can be observed on the regional/state level, with health leading as the most prominent policy issue (Figure 3.11).

Figure 3.10. Urban planning, infrastructure, and strategic planning are the most common policy issues addressed through representative deliberative processes for public decision making at local level

Types of policy issues addressed through local representative deliberative processes, 1986-2019

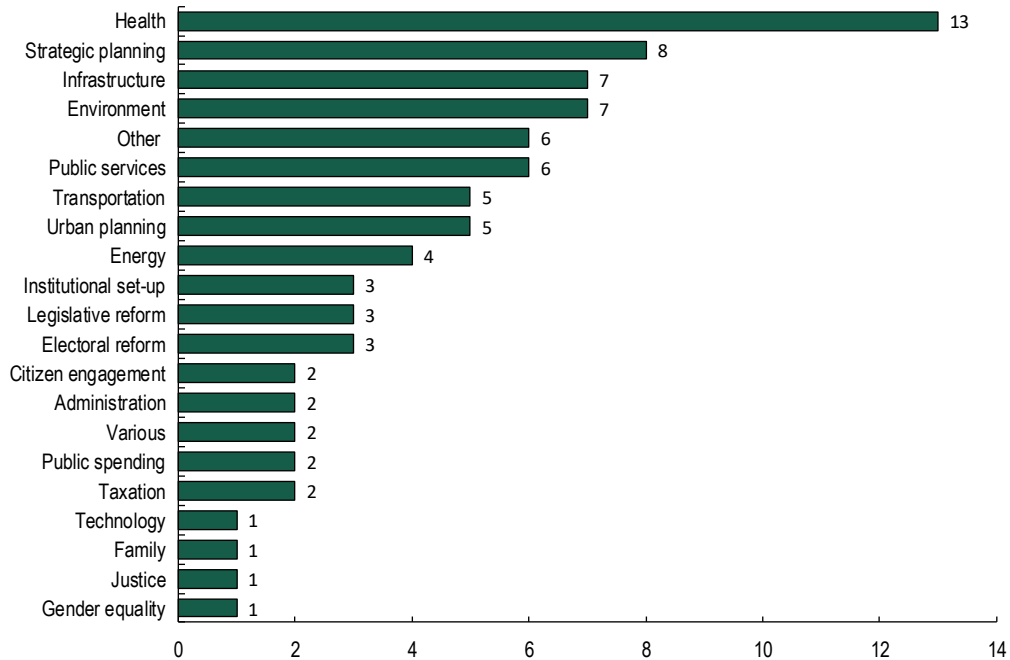


Notes: n=147; Data for OECD countries is based on 14 OECD countries that were members in 2019 (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, United States) plus the European Union; Category "various" refers to several different issues addressed in the same deliberative process, and permanent deliberative bodies that address different issues every time they meet.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Figure 3.11. Health, strategic planning, and infrastructure are the most commonly addressed policy issues through representative deliberative processes at regional/state level

Types of policy issues addressed through regional and stake level deliberative processes, 1986-2019



Notes: n=84; Data for OECD countries is based on 12 OECD countries that were members in 2019 (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, United Kingdom, United States) plus the European Union; Category "various" refers to several different issues addressed in the same deliberative process, and permanent deliberative bodies that address different issues every time they meet.

