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Evaluation Report of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly: Assessment of input, process, and output

Buzogány, Aron; Ehs, Tamara; Plöchl, Jana; Scherhaufer, Patrick

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Arbeitspapier / working paper

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Buzogány, A., Ehs, T., Plöchl, J., & Scherhaufer, P. (2022). *Evaluation Report of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly: Assessment of input, process, and output.* (InFER Discussion Paper, 1/2022). Wien: Universität für Bodenkultur (BOKU), Institut für Wald-, Umwelt- und Ressourcenpolitik. https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-83184-2

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Wirtschafts- und
Sozialwissenschaften

Evaluation Report of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly

Assessment of input, process, and output

**Aron Buzogány, Tamara Ehs,
Jana Plöchl & Patrick Scherhaufer**

Diskussionspapier / Discussion Paper 1-2022

Institut für Wald-, Umwelt- und Ressourcenpolitik
Institute of Forest, Environmental, and Natural Resource Policy

November 2022

Diese Reihe ist ein Publikationsorgan des Instituts für Wald-, Umwelt- und Ressourcenpolitik der Universität für Bodenkultur Wien. Der Inhalt der Diskussionspapiere unterliegt keinem Begutachtungsverfahren, allein die Autorinnen und Autoren zeichnen verantwortlich. Anregungen und Kritik seitens der Leserinnen und Leser sind ausdrücklich erwünscht.

These series is edited by the Institute of Forest, Environmental, and Natural Resource Policy at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU). Discussion papers are not subject to review procedures. Thus, the responsibility for the content lies solely with the author(s). Comments and critique by readers are highly appreciated.

ISSN 2072-764X

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In dieser Reihe erschienene Diskussionspapiere können von folgender Website als PDF-Files geladen werden: https://boku.ac.at/wiso/infer/publikationen/diskussionspapiere

Papers published in this series can be downloaded in PDF-format from:
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Eigenverlag des Instituts für Wald-, Umwelt- und Ressourcenpolitik, Universität für Bodenkultur Wien

Published by the Institute of Forest, Environmental, and Natural Resource Policy, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU)

Scientific Assessment of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly*

FINAL REPORT

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)

Please cite as: Buzogány, Aron, Ehs, Tamara, Plöchl, Jana, Scherhaufer, Patrick (2022): Evaluation Report of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly. Assessment of input, process, and output. University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna.

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Abbreviations

AK	Chamber of Labour
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and people of color
BAME	Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic
BJV	National Youth Council
BMK	Austrian Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology
NEKP	National Energy and Climate Plan
BOKU	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences
CAUK	UK Climate Assembly
CCA	Climate Citizens' Assembly
ECF	European Climate Foundation
EU	European Union
IV	Federation of Austrian Industries
KNOCA	Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies
KVB	Klimavolksbegehren
LKÖ	Chamber of Agriculture
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ÖGB	Federation of Austrian Trade Unions
SACCA	Scientific assessment of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly
UWK	University for Continuing Education Krems
WKO	Economic Chamber

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Summary

We carried out a mixed-method design to investigate the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly (CCA) input, process and output dimensions following the OECD's Evaluation Guidelines for Representative Deliberative Processes (2021). The following methods were used to deliver the empirical findings of this report: Document analysis and desk research, participant observation, semi-structured qualitative interviews, and media coverage review. The main findings are structured along the input, process and output dimension.

Input dimension

- The Austrian National Council (parliament) voted on March 26, 2021 on a resolution based on the negotiations following the '*Klimavolksbegehren'* (popular petition on climate issues) 'to establish a climate citizen assembly to discuss and develop proposals for climate protection measures necessary to achieve the targets in Austria'. The resolution was supported by the government coalition and one opposition party. This resulted in i) a relatively weak mandate given to the CCA and ii) only partial political support for the CCA project.
- The ownership of the process became associated from the onset with the Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, the political party controlling the ministry, and the person of the minister.
- Decisions about the design of the CCA and its governance process took place under very high time pressure. While the CCA design followed best available practices from other European CCAs, this has also led to a very demanding schedule and a shift in the framing of the objectives of the deliberative process.
- The selection process of the participants resulted in a citizen assembly resembling the Austrian population concerning gender, place of residence, education and income. Selection bias could be identified regarding age, length of living in Austria and climate attitudes. Indirectly, SARS-CoV-2 (non-)vaccination has also influenced the composition of the assembly.
- The Austrian CCA gathered strong media attention and was known to reasonably large parts of the Austrian population. However, the online platform established to allow the larger public to actively participate in the process has overburdened users and CCA participants and was confusing due to the high number of topics and questions asked.

Process dimension

- The team of facilitators and moderators managed to create a motivating working atmosphere among the participants.
- The scientific advisory board covered a wide range of expertise needed to provide accurate and relevant evidence in the field of climate change. Communication between experts and the participants was professionally facilitated. Scientific input was not perceived as a patronizing educational measure by the participants.
- A co-determination of the scientific advisory board by CCA members and including more social science expertise would have strengthened the deliberative process.
- The role of the stakeholder board remained largely undefined and did not contribute to high quality deliberation that would help mediate conflicts between stakeholders' interests and the CCA's goals due to lack of time but also lacking engagement for meaningful deliberation from some of the stakeholders.
- The CCA process showed a high degree of self-efficacy and empowerment among participants, which was essentially supported by the work and methods implemented by the facilitators and moderators.
- The CCA was able to create an adequate relationship between a procedural (process-oriented) and a substantive (content-oriented) level of participatory deliberation and highlights that an iterative approach of both is decisive for the assembly's success.

Output dimension

- The policy recommendations made by the participants are based on many incremental changes and call for a more demanding climate policy than existing Austrian policy-making in the field. Some of the recommendations do not shy away from long-standing conflicts, such as speed limits, or the land sealing ban. These recommendations in particular hold the potential of stimulating a wider societal debate.
- The recommendations are based on a sectoral logic and do not consider cross-cutting knowledge or trade-offs or possibilities of (more) disruptive and transformational social innovations.
- The communication strategy used by the facilitators was successful in raising the levels of knowledge about the CCA and was helpful in providing information about the process. Reaching out to local and broad-sheet media has been a particularly strong part of that strategy.
- Media coverage of the CCA focused on the process dimension and there were only few signs of instigating a societal discussion about climate policy or democratic decision-making. Consequently, after the end of the CCA attention to these procedural topics decreased rapidly.
- The establishment of an association of CCA participants to protect the legacy of the recommendations is a strong signal in taking initiative, assuming responsibility and empowerment.

1. Introduction and Background

The "Scientific assessment of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly" (SACCA) project contributed to the analysis and advancement of democratic innovations in European climate policy and provides evidence to guide future good practices and opportunities for institutionalizing citizens' deliberation in Austria and beyond. SACCA conducted an interdisciplinary assessment of the Austrian Climate Citizens' Assembly (CCA) – the "Klimarat", which lasted from January to June 2022 – and assessed the process and results against best practice standards elaborated in the field of citizen assemblies (OECD 2021). The project was carried out by two Austrian universities with complementary expertise, the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) and the University for Continuing Education Krems (UWK). The project was funded by the European Climate Foundation (ECF) and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK). The two universities were also co-funding the project with a duration from November 2021 to August 2022.

Citizens Assemblies are, generally speaking, characterized by a) a random selection of participants, b) strong deliberative momentum (or moments); and c) a participants' final report including measures or recommendations (OECD 2020). They usually receive (at least) an official response by the government and other stakeholders on this report. Participants of a CCA contribute their knowledge and values of climate policy-making while increasing their problem-related and political knowledge, experiencing a sense of political efficacy, and generally increasing the legitimacy of democratic decision-making (OECD 2020, Knobloch et al. 2020). Fundamental to this is the assumption that public involvement is necessary because value judgments must be made at all stages of the decision-making process (Rowe and Frewer 2000). At the heart of every CCA lies the question: How to reach reasonable, thoughtful decisions fighting climate change (e.g., mitigation and adaptation policies) and empower people at the same time?

Citizens Assemblies are often confused with the participatory method of a 'Wisdom Council' established by Jim Rough (2002). Although both share the elements (a) and (c) from above, Wisdom Councils are dominated by the moderation technique 'dynamic facilitation', which stipulates creativity in the search for new and innovative solutions among the participants, while Citizens Assemblies are characterized by an initial information and learning phase that is followed by a consultation and a concluding phase (OECD 2020). According to democratic theorists, the term 'deliberation' means the process and product of a fair and reasonable discussion among citizens (Habermas 1981, Mansbridge 1983, Fishkin 1991, Dryzek 2002, Renn 2004, Bächtiger et al. 2018). It maintains that democracy "*is not just about the making of decisions through the aggregation of preferences"* but *"also about processes of judgment and preference formation and transformation within informed, respectful, and competent dialogue*" (Dryzek 2011: 3).

This report first explains the methodology and operationalization of the project targets. The main section deals with the empirical results, recommendations, and learnings. Finally, the report provides an overall assessment of the Austrian CCA. This assessment complements those made in the evaluation of the same process by the University of Continuing Education Krems.[1]

2. Methodology

The SACCA project has been structured into six work packages (WPs) that describe the project's assessment approach and were guided by international standards of evaluation in the field (Elstub et al. 2021, OECD 2021). Table 1 provides an overview of the six WP and the responsibility of the university – either BOKU or UWK or both – as well as the time frame.

Table 1: Project overview and work packages

Work Package	Responsible Research Group	Schedule
WP 1 Assessment of Selection Criteria and Representativeness	BOKU	11/21 – 01/22
WP 2 Assembly Members: Assessment of the Effects and Impacts	UWK	11/21 – 05/22
WP 3 The Public: Assessment of the Effects and Impacts	UWK	11/21 – 05/22
WP 4 Process: Deliberation, Facilitation and Decision-Making	BOKU & UWK	12/21 – 05/22
WP 5 Impact on Polity, Policy and Politics	BOKU	02/22 – 05/22
WP 6 Policy Recommendations	UWK	02/22 – 07/22

To evaluate the various dimensions of a CCA, we followed the distinction proposed by Papadopoulos and Warin (2007) in assessing the effectiveness and legitimacy of democratic processes. Openness and access are regarded to be the main indicators for "input legitimacy", the quality of democratic activity for procedural "throughput legitimacy", and effectiveness as an indicator for "output-legitimacy" (see also Scharpf 1999, Schmidt 2013). This differentiation has been recently adapted to the study of deliberative processes by Galais et al. (2021) and is illustrated in Figure 1.

'*Input*' refers to the conditions and context that shape the engagement process, for example, who participates, the intended task, available resources and so forth. This can be

[1] The evaluation of the University for Continuing Education Krems (UWK) can be found in a separate report: Praprotnik, Katrin/Ingruber, Daniela/Nash, Sarah/Rodenko, Roman (2022): Evaluation Report of the Austrian 'Klimarat'. UWK, Assessment of the Perspectives of the Members and the Public. University for Continuing Education Krems (UWK).

summarized in two dimensions. First, the institutional and structural dimension concerns the institutional and technical characteristics that must be considered, such as in/exclusion with regard to gender, race, class, and other variables known to (re)produce structural inequalities. Second, the integrity design dimension encompasses procedural criteria which ensure that a process is perceived as fair by the public and in line with principles of good practice.

'*Process*' implies internal dynamics and interactions between participants and comprises first the communicative dimension, which refers to the deliberative attitudes of participants and organizers. Which forms of communication and knowledge integration develop in different modes of democratic decision-making? Second, the integrity design dimension comprises elements and methods that enable quality deliberation and result in sound public judgement.

'*Output*' combines effects or impacts of deliberative institutions regarding policy formulation and implementation (effectiveness dimension), impacts on the individual political efficacy and learning of participants (satisfaction dimension) as well as an accountability dimension which refers to the publicness and the transparency of the deliberative process.

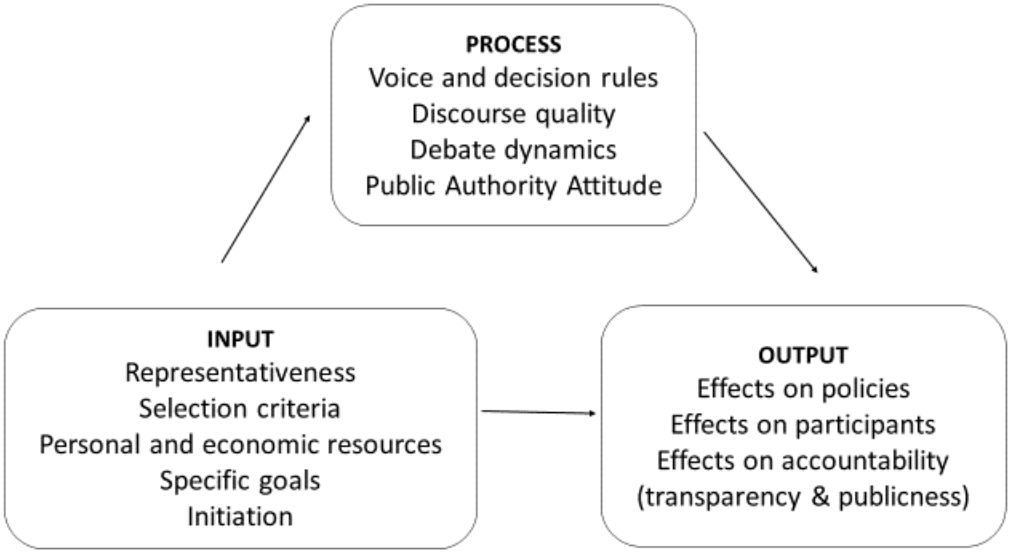

Figure 1: Dimensions of analysis (based partially on Galais et al. 2021)

Detailed indicators for the three dimensions are based on the OECD Guidelines (2021), which distinguishes between an evaluation of the process design integrity (= input dimension), the deliberative experience (= process dimension), and the pathways to impact (= output dimension). Thus, the analysis in Section 3 is structured as follows: First, the OECD main indicator(s) and its various aspects are presented in a box in italics. This is followed, second, by the evaluation results corresponding to the indicator and a list of recommendations or learnings at the end of each subsection. It should be noted that not every single aspect of an indicator could be considered in the evaluation due to the lack of empirical data or limited research resources.

The project carried out a mixed-method design to investigate the Austrian CCA's input, process and output dimensions. The following methods were used to deliver the empirical findings of this report:

- **Desk research** of existing evaluations of deliberative processes (Elstub et al. 2021), data collections (e.g., OECD 2020, Paulis et al. 2020) and official legal documents (e.g., Statistics Austria 2022, Austrian Parliament 2021) and secondary or grey literature (e.g., Information material sent to members of the Austrian Climate Assembly by the organizers: "FAQ – Der Klimarat" from December 13, 2021). The analysis of the output dimension is based on the (policy) analysis of the recommendations produced by the members of the CCA, corresponding authoritative policy documents, such as the coalition agreement, as well as various scientific reports dealing with Austrian climate change policy.
- **Participant observation** of each CCA weekend: The main aim of the participant observation was to evaluate the different actors, their language usage and interactions, activities and the settings and contexts in which these occur. Therefore, based on the OECD (2021) guidelines, the main observation criteria were: Organizational characteristics, communication, language, communicative setting, motivation and commitment, discussion highlights, breakthroughs, and conflicts. The complete observation guideline (in German) is attached in Annex A. The implementation of the participant observation was agreed upon with the CCA organization team in advance of the first CCA weekend and communicated to the participants verbally every weekend. For research ethics reasons, the observation was limited to the plenary sessions and selected working groups. Small groups and bilateral discussions remained unaffected by the observation. In addition, in the case of a working group discussion, the observers requested permission again verbally among the participants. The observation team consisted of the same two researchers to increase the trust in the scientific evaluation and the relationship between the people observed and the observers.
- **Semi-structured qualitative interviews** with five facilitators/moderators, four members of the scientific advisory board and 14 stakeholders. The interview guideline (for facilitators, see Annex B) was structured according to three thematic areas: i) Understanding of roles and processes and input dimension; ii) communication culture, inclusivity, knowledge transfer, and conflicts; iii) impact, documentation, transparency, and follow-up. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and analyzed through qualitative content analysis (Meuser and Nagel 2009). This research approach is necessary to address the different aspects of the CCA and find standard practices and interpretations. Interview partners have signed a BOKU data protection declaration and a declaration of consent for the inclusion of the contents in the evaluation report and other scientific publications. Personal details and data are processed anonymously.

- **Media coverage review** was used to estimate the impact of the CCA on public media and discourse. Previous studies and evaluations of CCAs suggests that one of the important influence channels CCAs have to reach larger audiences are via traditional and online media (McGovern and Thorne 2021). News about CCA can lead to more differentiated patterns of reporting about climate change and might also influence the results of the process (Muradova *et al.* 2020). We carried out a quantitative media analysis of the newspapers published in Austria in the period between 01.07.2021 - 31.10.2022 with a focus on articles reporting about the CCA. Qualitative analysis of media reports was performed for the same period for two quality newspapers *Der Standard* and *Die Presse*. We used the GENIOS online press database as well as the regular press clippings kindly provided by the Austrian CCA team.

Although some moderators and facilitators of the CCA expressed the wish that the evaluation team should also act in an advisory capacity, it was decided at the onset and following the OECD evaluation guidelines (2021) to conduct the evaluation as independently as possible. Hence, a summative (as opposed to a formative) evaluation, was carried out (Guyot 1978). This has also meant that the evaluation team made only sparse public appearances as long as the CCA was running so as not to influence the public debate or the participants.

The work of the scientific team at BOKU university was supported by five (unremunerated) master theses, which focused on the following aspects of the CCA: Stakeholder integration (*Lukas Pichler; Tina Seidl*), climate communication and expert knowledge (*Sonja Reinthaler*), participatory deliberation and empowerment (*Jana Plöchl*), and media analysis (*Nepomuk Harmer*). At the time of submission of this report, the master theses were not yet completed. However, research work and empirical data collection (esp. interviews with stakeholders and scientists) have been included in this final report and are cited as forthcoming literature.

