

Evaluation of the
**Biergerkommittee
Lëtzebuerg 2050**



Plateforme Luxembourgeoise
de la Démocratie Participative



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About the Report

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1. Introduction and Background

This report presents findings from independent research into Luxembourg's Citizens' Council, the Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050.¹ The research has been conducted by academic researchers from the University of Luxembourg, as part of the Luxembourgish Platform for Participatory Democracy (PLDP)², and the University of Groningen.

The research objectives of this evaluation encompass three main aspects:

- 1. Learning about the Biergerkomitee proceedings: The evaluation aims to assess the success of the Biergerkomitee as a deliberative process, gaining valuable insights into its strengths and areas for improvement.
- 2. Understanding the Biergerkomitee's impact: The evaluation seeks to delve into the impact of the Biergerkomitee on its members and its influence on the climate change debate and policy in Luxembourg.
- 3. Enhancing deliberative processes: The evaluation contributes to the continuous improvement of deliberative processes in Luxembourg, supporting better delivery and outcomes in the future.

Specifically, the research investigates:

- The Biergerkomitee organization, governance, design, and remit.
- The Biergerkomitee selection criteria and representativeness.
- The expert selection and evidence provision in the Biergerkomitee.
- The Biergerkomitee's perceived quality of facilitation, deliberation, and decision-making.
- The impact of participation on the Biergerkomitee members and their experience.
- The impact of the Biergerkomitee on policy, general public, and debate.
- Future lessons for citizens' councils (in Luxembourg), including the possibility of institutionalizing such processes.

To achieve these objectives, a comprehensive mixed-method approach was adopted. This approach includes the utilization of surveys to gather quantitative data, interviews to gain in-depth qualitative perspectives, non-participant observation to understand the dynamics during sessions, and content analysis of relevant materials. By employing this diverse set of research methods, the evaluation endeavors to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded assessment of the Biergerkom-

1 Biergerkomitee website: <https://luxembourgtransition.lu/en/citizens-committee/>

2 PLDP website: <https://pldp.lu/en/>

mittee's functioning and impact and foster the development of more effective and successful deliberative processes in Luxembourg in the future.

1.1. The Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050

Like its close neighbors (Belgium, France, and Germany) as well as many other European countries, Luxembourg also embraced the deliberative turn. Indeed, initiatives of deliberative processes have flourished at the local level, under the impulse of elected institutions. But when it comes to deliberative processes on the national level, such initiatives can be counted on one hand. In 2015, Luxembourg conveyed a consultative referendum, which was held within the context of a broader constitutional reform project. The reform process included, among others, three participatory and deliberative experiments: a citizens' forum (CIVILEX), a web portal where citizens could provide recommendations (www.ärvirschléi.lu), and a second citizens' forum (CONSTITULUX).

CIVILEX brought together a representative panel of 35 Luxembourgish residents for a day (only 27 people showed up for the day). The process was modeled along the lines of a 21st-century town meeting, including a pre-and post-survey (similar to the method of deliberative polling). CONSTITULUX differed from CIVILEX in two main regards: 1) it brought together 60 Luxembourgish nationals, and 2) the discussions were split over two days. The process implemented focus groups, and like CIVILEX, included a pre-and post-survey along the lines of deliberative polling. Certain similarities can be found with a deliberative citizens' consultation, such as a moderator and secretary in the focus groups, and experts providing a brief introduction at the start of each session. Yet, there were no final reports nor recommendations, and little to no public engagement. Neither CIVILEX nor CONSTITULEX generated political uptake or concrete action from the Government. Nonetheless, they laid the groundwork for future deliberative projects in Luxembourg by showing the potential contribution of citizens' participation.³

However, this changed in 2021 with the launch of the Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050. In the words of Minister Claude Turmes, it marked "a milestone in citizen participation for Luxembourg" (Delano, January 2021). The process was introduced as part of the broader Luxembourg in Transition (LIT) process and concerned itself with the question of how Luxembourg can become carbon neutral by 2050. Considering that neither CIVILEX nor CONSTITULEX can be considered an actual citizens' consultation, the Biergerkomitee marks the first citizens' consultation on the national level in Luxembourg. It can be considered a pioneering initiative, as also remarked by the media:

3 Burks, D., & Kies, R. (2021). Country Report: Luxembourg. Available at: <https://constdelib.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Luxembourg-report-CA17135.pdf>

“This form of participation is a novelty for Luxembourg”

Luxemburger Wort, January 2021

The Biergerkomitee forms the citizens’ section of the larger consultation entitled ‘Luxembourg in Transition - Spatial visions for the zero-carbon and resilient future of the Luxembourg Functional Region’. Or simply ‘Luxembourg in Transition’ (LIT)⁴. The LIT process was a vast project aimed at developing scenarios in terms of land use planning and urban planning, architecture, economy, and ecology. Launched by the Department of Land-use Planning of the Ministry of Energy and Land-use Planning in June 2020, headed by Minister Claude Turmes, LIT was a consultative process seeking to gather strategic, spatial planning proposals for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and neighboring border territories to become climate-neutral by 2050. The overarching goal of the urban-architectural and landscape consultation was to gather proposals to produce ecological transition scenarios. The process was inspired by similar large-scale consultations, such as those for Greater Paris and Greater Geneva. In essence, it was an international consultation aimed at professionals, universities, technical institutions, and research organizations with expertise in the field. The process was communicated as an open call for bold ideas to accompany the actions of decision-makers in years to come and to strengthen the support of citizens for such actions and the necessary transition towards a zero-carbon society.

The LIT process was launched in September 2020 and completed by the end of January 2022. The consultation initially involved ten, then six, and finally, three teams of national and international experts made up of architects, town planners, landscape architects, and social scientists. The process encouraged the formation of multidisciplinary teams from diverse backgrounds for a new transitional and resilient approach to spatial planning. The territorial strategies proposed by the experts were meant to give impetus to the development of the new master planning program for the territory (the so-called PDAT). The strategies comprised a long chain of decisions and actions aiming to reverse the actions and processes that contribute to the phenomenon of climate change while attempting to minimize the impact on citizens’ quality of life (less air pollution, less noise, more green spaces in cities, etc.) and biodiversity (i.e., to ensure the healthy development of the biosphere).

Hence, in the face of the global environmental emergency, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg set the goal of a new territorial strategy also based on a broad citizen consensus. Consequently, parallel to the experts, citizens were included within the framework of Luxembourg in Transition to confront the regional and urban

⁴ For more information on the Expert Consultation ‘Luxembourg in Transition’, see: <https://luxembourginttransition.lu/en/>

planning scenarios with their views and experiences and to ensure a large citizens' consensus. The Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050 was established because:

“When we talk about the future of our territory, we must certainly give the possibility to women and men of all ages and backgrounds, who live in our country or who work there, to give an opinion on these topics and express their opinions. Thus, the BK 2050 has been a pioneering initiative in Luxembourg, a new milestone in the process of citizen participation and I wanted the committee to become, throughout the process, a veritable laboratory of participatory democracy and co-creation. A laboratory in which each member, free from any political constraints and with complete independence, can discuss the role of planning territory to not only cope but above all to provide answers and concrete solutions to climate change and its undeniable impact on the territory and its natural resources.”

Claude Turmes, 2022, foreword in the Biergerkomitee's final report

The BK process testified to the willingness of Luxembourgish politics to take a significant step forward in citizens' participation. The Biergerkomitee can best be defined as a citizens' consultation⁵ focusing on regional and urban planning scenarios to consider how the functional territory of Luxembourg should evolve to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. A citizens' consultation, as its name indicates, is a democratic process that places citizens at the center. The goal of such a consultation is to bring citizens into the decision-making process by having them answer a pre-defined question or solve a problem facing a community in a way that fairly represents the interests of all people. In doing so, the aim is to prepare political decisions in collaboration with citizens. A consultation can center around any topic, with each consultation focusing on one specific one, such as the Biergerkomitee focused on climate. Put simply, a citizens' consultation is generally defined as a randomly selected representative set of citizens to deliberate on information provided by experts, ultimately leading to a set of recommendations aiming at informing decision-making.⁶ The deliberations are usually facilitated to promote fair and reasonable discussions.⁷

5 Also known as a citizens' council, people's assembly, citizens' assembly or mini-public

6 Elstub, S. (2014). Mini-publics: Issues and Cases, in Elstub, S. & McLaverty, P. (eds.) *Deliberative Democracy: Issues and Cases*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press ; Curato, N., Farrell, D. M., Geissel, B., Grönlund, K., Mockler, P., Pilet, J-B., Renwick, A., Rose, J., Setälä, M., & Suiter, J. (2021). *Deliberative Mini-Publics: Core Design Features*. Bristol University Press

7 Smith, G. (2012). *Deliberative Democracy and Mini-Publics*, in Geissel, B. & Newton, K. (eds.) *Evaluating Democratic Innovations: Curing the Democratic Malaise?* New York: Routledge

Citizens' consultations are increasingly being used worldwide to help shape the work of governments.⁸ The strength of a citizens' consultation lies in its inclusiveness, diversity, and independence: it "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".⁹

1.2. Report structure

This report is structured into seven chapters. [Section two](#) sets out the methodology. [Section three](#) considers the organization and delivery of the Biergerkomitee. [Section four](#) focuses on i) the selection criteria and representativeness, ii) the expert selection and evidence provision, and iii) the Biergerkomitee's deliberation, facilitation, and decision-making. [Section five](#) evaluates the impact of participation on the members, and [Section six](#) scrutinizes the Biergerkomitee's impact on policy, the general public¹⁰, and debate (i.e., media). The report concludes with the key findings, recommendations for future processes, and considerations for institutionalization.

8 For an overview of deliberative mini-publics in Europe, have a look at the Politicize dataset: <http://politicize.eu>.

For an overarching inventory of participatory and democratic innovations worldwide, have a look at Participedia: <https://participedia.net/>.

For an inventory of climate citizens' assemblies, have a look at KNOCA: <https://knoca.eu/>

9 Dryzek, J. S., & Niemeyer, S. (2010). Deliberative Turns, in Dryzek, J. (ed.) Foundations and frontiers of deliberative governance. Online: Oxford Scholarship

10 Also referred to as maxi-public

2. Methodology

In this chapter, we provide an overview of the research undertaken collaboratively by the University of Luxembourg and the University of Groningen. To answer questions about both the operation of the Biergerkomitee (the internal dimension) and the relationship between the process and the wider society, including policymaking and media (the external dimension), a mixed-method design was developed. This approach is best suited to investigate the multidimensional nature of deliberative processes, making use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative strands of research. First, we outline which elements of the Biergerkomitee we evaluate and specify our criteria for the evaluation. Second, we outline the methods used for the evaluation.

2.1. Elements and Criteria

The research has three main objectives:

- 1. Learning about the Biergerkomitee proceedings: The evaluation aims to assess the success of the Biergerkomitee as a deliberative process, gaining valuable insights into its strengths and areas for improvement.
- 2. Understanding the Biergerkomitee's impact: The evaluation seeks to delve into the impact of the Biergerkomitee on its members and its influence on the climate change debate and policy in Luxembourg.
- 3. Enhancing deliberative processes: The evaluation contributes to the continuous improvement of deliberative processes in Luxembourg, supporting better delivery and outcomes in the future.

To scrutinize the Biergerkomitee, we base our evaluation on the distinction proposed by Papadopoulos and Warin (2007) in assessing the effectiveness and legitimacy of democratic processes.¹¹ 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).¹² This differentiation has been recently adapted to the study of deliberative processes by Galais et al. (2021).¹³ Detailed indicators for the three dimensions are based on the OECD Guidelines (2021),

11 Papadopoulos, Y. & Warin, P. (2007). Are innovative, participatory, and deliberative procedures in policy making democratic and effective? *European journal of political research*, 46(4), 445-472

12 Scharpf, F.W. (1999). *Governing in Europe: Effective and democratic?* Oxford: Oxford University Press ; Schmidt, V.A. (2013). *Democracy and legitimacy in the European Union revisited: Input, output and throughput*. *Political Studies*, 61(1), 2-22

13 Galais, C., Fernandez-Martinez, I., Font, J. & Smith, G. (2021). Testing the input-process output model of public participation. *European Journal of Political Research*, 60(4), 807-828

which distinguished between an evaluation of the process design, the deliberative experience, and the pathways to impact.¹⁴

Thus, there are five broad elements of the BK process we seek to evaluate: the organization of the process; the extent to which the process qualifies as deliberative; the impact it had on the participants and how their opinions evolved through the process; the impact the BK had on policy, the general public, and debate; and lessons to be drawn. In this section, we explain the rationale and outline the relevant research questions. The methodology is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Approach to the evaluation of the Biergerkomitee

1. Organization	
INDICATORS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Governance & roles Remit & framing Design	Organization Independence Task and missions
2. Deliberative process	
INDICATORS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Participant recruitment Balanced information Facilitation Deliberation Decision-making	Inclusive Representative Diverse opinions Relevant expertise Balanced information Deliberative quality Ownership
3. Impact on members	
INDICATORS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Evolution of members knowledge Political engagement	Better informed Knowledge gains Opinion change
4. Impact on policy, maxi-public and debate	
INDICATORS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Political follow-up Media coverage	Accountability & commitment to respond Engagement with recommendations Extent & nature of media coverage
5. Overall learning	
INDICATORS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
Lessons future processes	What worked well Elements to be improved

14 OECD (2021). Evaluation Guidelines for Representative Deliberative Processes. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/10ccbfcb-en>

2.1.1. Organization

For any kind of process, the organization is key to the overall functioning and efficacy. The governance, remit and framing, and design of a citizens' council such as the Biergerkomitee are significant to consider as they help to explain other relevant evaluation criteria, specifically the deliberative process and its impact.

We pose the question:

- How does the organization affect the quality of the Biergerkomitee?

We hence scrutinize the following elements:

- The Biergerkomitee's governance and roles
- The Biergerkomitee's remit and framing, including the clarity of the task and mission(s)
- The Biergerkomitee's design

2.1.2. Deliberative process

Citizens' assemblies such as the Biergerkomitee are designed and organized considering the norms of deliberative democracy. We therefore seek to assess the extent to which the process was deliberative. There are several aspects to be examined here.