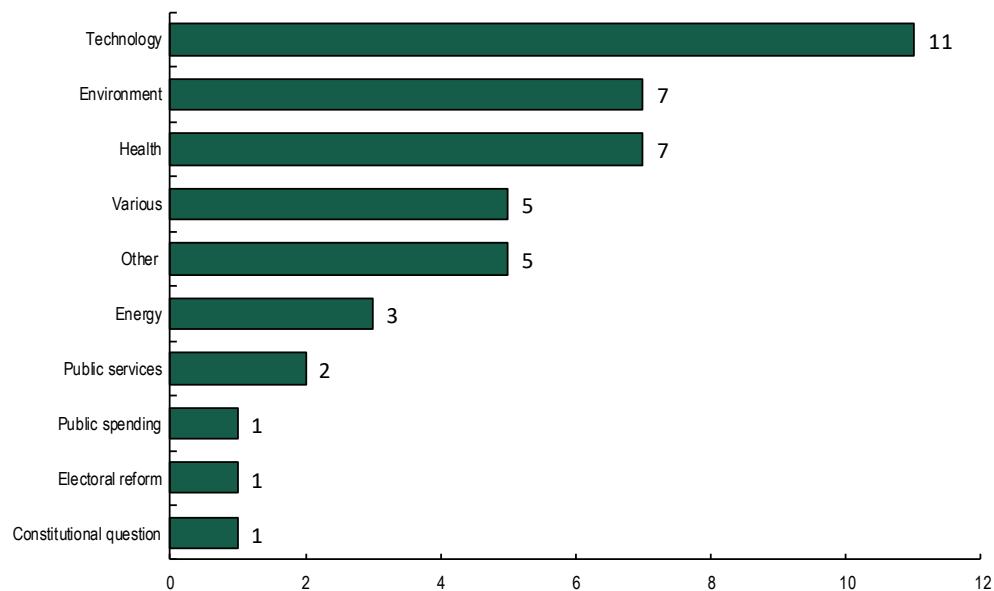
Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

At the national/federal level, technology, environment, and health have been the most popular policy issues addressed by deliberative processes (Figure 3.12). International processes have been almost exclusively used for environmental questions, with some other issues related to producing strategic visions of the future of Europe (Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.12. Technology, environment, and health are the most commonly addressed policy issues through representative deliberative processes at the national/federal level

Types of policy issues addressed through national and federal level deliberative processes, 1986-2019

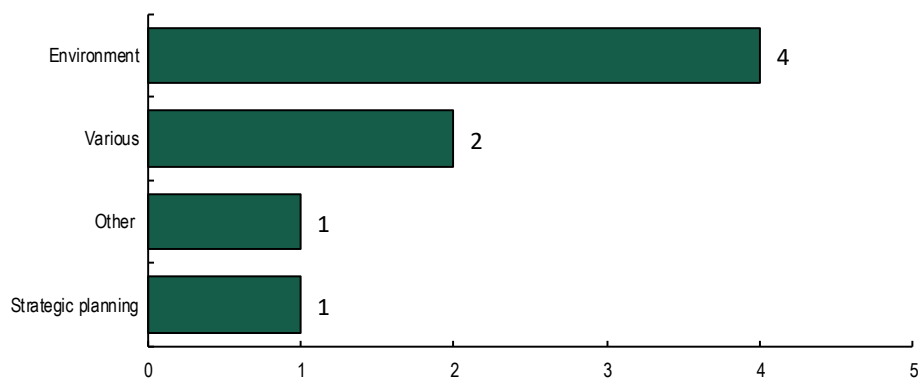
Types of policy issues addressed through national and federal level deliberative processes, 1986-2019



Notes: n=43; Data for OECD countries is based on 13 OECD countries that were members in 2019 (Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea, The Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom) plus the European Union; Category “various” refers to several different issues addressed in the same deliberative process, and permanent deliberative bodies that address different issues every time they meet.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Figure 3.13. Types of policy issues addressed through international level deliberative processes, 1986-2019



Notes: n=8; Data for OECD countries is based on 18 OECD countries that were members in 2019 plus the European Union; Category “various” refers to several different issues addressed in the same deliberative process, and permanent deliberative bodies that address different issues every time they meet.

Source: OECD Database of Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Average cost of representative deliberative processes

The cost of deliberative processes varies greatly depending on the model chosen, the length of the process, the number of participants, and the existing know-how and institutional knowledge related to such processes. Ad hoc processes are likely to cost more than institutionalised ones, when the cost of a single panel is considered. Table 3.1 shows the average cost of the deliberative models for which there is available data.