3. Analysis of the Austrian Climate Assembly

This section describes the empirical work and analysis undertaken during the reporting period of the project. Project activities were largely executed as planned, although the CCA got delayed compared to its original schedule. Due to the pandemic situation and the strong wish of the organizers to start the CCA with an in-person meeting, the first meeting of the CCA was postponed from late November 2021 to mid-January 2022.

Work on the project followed the WP structure outlined in Table 1 and was carried out by the two research groups (universities) in charge. We present work accomplished in the WPs along these lines where the BOKU research team was responsible. Where reasonable, we also refer to related results undertaken by the UWK team.

3.1 Assessment of Selection Criteria and Representativeness (WP1)

Clear and suitable purpose

The deliberative process was commissioned for a practical purpose, addressing a policy issue.

The mandate was clear, and how the recommendations will be used.

The deliberative process was connected to the broader political system or policy-making cycle.

The Austrian National Council (parliament) voted on March 26, 2021 on a resolution based on the negotiations following the '*Klimavolksbegehren'* (popular petition on climate issues) 'to establish a climate citizens' assembly to discuss and develop proposals for climate protection measures necessary to achieve the targets in Austria' [authors' translation]. Although legally not binding, the National Council's resolution constituted the mandate for the Austrian CCA. The coalition government carried the commitment to convene the CCA – the People's Party (VP) and the Greens – and was supported by NEOS (The New Austria and Liberal Forum) as the only opposition party. Social Democrats (SP) and the Freedom Party (FP) voted against the resolution for different reasons. This approach resulted in 1) a relatively weak mandate given to the CCA and 2) only partial political support for the CCA project.

The resolution also defined the composition of the Austrian CCA and the recruitment process. Although the federal government was the main addressee of the resolution, the further procedure for dealing with the recommendations has not been explicitly regulated. As the minister of the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) from the Green party assumed the responsibility to convene the forum, it was communicated from the start of the Austrian CCA that recommendations would have to be handed over to her. BMK assumed organizational leadership based on its in-house expertise. Inter-ministerial coordination was not sought for, partly because of time constraints. This has also meant that the ownership of the process became associated from the onset with the BMK, the political party in charge of the ministry (the Greens), and the person of the minister.

While the CCA was formally embedded into the broader political system, due to the newness of a national-level CA many uncertainties existed not only within the administration and the political sphere but also within the larger population and among the participants. Both the population survey (wave 1) and the CCA participant survey (wave 3) carried out as part of this evaluation showed doubts about the implementation of the CCA's recommendations (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022): In the first wave, the public was asked if they would participate in a citizens' assembly should they be invited. 17 % answered that they would 'rather not', 12 % that they would 'certainly not participate, in sum, more than a quarter of the population. When asked about reasons for not participating, most respondents (21 %) said they lack the time due to job obligations or childcare. Doubts about the political implementation of the recommendations were voiced by 16 %. Similar doubts were also found among CCA participants: In the last session's member survey, as many as 41 % said

they tended not to trust or did not trust that policymakers would make an effort to implement the recommendations of the CCA.

At the same time, the Austrian CCA gathered strong media attention and was known to reasonably large parts of the Austrian population as early as January 2022. The population survey (wave 1) showed that 45 % had heard of the CCA (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022). This is a rather high level compared to other citizens' assemblies, such as the French or the Scottish one (Elstub *et al.* 2021). Given the strong media attention it would have been relatively easy to set up an online platform to gather contributions from the interested public. Instead, the official website of the CCA[2] was limited to signing up for the newsletter, following on social media and helping to make the Austrian CCA known by 'being creative' (direct quote from the website/authors' own translation). This form of activation aimed engaging interested people as multipliers of the Austrian CCA's public relations efforts but did not facilitate a broader public participation process.

Although by June 2022 – at the end of the Austrian CCA – 53 % of the population has heard of the assembly (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022), outreach remained behind possibilities:

- Five hundred twenty-five people subscribed to the newsletter.
- Social media followers: Twitter (1450), Facebook (liked 680, followed 870), Instagram (980), Youtube (160 subscriptions).
- Different events have taken place with the support of a team, which was responsible for the involvement of civil society, e.g., film screenings, information evenings, round table discussions, workshops and webinars.

The website of the CCA also provided the possibility to discuss interim results of the CCA with the interested public. In this context, the online platform named '*Klimarat fragt um Rat*' ('Climate Assembly seeks advice' [authors' translation]) was launched on April 27, 2022 before the fifth weekend and was active until May 7, 2022. The CCA's five fields of action were mapped using the online tool *Pol.is*. According to the information provided by the organizers, several thousand people took part in the online survey, 833.354 votes were cast, and 5.761 statements were submitted. The organizers estimated that around 5.000 to 6.000 people in total participated. As no socio-economic data was collected in the survey, no final assessment can be made on the exact number nor on the characteristics of participants. Particularly controversial topics mentioned included dietary changes such as the reduction of animal products (especially meat), mandatory (thermal) renovation of privately owned houses and replacement of old heating systems, and the willingness to implement significant changes in personal mobility behaviors.[3] Measures that gathered high approval were bans on the destruction of non-standard fruit and vegetables, stricter climate protection requirements in spatial planning laws and support of an EU-wide implementation of the paraffin tax.

[2] http://www.klimarat.org
[3] Press release, May 15, 2022, https://klimarat.org/wp-content/uploads/20220515_PA_BilanzWE5.pdf.

Feedback from interviews and participatory observation concerning the usability of the survey indicates that the assembly members were frustrated because their statements were lost in the flood of new ideas proposed by the interested public. Taken together, the Pol.is tool has overburdened users and was confusing due to the high number of topics and questions asked. In addition, it was not accessible without barriers for people with disabilities.

Clear and unbiased framing

The question addressed by the deliberative process was framed in a non-leading, unbiased, straightforward way, easily understandable to the broader public.

Framing the guiding question of a CA is one of the most important indicators for influencing public deliberation (Shaw *et al.* 2022). In the Austrian case, the guiding question underwent several changes during the process. Initially, the question was framed as *'Wie wird Österreich klimafreundlich?'* ('How can Austria become climate-friendly?' [authors' translation]). The invitation letter by Statistics Austria addressed to prospective participants also stated that the goal of the CCA was to 'jointly propose measures to achieve Austria's climate goals' (authors' translation). In later communication, starting from the first weekend as well as on the official website, the neologism 'climate health' ('*Klimagesundheit'*) was created and the goal 'climate health by 2040' was formulated, as well as the question adapted to: 'What do we have to do today to live in a climate-healthy future tomorrow?' (authors' translation). However, what 'climate health' exactly means remained vague and was unclear in terms of a mandate. Consequently, during the CCA process, facilitators and participating scientists started interpreting 'climate health' as 'climate neutrality', corresponding with the governmental strategy to reach climate neutrality in Austria by 2040. The final report with the recommendations also uses the climate neutrality framing without mentioning 'climate health' anymore (ARGE Klimarat 2022). Taken together, we cannot find a straightforward or easily understandable framing.

Suitable design

The design choices of the deliberative process were aligned with its objectives.

The resulting process was in line with OECD Good Practice Principles[4]. (For example, a sufficient length of the process, group deliberation, etc.)

Design choices of deliberative processes play a crucial role for their success (Stack and Griessler 2022). When the BMK had to choose between CCA approaches in Spring 2021, the organizers reached out to several existing CCAs and finally opted for following the UK Climate Assembly (CAUK), and French Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat (CCC) as main role models. The difference between the two CCAs is that "[…] *the CAUK focused on the appraisal of predetermined policies, whereas the CCC existed more as a policy development*

[4] https://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/good-practice-principles-for-deliberative-processes-for-public-decision-making.pdf?_ga=2.195114604.1711860507.1668076486-900511732.1668076486

forum. Citizens were more able to shape the process and remit of the CCC than were those involved in the CAUK" (Cherry et al. 2021: 5). The final design of the Austrian CCA become more alike the UK then the French model. As stated in the invitation letter to the Austrian Climate Assembly, it was not the citizens' task to discuss Austrian climate policy in general, but to 'jointly propose measures for achieving Austria's climate goals' (authors' translation). Achieving climate neutrality by 2040 formed the basis and the framework within deliberation should take place.

Our interviews show that decisions about the design of the CCA and its governance process took place under very high time pressure. While the CCA design followed best available practices from other European CCA, it has also led to a very demanding schedule. Survey responses from Wave 2 of the participant survey provide an internal assessment of the design choices (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022). Among the positive aspects, 28% of participants mentioned discussions, exchanges of arguments/perspectives/opinions, different perspectives, and communication, followed by 22 % saying that they valued the contacts with other members. Asked about negative aspects, 26 % mentioned organizational aspects (such as too long introductory rounds and too rigid structures), followed by 22 % mentioning time pressure and 18 % too little time for meaningful deliberations. When asked about their overall experience at the end of the of process 40 % found that CCA duration was sufficient, while 49 % regarded it to be too short (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022, participant survey/wave 3).

Procedural design involvement

Organizers had an established process to call for, respond to, and recognize comments from stakeholders regarding the deliberative process design.

A wide range of stakeholders representing diverse views had an opportunity to review the deliberative process design.

Experts in the policy area were consulted over the questions and the choice of evidence provided.

Deliberative democracy experts (in-house or external) were consulted on process design.

Transparency and governance

Clear terms of reference, rules of engagement, codes of conduct, or ethical frameworks govern the process. They were followed throughout the process.

Information about the goals, design, governance of the process, funding source, civic lottery, and other materials was published publicly.

The design of the process was free of external interference.

As mentioned above, during the design phase of the Austrian CCA, the BMK consulted several national and international experts on (deliberative) participatory processes and also received support from the European Climate Foundation (ECF). In April 2021, a video conference with the ECF was held where numerous lessons learnt from previous citizens' assemblies were provided to the ministry. This was followed by individual meetings with

experts from the UK, Ireland, and France, some of which were also facilitated by the ECF. In addition, the BMK conducted a workshop with Austrian experts on deliberative formats (e.g., from Vorarlberg) and independent consultants on sustainable development and participation. However, no experts on Austrian democracy nor the Austrian political system were consulted to oversee the implementation of the process.

The public tender to conduct the CCA was won by consortium of three organizations (later called the ARGE Klimarat). These facilitators developed the process design in close cooperation with the BMK and an independent consultant working as the primary liaison person. They were also in contact with experts of deliberative democracy from Germany and representatives of the German Climate Assembly. Overall, this approach developing the design of the Austrian CCA can be characterized as expert-driven, where stakeholders from politics, civil society organizations or interest groups had no or little direct influence. It should be noted that several organizations, partly associated with the climate movement, have also put forward a concept and criteria for designing a CCA in March 2021.[5] At the same time, setting up the CCA took place under time constraints, with several interview partners criticizing that the time available for planning and implementation of the project was extremely short.

The selection process via "civic lottery" for the participants of the Austrian CCA has been conducted by Statistics Austria. The fact that the selection process was carried out without particular attention to procedural transparency led to speculation and mistrust within the Austrian interested public that started questioning the legitimacy of the recruitment process and, ultimately, of the CCA. Reacting to this critique, Statistics Austria (2022) published a detailed methodological report explaining the selection criteria and the member appointment process. To the evaluation team's understanding, the ministry in charge of the Austrian CCA initially underestimated the transparency criterion as substantially contributing to the legitimacy of the process. To avoid such developments, the recruitment report and the organizational problems due to COVID-19 should have been transparent to the public from the outset.

[5] https://xrebellion.at/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Leitfaden-und-Qualita%CC%88tskriterien-der-Allianz-Klima-Bu%CC%88rgerInnenrat-Ma%CC%88rz-2021.pdf

Representativeness and inclusiveness

Everyone had an equal opportunity, via civic lottery, to be selected as a member of the deliberative process. (For example, all residents or eligible voters.)

The final group of members was a broadly representative sample of the general public (reflecting the demographic composition of a community, city, region, or country). (Anyone looking at the members could see 'someone like me' within the process.)

Efforts were made to involve under-represented groups. (In some instances, it is desirable to over-sample specific demographics during the random sampling stage of recruitment to help achieve representativeness.)

Efforts were made to remove barriers to participation. The OECD Good Practice Principles identify remuneration of the members, covering their expenses, and providing or paying for childcare and eldercare as helpful ways to encourage and support participation.

According to the international standards laid down in the OECD's Recommendation on Open Government (OECD/LEGAL/0438) and the OECD publication on Good Practice Principles (2020) *inclusiveness* and *representativeness* are among the core principles to accomplish deliberative processes that result in useful recommendations for the commissioning public authorities and a meaningful opportunity for citizens to participate in shaping public decisions. The two terms are defined as follows:

- *Inclusiveness*: Inclusion should be achieved by considering how to involve underrepresented groups. Participation should also be encouraged through remuneration, expenses, and providing or paying for childcare and eldercare.
- *Representativeness*: The participants should be a microcosm of the general public. This is achieved through random sampling from which a representative selection is made, based on stratification by demographics (to ensure the group broadly matches the demographic profile of the community against census or other similar data), and in some cases also by attitudinal criteria (depending on the thematic context). In principle, everyone should have an equal opportunity to be selected as a participant. However, in some instances, it may be desirable to over-sample specific demographics during the random sampling stage of recruitment to help achieve representativeness.

According to the POLITICIZE dataset (Pilet et al. 2020), which includes information about 105 deliberative mini-publics in European countries and provides information on the selection mechanisms the vast majority (67 %) of the processes used a combination of random sampling with quotas or stratification methods. Of the 56 citizens' assemblies conducted at the national level, 43 applied some specific criteria (such as gender, age, formal education, region, income class, migration background, etc.) to select members. However, the more characteristics have to considered and the smaller the targeted number of participants, the more difficult it is to achieve actual representativeness. For this reason, citizens' assemblies often do not focus strictly on representativeness but on inclusiveness. In practice, this means that they consider how to involve traditionally disadvantaged or marginalized groups (e.g., women, disabled people or people disadvantaged because of their ethnicity or migration background).

The equality criterion substantially contributes to the procedural legitimacy of the CCA. Ideally, the Austrian CCA participants should have constituted a "mini-public" as a proxy for the population as a whole. Everyone affected by climate change in Austria should have been given an equal chance of being selected. Selection is achieved by participants being typically chosen through stratified random sampling so that a range of demographic characteristics from the broader population is adequately represented. However, it is impossible to achieve exact representativeness in a country of nine million inhabitants with only 100 assembly members. Therefore, the benchmarks for the analysis are 'broad representativeness' and 'inclusiveness', stressing the 'recognition factor' of 'descriptive representation' (Pitkin 1967): Anyone looking at the members of the Austrian CCA should be able to see 'someone like me' within the process.

When evaluating the inclusiveness of the CCA, the evaluation team faced several difficulties. For reasons of data protection, the primary data of the selection process carried out by Statistics Austria were not accessible. This lack of data was circumvented through the use of member surveys (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022, Praprotnik et al. 2022). Questionnaires containing socio-economic data were issued three times throughout the project. However, not all members were willing to disclose their data again. The data on the composition of the assembly members presented in this report are therefore only approximations through member surveys conducted by the evaluation team and should be treated with some caution.

To ensure that all affected persons have equal opportunity to be selected as a member of a citizens' assembly, the recruitment process and the assembly itself must be designed to avoid the general exclusion of any group from the start. In the case of the Austrian CCA, three obstacles to this criterion were observed:

1) *Pro-climate change bias.* The selection process implemented by Statistics Austria attracted those already primarily convinced of the danger of the climate crisis. Although it is precisely the aim of the lottery procedure to recruit members beyond the circle of already active and alert citizens, the following three attitude statements included in Statistics Austria's invitation letter and questionnaire at the request of the BMK represent the opposite (Statistics Austria 2022):

- *Statement 1:* We all urgently need to change our behavior to stop climate change. It is about a livable environment for future generations.
- *Statement 2:* If climate change exists, it will affect generations after me. I don't care; I have not been affected anymore.
- *Statement 3:* Policymakers must create framework conditions that make climate-friendly and sustainable action simple and cost-effective. [authors' translation]

  Although these statements were not used as a criterion for the selection of assembly members, the mere mention of these questions has the potential to increase the self-selection bias rather than counteracting it. In addition, the statements should have been phrased in a non-suggestive way, as particularly statement number 1 shows a

social desirability bias. Hence, from a scientific point of view, these statements do not meet the requirements of a neutral and unbiased framing. Results of the participant quantitative survey also support this. Respondents noted that only a few other members held different opinions than their own (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022, Wave 2). Instead of simply asking attitudinal questions when approaching potential participants), it would have been more accurate to include them in the selection process. Suppose attitudes towards climate change were a criterion of the participant selection. In that case, as was the case, for example, in the UK Climate Assembly – those who see a less urgent need for climate action or those having other priorities in climate policy could have been selected.

2) *Age bias.* During the selection process, Statistics Austria excluded all persons over 84-years of age from the civic lottery, which amounts to about 200,000 people living in Austria. Discussions of evaluation team discussed with international experts on sortition and citizens' assemblies and an Austrian pollster suggest that this was a rather untypical restriction for a civic lottery.

3) *COVID-19 rules.* CCA meetings were subject to COVID-19 rules. At the time of recruitment (September/October 2021) the '3G rule' applied, requiring people to provide evidence of either vaccination, recovery, or a negative PCR test as a precondition for participation. This requirement excluded all those who could or would not provide 3G evidence, potentially affecting almost 20% of the Austrian population (Eberl *et al.* 2022). In addition, the CCA's first session, which was originally scheduled for the end of November 2021, was postponed due to a lockdown. Finally, the CCA first meeting taking place in January 2022 applied the stricter '2Gplus rule', which meant that only evidence of vaccination or recovery was accepted. As a result, there were numerous cancellations by people who had already been confirmed as assembly members. Ultimately, this meant that Statistics Austria could only recruit 100 members after the first session began. Overall, it can be questioned why stricter rules were applied to members of a citizens' assembly than to Members of Parliament in Austria. In addition, Statistics Austria could have recruited more members from the start and prepared a long list of replacements, especially since one had to reckon with high levels of cancellations due to illness during a pandemic.