I. Participant recruitment

It is important for any deliberative process that its members are diverse and representative of the broader population concerning key demographic criteria, and preferably also their views on the issue to be deliberated on.

We therefore seek to provide an answer to the following questions:

- Which efforts were made to remove barriers to participation?
- Were the BK members demographically representative of the broader population?
- Were the BK members' attitudes on climate change diverse?

II. Balanced information

Another important element of a deliberative process is the information the participants receive. The participants should be provided with a range of information relevant to the topic from experts from different fields and socio-demographic backgrounds. The information should be balanced and well-communicated.

We therefore ask the following questions:

- Did the BK members receive sufficient, pertinent, relevant, and balanced information to address the task?
- Was the information that the BK members received easy to comprehend?

III. Facilitation

It is the norm in deliberative processes such as the Biergerkomitee that discussions are facilitated to ensure that they adhere to deliberative standards, such as equal speaking opportunities.

Our evaluation therefore seeks to establish:

- What was the (perceived) quality of facilitation?

IV. Deliberation and decision-making

Last, a deliberative process should guarantee numerous deliberative norms, including members must feel free to express a different opinion, everyone must have equal opportunities to speak, and participants must interact respectfully.

We therefore ask:

- What was the (perceived) quality of deliberation?
- Did the members have adequate time to learn, weigh evidence, deliberate, and develop informed recommendations?
- To what extent do the members feel ownership of the recommendations?

We also examine the success and suitability of the online format, necessitated by COVID-19 restrictions, and the success and suitability of the multilingual format.

2.1.3. Impact on members

Members must approach the deliberative process with an open mind, meaning that whilst no one should feel pressured to abandon their views, the participants must be willing to adapt and possibly change their views. It is therefore likely that individuals will feel more informed about the issue and consequently might also change their opinions on the topic. Additionally, their attitudes toward political participation might develop. More generally, taking part in the Biergerkomitee is expected to have had an impact on the members.

Our evaluation therefore seeks to answer:

- Do BK members feel better informed?
- Did BK members change their opinions on climate-related issues?
- Were the BK members satisfied with the process and its output?
- Did attitudes on political participation evolve?

2.1.4. Impact on policy, maxi-public, and debate

The Biergerkomitee should have a political follow-up and a possible impact on policy and particularly on the PDAT as was promised.

To assess this, we consider:

- How were the BK report and recommendations dealt with by the commissioning ministry?
- Did the BK results feed into the new version of the PDAT?

A deliberative process should also be visible and accepted by the general public. Here, the media plays an important role.

We seek to establish:

- What was the extent and nature of the media coverage that the BK received?

2.1.5. Overall learning

In this section, we discuss the lessons learned from the Biergerkomitee, including both positive aspects and areas for improvement.

We therefore pose the question:

- What are the lessons for informing other citizens' councils in Luxembourg and beyond?

2.2. Methods for BK evaluation

We carried out a mixed-method design to investigate the Biergerkomitee's input, throughput, and output dimensions. The data collection spanned 28 months, from December 2020 until March 2023, and involved surveys of members; in-depth semi-structured interviews with members, the organization, and moderators; non-participant observation; document analysis; and media coverage review. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods selected for the evaluation provides us with the resources to establish what occurred within the BK and how the organization and members perceived the BK, but also how it related to the wider society. The result is a comprehensive dataset, combining qualitative and quantitative data that gives a voice to the participants involved in the BK process and allows the findings to be grounded in their experiences.

First, we completed two surveys with the BK members. Two waves of surveys were sent out to the participants, one at the beginning of the BK (January 2021), the pre-survey (see Annex B), and one at the end of the consultative process (January 2022), the post-survey (see Annex C). We received authorization from the secretariat to reach out to the participants and conduct the surveys. Via the organ-

ization, we received the members' email addresses and sent them a link to access the surveys. Participation in the online surveys was voluntary. Both surveys comprised a series of closed and open questions. Whilst the close-ended questions generated results that were easier to analyze, the open-ended questions provided the respondents a chance to explain their opinions. Via cross-tabulation analysis, the data from the longitudinal survey was analyzed. In both waves, respondents were asked to inform about i) their recruitment, ii) their attitudes towards various aspects of deliberative consultative processes, and iii) their attitudes towards the issue at stake (i.e., climate change). The first survey, moreover, focused on their baseline attitudes towards politics (interest, trust, efficacy, and party affiliation). For the first survey, we had a response rate of 96.6%, or 28 out of 29 members participated. In the second survey we measured the participants' experiences with the process, their opinions on the outcome of the process, the multilingual core of the Biergerkomitee, and the online aspect of the process. For this second survey, we had a response rate of 66,1% or 19 participants. The collected information was then merged into a common dataset. The analysis enabled us to track how members' knowledge, opinions, and attitudes evolved throughout the process. We tracked this evolution at the individual and the aggregate level. However, as not all members wished to participate in the surveys, the survey data must be interpreted with caution.

Table 2 provides a demographic breakdown of the participants who filled out the surveys. Out of the 29 participants who started the process, all except one completed the first questionnaire ($n = 28$). There was a lower response rate for the second survey ($n = 19$) – a common feature of this kind of research. 13 people filled both surveys indicating their identity, thereby allowing for an evaluation of changes in opinions. The remaining six people who filled out the second survey did so anonymously, their answers to the post-survey can hence not be matched with answers given in the pre-survey.

Table 2: Demographic breakdown of survey participants

		Survey 1	Survey 2
Gender	Female	14	6
	Male	14	7
	Anonymous	0	6
Age	16-24 years	1	0
	25-34 years	11	4
	35-44 years	5	3
	45-54 years	3	2
	55-64 years	6	2
	65+ years	2	2
	Anonymous	0	6
Highest educational attainment	Other	1	1
	Secondary 1 st cycle	2	1
	Secondary 2 nd cycle	4	2
	Bac +1 to Bac +3	5	2
	Bac +4 and +	16	7
	Anonymous	0	6
Total		28	19

Second, the survey data is complemented with eight in-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews: five with members and three with the organization. The interview guidelines for the organization (see Annex D) were structured according to three thematic areas: i) understanding the process, ii) the impact of the online setup, and iii) the impact of multilingualism. The interview guidelines for the participants (see Annex E) had five main subjects: i) evaluation of the process, ii) representativity of the process, iii) quality of debates, iv) evaluation of deliberation, and v) perspective on citizens' participation (in Luxembourg). All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed through qualitative content analysis. We employed an inductive narrative analysis to understand how the interviewees constructed stories and narratives from their own experiences of the BK. All data was processed anonymously. The interviewees were contacted separately to explain the process, and each interviewee gave their informed consent before the interview. The eight interviews were conducted after the process had formally ended. A sample of five members was chosen to broadly reflect the demographic (gender, age, qualification, geography) makeup of the assembly. Additionally, this sample also included one person who left the BK due to dissatisfaction with the

process. The semi-structured interviews gave the interviewees the space to reflect on the experience on their own terms.

Third, one to two members of the research team attended and observed the online meetings. 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.¹⁵ The implementation of the non-participant observation was agreed upon with the Biergerkomitee organization team in advance of the first BK meeting and communicated to the participants verbally.

Fourth, the above methods were complemented by desk research; namely, an analysis of primary and secondary documents including official legal documents, the communication channel Slack, the final BK report, and secondary or grey literature (i.e., information material sent to the BK members by the organizers). We also received data from the BK secretariat, including information on the BK members' interactions with the political arena.

Fifth, a media coverage review was used to estimate the impact of the BK on discourse and the overall public. We carried out a quantitative media analysis of the news coverage published in Luxembourg in the period between December 2020 and March 2023 with a focus on articles reporting about the BK. We conducted a search for all relevant print, broadcast, and online articles using the *Revues de Presse* online press database. All articles were analyzed to examine the level of publicity throughout the process. We assessed how many articles were devoted to the BK process, the length of each article, its primary focus, and whether the coverage was positive or negative.

Additionally, the Biergerkomitee's move online due to the COVID-19 pandemic provided an interesting opportunity to compare the members' – perceived – online and face-to-face engagement.

2.3. Presenting findings

The surveys' closed-ended questions were mostly statements with five different levels of agreement and disagreement. As not all respondents to the surveys answered the open-ended questions, anonymized quotations from members are included for illustrative purposes and to provide nuance. In this report, interviewees from the secretariat and moderators are collectively referred to as 'organizers' to protect anonymity, although in some instances, where appropriate, specific reference is made to 'secretariat' or 'moderator(s)'.

15 OECD (2021). Evaluation Guidelines for Representative Deliberative Processes. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/10ccbfcb-en>

Where data exists, members' views have been compared with the results of STATEC (the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies)¹⁶ and other secondary data.

In the report, including the figures and tables, 'pre' and 'post' refers to the pre-survey (survey 1) and the post-survey (survey 2).

16 STATEC website: <https://lustrat.statec.lu/?lc=fr&pg=0>

3. Organizing the Biergerkomitee

This chapter presents findings relating to the organization of the Biergerkomitee, focusing on governance, the process to determine the remit and framing of the Biergerkomitee, and the overall design.

3.1. Governance and Roles

The groups involved in the Biergerkomitee and their respective roles are outlined in Table 3 below.

The organization and moderation in a citizens' assembly are complex but crucial aspects of the assembly's success. These roles are typically carried out by different entities or individuals, as each has specific responsibilities. This separation also helps maintain the independence and integrity of the process. In the BK, however, one company was responsible for both the organization and moderation. Put differently, the main organizer of the process was also the main moderator.

While one individual can fulfill both roles, it is generally considered best practice to keep them separate. Combining the roles of organizer and moderator in a citizens' assembly presents a complex scenario with significant concerns. Combining the roles of organizer and moderator can raise doubts about the independence and impartiality of the process. The organizer's interests in planning and execution may not always align with the facilitation and neutrality required of a moderator. Conflicts of interest can emerge when one person is responsible for planning and executing the assembly while also facilitating it. These conflicts can erode trust and credibility, both among participants and the public. The absence of a separation of roles can limit checks and balances within the assembly's management, increasing the risk of overlooking potential biases or issues.

The combination of both roles might, however, also offer several advantages. A single individual serving as both the organizer and moderator can streamline the planning and execution of the assembly. This alignment of responsibilities can help ensure that logistical aspects (i.e., the process of planning and organizing) are closely integrated with the deliberative process. With one person overseeing both roles, there's a greater likelihood of consistency in decision-making and coordination. This can lead to a more coherent and organized assembly. Moreover, the organizer-moderator, if dedicated to the assembly's objectives, may be better positioned to ensure that the assembly remains focused on its intended mission and goals.

When it comes to the double role organizer-moderator in the BK, none of the participants had any remarks on this construction, signifying that it did not pose any problems for the BK process.

Table 3: Groups involved in the organization of the Biergerkomitee

The **Secretariat** was established to function independently of the Luxembourgish Government. Stoldt Associés was charged by the Ministry of Energy and Land-use Planning with the secretariat of the Biergerkomitee. The structure set up by the Ministry gave the delivery body significant control over design and facilitation, but not over participant recruitment. Stoldt Associés was consequently responsible for the organization and running of the process, supporting the administrative functions, and providing the overall framework. This also included the communication, coordination, and moderation of the process.

The **Facilitation Team** was led by the same company as the **secretariat**, namely, Stoldt Associés, an independent consulting firm with a background in participatory processes and citizen dialogue. They focused on facilitating and moderating the Biergerkomitee.

The **Expert Group** included over 25 national and international experts, invited by the **secretariat** and **facilitation Team** to discuss a wide range of themes and issues with the BK members including water management, biodiversity, transport, and construction so that the members could assess the complexity of their task. These experts included researchers, climate change scientists, and practitioners.

The **Advisory Committee** comprised 6 members, covering a range of expertise and perspectives on climate change and participatory/deliberative democracy. They were tasked with assuring the integrity of the process. The members were: Dr. Léonie de Jonge, Sophie Federspiel, Dr. Raphaël Kies, Tommy Klein, Peter Opitz, and Bob Wetzel.

3.2. Remit and framing

This section considers the process to determine the remit and framing of the Biergerkomitee. The BK was commissioned by the Ministry of Energy and Land-use Planning as an accompanying element to Luxembourg in Transition. Because of its incorporation with Luxembourg in Transition, the Biergerkomitee was formally embedded into the broader political system. The process took place at the same time as international expert teams were meeting to discuss and put forward proposals for Luxembourg's future. Hence, the climate out of which the Biergerkomitee was born had consequences for the independence of the event. That is, the

BK was often referred to in connection with the LIT process, not as an independent process.

Integrating the BK into a larger process that includes expert consultation (i.e., the LIT process) can, however, be a valuable approach to decision-making and policy development. Citizens' assemblies bring the perspectives, values, and lived experiences of ordinary citizens to the decision-making process, complementing the expertise of subject matter specialists. This comprehensive input can lead to more well-rounded and effective solutions. The inclusion of citizens' assemblies alongside expert consultations reinforces the democratic legitimacy of decisions by ensuring that both technical expertise and public input are considered. Expert consultations provide evidence-based insights, while citizens' assemblies contribute a sense of fairness, ethics, and values, helping balance the decision-making process. Policies resulting from this integrated approach are more likely to gain public acceptance and trust, as they represent a broader cross-section of society.

Aside from a determined context, the BK came with a predetermined agenda, namely, to provide an answer to the question of how to transform the territory towards climate neutrality by 2050. This question was put forward by the Ministry. The structure set up by the Ministry gave the delivery body significant control over the design of the Biergerkomitee, but not over participant recruitment. The particularities (i.e., the program, working methods, and the choice of experts) were autonomously determined by the secretariat before the first meeting. Consequently, the organization had a general direction in mind on how to proceed and defined the general organizational lines, but these were not set in stone a priori. That is, the agenda-setting process remained partially open: the members were presented with the structure, to which they agreed, but they also had the choice to add topics, and relevant experts. The members took this opportunity and added three additional meetings, also choosing the relevant experts for these meetings.