Table 3.1. Average cost of twelve models of representative deliberative processes

Deliberative Model	Average cost in EUR	
Citizens' Assembly	€	1,822,775.33
Citizens' Jury/Panel	€	66,578.59
Planning Cell		no data
Consensus Conference		no data
G1000	€	71,666.67
Citizens' Council	€	13,000.00
Citizens' Dialogues	€	250,560.00
Deliberative poll/survey		no data
WWViews		no data
Citizens' initiative review	€	89,250.00
Ostbelgien Model		no data
City Observatory		no data

Notes: n=72; Data for OECD countries is based on 10 OECD countries that were members in 2019 (Australia, Austria, Canada, Estonia, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, United States) plus the European Union; Exchange rates used for calculation in May 2020: USD to EUR at 0.9, CAD to EUR at 0.68, AUD to EUR at 0.62, PLN to EUR at 0.23.

Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

Types of organisations commissioned to implement representative deliberative processes

As discussed in Chapter 5 (Good practice principles for deliberative processes for public decision making), it is important that the organisation that is responsible for carrying out the random selection and designing, running, and facilitating the deliberative process is at arm's length from the commissioning authority to ensure public confidence. Citizens should be able to trust that participants have been chosen without any manipulation of those initiating the process. Those who have a stake in the outcome should not be able to influence or bias the presentation of expertise and evidence, or to guide the development of participant recommendations in one way or another. For these reasons, an independent organisation (which can be either external or an arm's length public body) is commissioned to execute the representative deliberative process. Public institutions therefore have a choice to make regarding the type of organisation that will be commissioned for implementation.

To date, based on the evidence collected, the most common choice is to commission a private sector partner specialising in citizen participation and deliberation, such as MASS LBP (Canada), Missions Publiques (France), or Nexus Institute (Germany). Thirty-seven per cent of the cases collected by the OECD were implemented by a private sector partner (Figure 3.14).

The second most popular partner for implementing deliberative processes is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation (29%), such as the newDemocracy Foundation in Australia, Healthy Democracy in the United States, or Involve in the United Kingdom.

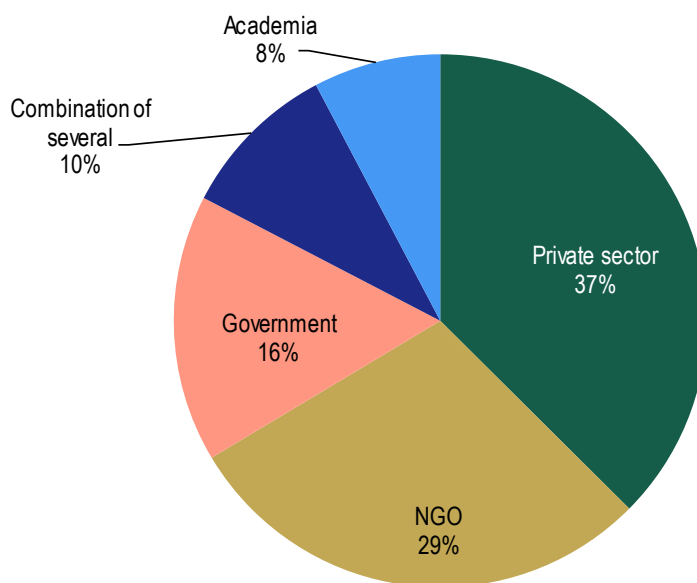
Sixteen per cent of deliberative processes were implemented by a governmental organisation. In these instances, usually it is an independent institution that specialises in citizen participation and is funded by the government. Examples include the Danish Board of Technology (until 2011) in Denmark, Participa Lab in Spain, and the Office for Future Affairs in Austria, state of Vorarlberg.

Eight per cent of deliberative processes were implemented by university institutes and centres specialising in deliberative democracy and citizen participation, such as the Institute for Participation and Democracy Research of the University of Wuppertal in Germany.

Around 10% of the cases were implemented by a partnership of several organisations – from public institutions in partnership with a non-governmental organisation, to joint efforts of a private sector organisation and a university institute.

Figure 3.14. The majority of representative deliberative processes have been implemented by a private sector company or a non-governmental non-profit organisation

Organising entity of representative deliberative process, 1986-2019



Notes: n=259; Data for OECD countries is based on 15 OECD countries that were members in 2019 (Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, United States) plus the European Union. Source: OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).



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