Categories of representativeness

Despite these shortcomings, we can still conclude that the group of members of the Austrian CCA, as selected by Statistics Austria, was broadly representative in terms of gender, level of education, income, and to some extent also concerning the place of residence. Problems arose – as already explained above – with the age criterion and the criterion 'country of birth' (details see below). Adding to this, the parliament's mandate did not include references to migration background or disability, and above all, political and thematic attitudes (on climate change).

In the following, we present data on the representativeness of CCA participants. As Statistic

Austria failed to reach the target number of at least 100 members as laid down by the parliament's resolution and was only able to deliver 98 members' commitments before the start of the first session, the evaluation team only had a report on those 98 confirmed members complemented by data from member surveys conducted by the evaluation team. However, as not all members were always present and not all wished to participate in the survey, this data must be interpreted with caution.

Concerning **GENDER**, the Austrian CCA was broadly representative of the general Austrian public, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Gender - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

Concerning **PLACE OF RESIDENCE**, Statistics Austria differentiated this criterion into regional distribution according to NUTS units (*Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques*) and degree of urbanization. NUTS 1 as used for the civic lottery encompasses Eastern Austria (Burgenland, Lower Austria, and Vienna), Southern Austria (Carinthia and Styria) and Western Austria (Upper Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol, and Vorarlberg). While the regional distribution is representative (see Figure 3), Figure 4 shows that people living in rural areas are over-represented compared to people living in smaller cities or suburbia and densely populated regions (cities). The participant survey also confirms the overrepresentation of members from rural areas. It is even more pronounced there than in the selection by

Statistics Austria: 59 % stated 'rural area' as their living environment, 20 % small town/suburbs and 20 % urban area (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022, participant survey/wave 2).

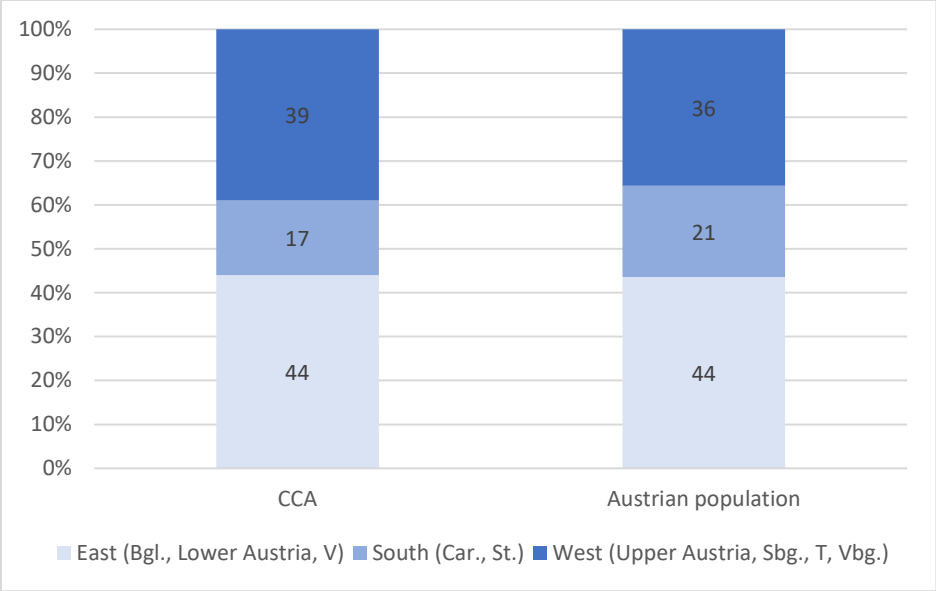

Figure 3: NUTS 1 regions - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

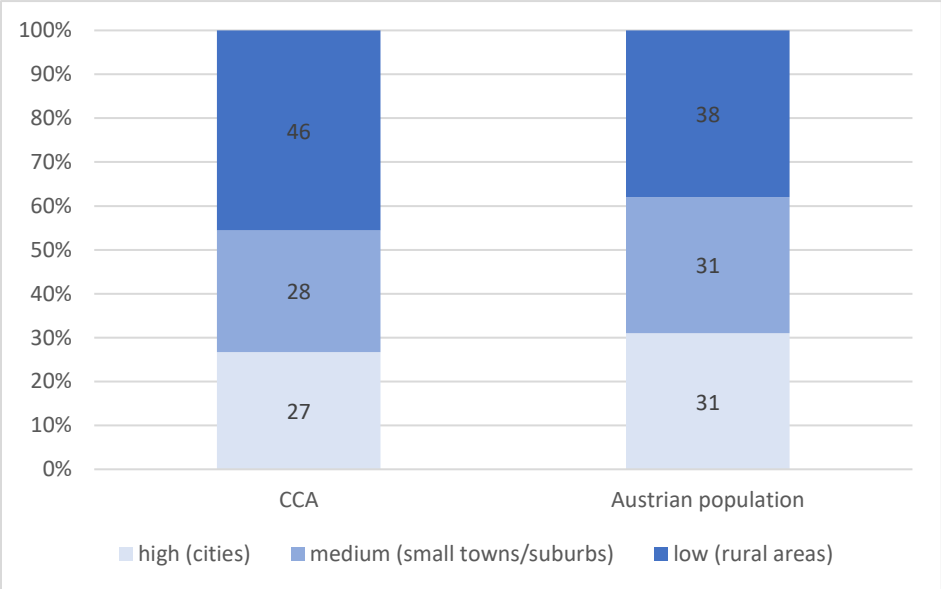

Figure 4: Degree of urbanization - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

Concerning **LEVEL OF EDUCATION**, the members of the Austrian Climate Assembly were almost exactly representative, as shown in Figure 5.

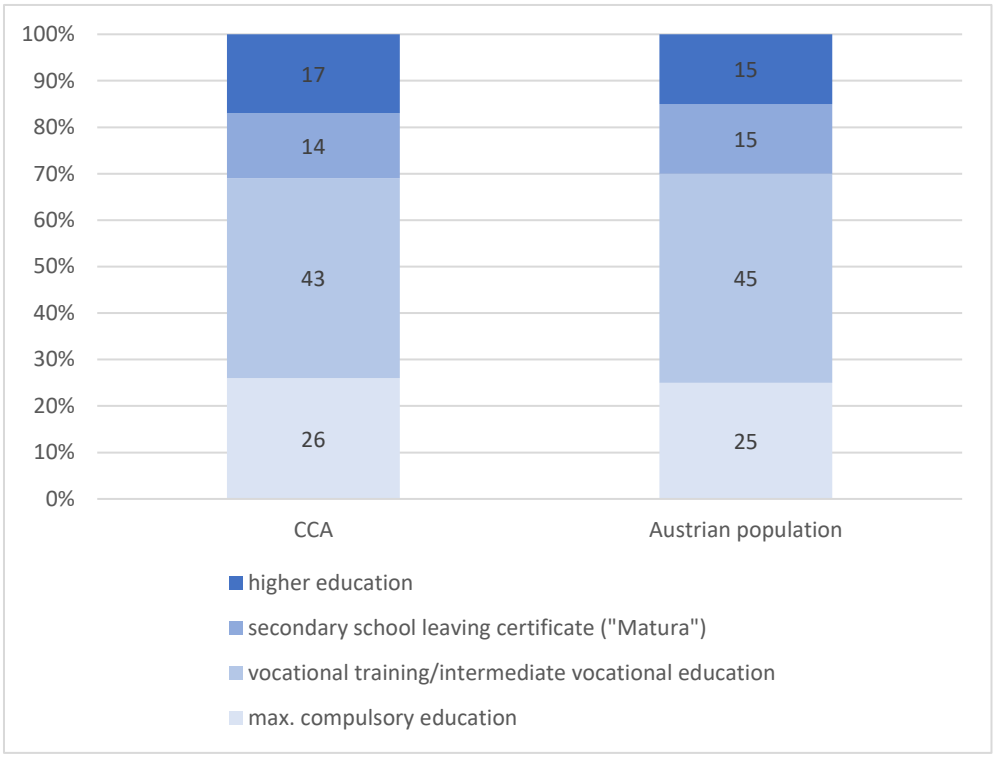

Figure 5: Highest level of education - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

Concerning **INCOME**, the members of the Austrian CCA were broadly representative (see Figure 6). It is noticeable, but common in an international comparison, that the richest (highest quintile) were under-represented. Together with the level of education, the two

characteristics form the selection criterion of socio-economic status. In the aggregate, a high degree of representativeness was achieved.

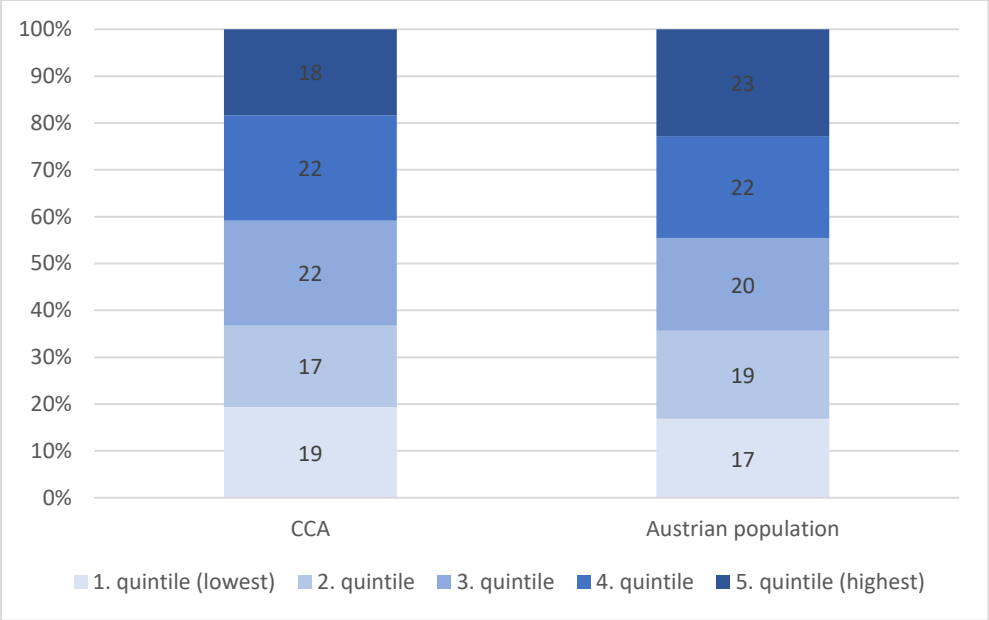

Figure 6: Equivalized household income - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

Concerning **AGE**, the Austrian Climate Assembly could have represented the general public more broadly. As explained above, all people over 84 years of age were excluded from the civic lottery. There were also imbalances in the other age groups, as shown in Figure 7: The youngest (16-29 years) and middle-aged (45-59 years) were overrepresented, whereas the oldest (75-84 years) were particularly underrepresented. Our survey indicates that only four members belonged to the most senior group. Furthermore, a difference of 10 % in the age group 30-44 years is also noticeable in our member surveys. It is known from participation research that this group can only be reached to a below-average extent due to the so-called

'rush hour of life' (Bittman and Wajcman 2000). Although initially expected, there is no gender gap in this cohort.

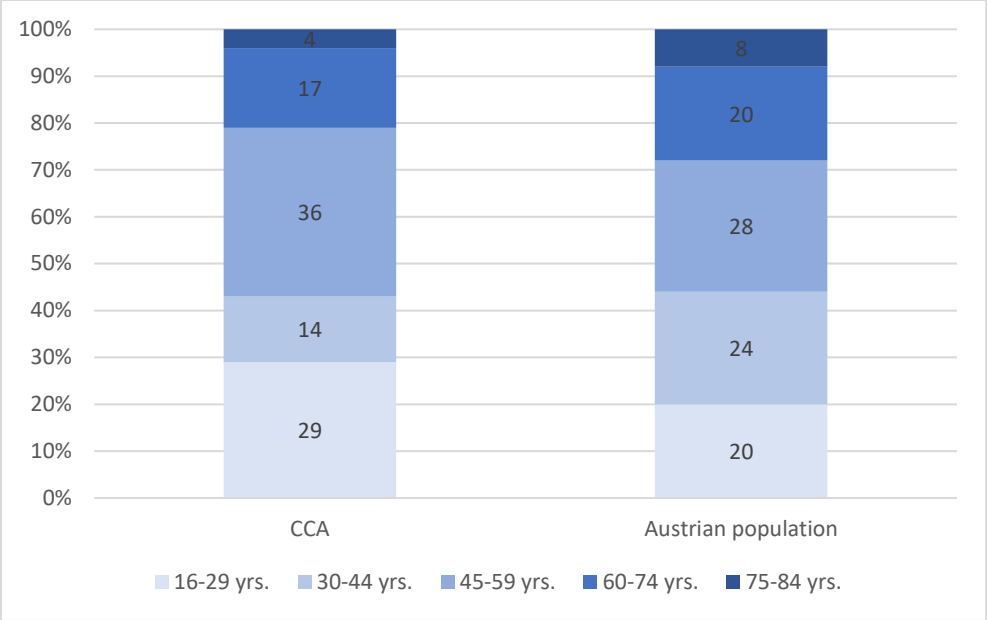

Figure 7: Age - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

The Austrian CCA lacked broad representation concerning the criterion **LIVING IN AUSTRIA FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS**. According to the parliament's mandate, the assembly should have been composed of members 'who have had their main residence in Austria for at least five years. This includes foreign nationals but excludes Austrians living abroad. Statistics Austria chose to focus on the item 'country of birth' and then distinguished between 'Austria', 'European Union' and 'Non-EU' country of birth. The results (for the 98 confirmed members) were as shown in Figure 8: People with Austria as their country of birth were over-represented, whereas people born outside the European Union were strongly under-

represented. Instead of 19 % with a foreign place of birth, only 11 % were present in the Austrian CCA.

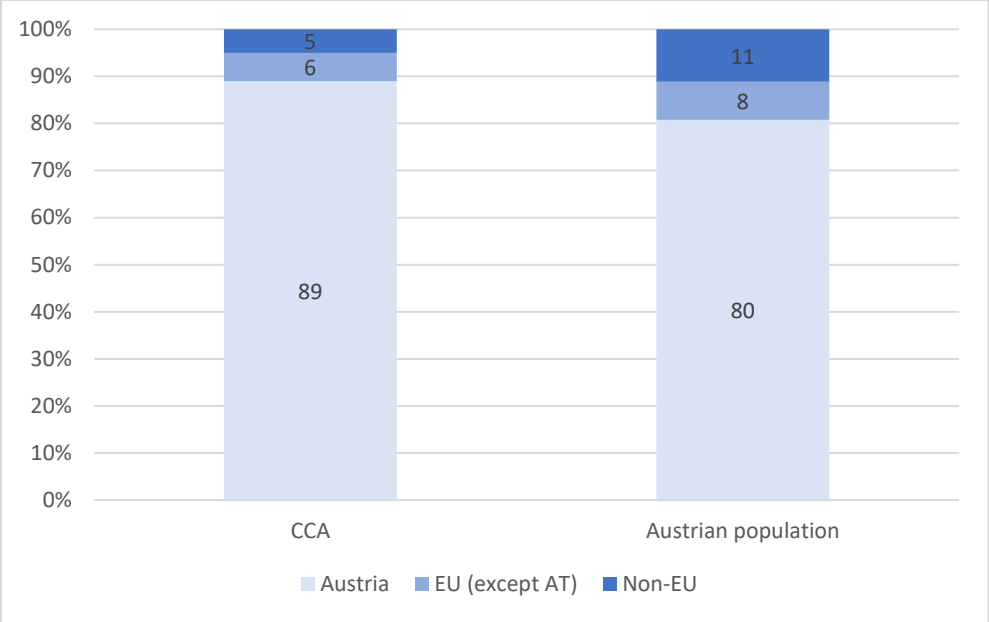

Figure 8: Country of birth - CCA and Austrian population (percentage)

The Austrian CCA is not limited to Austrian citizens but intends to represent the Austrian population (of age 16 years and older) as a whole, including over one million foreign nationals. According to Statistics Austria a total of 1.587.251 people with foreign citizenship lived in Austria on January 1 2022. The share of foreign citizens in the total population is 17.7%.

Although the CCA selection process followed the parliamentary mandate, the question for future citizens' assemblies is whether the application of the indicator 'migration background' is better than 'country of birth'. The item 'place of birth' does not necessarily correspond with citizenship and even less with 'migration background'. There are, for example, currently more than 250.000 people that were born in Austria without being granted Austrian citizenship and children born in Austria inherit the citizenship of their parents (*ius sanguinis*). Over 80.000 people have been living in Austria since they were small children but had so far also remained excluded from Austrian citizenship. 'Migration background', according to the official definition also used by *Statistics Austria*, includes persons who were either born abroad or whose two parents were born abroad. This would consist of both Austrian nationals and foreigners. In 2022, about 2.2 million inhabitants in Austria had a migration background. Although the recruitment criteria reflected how long people have been living in Austria, they disregarded numerous realpolitik problems that could have been addressed by including the criterion 'migration background.'

The members themselves also discussed the representativeness and inclusiveness of the Austrian CCA. Especially the field observation at the third weekend (March 2022) showed that weaknesses of the process, such as lacking diversity, were addressed and linked to the

anticipated lack of political and societal impact of the Austrian CCA. The participant survey confirmed that some members felt that certain groups or parts of society were not represented in the Austrian CCA. 23% of those who answered the questionnaire confirmed this feeling, especially mentioning the absence of migrants/foreigners, as well as those who doubt the climate crisis (or its causes and effects) (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022, participant survey/wave 2).

In a comparative perspective, we can observe that other CCAs took 'ethnicity' or 'migration background' as a criterion:

- Climate Assembly UK, 2020: Ethnicity was a criterion for selecting the members of the Climate Assembly UK, defined by 'white' and BAME i.e., Black, Asian, and minority ethnic, including white minorities such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.
- Scotland's Climate Assembly, 2020-2022: Ethnicity was a criterion with the categories 'white' (asked sub-categories on registration form, e.g., Scottish, Other), BAME (this included options on the registration form: Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British; Caribbean or Black or Black British; Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups; Other Ethnic Group).
- Bürgerrat Klima Germany 2021: '*Migration background*' was taken as a criterion applied to 27 % of the members. It was defined as 'Were you yourself or at least one parent not born with German citizenship?' in the questionnaire.