The Biergerkomitee, as part of the expert consultation Luxembourg in Transition, was charged with three missions:

- 1. The BK must make themselves available to the various teams of experts of Luxembourg in Transition for exchanges during their scenario development phase.
- 2. The BK must develop an understanding of how Luxembourg should position itself by 2050 to achieve climate neutrality.
- 3. The BK must make recommendations to politicians on how the territory should be organized so that Luxembourg becomes climate-neutral.

In comparison to other deliberative processes, the BK had multiple missions focusing on different aspects. To evaluate the BK's missions, we assessed the following aspects: to what extent were the objectives clear for the participants? And for that, we measured their understanding of the design at two points in time. At

the start and the end of the process. And, secondly, to what extent the different objectives were reached? For that, we based our analysis on survey and interview data.

The main originality of the BK design is that it was linked to two different actors. It had to follow the results of the different phases of Luxembourg in Transition and provide feedback to the various expert teams (mission one). On the other hand, as a ‘classical’ citizens’ assembly, it was requested to gain knowledge and develop a critical reflection on a specific topic (mission two), and to elaborate recommendations to be presented to the decision-makers (mission three).

From the outset, these different missions raise several issues. More precisely, the first mission does not specify what should be assessed during the scenario development phase. One could assume that the output generated by the expert groups should be analyzed, but this is not made clear. Furthermore, ‘to be available’ can be interpreted as that the BK should be ready to provide feedback if they are requested to do so. However, this implies that they may never be requested to provide feedback. In that case, mission one is a mission without substance, which is highly problematic. Moreover, it is also not clear from mission one’s wording who should take the lead for these exchanges. The organizers? The expert teams? External actors? Or the BK members themselves? In summary, mission one is vague and imprecise.

The second and third missions are clearer and sharper. Indeed, considering the different phases of the process, we easily understand that the second mission corresponds to the learning phase of the process where citizens are invited to interact with experts on a broad range of topics, while the third mission corresponds to the deliberation phase of the process during which the BK is requested to work on the elaboration of their proposals.

Despite these potential risks of confusion due to the Biergerkomitee having not one but three missions, it is interesting to note that participants did not signify any problems. In the pre-survey, the vast majority agreed that the BK’s objective and missions were rather (39,3%) or fully (50%) clear. Similarly, many claimed to understand the process (50% rather clear and 46,4% fully clear). In the post-survey, 37,5% of respondents agreed that the role of the BK was fully clear, 43,8% agreed that it was rather clear, and 18,8% perceived the BK’s role to be averagely clear. Put differently, citizens did not confirm the initial fear expressed concerning the clarity of the missions. Instead, as put into words by one of the members, they believed the following about their missions:

“Clear mandate, including all the dimensions to be addressed in an attempt to achieve carbon neutrality in the territory by 2050.”

However, asking about the missions, we noted that nobody referred to mission one, which we considered to be the most problematic objective of the process. The Biergerkomitee's secretariat provided different reasons for why mission one was, in practice, not regarded as a mission.

First, it was included as a reason to establish the Biergerkomitee. In other words, it was a way to integrate a citizens' consultation within the overarching LIT process. Second, whilst the Biergerkomitee members had a few chances to speak and discuss with the LIT teams, it was difficult to find a common language between the members and the expert teams. Although both teams worked on the same topic, there is understandably a difference in how citizens and experts approach the subject. Put differently, bridging the difference in understanding and communication between citizens and experts was challenging. Third, the LIT teams were not all located in Luxembourg making it difficult to organize exchanges with the BK members. Fourth, the Biergerkomitee had a full agenda just focusing on missions two and three. That is, mission one would have been an overload, for both the members and the LIT teams.

Based on these four reasons, it was decided not to communicate mission one as a mission. Hence, participants did not consider mission one as a proper mission to fulfill and instead focused on the informative phase (mission 2) and deliberation phase (mission 3). One way to have dealt with the multitude of missions could have been to integrate mission one with mission two. Accordingly, the LIT teams could have served as experts in the Biergerkomitee's informative phase.

Recommendation 1: Ensure that the missions are concrete and do not overwhelm the consultation's agenda.

3.3. Design

This section covers the findings related to the design of the Biergerkomitee. Design choices of deliberative processes are important to consider as they play a crucial role in their success.¹⁷ The Biergerkomitee's design is unique in three regards: 1) an almost fully online setting, 2) a multilingual design, and 3) no division into thematic working groups. In [Section Four](#), the online and multilingual elements will be considered in more detail regarding their impact on the quality of deliberation.

Practically, the first phase, from January to June was divided into four phases:

¹⁷ Stack, S. & Griessler, E. (2022). From a "Half Full or Half Empty Glass" to "Definitely a Success": Explorative Comparison of Impacts of Climate Assemblies in Ireland, France, Germany and Scotland. Vienna: Institut für Höhere Studien. Available at: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-78385-6>

- From January to February: Introduction to the Biergerkomitee, the members' tasks and roles, and the agenda for the coming months
- From March to early April: Exchange/discussions with experts on natural conditions
 - Geography and regional particularities
 - Water management
 - Soil, agriculture, and climate change
 - Biodiversity in cities, meadows, woods, and nature reserves
 - Environmental management
- From mid-April to early May: Exchange/discussions with experts on organization of the territory
 - Transport and mobility
 - Urbanism
- From mid-May to June: Exchange/discussions with experts on social and economic transformation
 - Living conditions
 - Construction
 - Demography, labor market, and cross-border workers and their relation to climate policy

This first phase was the informative phase where the members gathered twice a month from 4 February until 17 June 2021 to meet, digitally, with experts. In this first phase, the members met, for the first time, in person during an outing with the group to visit a section of Natur & Umwelt on 8 May 2021. Additionally, in mid-July, the members had the chance to make an interim evaluation of the process thus far and discuss the next steps. The second phase, from September until December was split into two distinct phases:

- From mid-September to early October: Deliberations
- From October to December: Writing, finetuning, and final deliberations on the recommendations

In contrast to most other citizens' councils, the members were not assigned to separate, thematic focus groups. Instead, all members worked on all topics, each of which tackled a specific area of climate neutrality. This approach was chosen by the BK secretariat because of the already smaller size of the group compared to most other citizens' assemblies.

Not splitting citizens' assembly members into separate thematic working groups can have several consequences, both positive and negative. Keeping assembly members together as a single group encourages the cross-pollination of ideas and perspectives across different themes. This can lead to more holistic and interconnected recommendations that consider the broader implications of policy decisions. Members then benefitted from a shared learning experience, as they were exposed to a wider range of topics and issues. This promoted a well-rounded understanding of the subject matter. Moreover, it promoted a stronger sense of unity and collaboration among members, potentially simplifying the process of reaching a consensus.

However, dealing with multiple, diverse themes in a single group can be overwhelming for participants, making it challenging to dive deep into complex issues and fully understand the nuances of each topic. Without separate working groups, members may not develop specialized expertise in specific subject areas, potentially leading to less in-depth analysis and policy recommendations. Covering a wide range of topics within a single group may lead to time constraints that limit the depth of discussion and exploration of each issue. Dominant perspectives or narratives on some themes may overshadow others, potentially limiting the diversity of recommendations. This, nonetheless, did not seem to be the case in the BK.

The Biergerkomitee was originally intended to be a fully in-person deliberative exercise, running from January 2021 until January 2022. Participants were told that they would have the opportunity to attend around twenty conferences, discussions, exchanges, and information sessions on various aspects of spatial planning, both digitally and in-person throughout 2021. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Biergerkomitee was forced to move online.

In practice, from 4 February until 17 June 2021, the committee met on a bi-monthly basis. A total of 12 digital conferences were held via Zoom. The Biergerkomitee members learned about the challenges facing Luxembourg and its border regions in the wake of climate change as well as possible transition scenarios from over 25 (inter)national experts, invited by the organization to discuss a wide range of themes and issues with the BK members such as mobility, housing, water management, and climate change so that the members could assess the complexity of their task. After the public lectures by the experts, participants were allowed to ask questions to the speakers using the chat function in Zoom. These online meetings constituted the learning phase, with the aim for the participants to improve their understanding of the challenges facing Luxembourg and its border regions in the context of climate (neutrality).

In the second phase, from July 2021 onwards, the deliberation phase took off. Over seven meetings, the Biergerkomitee discussed, based on the information received from experts in the online events, their positions, and ideas for the territory of Luxembourg and its neighbors concerning climate neutrality. The goal of

these seven meetings was to draw conclusions and come up with recommendations. Notwithstanding that it was an open process that had no explicit objective of achieving a consensus, the committee succeeded in finding common positions and compromises on all points.

Throughout the process, the members had access to an online collaborative platform, namely Slack. Their participation on this platform was not mandatory; instead, it served as an additional tool to discuss and share ideas and information with the other members. In addition, the platform was a way for the organization to receive and respond to questions and requests from participants.

In terms of language, consultations were organized in line with Luxembourg's multilingual setup. Members had to have a passive knowledge of the three official languages, that is they had to have a basic command of Luxembourgish, French, and German, but there was no obligation to speak all three fluently. The organizers believed that such a requirement would make it possible to omit translation and hence facilitate deliberation.

Due to multilingualism being a central element of the Biergerkomitee's design, particular attention was also paid to finding an interplay between the three languages: emails to participants were sent in French, the public newsletter was also in French, the Facebook page was in Luxembourgish, communication with the press occurred in both French and Luxembourgish, whilst the website, Slack, and the final report were fully multilingual in French, German, Luxembourgish and even English.

During the meetings, Luxembourgish, French, and German were used interchangeably, with each participant being encouraged to intervene in whichever language they preferred. The facilitation team had an important role in reminding people to speak in their preferred language instead of intervening in the language that was used by others. Concerning the presentation given by the experts, it was the intention to have one presentation in Luxembourgish or German and the second one in French at every meeting. Nonetheless, because of the preferred language choice of certain experts, this design criterium was not always feasible in practice.

4. Analysis of the Biergerkomitee

4.1. Assessment of Selection Criteria and Representativeness

There are several reasons why it is significant that participants of a citizens' assembly are randomly chosen. First, everyone in the general public should have an equal chance of being selected and therefore have an equal opportunity to have a say in decision-making. Second, random selection reduces self-selection which tends to result in those with vested interests and the loudest voices participating. Third, participants should be broadly representative of the population concerning key demographics, and preferably also attitudes on the topic at hand. Socio-demographic and attitudinal characteristics can influence public opinion and thereby the legitimacy of the process.

To assess if the recruitment fulfilled these objectives, this chapter evaluates whether the members were demographically representative of the general public. This chapter furthermore considers the Biergerkomitee members' attitudes on politics and climate change.

The assessment of the recruitment, representativeness, and attitudes in this chapter is based on the results of the surveys, supplemented with interviews.

4.1.1. Recruitment

The BK participant recruitment procedure aimed at maximizing the diversity of participants and hence their opinions, as the Biergerkomitee members were to reflect the social, linguistic, and professional diversity of Luxembourg as much as possible. The selection process for the participants of the Luxembourgish BK has been conducted by Ilres, the Luxembourg Institute of Social Research, and leader in market research and opinion polls in Luxembourg.

According to the international standards laid down in the OECD publication on deliberative practices (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.¹⁸ The two terms are defined as follows:

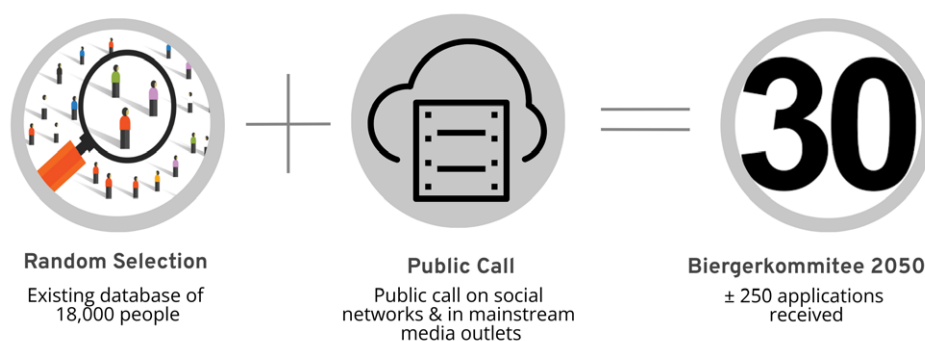
18 OECD (2020). *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave*. Paris: OECD Publishing, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/339306da-en>.

- Inclusion: 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 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.

However, the smaller the targeted number of participants (in the BK's case, only 30) and the more characteristics must be considered (i.e., gender, age, formal education, region, income class, migration background, etc.), the more difficult it is to achieve actual representativeness. Ideally, the BK participants should have constituted a mini-public as a proxy for the population. However, it is impossible to achieve exact representativeness in a country of over 660,000 inhabitants and more than 200,000 cross-border workers with only 30 assembly members. Therefore, the benchmarks for the analysis are broad representativeness and inclusiveness, stressing the recognition factor of descriptive representation (Pitkin 1967): any person living and/or working in Luxembourg looking at the members of the Luxembourgish BK should be able to see 'someone like me' within the process.¹⁹

Ilres' participant selection was done in two distinctive ways (see Figure 1), involving both random selection and a public call. First, a selection of people (approximately 1000 people) was randomly drawn from the Ilres database and subsequently invited by e-mail to apply. Second, a public call was launched, both on social networks and in mainstream media outlets on 4 December 2020. Following international standards, the organizers provided remuneration for the members (25 euros for online sessions and 40 euros for in-person sessions) to remove barriers to participation. There were, however, no efforts undertaken such as providing childcare, transportation, or issuing headphones to ensure the inclusion of the hearing and/or visually impaired. Two additional limitations to inclusiveness were: i) the requirement of having a passive understanding of Luxembourg's three official languages, and ii) the information concerning the BK was not communicated in other widely spoken languages common in Luxembourg (Portuguese, Italian, etc.).

19 Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California.

Figure 1: Sampling

The recruitment strategy resulted in ± 250 people registering their interest to take part in the Biergerkomitee. Among the 250 applications submitted, the polling institute then made an independent selection according to a whole series of criteria, such as gender, age, origin, occupation, etc. Ilres was commissioned to select 30 participants reflecting the social, linguistic, and professional diversity of Luxembourg. Three further requisites were: i) five participants had to be cross-border workers (i.e., Belgian, French, or German), ii) none of the candidates should otherwise be involved in a political party, and iii) participants were required to have, at least, passive knowledge of the three official languages of the country, namely Luxembourgish, French and German.

