



METHODOLOGY OF THE 1ST EDITION OF THE LISBON CITIZENS' COUNCIL

FRAMEWORK

The Lisbon Citizens' Council (CCL) project is a platform for citizen participation developed by the Participation Division of the Citizen Relations and Participation Department (DRMP) of Lisbon City Hall (CML), within the scope of its competencies, of which we highlight:

1. Support the operationalisation of a strategy for public participation of citizens in the formulation and implementation of policies and measures and to promote the publication of the results obtained;
2. Remove obstacles and barriers to civic participation by testing and encouraging the adoption of innovative techniques and tools that facilitate the involvement of all audiences;
3. Periodically evaluate the overall effectiveness of the participatory processes adopted, identifying areas for improvement and new opportunities for dialogue with the community.

This is an initiative for citizen participation in decision-making at municipal level, inviting the co-construction of proposals to improve the city of Lisbon.

This document describes the methodology of the first edition of the CCL. Being an unprecedented initiative in the city of Lisbon, this first edition will allow the gathering of lessons that will support adjustments in the model to reinforce the project's quality and guarantee its long-term success and continuity.

CONTEXT

The recent State of Democracy Report (International Institute for Democracy and Social Assistance, 2021) reports on Portugal's setbacks in the quality of democracy, aggravated by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The perception of citizens is consistent with this decline: in the Quality of Democracy Study in Portugal (Barometer of the Quality of Democracy of the Institute of Social Sciences), political participation and the relationship of citizens with politicians was the dimension with the worst evaluation.

As for young people, the survey conducted by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in 2020 shows that 57% of young people over the age of 15 consider the current functioning of democracy in Portugal as "average (28%) or "bad" (29%), whilst 55% feel no or little interest in politics. With regard to participation, around 95% do not belong to a political party or social movements, trade unions or youth and student associations.

At municipal level, the abstention rate for the 2013, 2017 and 2021 elections exceeds 45%, leaving no doubt about the permeability of municipalities to this context. In Lisbon, abstention in the 2021 local elections was 49%, revealing a worrying lack of interest in political participation.

Given this context, the reinforcement of municipal projects for citizen participation and involvement and the implementation of innovative initiatives in this area are considered essential to respond to the political and social context.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CCL

The main goals of the Lisbon Citizens' Council are:

- Promote a new space for debate and co-construction of proposals for the city;
- Bring citizens closer to decision-making;
- Improve the effectiveness of the decisions made by the municipal executive, integrating the input of citizens and adapting policies to their needs.

PRINCIPLES

- **Transparency:** the Participation Division will disseminate information about the constitution and functioning of the project. The draw for the 50 citizens who will join the CCL will be conducted by an independent external entity and will be published on the municipality's official channels, with the saving of personal information in compliance with the GDPR.
- **Inclusion:** the random selection of 50 participants ensures that all applicants have exactly the same opportunity to join the CCL. The use of a draw makes it possible to promote greater diversity in the composition of the CCL in terms of gender, age, academic qualifications, professional activity and parish of residence, work or study. The Participation Division will also ensure the participation of visually or hearing-impaired persons in CCL editions.
- **Cooperation:** CCL will enable collaboration with academic and civil society partners to promote active citizenship, through meetings promoted with organisations invited to accompany CCL and the Participation Division.
- **Impact:** the assessment made of the proposals submitted by the participating citizens should be made public, indicating and substantiating the next steps to be taken.
- **Dialogue:** the project focuses on promoting greater and better communication between residents, and between residents and local government.
- **Impartiality:** the selection of participants, facilitation of sessions and the monitoring and evaluation of participation processes will be carried out by external and independent entities, of recognised experience, as observed in other projects in countries such as France, Spain, the Netherlands, Ireland, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia¹.

METHODOLOGY

The Lisbon Citizens' Council methodology is defined in collaboration with the entities contracted to provide technical and operational support to the project.

The methodology of the first session comprises the following steps:

Registration

- Citizens can access the registration form online on the Lisbon City Council website, and on paper at the offices of the Parish Councils and Lisbon Bureaus (*Lojas Lisboa*) of CML. Data relating to registrations is stored under the GDPR.
- Each registration corresponds to a possibility of participation, and never a guarantee, as this participation is decided randomly. Registration for participation in the Citizens' Council is one-time only, and citizens who are interested in attending future sessions only need to register once.
- By registering, citizens must be willing to participate over 2 days (about 8 hours a day) and on dates to be communicated by City Hall.
- Approximately three weeks before the date of the CCL session, the closing of registration will be announced to allow for the draw to take place, as well as the call for participants.