Political engagement and awareness concerning climate change

The comparison of Austrian CCA members with the Austrian population shows that participation followed the unequal distribution pattern of political engagement and awareness concerning climate change: Members of the Austrian CCA were more politically interested and more convinced that climate change is a threat than the average Austrian population. The comparison refers to wave 1 of the member survey and the population survey (Praprotnik & Rudenko 2022, participant and population survey/wave 1): 94 % of members of the Austrian CCA said they were very or fairly interested in politics. In addition, 62 % of them had signed a referendum or a petition twelve months before the survey, 28 % had contacted a politician, and 20 % even had worked in a political party or other political groups. In the general population, only 82 % are very or somewhat interested in politics 54 % had signed a referendum or a petition in the twelve months before the survey, 21 % had contacted a politician, and 10 % had worked in a political party or another political group.

The data on people's attitudes towards and interest in climate issues is similar: 96 % of the members of the Austrian CCA were very worried or rather worried about the development the climate takes at the start of the assembly, and 67 % fully agreed that humans are responsible for climate change, not a single member fully disagreed. Moreover, 75 % of the members had a lot of trust in science. In comparison, in the general population, only 76 % were very worried or somewhat worried about the development of the climate, and just 37 % fully agreed that humans are responsible for climate change, 5 % fully disagreed. Only 35 % of the population has a lot of trust in science, and thus less than half compared to the

members.

Overall, these data show that members of the Austrian CCA had an above-average level of political interest and commitment, a higher level of trust in science and were much more worried about climate change. Moreover, the understanding that climate change is human-made was almost twice as high among members as the general population. In light of these data, we can conclude that the CCA assembly members were not fully representative of the Austrian population regarding characteristics of political interest, political participation, and attitudes toward climate change.

Discrimination

Organizers should therefore discuss whether future citizens' assemblies would have to pay more attention to discrimination indicators such as political interests and migration backgrounds. It might be advisable to focus on the item 'ethnic minority' or 'ethnicity' in general, as it is already applied in particular in the Anglo-American region and states with a colonial history. While 'minority' or 'ethnicity' as criteria are not defined as must-haves, these items have recently gained greater importance when organizing a citizen' assembly (cf. the examples of the UK, Scotland and Germany above). The reason is mainly to be found in the claim of inclusion and recognition: If *'someone like me* is part of the assembly this provides the process with a higher legitimacy in the public perception and underlines the political will to involve hitherto underrepresented population groups. Moreover, it pays tribute to research on political participation showing that citizens from ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely to engage in political activity than all other ethnic groups combined (Verba *et al.* 1995, Ehs and Zandonella 2021, Mokre and Ehs 2021). Therefore, many recruitment surveys now ask about ethnicity or migration background. Moreover, the inclusion of minorities also seems important concerning the topic of climate change. Environmental organizations also need to consider and attend to the concerns and expertise of BIPoC/BAME as Bell and Bevan (2021) have shown recently. Therefore, integrating them into the deliberations seems essential.

Retention levels

Another essential aspect of the indicator ' *representativeness and inclusiveness*' is retention. Here, a distinction has to be made between those members who initially agreed to attend but did not show up at the first session and those who dropped out during the process. Due to the exceptional situation of conducting a citizens' assembly in person during a pandemic, an international comparison regarding members' attendance does not apply here. Nevertheless, the following basics should be noted for future citizens' assemblies: According to Europe's leading public participation organizations, *Involve*, facilitators get a higher retention rate if they invest more effort into the recruitment process. Especially, in-person recruitment (outreach lot selection process) can enable the start of a personal connection with the potential assembly member and answer any immediate concerns, resulting in a

higher retention rate.[6]

The Austrian CCA had the written commitment of 98 people on the eve of the first weekend but finally started with only 82 members. On the third weekend, there was a significant drop in participation, mainly due to COVID-19-infections. Since some of those who had fallen ill had already failed to attend previous sessions of the Austrian CCA, they were finally eliminated as members, and the pool was reduced to 89 active members. In the end, 84 people completed the Austrian CCA by supporting the final recommendations and an average of 76 people were present per session. However, the evaluation team has to give the facilitators of the process on-site credit for keeping the dropout rate relatively low despite convening a citizens' assembly during a pandemic.

The following list explains the attendance rates of the Austrian CCA in detail:

- At the time of the Austrian CCA's launch in January 2022 (reference date: January 14, 2022), Statistics Austria had delivered 98 participants' letters of acceptance.
- On the first weekend (January 15, 2022), 82 people showed up on the first day. Another person left from Saturday to Sunday. Therefore, the first weekend concluded with 81 members.
- On the second weekend (February 26/27, 2022), 81 people were present on Saturday, 82 on Sunday. According to the facilitators and participatory observation, nine to ten members showed up for the first time, while equally nine to ten members that had been there on the first weekend reported sick or were otherwise excused. After the second weekend, there seemed to be a steady pool of around 90-92 assembly members. These numbers were made transparent for everybody on site.
- On the third weekend (March 26/27, 2022), only 72 members were present. According to the facilitators, many cancellations were made related to COVID-19 (see details below).
- The facilitators noted the following reasons for not showing up at the third weekend:
    - 10x CoViD19 (either members infected themselves or caring for sick relatives)
    - 1x illness, other than CoViD19
    - 2x occupational obligations
    - 1x care obligation
    - 1x member had moved to the UK; organizers did not provide reimbursement of travel costs from abroad; therefore, the member left the Austrian CCA.
    - 1x unexcused absence

  The steady pool of members was reduced to 89 after the third weekend.
- On the fourth weekend (April 23/24 2022), only 72 members were again present. Of these, two participants had already been absent on the third weekend. At this point

[6] https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/how-do-i-setup-citizens-assembly/3- representative

in time, the facilitators still counted 89 active members. The reasons given for absence were:

- 5x due to illness
- 5x due to private festivities
- 7x for other reasons (relocation, holidays, work etc.)

- The number of members increased on the fifth weekend (May 14/15, 2022). On Saturday, 77 members were present, on Sunday, 76. At that time, the facilitators counted 88 active members. One had dropped out between the fourth and fifth weekend. The reasons given for absence were:
  - 2x due to illness
  - 2x due to private festivities
  - 8x for other reasons (relocation, holidays, work etc.)
- On the sixth and final weekend (June 11/12, 2022), the number of participants dropped again: On Saturday, 73 members were present, on Sunday, 75.

Furthermore, the evaluation team critically reflects that the ministry's order for the recruitment process ended with the delivery of the contact data on November 19, 2021, respectively with the delivery of the members from the pool of registrants on January 14 2022 (just before the first session). Due to this assignment, it was impossible to nominate replacement members after the first (or even second) weekend, as is usually practiced internationally. Although some facilitators favored a post-selection, others argued that numerous substantive presentations had taken place in the first two sessions, which served as an essential and decisive prerequisite for later deliberation.

Barriers to participation

Following the quality criterion 'removing barriers to participation,' the team of organizers and facilitators behaved mainly following international standards. For example, the facilitators provided remuneration for the members (€ 100 per weekend), covered their travel expenses and meals, and provided for childcare on-site. This information was already communicated in the very first letter of the civic lottery and according to best practice herewith. The facilitators team was extremely supportive to the members and tried to overcome participation barriers in numerous phone calls before and after the weekend sessions and on-site. However, the invitation letters from Statistics Austria were neither accompanied by a summary in 'easy to understand language' nor in other widely spoken languages common in Austria (Turkish, Serbian, etc). Here, too, it should be considered for future citizens' assemblies whether at least the languages of the recognized ethnic groups should be used.

Some citizens' assemblies – especially those convened in the UK – use 'disability' as a selection criterion for the recruitment process. In doing so, they not only give voice to an under-represented population group but also create the basis for a better response to special needs during the process. For the Austrian CCA 'disability' was not a criterion. The

official website did have an accessibility information page from the beginning (https://klimarat.org/barrierefreiheit/) and stated that accessibility was under review. However, this page was not updated until the Austrian CCA had ended (accessed: July 22, 2022). As the evaluation team did not carry out its own website analysis, no statement can be made on accessibility. However, it must be critically noted that it is insufficient on the part of the ministry not to carry out an accessibility audit until the end of the process. The online platform '*Klimarat fragt um Rat*', webinars, lectures or information videos made available on the website via *Youtube* were not designed to be accessible to all people with disabilities. Of course, subtitles can be generated automatically via *Youtube*, but they are usually somewhat inaccurate. Hence, for example, professional subtitling should have been assigned.

Learnings and recommendations on the Input-Dimension

- Use a strong political mandate for the CCA and build on cross-party support.
- Base citizens' assemblies on a legal statute and be precise about what will happen with the assembly's recommendations.
- Involve inter-ministerial coordination early on
- Involve the general public in the process from the start (good practice: Ireland) and use a tool more user-friendly than Pol.is. When reaching out to the general public, take more care of people with disabilities.
- Include 'political interest', 'political participation, and thematic attitudes' criteria in the recruitment process in future citizen assemblies.
- Express a straightforward guiding question from the start. Keep the guiding question constant during the process and avoid neologisms.
- Consult experts on deliberative democracy and the Austrian political system to oversee the implementation of the process.
- Be more transparent and provide comprehensive information on goals and the civic lottery right from the start, not only upon public request.
- Instruct the recruiter to provide a final report on the composition of the current assembly members and collect the reasons for rejection in a structured way.
- Allocate more budget for a state-of-the-art recruitment process.
- Consider using 'migration background' and 'disability' as a criterion for the recruitment process of assembly members.
- Exercise due diligence concerning the involvement of under-represented and traditionally under-served groups during the recruitment process. Consider higher remuneration or other incentives (vouchers etc.) to get under-represented groups involved.
- Provide the facilitators more time to develop and implement the process design.

- There should be at least six months between the award of the contract and the start of the climate assembly. Instruct the facilitators to collect the reasons for withdrawal from the assembly in a structured way to learn what people would need to remain with the assembly.
- Allow replacement nominations until the start of the second session, at least.
- Exercise due diligence when using online tools, videos and webinars not to exclude people with disabilities.
- Lacking legal basis, dependence on political will and ambiguities as to how the recommendations will be used can impair the legitimacy of the process from an output perspective but can also have negative impact on the will to participate in such fora in general.

3.2 Process: Deliberation, Facilitation and Decision-Making (WP4)

The democratic empowerment of participants is an important normative goal of (deliberative) participation processes (OECD 2020). Learning democratic skills and increased knowledge about political decision-making processes should promote interest in future participation and increase political self-efficacy (Elstub et al. 2021, OECD 2021). Process design is central to the emergence of such democratic political effects, as different process elements influence the participants in different ways (Boulianne et al. 2020). Therefore, WP4 focuses on internal dynamics and interactions between participants and other actors and comprises a communicative and a design dimension. This includes evaluating the professional competence of facilitators, the provision of balanced information in expert testimony, the quality of the deliberations and other critical conceptions of participation like trust, respect and empowerment.

Neutrality and inclusivity of facilitation

The facilitation ensured inclusiveness, equal access to speaking opportunities, and an appropriate balance of small group and panel discussions throughout deliberation.

Enough consideration was given to marginalized communities to be heard. (For example, via supportive and mindful facilitation, creating a safe space for expression, and devising specific strategies for encouraging participation by those who are not used to speaking in public or may feel intimidated.)

The facilitation was neutral regarding the issue addressed.

A team of 12 facilitators from three different companies (the so-called 'ARGE Klimarat') were in charge of the preparatory-, the back- and the front stage of CCA. They were supported by a team of 17 moderators and 11 moderation assistants.[7] The organizers were entrusted with

[7] Next to these groups, the CCA was supplemented by a graphic recording team (1 person), a public relations team (5 persons), a film team (5 persons), a support team responsible for civic engagement and public events (2 persons) and a so-called core team, which accompanied the whole process and consisted of selected facilitators, civil servants from the commissioning ministry, members of the scientific board and the PR team, and two elected assembly members (citizens). More information about the various groups and persons enrolled in the Austrian CCA can be found in the final report of the 'Klimarat' (ARGE Klimarat 2022).

different duties, which means that some team members were responsible for the core process, for managing the scientific input or for small group discussions, and others took on administrative or supportive tasks. The team members had the skills and experience necessary for conducting deliberative mini-publics. However, such a prominent and publicly visible participatory process design has never been implemented in Austria. Most facilitators were highly experienced experts focusing on moderation techniques like 'Art of Hosting' and 'Dynamic Facilitation'. Although the facilitators and moderators had different levels of knowledge about climate change, its consequences and possible measures to be taken, they treated the subject as neutral as possible and with the necessary distance. Overall, the team of facilitators and moderators represents a group of independent experts of different ages, sex and experiences in dynamic group processes, team leading and management. However, a critical aspect arose when facilitators were (or felt) responsible for ensuring the implementation of the measures or maintaining contacts with the political decision-makers that are presumably crucial for the subsequent policy-making process. These tasks should have been taken over solely by the selected liaison persons from the ministries, the parliament and the public relations team to guarantee the essential and decisive neutrality of facilitation.

The team of facilitators and moderators managed to create a motivating working atmosphere among the participants very quickly, which was supported by the adoption of two main documents – the "Impact Manifesto" ("Wirkungsmanifest") and the "Agreement for Cooperation" ("Vereinbarung für's Miteinander") – on the first weekend. The 'Impact manifesto' sets out the following goals for the Austrian CCA:

- We want to make practical, effective and socially just proposals to policymakers.
- We want to generate attention.
- We want to promote a shift of attitudes in the general public.
- We want to increase the willingness of politicians to implement fast, effective climate protection measures.

The facilitators used many supportive methods to keep the level of participation high (e.g., support for organizing travelling, considerations of dietary requirements and special needs in case of physical or psychological impairments). The moderators took participants' experiences and knowledge seriously and were well integrated into the agenda. This is best illustrated by two elected assembly members joining the core managing team as equal partners right after the first weekend. There were sufficient breaks and time for recreation during the weekends, although the work intensity, in general, was very high. The meeting rooms and locations (in Vienna and Salzburg) were well equipped, although the main room in Salzburg on the second and the final weekend turned out to be too small and noisy. The detailed agenda of each weekend contained inputs designed to inform participants (e.g., lectures by scientific experts) as well as many other communicative settings where, according to the ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein 1969), consultation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control could take place. In sum, next to the plenary sessions were ten moderated working groups (two per thematic field) with 8-10 participants each,

where the main discussions and deliberations took place. This was complemented by discussions in small group where only 2-3 participants could speak to each other and work intensively on specific tasks, which were set by the moderation team. The team of facilitators and moderators used adequate language adapted to the participants' needs and was easy to understand for all. For example, the word 'consent' ('Konsent') was mentioned only a few times. The moderators preferred to speak about 'the possibility of expressing a serious objection' to reduce the language's complexity or to paraphrase the term(s) (read more about the decision principle consent below / indicator '*free decision making and response*'). Moreover, the moderating team frequently conducted creative exercises to activate the body and mind and keep participants relaxed but focused.

Breadth, diversity, clarity, and relevance of the evidence and stakeholders provided

Members were provided a solid and accessible information base featuring a wide range of accurate, relevant, transparent and accessible evidence and expertise, sufficient for effective participation and to address the remit set.

The information base was neutral, with a breadth of diverse viewpoints represented. (Ensured, for example, through mapping all the arguments of the issue with stakeholders to see whether all relevant areas and viewpoints are reflected in the information base.)

The information base accommodated members with different learning styles and included materials in various forms (written, video, in-person expert presentations, etc.).

There was a wide range of stakeholder views. (This could include an element of public submission.)

The selection of sources was transparent, revealing the curator and the basis for selecting the content. People in charge of preparing the information base had declared any potential conflict of interest.

Members could submit evidence for consideration and request additional information.

The Scientific Advisory Board of the CCA consisted of 15 members, including two coordinators. The team represented different Austrian research institutions and various disciplines – climate science, economics, sociology, glaciology, environmental psychology, transport planning, landscape ecology, environmental law, agriculture, biodiversity, housing and residential building science. The scientific advisory board was supported by a team of facilitators and moderators, who acted as an interface between experts and citizens in developing the communication strategy and all information materials. The advisory board thus covered a wide range of expertise needed to provide accurate and relevant evidence in the field of climate change, and communication with the participants was professionally facilitated.

However, assembly members were not given the possibility to decide or co-determine which scientific input they wanted from whom and whether, for example, any additional information would be helpful. The Scientific Advisory Board was already in place in advance and selected by a facilitator according to the commissioning ministry's specifications. In addition, the evaluation team missed expertise, particularly in the social sciences. Experts from political science, democratic theory and participation might have helped to enhance the understanding of different levels of policy making and instruments among participants (see also the indicator '*quality of judgement*' below). Also, the availability of expertise in

participatory democracy and deliberation could have helped the facilitators to reflect and adapt the design of the CCA throughout the process.

The facilitators used several instruments for communicating evidence within the CCA. There were information sheets on the respective fields of action, as well as videos of the eight lectures, including presentation slides, a graphic recording of the lectures on posters as well as the possibility to ask questions in the plenum and discuss issues with the members of the scientific advisory board in the respective working groups. Although the process design did not foresee the presence of all scientists on the advisory board during the assembly meetings, assembly members had sufficient opportunities to reflect on concerns or to request additional information. In addition, individual questions were also discussed more informally during coffee breaks, lunches or other events outside the official agenda. The participating scientists showed high levels of openness towards the people and their backgrounds and were willing to learn from the participants' viewpoints.