4.1.2. Socio-Demographic Representativity

The Biergerkomitee was initially composed of 30 participants, including 14 men (47,7%) and 16 women (53,3%). However, from the onset, one participant did not show up and the process ultimately started with 29 members. Table 4 shows that the gender division of the Biergerkomitee broadly corresponds to the Luxembourg population.

Table 4: Gender

Criteria: Gender	% BK members	% Luxembourg population ²⁰	% Difference (= BK – Lux pop.)
Male	47,7	50,3	-2,6
Female	53,3	49,7	3,6

Throughout the Biergerkomitee, seven members resigned (we delve deeper into their reasons for resigning in [Section Five](#)). However, these members were not replaced because there had been no substitute members selected at the start of the process. Replacing the resigning members was perceived as difficult since the replacing members would lack the necessary information.

²⁰ STATEC population data by age and sex, 2020

Recommendation 2: Ensure substitute members from the start of the assembly’s design to maintain representativity and adaptability throughout the deliberative process.

On average, participants were rather young with an average age of 42 years. In the Biergerkomitee, the youngest member was 19 years and the oldest was 74 years. The median age group was 35-44 years. Table 5 highlights a significant underrepresentation of the youth (16-24 years) and elderly (65+), and an overrepresentation of people in the 25-34 age group. An explanation might be that younger individuals feel unprepared to take part in such processes, as proclaimed by the BK’s youngest member:

“I wondered whether I was mature enough.”

Table 5: Age

Criteria: Age	% BK members	% Luxembourg population ²¹	% Difference (= BK – Lux pop.)
16-24	3,5	10,5	-7
25-34	42,9	15,5	27,4
35-44	17,9	15,4	2,5
45-54	14,3	14,9	-0,6
55-64	14,3	12,3	2
65+	7,1	14,5	-7,4

The socio-demographic profile of survey respondents mimicked the highly multicultural aspect of Luxembourg’s society: five out of the thirty participants (16,7%) were cross-border workers. Including cross-border workers in a Luxembourgish citizens’ assembly is important for several reasons. Cross-border workers form a significant part of the Luxembourgish population, contributing to the country’s economy and society. Their inclusion ensured that their perspectives and needs were represented in the deliberations, as the decisions made in the BK are likely to affect cross-border workers directly. Moreover, engaging cross-border workers in the process helped strengthen social cohesion by acknowledging their presence and contributions within Luxembourg.

Put differently, incorporating cross-border workers into a citizens’ assembly demonstrates a commitment to democratic values, inclusivity, and the equitable representation of all individuals and communities within the country, regardless of their specific circumstances or geographical location. This was also commented on by numerous BK members:

²¹ STATEC population data by age and sex, 2020

“As a cross-border worker, it also has an impact on our personal life, maybe even more than the decisions taken in the country we live.”

“It was nice to be included and heard.”

“Cross-border workers are a part of Luxembourg.”

From the viewpoint of nationality, there was a great variety reflecting the multi-national nature of the population in Luxembourg. 78,6% of the participants have the Luxembourgish nationality, of whom 42,9% are mono-Luxembourgish, 28,6% hold a double nationality, and 7,1% have a triple nationality. 21,4% of the BK members are non-Luxembourgish; they originate from the following countries: France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Congo. Nevertheless, Table 6 shows that the overall society in Luxembourg is more diverse than the Biergerkomitee when it comes to nationality. Here, it is very likely that the requirement to have a passive understanding of Luxembourg’s three official languages had an impact.

Table 6: Nationality

Criteria: Nationality	% BK members	% Luxembourg population ²²	% Difference (= BK – Lux pop.)
Luxembourgish	78,6	52,6	26
Non-Luxembourgish	21,4	47,4	-26

In the pre-survey, the Biergerkomitee members were asked about their highest level of educational achievement. The level of education was remarkably high, as 57,1% of the participants have a university degree of four years or more, and 17,9% have a university degree of between one and three years. Table 7 shows that those possessing a university degree (75%) were over-represented in the Biergerkomitee compared to the Luxembourg population (44,5%). However, when asked about this over-representativity of higher-educated individuals in the BK, one participant responded as follows:

“The topic is more relevant than educational background because one’s educational background does not determine one’s knowledge on the topic.”

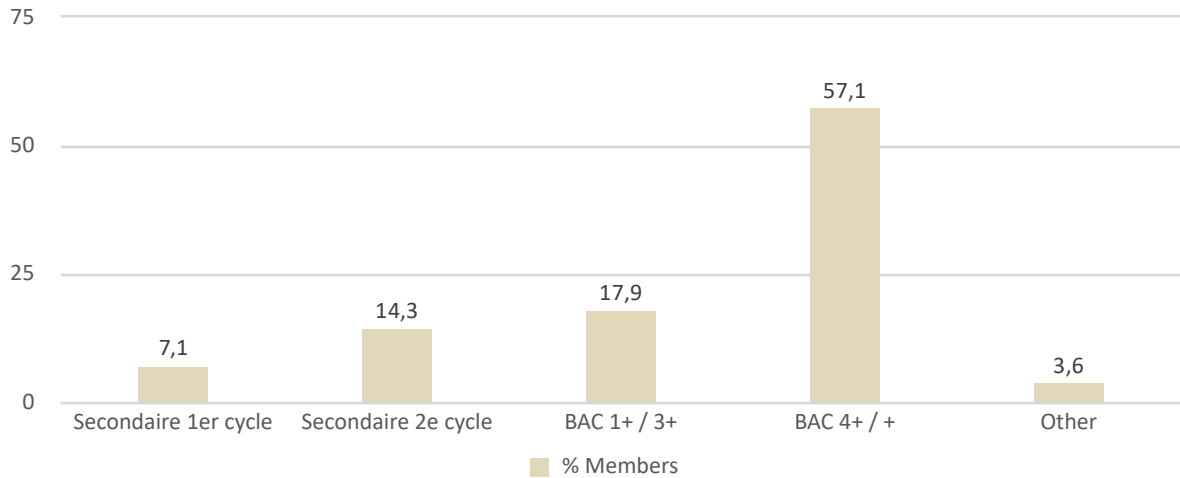
Table 7: Educational level

Criteria: Education level	% BK members	% Luxembourg population ²³	% Difference (= BK – Lux pop.)
No university degree	25	55,5	-30,5
University degree	75	44,5	30,5

22 STATEC population data by age and sex, 2020

23 Statista education data (population aged 15-64 that have a university degree), 2021

Figure 2: Educational level (in detail)

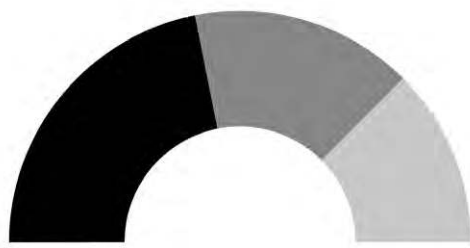


This over-representation of highly educated people was also reflected in the professions of Biergerkomitee members: who work either in the private sector (32,1%) or the public sector (35,7%). There are no participants who are occupied in the agricultural or industrial sector. Accordingly, the income of participants is relatively high; 14,3% find it very easy to live on their income, 53,6% find it rather easy to live on their income, whilst 17,9% consider their household income to be insufficient.

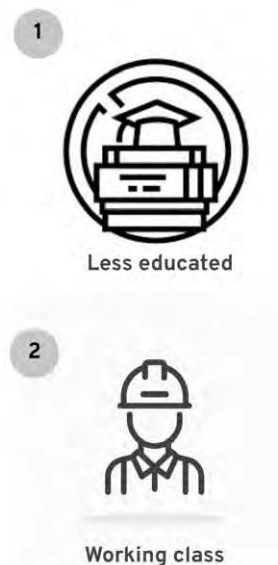
The members were asked whether they believed that certain people were missing from the BK, with 43,8% answering “yes” to the question. When asked which individuals were missing, the following two groups were identified by the majority of Biergerkomitee participants: the less educated, and the working class.

Figure 3: BK’s perceived representativity

Do you believe parts of society are missing?
 Members were asked whether they believe that certain people were missing from the BK.



■ Yes (43.8%) ■ No (31.2%) ■ No idea (25%)



When asked whether the socio-economic background of BK members might have had an impact on the final recommendations, one individual stated that:

“I would have tried to have greater diversity on the different social breaks in order to diversify the points of view and the problems that we can meet on a daily basis.”

Another member claimed that such shortcomings are to be expected:

“There is always room for something like this to be more representative.”

Yet, the underrepresentation of less educated and working-class individuals in a citizens’ assembly can have several significant consequences. Citizens’ consultations are most effective when they reflect the diversity of society. When certain socio-economic and educational groups are underrepresented, the range of perspectives and experiences is limited, potentially leading to a narrow understanding of the issues under discussion. Similarly, its legitimacy depends on its representativity. When certain segments of the population are excluded, the recommendations may be seen as less legitimate, reducing their impact and acceptance. Working-class and less-educated individuals may face specific challenges that require attention. If they are not adequately represented, the process may not effectively address these issues, potentially perpetuating inequalities. Underrepresentation can result in an unequal distribution of influence, where the concerns and needs of the less-educated and working-class individuals are marginalized, potentially leading to policies that favor more privileged groups. Addressing the underrepresentation of these groups in a citizens’ assembly is crucial for ensuring that the deliberative process is equitable, effective, and legitimate. Efforts should be made to design inclusive selection processes and outreach strategies to encourage diverse participation and ensure that all voices are heard and considered.

As mentioned above, whilst it is difficult for a process comprised of 30 individuals to be fully representative of Luxembourg society, totaling over 660,000 residents²⁴ and more than 200,000 cross-border workers,²⁵ the BK should at least have been representative in terms of ‘recognition factor’. Looking at the images of the participants on the front page and throughout the BK final report²⁶, we conclude that many but not all people in Luxembourg will be able to see ‘someone like me’ within the BK process. To that end, the BK fell rather short in terms of representativeness.

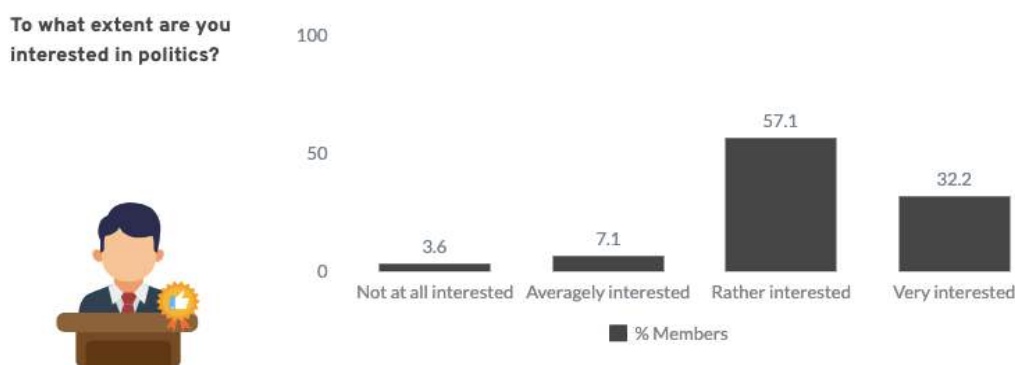
24 STATEC population data by nationality, 2023

25 ASTI frontaliers data, 2020

26 BK final report: <https://luxembourgtransition.lu/fr/la-consultation-internationale/#comitedes-citoyens>

Recommendation 3: Remove obstacles to participation to foster an inclusive and representative decision-making process, ultimately resulting in a more diverse range of voices.

Figure 4: Interest in politics



In the first survey, the members were asked about their views on politics. 57,1% of the participants are rather interested in politics and 3,2% are very interested, whilst 7,1% have a limited interest in politics. Only 3,6% have no interest in politics at all. Table 8 shows how their interest in politics compares to the Luxembourg population, finding that the Biergerkomitee members are more interested in politics than the overall population and therefore not fully representative of the population in terms of political allegiances.

Table 8: Political interest

Criteria: Political interest	% BK members	% Luxembourg population ²⁷	% Difference (= BK - Lux pop.)
Strong	32,2	17	15,2
Medium	57,1	48	9,1
Low	7,1	19	-11,9
Not at all	3,6	16	-12,4

²⁷ Statista political interest data, 2019

Members were also asked about their perception of the functioning of democracy in Luxembourg. The majority, 57,1%, claimed that it functions rather well, whilst 39,3% believed it functions moderately, and 3,6% very well. When it comes to their perception of citizens being heard, 3,6% stated that citizens are not heard at all, 25% believed rather not, 25% argued rather yes, and 42,9% stated that citizens are moderately heard.

Figure 5: Functioning of democracy

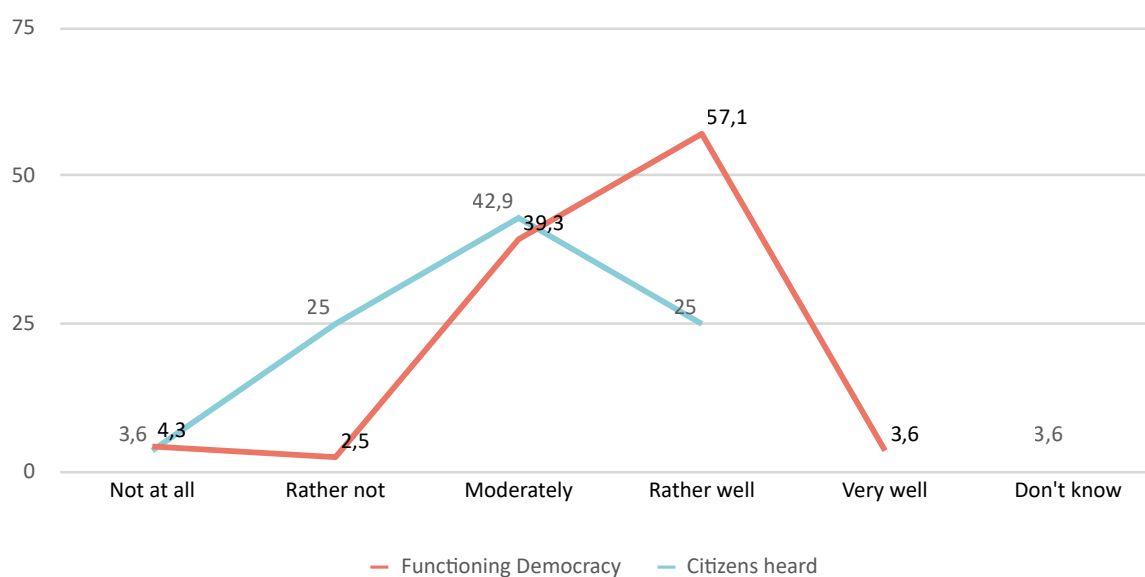


Table 9 shows that the Biergerkomitee members are more satisfied with the functioning of democracy compared to the Luxembourg population.