¹ Participation methodologies based on random selection ("sortition") are recommended by the OECD as important innovative practices for democratic institutions ([link](#)) and have also been considered by the European Commission as essential tools for democracy ([link](#)).

Drawing

- The draw will be carried out by an independent entity, which will define the sampling model and select the participants.
- Official and public statistical sources will be used in order to gather data about the Lisbon population.
- Information on registrants will be communicated to the independent body in a pseudonymised format to ensure the data protection of the participants and each entry will be assigned a numerical identifier.
- The draw is carried out according to 5 criteria: gender, age, academic qualifications, professional activity, and parish of residence, work or study.
- In order to minimise the impact of any unavailability, a second group of 50 substitute participants is drawn.

Session

- The first edition of the CCL takes place on 14 and 15 May 2022 at the Town Hall.
- The agenda is published on the lisboa.pt website in advance and is defined by the set of independent facilitators who will lead the working sessions.
- Apart from the selected citizens, facilitators, evaluators and potential guest speakers, no other person should intervene during the work of the CCL, with the exception of the final session for the presentation and discussion of citizens' proposals.
- Participation in the sessions of the Citizens' Council is not remunerated, nor does it involve any financial incentives. However, meals are provided during the sessions and the necessary support is available to ensure transportation for those who request it.
- CCL working sessions should include:
 - Learning about the topic and debate with invited experts;
 - General discussion on the topic and identification of challenges and priorities;
 - Generating ideas and formulating proposals;
 - Election of spokespersons;
 - Presentation of the proposals and debate.

THEME

The CCL's theme is defined so as to question and listen to citizens on matters considered strategic and priority for the city, and for which it considers that decision-making should take into account the citizens' perspective.

For the 1st edition of the Citizens' Council, the theme will be "Climate Change in Lisbon", focusing on (i) how climate change impacts the daily lives of citizens, (ii) what citizens can do to combat climate change, and (iii) what the city and CML can do towards this goal.

IMPACT & CONTINUITY

At the first edition of CCL, citizens will elect representatives who will be invited to participate in periodic working meetings with the Participation Division and other CML departments to be defined, in order to follow up on the proposals presented.

These proposals will be subject to an impact and feasibility assessment by CML, and the follow-up will be communicated to all participants and made public. CML will seek to provide as much detail as possible on this follow-up, both for proposals that are considered feasible and for proposals that are not considered possible to implement.

It is the DRMP's intention to organise the CCL at least once a year, starting as early as 2022.

COMMUNICATION

- CML will disclose and publish on its official channels (lisboa.pt website and social networks), clear and transparent information regarding the CCL and its implementation.
- In addition, information will also be disseminated in national and local communication channels (press and static advertising), whenever justified.
- CML will also publish the results of the CCL, in particular the proposals presented by the participating citizens.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Participation Division is responsible for ensuring, in collaboration with the Institute of Social Sciences (ICS) of the University of Lisbon as an external and independent entity, the monitoring and evaluation of the CCL.

Monitoring aims to collect and systematise the information produced throughout the implementation of the CCL by the coordinating team.

The evaluation, on the other hand, should be the subject of a report for each edition of the CCL, compiled by the ICS and containing:

- methodology,
- sampling procedure,
- materials used in the preparation of the theme
- agenda and facilitation tools,
- the restitution of the sessions (at the expense of the independent facilitators),
- contributions from civil society and academia,
- general assessment of the implementation and impact of the exercise.

The report also includes the results of the analysis of data collected through evaluation instruments.

OTHER PARTNERS

Lisbon City Hall, through the Participation Division, will periodically bring together academic and civil society institutions to discuss technical and methodological aspects concerning the implementation of the project.

These meetings allow specialists to contribute to the continuous improvement of the project, presenting and discussing case studies, good practices and other proposals on the model and methodology as well as links with other national and international entities.

There are no contractual ties, remuneration or other legal obligations on the part of the invited experts.

PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

- Within the scope of this initiative, the Municipality of Lisbon undertakes to treat the personal data of third parties in accordance with the rules set out in the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 April 2016), hereinafter referred to only as "GDPR", as well as the rules contained in Law No. 58/2019, of 8 August, which ensures the implementation, in the internal legal order, of the aforementioned Regulation.
- Where personal data processing operations are carried out, particularly at the stage of initial data collection, data subjects shall be given appropriate information about the processing of their personal data, specifically on the purposes, means, technical and organisational measures, security measures, recipients of the data and exercise of their rights.
- The data controller or responsible parties, in case of joint responsibility, ensure that the competent Data Processing Agreements (DTA) are drawn up to guarantee compliance with the GDPR, where applicable.