Two scientific lectures on the first weekend focused on the basics of the climate crisis and climate protection. On the second weekend, there was a lecture introducing the field of food and land use and insights into the individual handling of the climate crisis from the perspective of environmental psychology. The information and learning phase of the participants continued until the third weekend when a total of four lectures on the remaining four fields (energy, mobility, production and consumption, and housing) were held. The main task of the presentations was to introduce and provide an overview of the topic and propose 4 to 5 leverage points per field of action. Starting with the third weekend, the facilitators moved on to lead the participants towards the consultation and deliberation phase. For an overview of the process design of the scientific input into the Austrian CCA, see Figure 9.

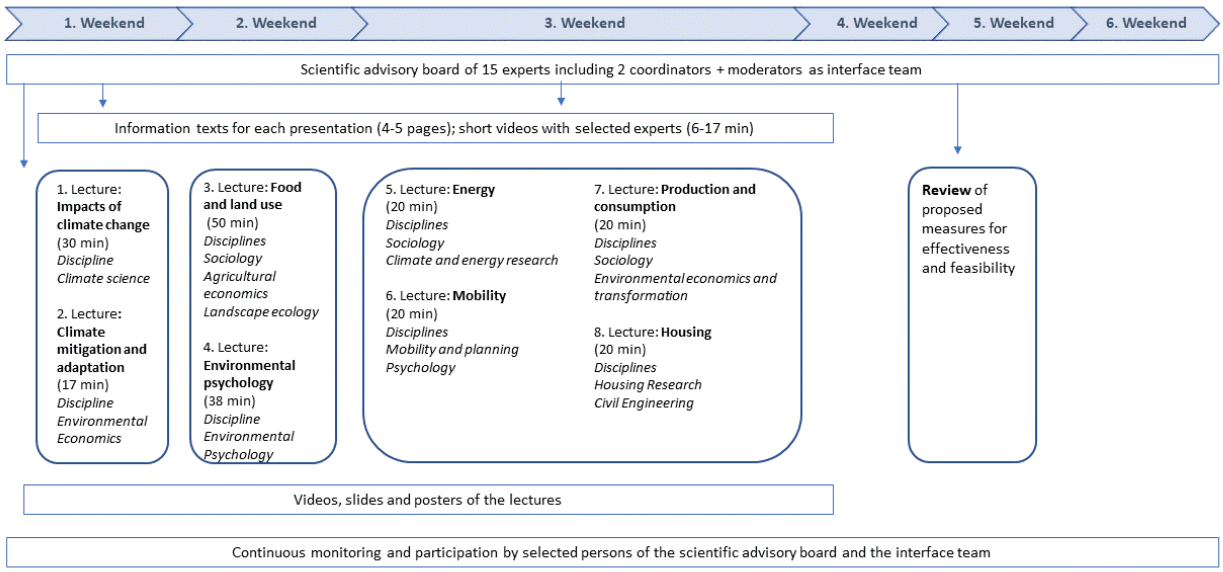

Figure 9: Implementation design of scientific expertise in the Austrian CCA (based on Reinthaler, forthcoming)

The assembly meetings have been documented on the CCA's website with short written summaries and videos documenting each weekend. In addition to this openly accessible section, an internal area on the website for participants offered additional information (documentation and protocols of the weekends in a detailed version, including the extensive graphic recording and flipcharts; photographs; videos and information texts from the scientific advisory board; documentations of developments in the specific working groups and fields of action).

At the beginning of the CCA, the scientific lectures were demanding for non-expert audiences and structured more like university lectures. Far too many graphs were presented, and there was too little time to provide sufficient explanations. This was partly because the process design did not provide enough time to prepare the expert statements and inputs. However, following the first weekend, the facilitators and scientists successfully invested much time and effort in making the scientific input more accessible and understandable for the target audience. In addition, the lectures emphasized the urgency of the climate crises, but important considerations were made not to overburden the participants or inhibit them in their search for adequate solutions and measures. Although these lectures were significant at the level of information provision and for stimulating discussions, the integration of knowledge (e.g., processing and application) took place mainly through the joint exchange and through queries between the citizens and members of the scientific advisory board at a later stage (from weekend three onward).

A cornerstone of the scientific advice in the CCA occurred before and during the fifth weekend when the Scientific Advisory Board had to review the proposed measures. This was based on a set of criteria, where effectiveness, feasibility and impact period for each measure or recommendation were assessed. Some preliminary work on this was completed in digital form in the run-up to the fifth weekend. However, the main work was carried out in a "Long Night of Research" (from Saturday to Sunday). At this stage, the scientific team showed impressive levels of passion and commitment and created a constructive working atmosphere. Each of the proposed measures was accurately discussed in small groups (2-3 scientists), followed by a plenary discussion.

Overall, the CCA provided accessible and valuable information (evidence) in various formats, sufficient opportunities for effective knowledge integration, a wide range of expertise and considered different learning styles. The following obstacles were identified: the lack of co-determination on members of the Scientific Advisory Board and the lack of social science expertise, in particular political science.[8]

Furthermore, as an institutional innovation compared to most other CCAs, stakeholder views were given a direct presence in the Austrian CCA through the *Stakeholder Advisory Board*.[9]

[8] For more detailed results and recommendations regarding the opportunities, obstacles, and pitfalls of scientific climate communication in the CCA, see the master thesis by Sonja Reinthaler (forthcoming 2023).
[9] The following institutions were represented on the stakeholder advisory board: Chamber of Labour (AK), Anti Poverty Network ("Die Armutskonferenz"), National Youth Council (BJV), Global Responsibility, Federation of Austrian Industries (IV), Climate Petition (Klimavolksbegehren KVB), Chamber of Agriculture (LKÖ), Ökobüro

This Board met independently and also with the CCA members. Most, but not all, stakeholders prepared impulse papers presenting their views on the issues relating to the CCA. During the fourth weekend, stakeholders could discuss their perspectives in person (or online) with the CCA members. The stakeholders highlighted their specific contributions to the climate debate in the sectors in which they are active, e.g., Disability Council: climate protection must be barrier-free and accessible for all; Poverty Conference: climate mitigation must be affordable. In interviews, most stakeholders reported to be impressed by the diversity of participants and the topics discussed during the fourth weekend. They were able to dispel prejudices and raise awareness during the discussion. Most stakeholders' interviews supported the use of deliberative processes also for other social, economic or ecological problems. Many regard the population's involvement as necessary, but rather in the context of external communication and other public relations efforts and not necessarily at the level of co-decision-making. Overall, the stakeholders stressed the importance of the forthcoming 'Climate Change Act' ('Klimaschutzgesetz') to ensure that the decisions of the CCA are considered in the political process.[10]

Significant insecurity prevailed within the Stakeholder Advisory Board about its own role. Organizational structures and hierarchies of the many involved interest groups contributed to difficulties, as the mandates of the representative in the Board was also unclear. Personnel fluctuations in the composition of the Board made establishing a good working atmosphere difficult. At the same time, there were notable differences among the participating groups, with a large number of supportive organizations and a few which remained skeptical of the process.

The participatory observation during the fourth weekend also shed light on the assembly members' perceptions of these stakeholder dialogues. Some of the discussions were very constructive and encouraging: Assembly members showed great interest in the issues that the stakeholders brought to the table, while the stakeholder representatives communicated their appreciation for the assembly's work and tried to find synergies between their efforts and the CCA's concerns. Other dialogues were more confrontational, with citizens questioning or criticizing the stakeholders' (lack of) substantial contributions to effective climate policies. Some stakeholders seemed unprepared to face such a large variety of informed opinions, compared to the echo-chambers they are usually acting in. These representatives reacted defensively and without genuine efforts to discuss the citizens' concerns or integrate their perspectives. In particular, many citizens were disappointed by the Austrian Economic Chamber and the Federation of Austrian Industries who were late to submit their impulse papers to the CCA, were the only stakeholders not to attend in person

(Alliance of the Austrian Environmental Movement), Federation of Austrian Trade Unions (ÖGB), Umweltdachverband (an umbrella organization of environmental protection organizations), Economic Chamber (WKO). Three other institutions were invited to the exchange with assembly members: Dachverband Erneuerbare Energie (umbrella organization for the promotion of renewable energy), Austrian Disability Council, Österreichs Energie (special interest group of the Austrian energy sector).

[10] More insights about the role and perceptions of the participating stakeholders in the Austrian CCA can be found in the master theses of Tina Seidl (forthcoming 2023) and Lukas Pichler (forthcoming 2023).

but online, and only had time for one round of discussions with the assembly members (all the other stakeholders stayed for two rounds).

In general, the format of the 'stakeholder dialogues' was not well-suited for discussing these issues more deeply or resolving conflicts between stakeholders' interests and the CCA's goals, mainly due to a lack of time but also engagement for meaningful deliberation from some of the stakeholders. Nevertheless, in some cases, the assembly members gained insights into the stakeholders' work and received support from the representatives for their efforts and concerns. In addition, keeping meetings with stakeholders short has helped to maintain the citizens' assembly's independence from interest groups and lobbying.

The fourth weekend also allowed the assembly members to meet with representatives from Austria's major political parties. Two representatives from each party in the Austrian parliament were invited, though all except the Green Party only sent one person. Participants prepared for the exchange in their respective working groups by reflecting on how citizens and politicians could work together on the CCA's issues. The content of the discussions varied widely, with some conversations being very cooperative and respectful while others were more confrontational and divisive. Assembly members frequently criticized the lack of political action on climate issues and the often-uncooperative nature of the political debate, while politicians highlighted the need for broad public support of climate policies. All political representatives have positively valued the citizens' knowledge and hard work in the CCA and willingness to communicate the assembly's issues to their respective parties. The assembly members' meetings with stakeholders and politicians during the fourth weekend were kept relatively short. Nevertheless, time was sufficient to make the members feel appreciated for their work in the assembly. At the same time, the short duration of the exchanges served to avoid the undue external influence of (political) parties on the participants.

Quality of judgement

There was the consideration of conflicting values and structural issues underlying the question.

There was an emphasis on diversity of viewpoints, weighing alternatives and trade-offs, exploring uncertainties, and exposing assumptions.

Members provided justifications for their viewpoints.

Members approached the process with open-mindedness.

Members considered and integrated a range of evidence in their judgements.

Perceived knowledge gains by members

Members have exercised and gained empathy by developing mutual understanding and considering different views and experiences.

Members have gained a clearer understanding of each other's opinions.

After deliberation, members better understand the policy issue and the public decision-making process in general.

The opinion of each member became clearer through deliberation and moved towards informed judgement.

CCA participants have worked along five main thematic areas: energy, mobility, housing,

production and consumption, and food and land use. The topics of social justice, education, health and global responsibility were treated as cross-cutting issues. From the third weekend onwards, the participants were permanently assigned to a thematic field and had to discuss possible measures in two interlinked working groups per thematic area.

The participatory observation showed that during the process, the assembly members considered more and more evidence in their judgements and justified their viewpoints. One external source for this conclusion is that the stakeholders and politicians invited to the fourth weekend have positively valued the level of knowledge of the assembly members about the impacts of climate change and potential mitigation policies. These are clear signs that the process design also valued the Habermasian notion (Habermas 1981) of reasoning and rationality associated with deliberative formats and that the scientific input was not perceived as a patronizing educational measure.

However, participants also needed to gain more knowledge regarding different policy-making instruments. Most of them needed to be made aware of the full spectrum of environmental policy, starting with persuasive, procedural and cooperative instruments and including market-based instruments and hard regulation. This was then reflected in the measures adopted at the end, which do not differentiate between different instruments but represent a bundle of additional measures to varying levels per policy field. In addition, the so-called cross-cutting issues were not dealt with in separate working groups, which resulted in an insufficient consideration of these topics of utmost importance. Hence, coherent system thinking was not promoted on the part of the participants. It is, therefore, unsurprising that the final report proposes many incremental changes but neglects the manifold possibilities of (more disruptive) social innovations and transformation. This partly explains the concerns the Scientific Advisory Board expressed on the (so far) proposed measures at the fourth weekend (see indicator '*Free decision making and response'* below*).*

Accessibility and equality of opportunity to speak

All members had equal speaking opportunities, the opportunity to influence the discussions, and equal access to any necessary support, tools, or resources during the process.

Members had the opportunity to provide ongoing feedback and suggest modifications to the process (such as asking for more time or reporting experienced bias).

Respect and a mutual comprehension

Interactions among members were respectful.

There was careful and active listening, as well as interactive deliberation, that allowed members to weigh each other's views.

All members felt heard in the process.

Free decision-making and response

The process implementation was free of interference beyond set roles and processes (i.e. intrusions by experts and steering group members).

The final recommendations represent what the members think (i.e. members had the final say over the wording of the recommendations).

The final decision-making was non-coercive, using democratic decision-making rules (i.e. consensus, majority rule, ranking etc.).

The report fully reflects the group's judgement, including views not supported by the majority. Members were free and helped to contribute a minority report which appears in the appendix to the main report.

Respect for members' privacy

Members' privacy was protected.

There was no undesired attention or attempt at interference from the media, stakeholders, or other actors.

Concerning learning democratic skills, respectful and appreciative interaction with one another is of particular importance. These issues were of great importance throughout the Austrian CCA process. In the beginning, the participants developed their own rules of conduct and repeatedly praised the pleasant cooperation in the CCA. The different perspectives and opinions of the citizens were presented as valuable and essential for the success of the process. The facilitation and moderation team supported the participants in contributing their views and actively listening to and understanding other points of view. The wording of texts (e.g., the concretization of a proposed measure) was often revised and streamlined from weekend to weekend by the moderators. These changes were made transparent and understandable for the participants. In addition, the 'slido' online tool was used to raise and rate questions and to structure the discussion in plenary sessions. This tool was mostly applied after scientific inputs. Feelings of frustration and being overwhelmed were repeatedly addressed and worked through together. One example is the CCA's Working Group on Food and Land Use: At the third weekend, the evaluation team carrying out the participants' observation witnessed clear signs of overstraining, both with the (very dense) scientific inputs and with the task of concretizing measures in their field of action. The participants had feelings of overload and stagnation. The moderation team reacted

strongly to this and made room in the agenda for dealing with these feelings and tried bringing what had already been achieved to the foreground.

Some debates in the working groups were dominated by male and older participants, which was challenging, especially for young female moderators. In general, the moderators dealt with such situations gently but firmly. Our team observed that the success of these interventions often depended on the level of experience of the moderator. The COVID-19 rules, which remained in place until the fourth weekend and were in part very restrictive, especially at the beginning of the CCA, had hardly any negative influence on the overall dynamics of the talks and the process. Moreover, the participants adhered to these rules in a very disciplined manner, which probably also relates to the exclusion of non-vaccinated persons (cf. the input dimension). Overall, during the process, the participants were able to experience the positive effects of respectful dialogue as a means for fostering creativity, knowledge exchange and mutual learning. Over time, a stronger sense of community developed, and the citizens consciously showed responsibility for the process and its results.

During the CCA, the acquisition of knowledge about political processes was less important than knowledge about climate change and potential measures. However, the participants were repeatedly confronted with climate change-related issues' complexity and political nature, particularly as the moderation team also addressed conflicting goals, trade-offs and possible barriers to implementing measures. Especially at the fourth weekend of the CCA, when various stakeholders and politicians were invited to discuss with the assembly members, the obstacles and pitfalls of traditional or established policy-making became obvious. Furthermore, many citizens expressed the wish to contact political representatives directly and were supported by the various CCA support teams (see also indicator 'Neutrality and inclusivity of facilitation'). At the end of the CCA process, different possibilities for further participation were presented. Many participants emphasized their intention to continue working on the issues of climate change and the CCA. Establishing an association after the Klimarat concluded is the strongest signal in taking the initiative, assuming responsibility and empowering the participating citizens.

As a decision-making rule for any voting and especially the final recommendations, the facilitation and moderation teams proposed the consent principle (*Konsent-Prinzip*), which means a decision can be taken unless there is a severe and justified objection. This principle allows individuals to express serious objections and ensures to decide without neglecting dissenting opinions or voices of opposition. At the same time, consent is less conservative and restrictive than consensus. This decision-making rule was presented at the first weekend of the CCA when it was only briefly addressed and explained to reduce complexity. In the course of the CCA process, the consent principle was implemented step by step and became an accepted and well-practiced decision-making tool. During the drafting procedure of the final recommendations only very few severe objections were raised as these had often already been debated, worked through and implemented earlier in the process. All 14 complaints concerning seven different recommendations are documented in the annex of the final report (cf. ARGE Klimarat 2022: 91). In total, all 97 submissions were accepted by

the citizens because the threshold for the acceptance or rejection of a measure was fixed at the level of ten and more serious objections, which no single recommendation has reached.

The introduction of the consent principle was adequate for the size and tasks of the CCA. Nevertheless, the participants could also have been granted a stronger right of co-determination in this regard. For example, several options (compromise, consensus, majority voting, systemic consensus building or measuring resistance) and their advantages and disadvantages could have been presented by the facilitators and submitted to vote. Whether the threshold of ten serious objections, again determined solely by the facilitators, is adequate or too high regarding the number of participants could also be a point of discussion or criticism.

The few substantive conflicts that occurred among participants (e.g., whether the commuter allowance should be completely cancelled or revised and more geared towards ecological criteria) were treated with great attention, time and resources. For example, (especially at weekend five of the CCA) breakout sessions took place and were moderated using the 'dynamic facilitation' technique, where conflicting parties could discuss the issue and find a common solution. At weekend four of the CCA, the Scientific Advisory Board raised concerns about the comprehensiveness, coverage and scope of the discussed measures and recommendations vis-à-vis the responsible liaison team (= selected facilitators and moderators). This conflict quickly resolved in a small face-to-face meeting of selected participants, including the two elected assembly members of the core (management) team. The citizens emphasized that they had full ownership of the final report and measures and that there was no need to produce a scientific output at the end.

Overall, the deliberations were guided by the conscious and professional steering strategy, which allowed a good balance from passive listening to active participation. CCA members were motivated, members' privacy was respected, mutual comprehension was encouraged, and the opportunity to speak was formally equally distributed. Until the end of the process, we can attest to the CCA a high degree of self-efficacy and empowerment among participants, which was essentially supported by the work and methods implemented by the facilitators and moderators.[11]

Learnings and recommendations on the Process-Dimension

As we assumed that the deliberative process design is robust and complete, only a few minor recommendations would make sense. Therefore, we decided to instead present a list of learnings on the process dimension:

- The more lively, well moderated and orchestrated the process is, the better the Citizen Assembly method works.