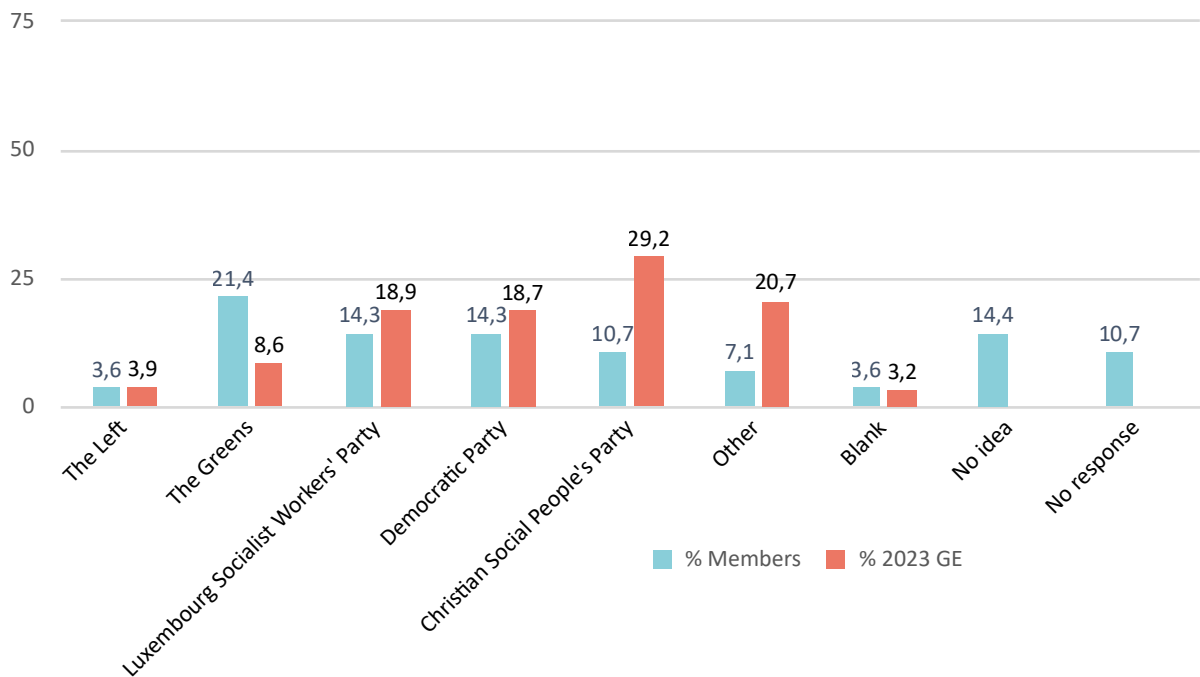
Table 9: Functioning of democracy

Criteria: Functioning of democracy	% BK members	% Luxembourg population ²⁸	% Difference (= BK – Lux pop.)
Satisfied	100	89	11
Not satisfied	0	9	-9
Don't know	0	2	-2

The Biergerkomitee members were also asked about their party affiliation. Specifically, they were asked for which party they would vote if the elections were to occur immediately. Figure 6 shows how their party affiliations compared to the 2023 Luxembourg general election.²⁹

²⁸ Statista democracy opinion data, 2019

²⁹ <https://elections.public.lu/en.html>

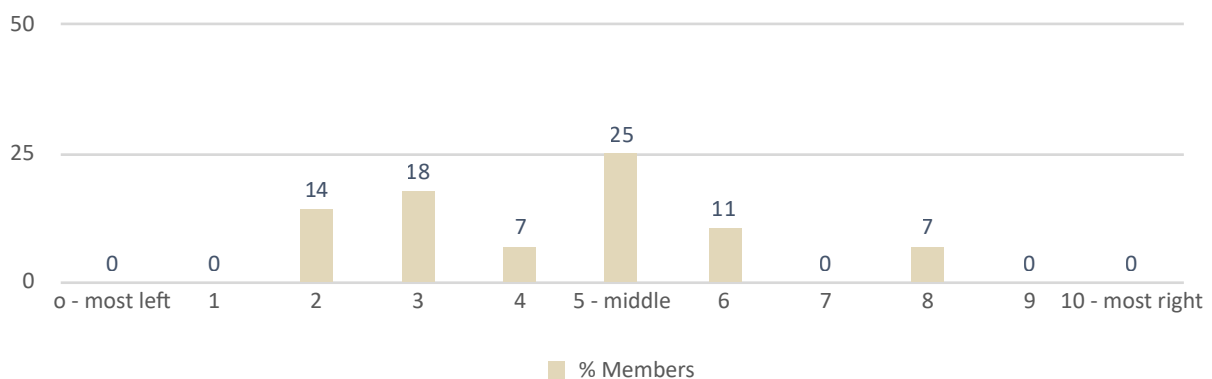
Figure 6: Political orientation (party preference)

Of the members, the largest proportion (21,4%) would vote for the Greens (Les Verts/Déi Gréng). However, the Greens received only 8,55% of the votes in the 2023 General Elections. Put differently, the proportion of Biergerkomitee members that would vote for the Green Party appears highly over-represented. Conversely, compared to the percentages of votes received from eligible voters in the 2023 general elections, members affiliating with the Christian Social People's Party (Parti Chrétien Social/CSV) appear highly under-represented. A reason for such an over-representation might be unintentional selection bias. Because the invitations to the Biergerkomitee indicated the topic was about climate, supporters of the Green Party might have been more inclined to respond. People who choose to participate in a climate assembly often have a pre-existing interest in environmental and climate issues (as we show in the following section). They are thus more likely to align with the Green Party's emphasis on sustainability, environmental protection, and climate action, as we see here with the BK.

Recommendation 4: Offer minimal information about the topic of the consultation to reduce self-selection bias and promote a more diverse participant pool.

To further assess the members' political leanings, they were also asked where they would situate themselves on the left-right political scale. Figure 7 shows that most Biergerkomitee members selected the mid-point on the scale from 0 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right), with 5 (the center). The results indicate that the members were ideologically diverse, although with a majority situating themselves left on the political spectrum and no members identifying as extreme left or right.

Figure 7: Political orientation (left-right scale)

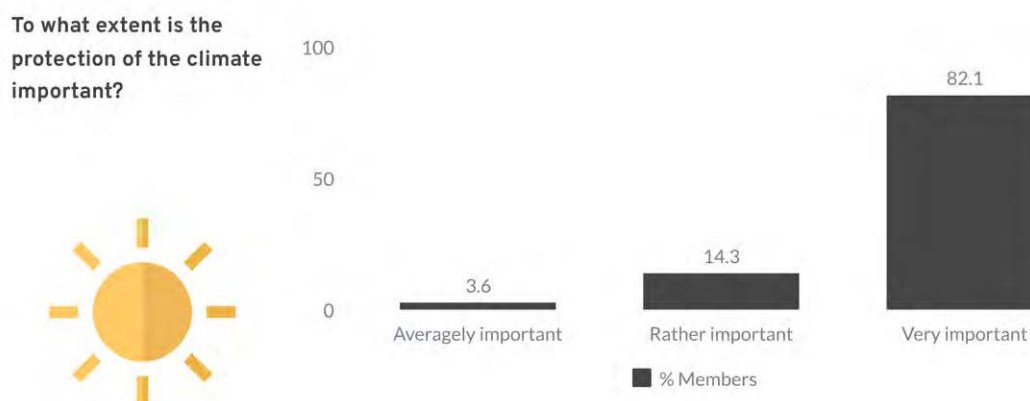


4.1.3. Attitudes towards Climate Change

One key feature to guarantee the legitimacy of a mini-public is that a multitude of public opinions is present in the mini-public. In the pre-survey, the Biergerkomitee members' attitudinal diversity on the topic of climate was measured. 75% of the respondents answered yes to the question "Do you think that Luxembourg should get ahead of other countries in the fight against climate change?".

When asked how long they have felt concerned with climate change, 10,7% indicated more than 20 years. 21,4% have been occupied with climate change for 11-20 years, 17,9% for 6-10 years, and 21,4% for 4-5 years. 28,6% of the Biergerkomitee members were relatively new to the topic of climate change, indicating they started to feel concerned in the last 1-3 years. These results indicate that all members were already fairly or very concerned about climate change before they participated in the Biergerkomitee. It is hence not surprising that more than half of the members felt moderately informed about the issue of climate change and its effects on Luxembourg. Additionally, the vast majority (82,1%) of members believed that the protection of the environment is very important, and a further 14,3% considered it rather important. One member claimed that a possible explanation for such numbers might be that:

"Citizens who sign up for such initiatives are generally interested in discussing and finding solutions on the issue at hand."

Figure 8: Importance of climate protection

We find more attitudinal diversity when it comes to the reasons for climate change and the solutions to tackle it. 60,7% claimed that climate change is mainly due to human activity, 17,9% stated that it is uniquely due to human activity, whilst 21,4% believed that it is as much a result of natural processes as human activity. None of the participants believed that climate change is essentially due to natural processes. Such a finding could imply that there were no climate skeptics in the BK. Without climate skeptics or individuals with varying viewpoints, an assembly may lack a complete spectrum of perspectives on climate change. This can limit the breadth of discussions and result in a narrower range of recommendations. Excluding climate skeptics may lead to polarization, where participants reinforce their existing beliefs without considering opposing viewpoints. Moreover, the absence of climate skeptics can lead to the perception that the assembly is a biased or manipulated process. This can undermine public trust and confidence in the assembly's outcomes, as well as reduce its legitimacy.

Recommendation 5: Broaden the sampling process by incorporating attitudes towards climate change as a selection criterion, promoting a more comprehensive and well-balanced citizens' consultation.

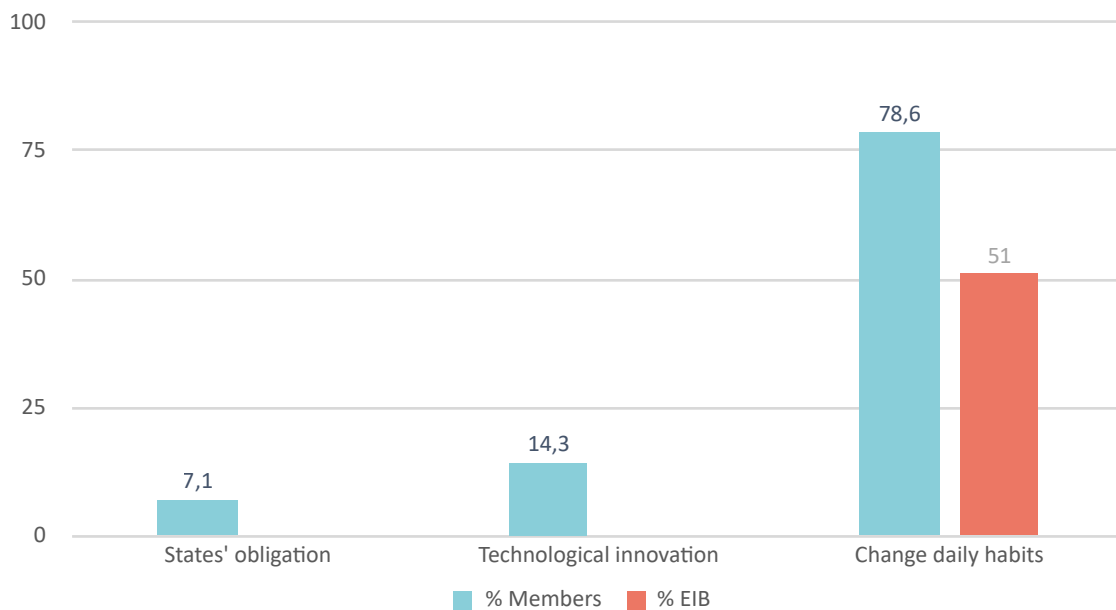
Figure 9: Climate change opinions

Figure 9 shows that 78.6% of BK members agreed with the statement that “significant changes in our lifestyles will be needed to prevent climate change”. The 2021-2022 European Investment Bank (EIB) Climate Survey shows that 51% of Luxembourg citizens believed that a radical change in habits is the best way to limit climate change, with 64% claiming that their behavior can make a difference in tackling climate change.³⁰

Most members claimed to have already undertaken several actions to protect the climate before they participated in the Biergerkomitee, such as sorting trash (100%), limiting meat intake (71.4%), lowering the temperature by 2-3 degrees (75%), and choosing products with a limited impact on the environment (71.4%). Compared to the Luxembourg population, the Biergerkomitee members seem broadly representative. According to the 2021-2022 European Investment Bank (EIB) Climate Survey, 70% of the Luxembourg population claimed to be already doing all they can to fight climate change in their daily lives but believed that only 26% of the people in Luxembourg are doing all they can to tackle climate change. 84% of the population, following the 2021-2022 EIB Climate survey, considered the issue of climate change when buying a product or service.

In the pre-survey, members were asked which measures they believed to be desirable. As shown in Table 10, agreement with the statements was relatively high, ranging from 35,7% to 92,9%.

³⁰ 2021-2022 European Investment Bank Climate Survey, available at: <https://www.eib.org/en/surveys/climate-survey/4th-climate-survey/index.htm>

Table 10: Member agreement with statements

Statement	Agree ('very desirable' + 'desirable')
Lowering the limit on the motorway to 110 km/h	53,6
Taxing air transport to favor train transport	60,7
Obliging landlords to renovate and insulate homes when selling or renting	35,7
Increasing the price of consumer products that are transported by polluting modes of transport	89,3
Increasing the carbon tax	71,4
Developing renewable energies even if, in some cases, the production costs are higher for the moment	92,9
Densifying cities by limiting suburban housing in favor of collective buildings	60,7
Taxing the vehicles that emit the most greenhouse gases	85,7
Promoting the use (traffic lanes, reserved parking spaces) of low-polluting or shared vehicles (carpooling)	82,1
Obliging public collective catering to offer a vegetarian, organic and/or seasonal menu offer	53,6
Average	68,57

Compared to the overall population, the 2021-2022 EIB Climate Survey showed that 63% of people in Luxembourg were in favor of stricter government measures that impose changes in people's behavior.

Figure 10 shows the obstacles to tackling climate change, as identified by the Biergerkomitee members. When asked which obstacles they perceive to be significant in the fight against climate change, the respondents mentioned lobbyists, the lack of political will, inequalities, the lack of cooperation between countries, the uncertainties of the scientific community, democracy, and the lack of alternative technologies. The 2021-2022 EIB Climate Survey showed a different picture, claiming that 43% of Luxembourg people believed that the main barrier to solving the climate crisis is the difficulty for people to change their habits, and not because governments are not active enough.

Figure 10: Obstacles to tackling the climate crisis

Please indicate which item is an obstacle to tackling climate change.

Members were asked to select which obstacles they believe are most significant



The above shows that the Biergerkomitee members' attitudes towards climate change were not very diverse. None of the members were unconcerned by the issue of climate change. Further, the members were all in favor of actions to protect the climate. Such findings indicate that there were no climate skeptics among the Biergerkomitee members, at least not according to the data. This supports the conclusion that the Biergerkomitee was dominated by those with an interest in environmental issues more broadly.

4.2. Expert Selection and Evidence Provision in the Biergerkomitee

In this section, the breadth, diversity, clarity, and relevance of the evidence provided are examined.

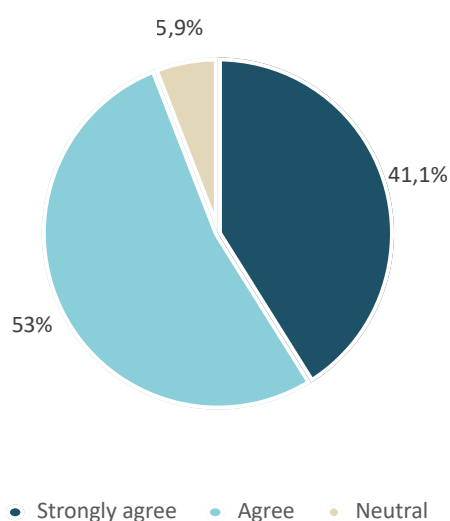
The information and learning phase of the participants lasted six months. Over Zoom, the participants met 12 times to discuss critical elements related to the question posed to them: **What should Luxembourg do to be climate-neutral by 2050?** Each expert session included one or two expert presentations. The members received no obligatory readings before or after the Zoom sessions. They were informed about the subject that would be discussed and the expert(s) that would be present. After the sessions, they received the slides. Additionally, the members could afterward contact, via email, the experts to ask additional questions.

The expert lectures, including presentation slides, were recorded, and placed online, together with a summary of the session. That is, the expert sessions have been documented on the Biergerkomitee's website with short written summaries and videos documenting each expert presentation.³¹ The discussions that occurred after the expert presentations took place behind closed doors (i.e., not open to the general public), and were hence not recorded nor published on the website.

The main task of the expert presentations was to introduce and provide an overview of the topic. Whilst the lectures were significant at the level of information provision and for stimulating discussions, the integration of knowledge (i.e., the processing and application) took place mainly through the joint discussions between citizens and experts, and at a later stage between the members themselves. In addition to the Zoom expert sessions, the co-working platform Slack (exclusively available to the BK members, organizers, and moderators) offered the participants an additional information-sharing platform. The members were free to upload any information they believed to be beneficial to their deliberations. Slack was no compulsory platform, meaning that the members were free to use it, or not.

Throughout the process, the Biergerkomitee members heard from more than 25 (inter)national experts, see Table 11 for an overview of the consulted experts. As Figure 11 highlights, most members (strongly) agreed that the experts were competent.

Figure 11: Members' perception of competence experts



In both the open-ended survey questions and interviews, BK participants showed satisfaction with the experts. However, they also pointed out that:

“The experts were experts.”

³¹ Recordings available on the Biergerkomitee website: <https://luxembourgtransition.lu/evenements/>

Numerous members reiterated that the experts provided useful, relevant, and balanced information but were sometimes difficult to follow despite their competence and commitment:

“They got lost in their expert language.”

Put differently, the experts were at times:

“Too scientific for the ordinary participant.”

Only one interviewee, who left the process, argued that too many of the experts were “dependent on the government”, thereby claiming that the experts were biased. Such feelings were not reiterated by other members.

Table 11 shows that the experts represented different research institutions and various disciplines, covering a wide range of expertise needed to provide accurate and relevant evidence in the field of climate change and climate neutrality, and communication with the participants was facilitated via online Zoom meetings. The experts were selected by the secretariat to ensure that all members had a similar and balanced knowledge base on which they could work. This included university professors, urban planners, architects, historians, climatologists, hydrologists, engineers, researchers, biologists, economists, and geographers. Furthermore, environmental organizations such as Greenpeace were also represented, as well as the Luxembourgish social housing agency, and not-for-profit associations such as the Luxembourg Sustainable Finance Initiative. It can thus be said that the members were presented with a full spectrum of perspectives.

Nonetheless, while the experts were diverse in terms of background, they were not particularly diverse concerning gender. Gender balance among experts in citizens’ assemblies such as the BK is essential as it contributes to more inclusive and equitable decision-making. It helps prevent the exclusion of certain perspectives and experiences, ensuring that the recommendations are better representative of the population and more likely to address the needs and concerns of all citizens. Thereby also increasing the overall legitimacy of the process. It is therefore important to strive for a roughly equal representation of male and female experts. Yet, gender is not the only dimension of diversity. Other factors such as race, ethnicity, and age also play a role when selecting experts.

Recommendation 6: Promote diversity in expert selection by not only considering the experts’ disciplinary and field diversity but also their socio-demographic backgrounds.

Table 11: Consulted experts during phase 1³²

- François Gemenne, University of Liège and co-author of the GIEC
- André Weidenhaupt, Ministry of Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development
- Marie-Josée Vidal, Ministry of Energy and Spatial Planning
- Lex Faber, urban and spatial planner
- Christine Müller, architect and spatial planner
- Denis Scuto, historian, University of Luxembourg
- Andrew Ferrone, climatologist and head of the meteorological service of the Ministry of Agriculture
- Guy Schumann, hydrologist
- Laurent Pfister, hydrologist and researcher at LIST
- Claude Felten, agricultural engineer and teacher at the Lycée agricole, president of IBLA
- Georges Moes, agricultural engineer and project manager at natur&ëmwelt
- Frank Wolff, biologist and deputy director of the Administration de la nature et des forêts
- Philippe Gerber and Guillaume Drevon, mobility researchers at the LISER
- Markus Hesse, Professor of Urban Geography at the University of Luxembourg
- Julien Licheron, researcher at LISER and President of the Observatoire de l'habitat
- Gilles Hempel, director of the Agence immobilière de l'habitat
- Nico Steinmetz, architect
- Hans Kollhoff, architect and professor emeritus at ETH Zurich
- Tom Haas and Olivier Thunus, economists at Statec
- Martina Holbach, project manager at Greenpeace
- Claire de Boursetty, director of the Luxembourg Sustainable Finance Initiative
- Estelle Evrard, geographer and researcher at the University of Luxembourg
- Antoine Decoville, geographer and researcher at LISER

³² List can be found in the BK final report, available at: <https://gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/documents/actualites/2022/01-janvier/20-luxembourg-in-transition/Brochure-Biergerkomitee-Letzebuerg-2050-nos-recommandations-au-monde-politique-.pdf>

When it comes to information per se, we asked the members whether the information provided by other members was useful, whether all information was balanced, and whether all information was easy to comprehend. Figure 12 shows that the participants were overall positive, indicating that the evidence provision in the BK was of good quality. However, we identified that 1/3 of respondents to the post-survey claimed having felt overwhelmed by the mass of information. In the open-ended survey questions, members provided the following explanations:

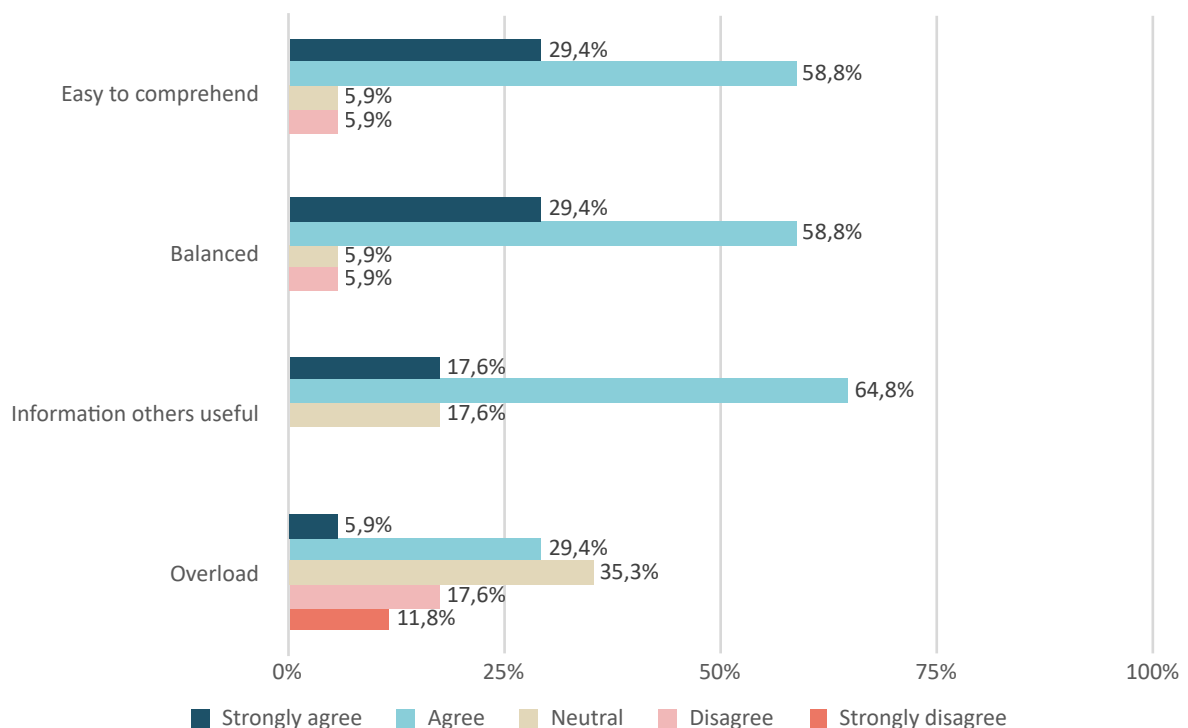
“Sometimes too detailed depending on the subjects.”

“We received a lot of information, perhaps it was not digestible enough in this time frame.”

“Sometimes it was too much information.”

The previously identified issue with jargon might have posed a problem here. Avoiding jargon and using plain language when presenting information can help make complex data more understandable and might have possibly helped individuals who felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information.

Figure 12: Members’ self-reported quality of information



Recommendation 7: Enhance the effectiveness of citizens’ consultations by allocating sufficient time for members to process information comprehensively. Similarly, ensure that members can thoroughly engage with the content, fostering a more informed and productive deliberative process.

4.3. Process: Facilitation, Deliberation, and Decision-Making

This section considers the perceived quality of facilitation, deliberation, and decision-making. The following elements are scrutinized: the quality of facilitation, respectful listening and equal speaking opportunities, the presence of different perspectives, the online format, the multilingual setting, and decision-making.

4.3.1. Quality of facilitation

Throughout the process, and because the members were not split into focus groups, there was one facilitator (or moderator to use the term that was used in the Biergerkomitee). At times, this moderator was supported by a second moderator who mainly worked in the back office; that is, their main role was managing Zoom and the online platform Slack.

The moderator(s) received resoundingly positive evaluations from the Biergerkomitee members. The vast majority of members (94,1%) felt that the moderator(s) were an added value to the process, partly because they ensured that everyone had equal speaking opportunities.

Figure 13: Moderators were an added value

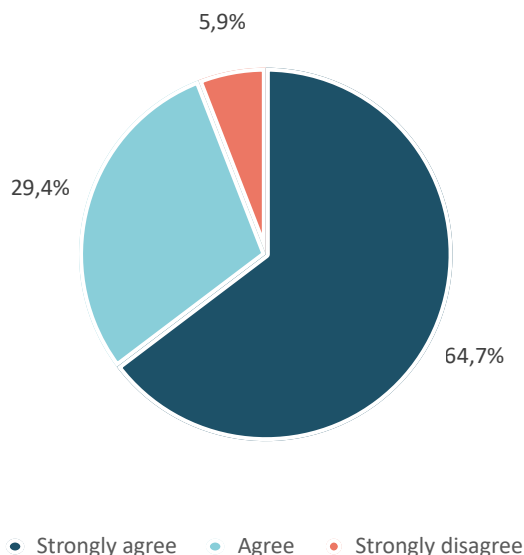
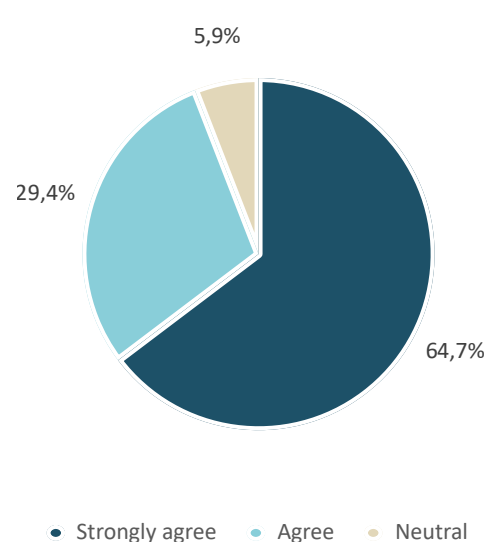


Figure 14: Moderators ensured equal speaking opportunities



Most participants agreed that the facilitators ensured that everyone felt comfortable participating and that all arguments were considered leading to rich deliberations. The following quotations illustrate the fact that nearly all members were satisfied with the facilitation:

“We benefited from conscientious and committed moderators who allowed us to have rich discussions.”