[11] A more comprehensive examination of the connection between process design and democratic political empowerment in the Austrian CCA will be conducted in the master thesis of Jana Plöchl (forthcoming 2023).

- The ownership lies with the participants, i.e., the influence of scientific knowledge, moderation or external actors must be kept as low as possible.
- The involvement of stakeholders into CCA process needs to be more clarified. On the one hand, they offer important special knowledge and might be helpful in disseminating the result in their communities. The deliberative process might also instigate learning processes. On the other hand, the presence of the stakeholders, might easily overburden the work of the CCA.
- The participants must be aware of the spectrum of policy instruments (from persuasive and cooperative instruments, and financial incentives to legal prohibitions and bans) to be able to propose a bundle of effective climate policy measures.
- To guarantee the important neutrality of facilitation, only the selected liaison persons from the ministries, the parliament and the public relations team should be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the measures or maintaining contacts with the political decision-makers.
- Assembly members must be seen as essential multipliers because, in the process, they also increasingly consciously influence their living environment. This is particularly relevant for working groups on nutrition but also in the areas of mobility, energy, housing and consumption.

3.3 Impact on Polity, Policy and Politics (WP5)

WP 5 focuses on effects of CCA regarding policy formulation and implementation (*effectiveness dimension*), impacts on the individual political efficacy and learning of participants (*satisfaction dimension*) as well as the *accountability dimension*, which refers to the publicness and the transparency of the deliberative process, including the media attention it triggers. Measuring the impact of the CCA needs to pay attention to different dimensions and requires conceptual thinking which builds on the methods and results of the previous parts of the project, including the survey with the participants, the larger public and the policy results. While individual-level efficacy has been analysed by UWK's report that presented results from the survey of participant and with the broader public (see Praprotnik et al. 2022), the focus here is on evaluating the CCA's recommendations, and the perception of the process in the Austrian public sphere.

The impact of a CCA can be measured along many dimensions. These can relate to the (climate policy) recommendations made as the result of the CCA process, better integration of science-policy interfaces into the political system but also to changing perceptions of democracy and of democratic innovations. Conceptually, WP5 follows recommendations of the OECD Guidelines and discussions within the KNOCA network concerning impact assessment (Thorman and Capstick 2022). In the state of the art regarding citizen assemblyevaluations as proposed by the OECD (2020) two considerations of impact can be found. The first states the importance of influential recommendations, in terms of "*the evidence of impact on public decision making*" (OECD, 2020, p. 81) and the extent of

implementation of recommendations (OECD, 2020, p. 103). However, existing impact assessments of consultative participatory processes clearly show that the impact in terms of potential policy uptake is a process that needs more time to occur (Jacquet and van der Does 2021, Vrydagh 2022). Following the policy development over time the correspondence between CCA recommendations and public policy documents can be established based on textual correspondence and expert interviews. Given that most evaluations of CCA processes take place immediately after the end of the citizen assemblies, there are limited possibilities to evaluate impact in terms of policy outcome (Thorman and Capstick 2022). Therefore, we need to differentiate between output and outcome of CCAs. *Output* describes the concrete quality of the results. The recommendations developed by CCAs should be relevant to the political process and adequate for the topic or problem being addressed. This includes the existence of formal commitment of policymakers to consider the results of the citizen assembly and report back to the citizens. Even though most recent CCA evaluations do not consider the policy dimension directly (Elstub *et al.* 2021, Giraudet *et al.* 2022), evaluating output can also include an evaluation of the quality of the recommendations in comparison to an external anchor, such as the policy status quo or state of the art in research (Saujot *et al.* 2021). The main aim of the CCA is at this stage to initiate broader deliberation beyond the CCA and increase the likelihood for some kind of political reaction as much as possible. *Outcome*, in contrast, refers to influence of the recommendations on subsequent political decisions or whether something of the recommendations has been implemented. Thorman and Capstick (2022) calls this aspect the "legacy of climate assemblies" and distinguishes between legislative, democratic and public discourse as relevant dimensions of influence.

Based on the above considerations we focus on two aspects of the *output* dimension in terms of linkages to the political system. On the one hand, we examine the recommendations made by the Austrian CCA in terms of policy content and assess how they relate to the status quo of Austrian climate policy. Impact does not refer here to the "political legacy" of the CCA but is limited to the process of the CCA and the quality of recommendations that were put forward as a result of that process. On the other hand, we evaluate how CCA process and its results are taken up by the media in the context of public relations work and thus made accessible to the broader public.

Response and follow-up

The government or equivalent commissioning body responded to members of the deliberative process and/or to the general public. (Ideally, such a body would accept the recommendations or provide a public justification for why not.)

The implementation of all accepted recommendations was monitored with regular public progress reports.

The resolution of the National Council stipulates that the concrete proposals developed by the CCA will be forwarded to the government and that the final report will be submitted to the Climate Cabinet and the National Climate Committee for discussion. There is no legal obligation to implement the CCA's proposals. Following deliberations during the six

weekends between January and June 2022, the Austrian CCA presented its recommendation on July 4th, 2022. The 93 recommendations (see Annex C) were officially handed over to Minister Leonore Gewessler (Greens) and Labour Minister Martin Kocher (VP) who received the recommendations on behalf of the government. The coalition government promised reviewing the recommendations over the summer and give feedback on each point in autumn of the same year. It is not yet clear how this feedback will look like: As different ministries are in charge with the recommendations, ideally the response should be based on inter-ministerial coordination.

If and how the "legacies" of the CCA process will be monitored during the potential follow-up policy process seems not to been decided yet. To secure this legacy, one possibility would be to task one government body, such as the BMK, to provide regular (e.g., annual) reports to the public highlighting policy developments on the 93 recommendations. A second option could be to task the CCA participants as an independent body to carry out this monitoring on "their" recommendations using external expert knowledge. Both solutions involve additional financial commitment. In a first step, however, the response to the government would need to clarify which recommendations can be supported. As many of the recommendations already exist, it is unlikely that all recommendations would enter the policy process.

Influential recommendations

The commissioners of the process identified and pursued a set of plausible pathways to immediate policy impact.

The impact (influential conclusions and/or actions) of the deliberative process corresponds to the mandate it was given.

The report of the deliberative process was released publicly.

Efforts were made to disseminate the report widely.

The members' recommendations had an opportunity to influence opinions and decisions made by a commissioning body, other public institutions, or the broader public.

The report of the recommendations was presented officially on July 4, 2022. The report was handed over to the government, represented by two government ministers from the two coalition partners, the President of the Republic, Alexander van der Bellen, and to all party groups represented in the Parliament. A press conference was held with participation of all groups involved into the CCA, which received high media attention (see the results of the media content analysis below). Most Austrian news outlets reported also about the recommendations made as a result of the deliberation process in detail.

Titles of the 93 proposals of the CCA can be found in Annex C. They include a high variety of different policies related to various aspects of climate change. For example, the list contains declaring climate protection a fundamental right, a land sealing ban, the abolition of subsidies for fossil energy, the creation of a climate commission, greenhouse gas tariffs for food from third countries and higher taxes for climate-damaging vehicles. The CCA agreed also on the expansion of public transport, the introduction of a paraffin tax and of

chargeable returns in online trade. The recommendations also include the demand for speed limits. In the area of consumption and production, the CCA proposes to ban the destruction of new goods due to online trade. In addition, the reparability of products is to be made obligatory. Climate-damaging products should be avoided - and their advertising should be severely restricted and even banned in the case of particularly harmful products. Another proposal are favorable credit conditions for climate-friendly projects. Food should be taxed on the basis of environmental impact. Climate-friendly products should thus become more attractive. The CCA also favors a stronger food waste regulation. The citizens have also formulated a number of measures in the area of housing: An immediate policy offensive should enable the renovation of all existing buildings. Renovations should also be promoted more strongly than new buildings in order to curb soil erosion. To reduce the amount of sealed land, the responsibility for spatial planning is to be shifted to the state level. Another important point concerns the compulsory installation of solar systems on large and communal buildings.

To situate the recommendations made by the CCA the status quo of current Austrian climate policy has to be compared with the CCA's recommendations. After the ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement the Austrian federal government presented in June 2018 the Austrian Climate and Energy Strategy #mission2030 (BMNT and BMVIT 2018). Its targets were mainly geared towards the year 2030 and partly 2050 and the overarching goals of the strategy refer to environmental sustainability, security of supply and economic competitiveness. This strategy formed the basis for the National Energy and Climate Plan (NEKP) which was submitted to the European Commission by the end of 2019. The first draft was rejected by the European Commission and was also heavily criticized by the Austrian Court of Audit, the Austrian scientific community and the NGO sector (Schulev-Steindl *et al.* 2020, Lueger and Zalneva 2021, Rechnungshof Österreich 2021, Marhold *et al.* 2022, Schulev-Steindl and Schnedl 2022). This critique led researchers from Austrian universities and research institutions from the fields of climate research, economics and natural sciences to develop the so-called Ref-NEKP, an alternative reference plan which is in line with the Paris climate goals (Kirchengast *et al.* 2020). The Conservative-Green coalition, which assumed government office in 2020, has emphasized the relevance of climate policy in its coalition agreement, which includes inter alia, the commitment for a new Climate Protection Act. The evaluation of CCA recommendations is made against the coalition agreement "Aus Verantwortung für Österreich"[12] and assesses the novelty, reach, and the policy instruments envisioned.

Regarding the substantive novelty of the policy recommendations made by the CCA participants, Table 2 shows parity between policies that were included in some form into the

[12] https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:7b9e6755-2115-440c-b2ec-cbf64a931aa8/RegProgramm-lang.pdf

coalition agreement of Conservative-Green government, and those that propose new solutions compared to the status quo. General recommendations as well as issues related to Food and Land have received relatively many new impulses, whereas Energy and Mobility policies rely more strongly on what is already in the discussion. The other issue areas such as Consumption and Housing are relatively well balanced between old and new recommendations.

Table 2: Relative newness of CCA recommendations

Issue area	Number of topics in the CCA recommendations	Included into coalition agreement	New recommendations
General recommendations	6	2	4
Energy	11	7	4
Food and Land	21	8	13
Consumption and Production	15	7	8
Mobility	22	14	8
Housing	18	10	8
Summ	93	48	45

A closer look shows that when the CCA recommendations are not new but build on existing or planned policies, over one third of these recommendations are more demanding in terms of policy content (Table 3). Categorizing recommendations as "more demanding" was made based on the textual comparison of the detailed version of the recommendations with the existing policy status quo. Recommendations including more details, higher targets or broader reach were coded as more demanding. Two sectoral experts were consulted in some unclear cases. More demanding recommendations seem particularly strong for issue area 'Mobility' and 'Consumption and Production', where more than 40% of recommendations are "gold-plating" existing policies.

Table 3: "Gold-plating" CCA recommendations

Issue area	Recommendations included into coalition agreement	More demanding CCA recommendations (#/%)	
General recommendations	2		
Energy	7	2	28.6
Food and Land	8	3	37.5
Consumption and Production	7	3	42.9
Mobility	14	7	50.0
Housing	10	3	30.0
Summ	48	18	37.5

The recommendations can be also differentiated regarding the envisioned policy instruments. Following the method applied in the so-called Ref-NEKP, an alternative

reference plan (Kirchengast *et al.* 2020), we distinguish between regulatory, subsidy-based, tax-based and informational policy instruments, the latter defined as policies attempting to influence behaviour through the provision of information. Figures 10 and 11 show that these policy instruments are relatively evenly distributed across the policy fields, suggesting that CCA participants did not support one-sidedly a strong regulatory state, or called only for subsidies.

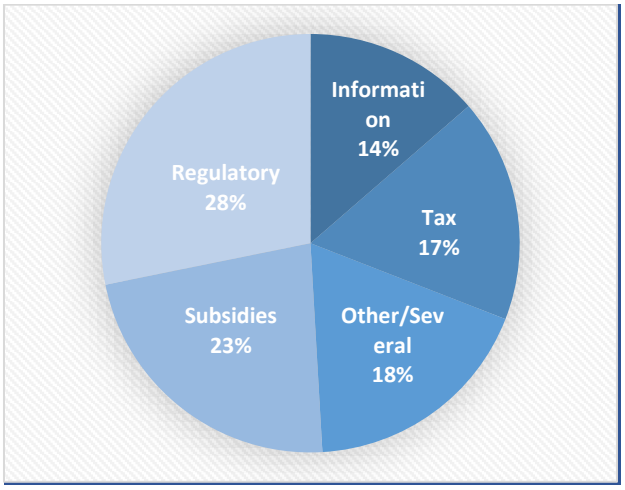

Figure 10: Recommended policy instructments

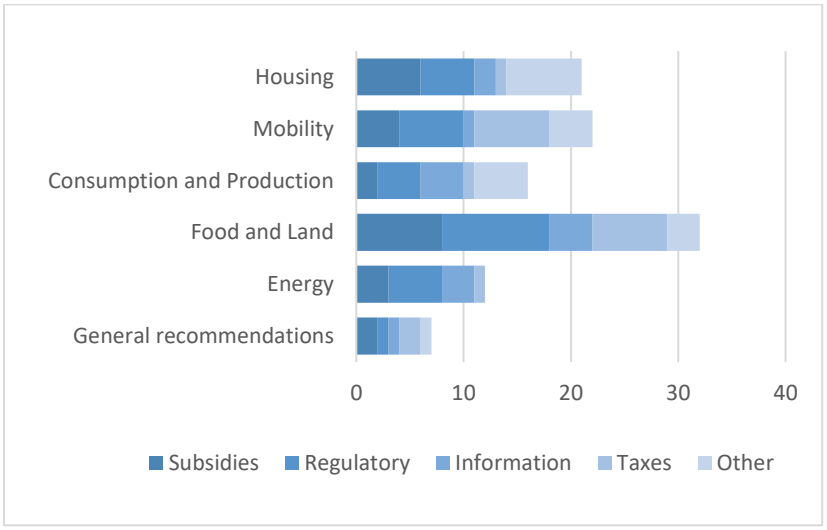

Figure 11: Number of recommended policy instruments for the different policy fields

Member aftercare

The members of the deliberative process were provided information on how to follow the uptake of their recommendations and further engage in the policy-making process.

The members had necessary support to speak about their experiences and recommendations to their communities or the broader public.

Communication channels were established for members to maintain their connection amongst themselves after the deliberative process.

One important aspect of deliberation processes is to increase the political self-efficacy of participants also after the events. As participative observation, in-depth interviews carried out by both universities with participants, and media reports show, the Austrian Climate Assembly has been certainly very influential in this sense on the personal level. During the CCA process, several participants have become actively involved in public debates through public talks or broadcast and podcast interviews where they reported about their experiences and learnings through within the deliberative process. CCA facilitators have especially encouraged developing innovative communication channels at the regional level by promoting exchange between participants from a given region and the respective political actors as well as the media. This strategy was explicitly oriented towards all political forces and thus seems to be an important best practice on the way to build broad societal coalitions concerning climate change related issues.

Following examples from other CCAs, participants of the CCA have established their own association, called "Verein des österreichischen Klimarat der Bürger:innen", in order to guard the implementation of their recommendations after the end of the CCA process.[13] The association could play an important role in protecting the legacy of the CCA and use its legitimacy to act as a non-partisan body that is sociologically representative of the Austrian population. This would, however, also necessitate some level of organizational consolidation that can be reached only if securing seed funding.

Media attention

The importance of communicating about the CCA beyond the participants is recognized in the OECD (2020) report, which suggests that communication can help engaging the broader public and stimulate debate in the public sphere. The report also suggests that it is helpful for CCAs to appoint a dedicated press officer to deal with this interface. Media attention to the Austrian CCA was considered to be an important component for influence and has been carefully monitored during the whole process by a dedicated team. The press team produced regular press clippings of media attention in national and regional media. In addition to that the media strategy of the CCA also included proactive measures to increase the quantity and quality of media reporting about the process. Press and classic public relations officers have moderated the access of the media to the CCA, including the access to the participating citizens, and were helpful themselves in providing information about the

[13] klimarat-verein.at

process in interviews or discussion panels. While some of the meetings of the CCA were open to the public via online streaming or could be watched afterwards on the site of the CCA, the organizers have carefully protected the confidentiality of deliberation process from the media. There was a media strategy in place to proactively reach out to regional media in particular, which was identified in previous CCAs as a potential weakness in communication.

Around 500 newspaper articles were published in the Austrian press focusing on the CCA between 01.07.2021 - 31.10.2022. Figure 12 shows that the regionalization strategy was successful and amounts for approximately one third of media mentions. The most news items related to the CCA were published by the broad-sheet dailies Kleine Zeitung, Kronen Zeitung und Kurier as well as the Austrian radio broadcaster. The two Vienna-based quality newspapers Der Standard and Die Presse have both published a similar number of articles.