“Additional sessions on certain specific topics have been organized by the moderators following requests from participants, which demonstrates their responsiveness and a real desire to move the exchanges forward towards informed and productive debates.”

“I really appreciated the way the moderators managed, structured, and accompanied the process. It is certainly not easy to organize the process in an efficient and fair way where everyone feels included.”

“Moderators did a good job in my eyes even if the process was perhaps a little too directed and this bothered me.”

“Moderation was very present, but not invasive.”

“The facilitators did their best to involve as many members of the committee as possible, and took care to put the debates back on track when necessary.”

“I think the facilitator and their team guide did well, always provided us with the necessary information, and even for questions where there was no immediate answer, they tried to find out something.”

Only a small percentage of the members were dissatisfied with the moderator(s), claiming that:

“Group is more than the sum of individual parts. But what [moderator] did was: everyone brings in a sentence but nobody got input.”

“My problem was the organization and how it was steered.”

“How can it be that the secretariat [i.e., moderator] makes decisions about who [i.e., which experts] we see.”

“We do not need a transition, we need a revolution. We need radical change. [The moderator] ruined this.”

“Lack of transparency. I was not happy with the process. Too much steering.”

Other members refuted these statements, claiming that the moderator guided rather than steered the process. Moreover, members highlighted the moderator(s) impartiality:

“The facilitators were able to maintain a certain neutrality.”

“They have ideas of their own, which came through when asking about a follow-up question, but this makes sense.”

“It is a very hard thing to steer the conversation without seeming to influence the conversation. They could distance themselves from it. They did a terrific job.”

There appear to have been no instances of unhelpful behavior. By contrast, members reflected on the helpfulness of the moderator(s):

“They took critiques seriously and tried to incorporate them. They were always incorporating the opinions of the members. And they also helped with the language [i.e., the multilingual context].”

“They were really nice, also on a personal level.”

“They were part of the group, they did not stand out as moderators.”

In the interviews, the moderator frequently reflected on the need to manage the balance of voices to ensure that all members had a chance to contribute. A strategy that seemed to have paid off, as the members proclaimed that the moderator did “put a stop to it when necessary” and “brought back the focus”, whilst letting “the participants discuss openly”.

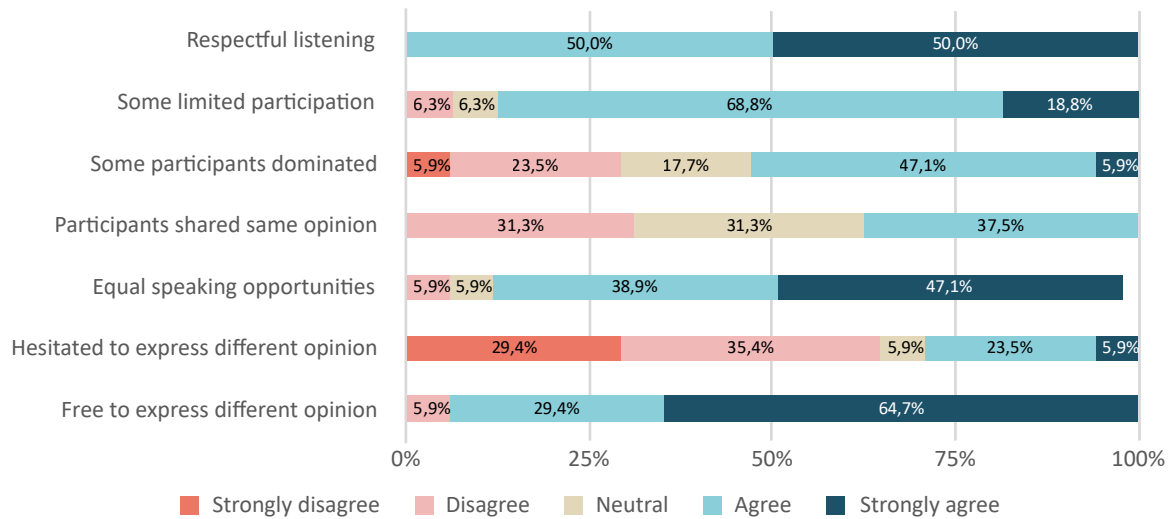
Overall, the members perceived the quality of facilitation to be good, with a supportive approach including encouraging members to be respectful. One member summarized the facilitation as follows:

“They had a very ungrateful role, but they did a very good job.”

4.3.2. Quality of deliberation

Another significant factor to consider is the quality of deliberation. Figure 15 provides a summary of the members' perceived quality of deliberation.

Figure 15: Members' perceived quality of deliberation



The members perceived the BK's deliberative quality to be very good. The majority overwhelmingly perceived the tone of fellow participants as respectful, which is an important finding as the members also pointed out that most participants did not share the same opinions. In particular, the majority felt free to express a different opinion. This suggests that the Biergerkomitee successfully created an atmosphere conducive to genuine deliberation. However, we also observed that almost one-third of respondents to the post-survey agreed they hesitated to express a different opinion. Members claiming that they could freely express a different opinion while also stating that they hesitated to do so seems contradictory. Whilst we have no data on why this was the case in the BK and can thus not say with certainty the reason(s) for this contradiction, it can generally be understood through a variety of factors and dynamics.

Even in a citizens' consultation, participants may still feel some level of social norms and expectations. They may believe that they are expected to express their differing opinions, and the assembly environment may be designed to encourage open discussion. However, the fear of being the only one with a different viewpoint or concerns about how others might react can still lead to hesitation. Members may hesitate because they doubt the validity or persuasiveness of their different opinions. They might feel that their viewpoint is not as well-informed or well-argued as the majority view. This self-doubt can be a barrier to freely expressing differing opinions. Even in a consultation, an individual may worry about being isolated or being perceived as an outsider if their opinion differs significantly from the majority. This fear of isolation can lead to hesitancy, even in an environment that encourages diverse perspectives. While members may believe that they have

the freedom to express different opinions, they may still have concerns about the impact of their words. They might worry that their differing opinion won't have a meaningful effect on the decision-making process, leading to hesitation. Put differently, people may simultaneously feel they have the freedom to express differing opinions within a citizens' assembly while also experiencing hesitation due to various individual and group dynamics. It highlights the importance of creating environments that not only encourage diverse viewpoints but also actively support and empower individuals to share their perspectives without fear of negative consequences.

Except for one interviewee, the other interviewees and respondents to the surveys repeatedly praised the pleasant cooperation in the Biergerkommittee. The different perspectives and opinions of the citizens were presented as valuable and essential for the success of the process. During the process, the participants experienced the positive effects of respectful dialogue as a means for knowledge exchange, mutual learning, and fostering group cohesion. Our evaluation finds compelling evidence to suggest that participants felt able to meaningfully contribute to the deliberations. Almost all respondents agreed that they were given equal and plenty of speaking opportunities.

The group dynamic is imperative for the quality of participation and deliberation. When it comes to the group dynamic within the Biergerkommittee, the members believed there was a strong and positive group cohesion. According to one member, the group dynamic was "wonderful". Over time, a stronger sense of community developed, and the citizens continuously praised the group dynamic whilst consciously showing responsibility for the process and its results. As a collective, members developed a strong sense of identity as well as interpersonal bonds. The observed strength in relationships between members was noted in the interviews, which sometimes elicited surprise, given the diversity of backgrounds and experiences represented in the process.

Overall, the deliberations were guided by a conscious and professional facilitation strategy, which allowed for a good balance between passive listening and active participation. Biergerkommittee members were motivated, mutual comprehension was encouraged, and the opportunity to speak was equally distributed. Until the end of the process and even after the process, we can attest that the Biergerkommittee allowed a high degree of self-efficacy and empowerment among the participants.

I. The online format

While the Biergerkommittee was initially intended to take place offline, the organizers were forced to move the process online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the participant selection did not take into consideration any additional criteria set out for online participation, such as technological access or competencies.

The Biergerkomitee made use of multiple online/digital tools: emails, online newsletters, an online platform, and an online communication space. Emails and newsletters were sent to the participants to inform them about the process and meetings. Slack was used as the online platform, providing asynchronous discussion. This allowed citizens to meet up in between official meetings, and to exchange ideas and opinions, whilst removing location and/or time restrictions and increasing access for people with slower internet connections. Slack was also used by the secretariat to upload documentation and protocols of the sessions, and documentation of developments of the proposals and recommendations. Further, the organizers made use of Zoom as the main online communication space, where citizens would meet face-to-face albeit in an online format. The advantage of a synchronous environment is that it allows for more real-life discussions.

When it comes to the online setting of the BK, the moderator(s) believed that managing and facilitating online breakout rooms is more challenging than focus groups in in-person citizens' consultations, and, therefore, decided against using breakout rooms, fearing that it would complicate the facilitation process. No further remarks were made on what the online context meant for the facilitation, neither from the members nor the moderator(s). We might therefore assume that the online environment did not pose any serious problems for the Biergerkomitee's facilitation.

Figure 16: Appreciation of Zoom and Slack for deliberations

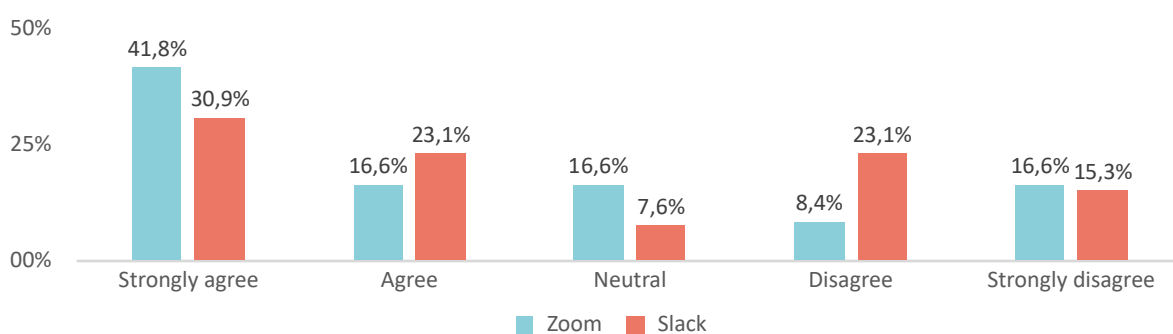


Figure 16 shows the extent to which the members appreciated Zoom for the deliberations, and Slack to exchange information. We can conclude that whilst the majority appreciated Zoom for the deliberations and Slack for information exchange, these numbers are, nevertheless, on the lower side. Several reasons can explain such numbers.

When it comes to Slack, there was a high level of dissatisfaction because some members posted too much information and material, thereby confusing or even disturbing other participants. Moreover, as Slack was an unmoderated environment, certain members posted relentlessly to the dissatisfaction of other members. One interviewee evaluated Slack as follows:

“I was not a fan of Slack. It was well-intended but backfired. Slack was this weird thing in between Zoom and email. It was too much, so I disengaged with the channel and did not open the app anymore.”

Whilst Slack could then have been useful as a communication platform, the fact that it was unmoderated led to many people disengaging with the platform. Especially since there was no obligation to use or consult Slack since all necessary information was communicated via email by the secretariat.

Concerning Zoom, two issues were identified. First, is the group dynamic. Second, the impact on deliberations. Participants agreed that online and offline deliberations cannot be compared, as one member commented:

“Very different dynamics between offline and online.”

38,5% of respondents to the post-survey disagreed that the online setting contributed to a stronger group feeling. Instead, the vast majority (91,7%) argued that face-to-face meetings were necessary to ensure an actual group feeling. Members contrasted the online environment with face-to-face meetings, which they believed provided a more social environment and opportunities to informally chat, hence strengthening a feeling of cohesion and belonging. When asked about the difference between offline and online meetings, members proclaimed the following:

“Meeting in person changes the group dynamics.”

“Better to first know people and then switch to online.”

“Process started all over again when participants met in person.”

“Better offline, you really get to know people.”

“We really did not know each other before meeting each other in person. [That is] the process started all over again when we met in person”.

Some members felt that this less social, online environment impacted the quality of deliberation as it did not feel like actual deliberation but rather a summing up of points or feeling like the discussion was stilted. Some members also spoke of technical difficulties or discomfort with the online environment, such as finding it tiring. 30,8% of respondents to the post-survey claimed that at times the online context made it difficult to concentrate, and 23,1% argued that they encountered online fatigue. While the online meetings could still achieve the function of deliberating on the topic, it led to what members described as:

“Difficult to have actual discussions online, not such a lively discussion.”

“I did not like the online format; we could not interact with the experts.”

“You do not really have the feeling that people are listening.”

“In-person debates were more emotionally charged. In the online setting, you have to indicate you want to speak, you state your argument and then it is the next person’s term. This is a more formal environment like school: you raise your hand and can then talk. You cannot really confront each other.”

Yet, the online environment was not all negative, with one participant claiming:

“It worked surprisingly well.”

When speaking positively about the online environment, members often referred to the advantage that the process could continue rather than being delayed or canceled as a result of COVID-19, as the following quotations highlight:

“There was no choice online or offline, it was the only option. Good that the BK did go through.”

“It did not derange the BK too much; we could still see each other.”

For others, the advantage was that the online setting allowed a certain level of flexibility:

“Made it more flexible, allowed to zone out for a bit.”

“Even if we had no choice, I find that digital formats certainly help to involve more people (journey, time, work, private life, etc.).”