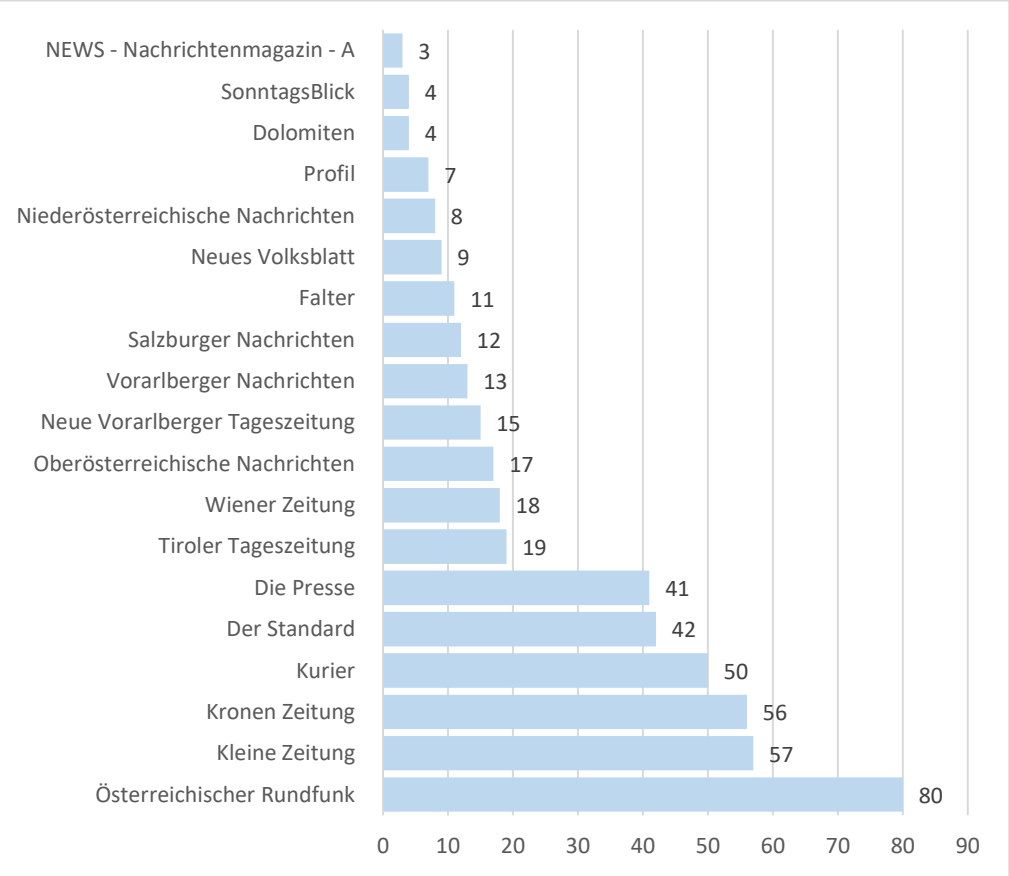

Figure 12: Number of mentions of the CCA in Austrian media

A closer look at the dynamics of media reporting about the CCA (see Figure 13) in the two quality newspapers Der Standard and Die Presse shows that media attention peaked at the start of the CCA in January and February 2022, with 7-9 articles published, declined during

most of the duration of the CCA and then increased again in June and July when the process was closed and the recommendations were presented.

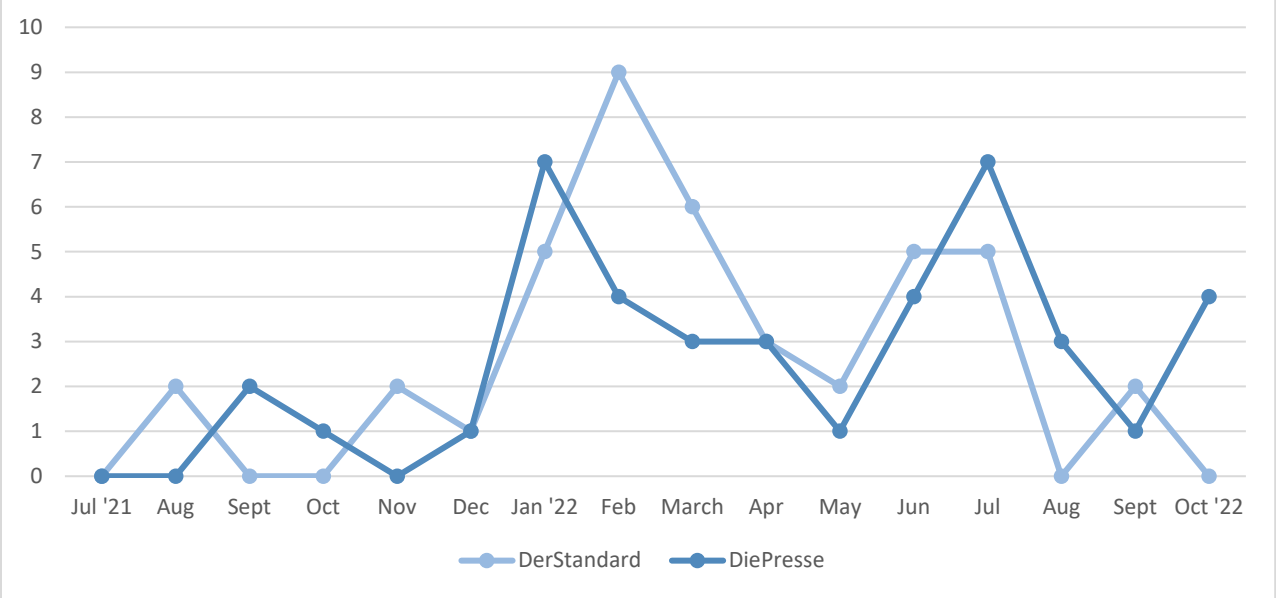

Figure 13: Number of articles about the CCA published in Der Standard and Die Presse between July 2021 and October 2022

The analysis of the content of the media reporting in the two media outlets shows a combination of neutral documentation of the CCA process and its results, a number of articles with positive tonality which focus either on the promising democratic innovation or on the participants in the CCA, as well as a significant number of negative commentaries. This latter group of articles were often commentaries or letters to the editor which criticized the CCA process as being "populist", for being an instrument of party politics or simply being too expensive.

One expectation mentioned in the literature concerning CCAs is that a substantive outcome of these processes might be in an increased level of media reporting about climate change. Following McGovern and Thorne's (2020) pre/post analysis of media reporting in Ireland, Figure 14 shows the share of reports about the CCA in relation to all climate change relevant media reporting of the two dailies in the six months before (Period 1), during (Period 2), and after (Period 3) the Austrian CCA. This suggests that during the CCA process somehow less than 2% of the climate change related reporting focused on the CCA process. Similar to other climate assemblies, the reporting about the CCA had a strong procedural character and only during the later stage are there few signs of instigating a societal discussion about climate policy but also democratic decision-making. The strong focus on procedural reporting about

the CCA has also meant that after the end of the CCA, attention to these topics decreased rapidly.

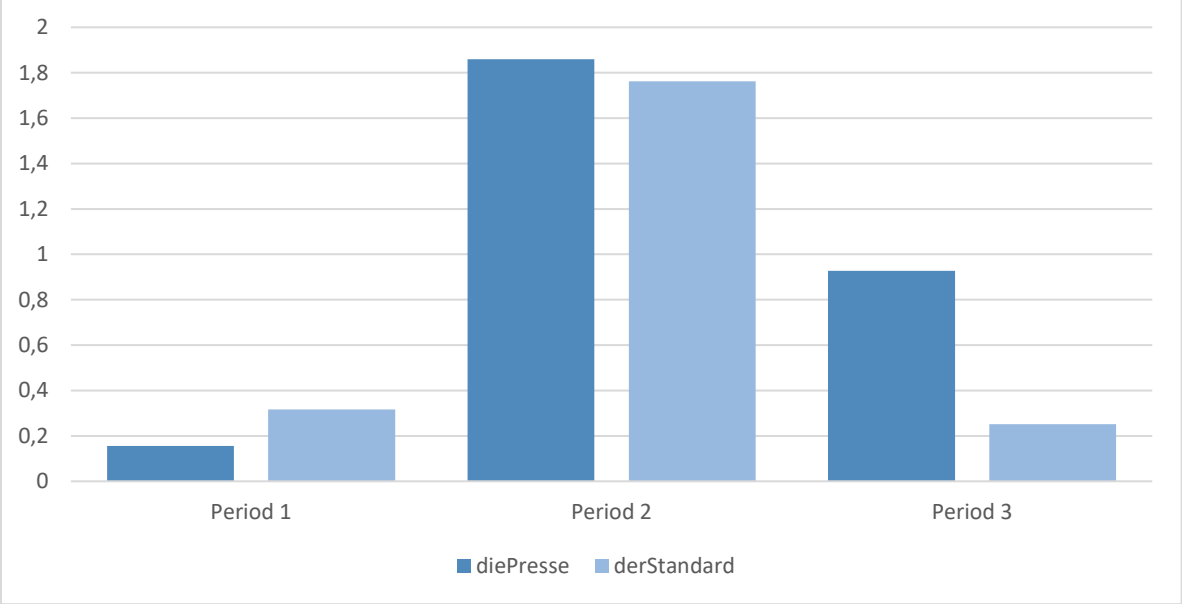

Figure 14: Reports about the CCA as a percentage of all climate change relevant media reporting in Der Standard and Die Presse in the six months before (Period 1), during (Period 2), and after (Period 3) the Austrian CCA

Overall, the evaluation of output shows that the policy recommendations made by the participants call for a more demanding climate policy. About half of the recommendations are already envisioned in the coalition program, are thus not new as such. At the same time, recommendations have taken into account existing or planned policies and develop them further and one third of the recommendations calls for more demanding or more stringent policies compared to the existing ones. While most recommendations enter known territory, some of the policies envisioned do not shy away from long-standing conflicts, such as speed limits, or the land sealing ban. These recommendations in particular hold the potential of stimulating societal debate.

As related to the media reporting of the CCA, we found that the communication strategy used by the facilitators was successful in raising the levels of knowledge about the CCA, and helpful in providing information about the process. The media analysis complements the results in the population survey which shows that traditional media has played the most important role drawing attention to the CCA process. Reaching out to local and broad-sheet media has been a particularly strong part of that strategy. It is foreseeable that after the end of the CCA, that media attention will steeply decline.

Learnings and recommendations on the Output-dimension

- More attention to the interconnectedness of the selection process and the internal governance will influence also the impact of the CCA.

- Clarify the role of the CCA recommendations: a) should these aim at coherence and be "realistic" or b) show controversies and different possible pathways existing in society.
- Strengthen the focus and inclusion of cross-sectoral considerations and trade-offs, including social aspects of transformation.
- Strive to interact with relevant parliamentary and administrative bodies. The impact of the CCA depends crucially on resonance in the political and administrative space.
- Include stakeholders in disseminating the results of the CCA.
- Government authorities should provide meaningful feedback based on inter-ministerial cooperation.
- A follow-up mechanism should be established and financially supported to provide regular updates about the policies. This could be handled either by a ministry in charge or by an organizationally supported association representing the members of the CCA.

4. Overall Assessment

Electoral democratic systems have not delivered adequate answers to the climate crisis, mainly due to special interests within the competitive party system and the myopia characteristic for representative democracy. Randomly selected citizen assemblies have been considered a possible solution to some of the weaknesses of representative democracies and have recently flourished around Europe (Cherry et al. 2021, Paulis et al. 2020). Such a deliberative theory-inspired approach propagates decisional rationality and fairness by preventing the domination of a particular interest group and improving the civic and social competencies of participants or citizens (Bohman 1998, Curato et al. 2017).

The evaluation results showed that the Austrian CCA was oriented towards the process dimension, the participatory and deliberative experience. A solid reflective process design was in place, with clear expression of process ownership by the assembly members and an adequate level of knowledge integration. This means that lay people's knowledge was extended but not overrun by scientific evidence and advice. Hence, the Austrian CCA did not fall into the trap of some other CCAs, which framed climate change solely "*as a scientific or technical problem, with a strong reliance on expert views to 'solve' the problem and a technocratic approach*" (Cherry et al. 2021: 5). In addition, different social groups were able to discuss with each other in a targeted manner and to reflect on their attitudes.

Overall, the CCA has achieved a good relationship between a procedural (process-oriented) and a substantive (content-oriented) level of participatory deliberation and highlights that an iterative approach of both is decisive for the assembly's success. With the help of such a process, citizens can produce a joint output that represents much greater ambitions for a sustainable future than a hesitant national climate policy (cf. Section 3.3). Hence, focusing on the process design of the Austrian CCA, our evaluation showed elements that are highly

relevant for the democratic political empowerment of the citizens involved.

However, we also indicate several weaknesses of the Austrian CCA. On the input dimension the CCA was able to (re)integrate and to (re)include some underrepresented groups, but at the same time inequality was reproduced, and exclusion mechanisms took hold (e.g., elderly people; people with disabilities; SARS-CoV-2 non-vaccinated persons). Hence, the potential to create more political equality in or through the CCA was not fully utilized. Moreover, the official website including social media outlets and the online platform using Pol.is did not stimulate a broader public participation process. Parts of the literature on deliberative innovations criticize this tendency to neglect 'mass public' (Chambers 2009). They warn that citizens' assemblies might "*create a new deliberative elite"* and argue that mini-publics should seek to include the wider public (Lafont 2015). Accordingly, an essential function of mini-publics is fostering mass deliberation, to "*reinvigorate deliberation in mass publics*" (Niemeyer 2014: 179) rather than replace it.

Concerning the output dimension, the recommendations are characterized by two dilemmas, ultimately resulting from the design of the CCA. The first dilemma concerns the question of *policy integration* where sectoral and overarching policy objectives need to be included. By design, the deliberation in the CCA has followed the established sectoral policy logic, which was reinforced also by the expertise of the involved scientists. Cross-cutting system level thinking has been mentioned repeatedly (see also 3.2), but received little attention during the deliberation phase and this is reflected also in the policy recommendations. More attention to trade-offs regarding what is possible and desirable and a stronger integration of climate justice or social justice related aspects would have been desirable – and possible. These issues would have also called for more attention to a global perspective that includes North-South relations, which was only sparsely discussed. This relates to the second dilemma concerning the *role of the CCA's recommendation*: Should these be focusing on proposing coherent sectoral policies that are put forward for consideration within the political system? Or should the focus be more on deliberation of different available options, including trade-offs, without necessarily opting for a coherent solution? This would mean more conflict than consensus orientation in the deliberation. At the process-level, more conflict-oriented deliberation would call for including more controversial positions when selecting scientific experts.

One of the main challenges of conducting and implementing a (Climate) Citizens Assembly is to keep it manageable with expectations in terms of representation (input dimension), design (process dimension), and political effectiveness (output dimension). This problem was also observed in the Austrian CCA, where many civil society organizations and members of the Green party expressed strong expectations on all three dimensions. In contrast, others (e.g., selected members of parliament, especially from the Freedom Party of Austria) have criticized the process as such, regardless of the level. Therefore, to counteract excessive

demands, we recommend that future assemblies should be able to focus on one dimension while at the same time considering the other two dimensions, but to a lesser extent.

- *Focus on representation*: If the (C)CA aims to test the acceptance or feasibility of already existing (or new) ideas and policies, then a representative sample of the population is of high importance. Such an approach would legitimize further policy-making through established democratic institutions (e.g., the parliament).
- *Focus on process design*: If the (C)CA aims to be a tool for citizen learning and empowerment, then the procedural dimension of participatory deliberation is decisive. In addition, when it comes to increasing citizens' self-efficacy, it may not be necessary to conduct a large number of (C)CAs so that everyone can participate once, but stories of success must be told about these experiences of participation, in which lay people appear as effective and empowered.
- *Focus on output dimension*: If political fit and linkages to existing political institutions and the political system are important, then a stronger institutionalization of such deliberative methods and processes seems indispensable. This can be done by (new) legislation or also through sustained political awareness that such procedures evoke great democratic and political added value.

Adopting such a reflective approach and announcing its focal point transparent and in the public right from the beginning would help to manage expectations and mitigate unwarranted criticism of the initiative. Finally, it would create more clarity in dealing with such citizens' assemblies and the recommendations in the political arena.

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Annex A: Participatory Observation Guideline

Beobachtungsleitfaden inkl. Fragen

Generell:

- Die Teilnehmende Beobachtung dient dazu, die Akteure, ihre Sprache, ihre Interaktionen, die Situationen und Zusammenhänge sowie die Erfassung ihrer Handlungsmuster zu identifizieren (Atteslander 2006: 82).
- Jede Beobachtungseinheit entspricht einem konkreten (für uns zugänglichen) Programmteil und wird entlang von Beobachtungskriterien und Fragen dokumentiert und protokolliert (= strukturierter Teil). Zusätzlich werden etwaige Besonderheiten und Allfälliges festgehalten (= unstrukturierter Teil).
- Einprägsame Zitate, die gut zu den Beobachtungskriterien passen, sollen gesondert notieren werden.
- Wenn möglich bei Notizen zu individuellen Wortmeldungen oder Handlungen auf Unterschiede nach den Kriterien Alter (junge Erwachsene 16-30, Mittleres Alter 30-65, Pensionsfähiges Alter 65+) und Geschlecht achten

1. **Beobachtungseinheit XY** (Code: Datum-Uhrzeit z.B. 15012022-1400.docx)
2. Titel, Ort, Zeit, Dauer, Teilnehmer*innen und Setting

   Beobachtungseinheit:

   Titel:

   Ort:

   Zeit:

   Dauer:

   TN:

   Setting:
3. **Was ist vor dieser Beobachtungseinheit passiert** (z.B. Pause mit Café)**?**
4. **Was sind die wichtigsten Ziele und Inhalte dieser Beobachtungseinheit?**
5. **Welche Methoden der Interaktion kommen zum Einsatz? (z.B. Vortrag mit Fragerunde, World Café, etc. – hier den Ablauf dokumentieren)**

   4.1 Wie werden Kleingruppen organisiert bzw. zusammengestellt?

   4.2 Wie ausgewogen sind diese Kleingruppen?

6. **Zentrale Beobachtungskategorien:**

   5.1 Kommunikation / Sprache / Gesprächskultur / Dynamik

   5.1.1 Wieviele und welche Art von Wortmeldungen gibt es (Vortrag, Erklärung, Fragen, Kommentare, Kritik, Bemerkungen)?

   5.1.2 Sprachliche Muster

   5.1.2.1 Wie sehr bemühen sich das Moderationsteam oder die Wissenschaft um eine verständliche Sprache?

5.1.2.2 Welche Begriffe werden wie erklärt?

5.1.2.3 Gibt es sichtbare sprachliche Barrieren (zB Wissenschaftssprache)?

5.1.3 Wie ist die Kommunikation und Gesprächskultur zu beurteilen?

5.1.3.1 Welche Kommunikations- und etwaig Entscheidungsregeln werden auf welche Art und Weise festgesetzt?

5.1.3.2 Wie ist die Stimmung/Atmosphäre allgemein in der Gruppe? (sehr gut, gut, mittelmäßig, schlecht)

5.1.3.3 Auf welche Art und Weise versucht das Moderationsteam zu einer positiven, wertschätzenden Gesprächs- und Diskussionskultur beizutragen?

5.1.3.3.1 Wie neutral verhält sich das Moderationsteam?

5.1.3.3.2 Wie flexibel ist das Moderationsteam (spontane Änderungen)?

5.1.3.4 Wie wird der wissenschaftliche (oder anderer zentraler) Input von den Teilnehmenden aufgenommen (als Information, mit Sorge, als Meinung, etc.)?

5.1.3.4.1 Wie wird dieser Input geframed? (Neutrale Information, Krise, Utopie, Bedrohung, etc.)

5.1.3.5 Respektvoller Umgang: ausreden lassen, aktives zuhören

5.1.3.6 Sachlichkeit und Emotionen: Bei welchen Themen steht Sachlichkeit im Vordergrund? Welche Themen emotionalisieren? Wie werden Emotionen ausgedrückt?

5.1.3.7 Werden non-verbale Gesprächsunterstützungen eingesetzt? (Kopfnicken oder -schütteln, Applaus, andere Mimik oder Gestik)

5.1.3.8 Wie gehen Teilnehmende mit Ihren Mobiltelefonen oder anderen Gadgets um? Werden diese auch aktiv für Recherchetätigkeiten oder Social Media Berichte (zB Insta-Stories) verwendet?

5.1.3.9 Hierarchische Beziehungen über Wortmeldungen (Mag sich jemand mit seiner Meinung durchsetzen?)

5.1.3.10 Zynismus, Ironie

5.1.3.11 Verbale Grenzüberschreitungen oder Übergriffe

5.2 Motivation und Engagement

5.2.1 Gibt es einen Teil in der Beobachtungseinheit, wo Engagement bzw. Kooperation der Teilnehmenden von zentraler Bedeutung ist?

5.2.2 Ja / Nein (bei Nein müssen die Folgefragen nicht beantwortet werden)

5.2.3 Mit welchen Mitteln und Methoden werden Motivation und Engagement der Teilnehmenden vom Projektteam aufrecht erhalten/erhöht?

5.2.4 Wie ausgewogen sind die Gesprächsanteile?

5.2.4.1 Wer meldet sich und wie oft?

5.2.4.2 Wie lange sind die Wortmeldungen?

5.2.4.3 Gibt es dominante Gesprächsteilnehmer*innen?

5.2.4.4 Gibt es Teilnehmende, die sich kaum zu Wort melden?

5.2.5 Wie motiviert wirken die Teilnehmenden?

5.2.5.1 hohes Motivationslevel: fast alle Teilnehmenden hören aufmerksam zu, sprechen aktiv oder sind an einer Zusammenarbeit interessiert, nur wenige sind abgelenkt oder nicht bei der Sache

5.2.5.2 mittleres Motivationslevel: die meisten Teilnehmenden hören aufmerksam zu, sprechen aktiv oder sind an einer Zusammenarbeit interessiert, 10-20% der Personen wirken abgelenkt oder sind nicht bei der Sache

5.2.5.3 niedriges Motivationslevel: es herrscht Unruhe oder andere Tätigkeiten werden parallel durchgeführt

5.2.5.4 Gibt es bei einigen deutliche Ermüdungserscheinungen?

5.3 Höhepunkte / Durchbrüche bei Plenar- oder Gruppendiskussion

5.3.1 Gelingt es Teilnehmenden den wissenschaftlichen oder anderen zentralen Input zu verstehen (wird Verständnis vermittelt)?

5.3.2 Schaffen es die Teilnehmenden, Ergebnisse, Lösungen, Kompromisse, etc. auszuarbeiten? Wie wird hier entschieden (Konsens, Mehrheit, etc.)?

5.3.3 Kommt es zu ganz intensiven Meinungsunterschieden? (siehe auch Konflikte)

5.3.4 Kommt es zu wechselseitige Lern- und Willensbildungsprozessen zwischen den Teilnehmenden?

5.3.5 Grobe Skizze des Diskussionsverlaufs

5.4 Umgang mit Konflikten

5.4.1 Welche Art von Konflikten gibt es? (Meinungsverschiedenheiten, Kritik, Widerstand)

5.4.2 Was sind umstrittene Themen? Welche unterschiedlichen Standpunkte werden vertreten?

5.4.3 Was ist die Folge des Konflikts? (zB Kommt es zu einer Einigung, Anpassung des Ablaufs)

5.4.4 Grobe Skizze des Diskussionsverlaufs

7. **Was passiert nach dieser Beobachtungseinheit und wie wird das angekündigt?**

8. **Etwaige Besonderheiten und Allfälliges:** (Sprechen Teilnehmende den Auswahlprozess an – wenn ja, wie?; Wird thematisiert wer da ist und wer nicht?; gibt es Referenzen zu anderen Klimaräten, Bürger*innenräten, etc.?)

9. **Resümee / wichtigste Erkenntnisse:**

Annex B: Interview Guideline (with facilitators)

Interviewleitfaden Facilitators

Vor dem Einstieg in das Interview:

- Kurze Projektvorstellung (inkl. Förderung) und Verwendung der Ergebnisse
- Rahmenbedingung des Interviews: COVID-Konzept (wenn notwendig), Einverständniserklärung + Gewährleistung der Anonymität, vereinbarte Dauer, Technik-Check

Genereller Einstieg in das Interview (**ab hier Aufnahme**):

- Dank für Teilnahme und Bitte, möglichst ungestört bleiben zu können
- es werden ganz einfache Fragen zum Prozess des Klimarats gestellt, die möglichst offen und ausführlich beantwortet werden sollen
- Wiederholungen & Nicht-Beantwortung von Fragen möglich
- I macht sich etwaig Notizen, bitte davon nicht irritieren lassen

Themenblöcke:

I. Rollen- und Prozessverständnis, Input-Dimension
II. Kommunikationskultur, Inklusivität, Wissensvermittlung, Konflikte
III. Impact / Dokumentation / Transparenz / Nachbearbeitung

Einstiegsfrage: *„Bitte könnten Sie mir zunächst einmal beschreiben, mit welchen Aufgaben Sie im Rahmen der Durchführung des Klimarats betraut waren?"*

Block I: Rollen- und Prozessverständnis, Input-Dimension

1. Was waren aus Ihrer Sicht die Ziele des Klimarates?
    - Welche Erwartungen hatten Sie persönlich an den Prozess?
    - Welche Anforderungen an den Klimarat haben sich durch den Entschließungsantrag ergeben?
2. Die Zeitspanne zwischen Ausschreibung, Auftragsvergabe und des Starts des Klimarates war sehr eng bemessen. Welche Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten sehen Sie in diesem Bereich?
3. Wie gestaltete sich Ihre Zusammenarbeit mit den verschiedenen Teams? [Organisationsteam, Kernteam, ARGE, wissenschaftlicher Beirat, Stakeholder-Beirat, PR-Team, Verbindung zum BMK]
    - Inwiefern wurde die komplexe Organisationsstruktur den Anforderungen und Aufgabenstellungen des Klimarats gerecht?
    - Wo sehen Sie Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten?

4. Wie angemessen waren Ihrer Meinung nach die Ressourcen, die für die Umsetzung des Klimarats zur Verfügung standen, um seine intendierten Ziele zu erreichen? [finanziell, zeitlich, Expertise, …]
    - Hätten Sie sich eine andere Verteilung der verfügbaren Ressourcen gewünscht?
5. Wie angemessen war aus Ihrer Sicht die Zahl und Diversität der Teilnehmer:innen im Klimarat?
    - Mit welchen Mitteln haben Sie versucht, während der Rekrutierung und später im Verlauf des Prozesses eine angemessene Zahl und Diversität zu erreichen und zu erhalten?
    - Welche Gründe gaben Teilnehmer:innen für ihre Absage oder den Ausstieg aus dem Prozess an?
    - An den verschiedenen Wochenenden nahmen immer so zwischen 70 und 85 Personen teil. War das aus Ihrer Sicht ausreichend, damit der Klimarat genügen Legitimation erfährt?
6. Der Bürger:innenrat (engl. Citizen Assembly) ist ja nur eine von vielen partizipativen Methoden. Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach das Besondere am Klimarat im Vergleich zu anderen Methoden der Bürger:innenbeteiligung?

Block II: Kommunikationskultur, Inklusivität, Wissensvermittlung, Konflikte

7. Im Klimarat wurde zunächst der Begriff Klimagesundheit und später im stärker die Klimaneutralität verwendet. Hinzu kam der Zustand, dass mit den beschlossenen Maßnahmen die Klimaneutralität 2040 nicht explizit erreicht werden musste. Wie zufrieden sind Sie aus der retrospektive heraus mit diesen Rahmensetzungen?
8. Was war Ihnen für die Kommunikation und Gesprächskultur beim Klimarat wichtig?
9. Wo beim Klimaratsprozess standen Ihrer Meinung nach Emotionen im Mittelpunkt?
10. Welche Hindernisse für die Inklusion in den Klimaratsprozess haben Sie im Laufe der Durchführung wahrgenommen? [z.B. Einschränkungen der Teilnehmer:innen physisch oder mental, Alter, Geschlecht, Sprachkenntnisse und Dialekte, Bildung, …]
    - Welche zusätzliche Unterstützung beim Umgang mit diesen Hindernissen hätten Sie sich gewünscht? [z.B. Bereitstellung von Gebärdendolmetsch, Übersetzung, etc.]
11. Wer hat wie über die Ziele und Inhalte der einzelnen Wochenenden entschieden?
    - Wie zufrieden waren Sie in diesem Zusammenhang mit Ihrem Beitrag?
12. Wie zufrieden waren Sie mit den Inhalten und der Aufbereitung der wissenschaftlichen Inputs?
    - Welche Perspektiven bzw. Sichtweisen [oder sogar Disziplinen] haben aus Ihrer Sicht gefehlt? [zB Politikwissenschaft, Policy-Instrumente, Demokratiewissenschaften]
    - Was würden Sie im Nachhinein an den wissenschaftlichen Inputs verändern?
13. Inhaltlich orientierte sich der Klimarat überwiegend an den klassischen Handlungsfeldern wie Mobilität und Energie. Themen wie Suffizienz, gesellschaftliche Transformation,

Kreislaufwirtschaft oder auch die globale Verantwortung spielten eine untergeordnete Rolle. Wie zufrieden sind Sie im Nachhinein mit dieser inhaltlichen Ausrichtung?

14. Wie gestaltete sich aus Ihrer Sicht der Entscheidungsfindungsprozess im Klimarat?
    - Welches Prinzip der Abstimmung kam zu tragen? [systemisches Konsensieren, Konsent, Konsens]
    - Welche Möglichkeiten hätte es aus Ihrer Sicht gegeben, dass bei der Ausgestaltung der Entscheidungsregeln auch die Teilnehmer:innen mitbestimmen?
15. Welche Konflikte haben sich Ihrer Einschätzung nach im Prozess des Klimarats ergeben?
    - Zwischen welchen Personen oder Gruppen haben sich diese Konflikte manifestiert? [z.B. zwischen Teilnehmer:innen und Stakeholder-Beirat]
    - Welche Einflussnahmen von außen auf Sie selbst oder die Teilnehmer:innen haben Sie erlebt? [durch die anderen Teams, die Medien, einzelne Personen, etc.]

Block III: Impact / Dokumentation / Transparenz / Nachbearbeitung

16. Wie und von wem wurden die Abläufe und Ergebnisse der Klimarats-Wochenenden dokumentiert und nachbearbeitet?
    - In welcher Form wurden diese Dokumentationen den Teilnehmer:innen zur Verfügung gestellt?
17. Wurde die Prozessgestaltung auch gemeinsam mit den Teilnehmer:innen reflektiert und ggf. überarbeitet?
18. Wie wurden die Angebote zur Vernetzung auch zwischen den Wochenenden von den Teilnehmer:innen angenommen?
    - In welcher Form haben die Teilnehmer:innen selbst Initiative ergriffen, um sich für den Klimarat zu engagieren?
19. Wie bewerten Sie die Bevölkerungsumfrage POLIS, die nach dem vierten Wochenende durchgeführt worden ist?
    - Welchen Einfluss auf den Klimarat hat aus Ihrer Sicht diese Bevölkerungsumfrage?
20. Ziel der Klimarats-PR war, die Methoden Bürger*innenrat in Österreich möglichst gut bekannt zu machen. Wie gut wurde dieses Ziel Ihrer Meinung nach erreicht?
21. Welche Möglichkeiten wird es nach Ende des Klimarats für die Teilnehmer:innen geben, miteinander in Kontakt zu bleiben und die Umsetzung ihrer Empfehlungen (kritisch) zu beobachten?
22. Welche Bedeutung hat der Klimarat aus Ihrer Sicht für die zukünftige Entwicklung des politischen Systems in Österreich?

Abschlussfrage: Sollte es in Österreich weitere Bürger:innenräte auf Bundesebene geben, was würden Sie den Prozessverantwortlichen empfehlen wollen?

Annex C: Recommendations proposed by the citizens' climate convention

General recommendations

1. Introduce a basic right to climate protection

2. Abolish subsidies that are harmful to the climate

3. Form and expand cross-border alliances for climate protection

4. Implement effective CO_2 pricing

5. Support the labour market in the direction of climate protection

6. Raise awareness for inconvenient measures

Energy

7. Introduce an effective climate protection law without delay

8. Expand zero-emission energy nationwide with the goal of 100 per cent renewable energy supply

9. Require energy suppliers to adjust their pricing policies

10. Abolish subsidies for fossil energy

11. Effective CO_2 pricing in the energy sector

12. Use already sealed areas for energy production and avoid further soil sealing

13. Municipalities and public administration should take on an exemplary role and make use of savings potential

14. Financial service providers - should set an example and make use of savings potentials

15. Companies should play an exemplary role and exploiting savings potentials

16. Promote green investments

17. Make citizen participation in spatial energy planning mandatory

Consumption and production

18. Set up a non-partisan climate commission

19. Create experimental spaces for social and technological innovations

20. Make product reparability obligatory

21. Ban the destruction of new goods

22. Make energy labels compulsory for more consumer goods and take into account the entire product life cycle

23. Extend and tighten the EMAS environmental management label

24. Increase private investment capital in climate-impacting investments: green stock index and green government bonds

25. Introduce more favourable loan conditions for climate-impacting projects

26. Expand financial participation of citizens in regional climate-friendly projects

27. Integrate climate protection in curricula and adult education

28. Restrict advertising for products that are harmful to the climate and ban advertising for products that are particularly harmful to the climate.

29. Introduce or expand refill stations in supermarkets/drugstores

30. Create a coordination office for climate-effective synergies between companies

31. Reduce plastic packaging waste

32. Establish a centre for the circular economy

Food and land use

33. Set political incentives for a climate-friendly diet

34. Introduce climate-friendly and value-based pricing of food products

35. Introduce greenhouse gas tariffs based on climate footprint for food from third countries

36. Introduce a ban on food destruction

37. Use suitable agricultural land that becomes available to mitigate the climate crisis, e.g. for efficient energy production

38. Make it compulsory to use climate-friendly food in restaurants and large-scale kitchens

39. Establish a legal framework for portion sizes in large kitchens and restaurants

40. Implement unit pricing instead of bulk packaging

41. Prohibit quantity discounts for food

42. Promote self-sufficiency in renewable energy in communities and on farms

43. Promote energy production from waste (biomass) and close nutrient cycles

44. Examine and align agricultural policy measures at EU and national level with regard to their actual impact on the climate

45. Promote CO_2 sequestration through sustainable forestry and make tree planting in public spaces mandatory

46. Create the basis for humus build-up

47. Provide targeted support for small and medium-sized enterprises in the implementation of climate protection measures

48. Promote innovative climate-friendly production and distribution channels for agricultural products

49. Promote knowledge and education on climate-friendly nutrition

50. Introduce anti-discrimination legislation for vegetables and fruit: compulsory purchase of crooked vegetables

51. Create awareness for climate-friendly food handling

52. Promote transparency and compulsory labelling of food product standards

53. Promote and advertise public distribution refrigerators

Housing

54. SOS 2024 - Immediate offensive to promote redevelopment

55. Stop soil sealing - promote redevelopment more than new construction

56. Stop soil sealing - shift regional planning competences

57. Stop soil sealing - implement development deadlines for building plots

58. Compulsory installation of photovoltaics

59. Introduce a vacancy tax and mandatory vacancy reporting

60. Make buildings energy self-sufficient

61. Harmonisation of the legal framework for climate-neutral buildings

62. Co-Housing from 0 to 100+

63. Develop and legally anchor the best possible climate-friendly building and renovation standards

64. Introduce CO_2 pricing for building materials

65. Reduce grey emissions, promote circular economy: Recycle building materials

66. Redensify existing buildings

67. Climate-friendly retraining and apprenticeship programme in the building sector

68. Re-evaluation of risk areas

69. Mobilise already dedicated building land

70. Energy quality label with redevelopment effect

71. Adapt monument protection to the climate

Mobility

72. Introduce a climate-neutral mobility guarantee

73. Promote public transport

74. Promote cycling and walking

75. Introduce higher taxes for climate-damaging vehicles

76. Shift zoning from municipal to regional or provincial level

77. No new registrations (first registrations) of cars with combustion engines after 2027

78. Strengthen parking space management, city toll and car-free city centres as further options

79. Promote climate-friendly freight transport - introduce a level playing field for rail and road transport

80. Ecologise commuter allowance and kilometre allowance

81. Reduce speed on roads

82. Optimise the shared use of cars

83. Reduce company cars

84. Introduce paraffin taxation

85. Expand international train traffic

86. Make returns in online retailing subject to a charge

87. Implement inclusiveness and accessibility in all means of public transport

88. Give away free public transport tickets

89. Build more charging stations for electric vehicles

90. Develop a car lifetime calculator

91. Anchor tax deductibility of bicycles in law

92. Reduce the number of journeys to school and kindergarten by private car

93. Introduce a monthly car-free day