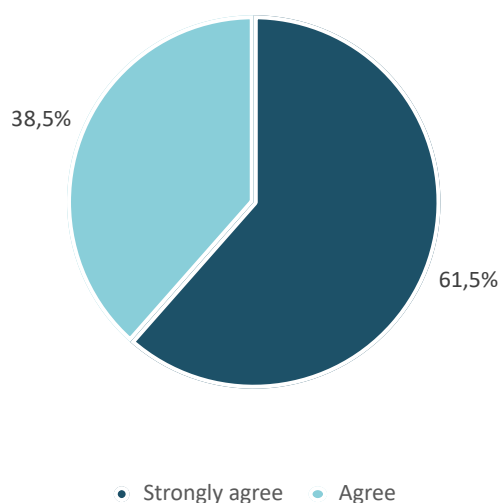
In conclusion, the online platforms used during the process thus lacked the richness of in-person interactions, making it more challenging to develop a strong group feeling and to maintain participants’ attention during virtual meetings. Additionally, online platforms, even synchronous ones such as Zoom, limit non-verbal cues, making it difficult to read participants’ body language and interpret participants’ emotions or reactions accurately. The online environment did hence impact the process because members felt that there were rather sequencing ideas and not necessarily engaging. The participants seemed to agree that there was more and better deliberation during the in-person sessions. Yet, at the same time, the members appreciated that the online setting allowed the Biergerkomitee to continue.

Recommendation 8: Prioritize strategies that enhance member engagement and participation in citizens' consultations conducted in an online setting.

II. The multilingual format

The multilingual nature of the Biergerkomitee did not seem to pose (m)any issues for the participants. The members appreciated and embraced the Biergerkomitee's multilingual core. The vast majority of members (76,9%) agreed that multilingualism made the process – feel – more inclusive. The post-survey data indicated that all felt entirely or almost entirely at ease with the use of multiple languages and did not hesitate to speak. They attested that multilingualism did not make them feel excluded or uncomfortable. 92,3% of respondents to the post-survey claimed that the multilingual context did not pose any difficulties in understanding the information provided. Additionally, the BK members felt that the moderators did an excellent job ensuring that the use of three languages ran smoothly and that they encouraged all members to speak in their preferred language.

Figure 17: Moderators encouraged individual language choice



The following quotations highlight members who strongly appreciated the multilingual context of the Biergerkomitee:

“The openness to multilingualism has been an asset and has made work easier.”

“Everyone could express themselves in the language with which they could best express themselves in order to present their ideas most clearly.”

“Panel of people who come from different origins and who can exchange without having to worry about finding the right words in another language where they would not be as comfortable with jargon.”

“It makes the gray cells work.”

69,2% claimed that there was a dominant language during the process. Nevertheless, the members paint an overall positive picture of the BK’s multilingual format. 83,3% would not have preferred the process to be held in a single language. The small percentage of members believing that a single language would have been preferable did so because it would have facilitated the deliberation whilst saving time. 84,6% did not believe there to be a need for simultaneous translation. One member did, however, pose the question of why English was not included in the process, as it would have opened the process to a larger part of the population living or working in Luxembourg.

One critique that members referred to when it came to language is that jargon posed more problems than multilingualism per se:

“The use of multiple languages is very difficult, especially with highly technical information. At times when the topic got too technical, multilingualism suffered. Some were sitting at the table and had no idea what was being said.”

“The problems I rarely had with the language used were caused by specialized terms with which I was initially unfamiliar.”

“Jargon was more difficult than multilingualism.”

These findings concerning multilingual deliberation also hold for the multilingual setting on the BK’s communication channel Slack. A review of Slack suggests that multilingualism was heavily present on the channel with posts alternating between the three languages, which did not seem to pose any issues.

Overall, multilingualism did not seem to have an impact on the quality of deliberation. Asking why this might be the case, participants almost always referred to Luxembourg’s multilingual character:

“It is a particularity of the Grand Duchy, it is good that it is represented in this kind of debate.”

“The use of multilingualism represents our country.”

“A strength of Luxembourg is its multilingualism.”

“Luxembourg is multilingual.”

“The diversity of languages felt right, as one is accustomed to it in Luxembourg. It was authentic [...]. The language switch is, for most, part of our everyday life.”

In conclusion, the members perceived multilingualism to be at the heart of Luxembourgish society. The organization re-iterated such statements, claiming:

“Multilingualism is fundamental to Luxembourgish society.”

“Most people living or working in Luxembourg are used to it.”

However, it is important to remark that the members were selected because of their passive knowledge of all three languages. That is, all participants stated that they understood all three national languages without difficulty. The overall findings concerning multilingualism must thus be taken with a grain of salt.

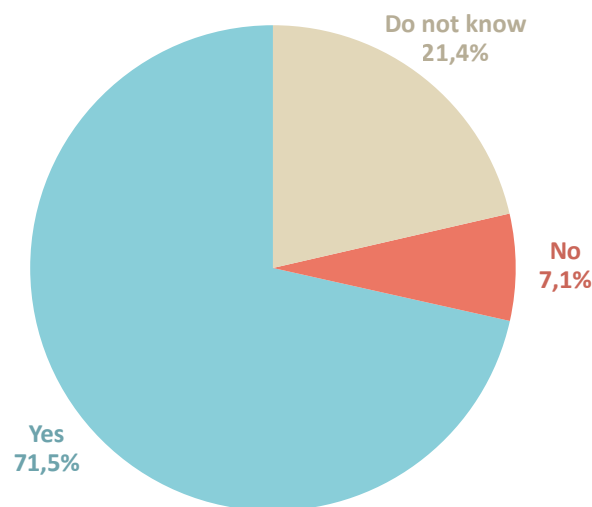
Selecting members of a multilingual citizens' assembly based solely on their passive knowledge of languages and without providing translation services can have several implications and challenges. The selection criteria may favor individuals with particular language skills, potentially leading to unequal participation opportunities and reinforcing existing social and linguistic inequalities. The process may miss out on the active contributions and perspectives of participants who have limited/no passive knowledge of Luxembourg's three official languages. A lack of translation services may deter individuals who do not have passive knowledge of the process' languages from participating, reducing the assembly's overall diversity and inclusivity. Ultimately, the choice to select members based on their passive language skills and exclude translation services should be made carefully, considering the assembly's goals, the available resources, and the commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable deliberative process.

Recommendation 9: Incorporate multilingualism as a fundamental principle in citizens' consultations in Luxembourg. Provide resources for translation and interpretation services to ensure all participants can engage effectively in their preferred language. Encourage the use of Luxembourg's official languages and consider adding English as an additional accessible language to foster inclusivity and mirror the nation's linguistic diversity.

4.4. Quality of decision-making

The decision-making process of the Biergerkomitee combined both deliberative and aggregative mechanisms. At various times throughout the process, the organization asked for concrete input from the participants, and more importantly the arguments behind these inputs. As such, equal consideration was given to each participant and their respective perspective. In the first phase of the process, the participants received relevant information from the experts, providing them with a basis to form, strengthen, and/or modify their ideas and opinions. The participants then exchanged their perspectives and arguments, leading to the collection of all participants' opinions. About the time of the process and the business of the agenda, which might have an impact on the quality of decision-making, the participants believed that they had sufficient time for thorough argumentation and information exchange.

Figure 18: BK output adheres to initial expectations (aggregate level)



The group was responsible for writing down their results, although the moderator played a significant role. The moderator proposed for the members to summarize their findings in three groups: i) a situation analysis of Luxembourg, highlighting its weaknesses and strengths when it comes to climate neutrality, ii) guidelines and principles for a policy of transition, and iii) the specific recommendations, focused on spatial planning. After careful consideration and upon approval of the members, the initial writing and clustering of the proposals and recommendations were done by the moderator(s), mandated by the members to do so. This allowed the members more time to finetune the recommendations, deliberate the final report, and ultimately decide on which recommendations to include.

To conclude the deliberations, two longer meetings were organized so that the members could put together, structure, and prioritize all previous ideas. This was

followed by deliberations concerning what is important, and what is not important. During these meetings, both the members and the moderator took note of what was being discussed. Based on these notes, the moderator made a first rough draft, which was made available to all via the online platform, Slack. At any stage, the members were free to comment and change things around. The moderator then modified the first draft to enrich it with the comments and modifications proposed by the members. When the draft of the final report was completed, the members decided to send it to five experts to receive their feedback. The experts consulted provided extensive responses, which were deliberated on by the members, some taken into account, others not.

The secretariat thus provided the structure for decision-making, but the members were always closely involved ensuring that the recommendations were ultimately theirs. The recommendations were hence only partially written by the members, yet 92% of respondents to the second survey contended that they contributed to the recommendations. Such a positive finding might be because the aggregation was not done behind the scenes; the members were always closely involved. It can then be argued that there was probably no loss of information or legitimacy, because although the structure was provided by the organization/moderators, which was appreciated by the members, the Biergerkomitee members had the freedom, and even power, to scrutinize the work of the moderators. Only one member, who left the process, explicitly criticized the moderators and their way of working, claiming that the “citizens are puppets” and that there was “too much steering” and a “lack of transparency”. However, such feelings were not reiterated by the other members.

Consequently, the decision-making was not entirely a bottom-up process, but neither was it a top-down process. Ultimately, following intense deliberations, the Biergerkomitee members reached a consensus on 44 recommendations. The quality of deliberation is hence also reflected in the outcome with a consensus being reached. Members claim that they did not feel pressured to follow the group, that the outcome was the result of actual deliberation, and that each participant had a chance to contribute to the final recommendations.

5. Biergerkomitee Members' Experience

This chapter explores the members' experience with their participation in the BK, learning and knowledge, and outcomes. It begins with vignettes of the experience of two members (here named 'A' and 'B' to protect their anonymity), selected to illustrate different types of journeys through the Biergerkomitee.

Member 'A'

Member A is aged 25-34. They report having a good relationship with fellow members and the facilitators, feeling included, respected, and listened to. This environment made them comfortable to raise their views and learn from other members, despite thinking certain individuals tended to dominate the debates. They strongly support the outcome, only wishing that there was more certainty as to what will be done with them. Reflecting on their experience, they explain:

"We roughly had about a year. I think that was a good format, because it was not too long and it was a manageable commitment. The sessions were well structured. They tried to pack a lot which I think is a good thing and a bad thing at the same time, because there was a lot of information, but sometimes there was also information overload. Some people came into the process very motivated and very interested but some people also came too motivated. They had their own agenda and they kind of tried to use the process to further a very specific angle that they had in mind. These were disproportionately well informed about a certain subject and hence were able to slightly dominate conversations in their area. That was a bit challenging for the group.

There was a final document that was produced, which I think is great, which kind of concludes the whole process. It got a lot of ideas in it. At the end of the day, it is obviously a question, you know, what happens with it, where does it go? How does it influence what the policy makers do with it or do not do with it? Or do they just put it on the shelf and say 'oh, that was a nice project and that is it'. So, I think in terms of the formal aspect of what was supposed to be the outcome of it, I think that that is something that could be improved because some people would have liked to have seen more clearly how their ideas might have influenced policy makers or the way of thinking about this whole issue."

Member 'B'

Member 'B' is aged 45-54. Despite claiming that climate is not their thing, they joined the Biergerkomitee as they had a mission. Specifically, they wanted to influence politics. Member B believes their opinions are as valid as anyone else's and feels comfortable challenging other people's opinions.

Before the Biergerkomitee, Member B had experience with political engagement at the local level. From their educational background, they considered themselves to have a high level of knowledge on the topic but also on the process and more precisely how the process should function.

They reflected that they worried about the other participants being not motivated or interested enough, whilst they also struggled with not trusting the facilitation. They critiqued the topics being discussed, arguing they were not the right ones to be considered. They felt that the discussions were unhelpful, and the experts were not informed enough. Throughout the Biergerkomitee, they maintained the view that the organization, the facilitation, and how the process was steered were significant shortcomings. They could not find themselves and their opinions and views in the discussions. Ultimately, they felt very dissatisfied with the result, claiming it was a disappointment.

Reflecting on their own experience, they believe that the program was already set, and that there was a lack of transparency and too much steering. They felt coerced. They claim that it should have been closer to the people, instead of using "*citizens as puppets*". Additionally, they did not like the online nor multilingual format or the fact that there was a deadline. They state that they felt relieved having left the process at the end.

When asked about climate change, they claim: "*we do not need a transition, we need a revolution. We need radical change. The organization ruined this*".

5.1. Participation and resignation

This section throws light on why the members signed up for the Biergerkomitee, whether they encountered any hindrances to their participation, and why several participants left the process.

As a response to the question of why they signed up for the Biergerkomitee process, the members proclaimed the following (see Figure 19): to gain knowledge and to express their voice. Additionally, people also signed up because they perceived it to be an interesting process, to exert influence, because of the methodology or to socialize. The following quotations shine light upon members' reasons for participating:

“So, I thought it was a very good opportunity to kind of see how the different issues played out and maybe also to learn different arguments from different sides and, essentially being exposed to that information that usually only policymakers have.”

“I sent my application to show my interest and my willingness to get involved in this project because although I do not have expert knowledge in the field, I am of the opinion that change must come from below, from all of us, the citizens.”

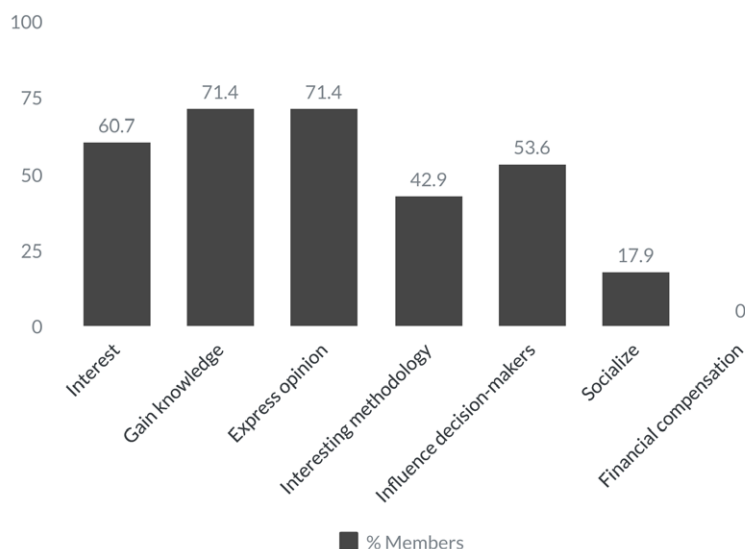
“It gave a broader spectrum of people a say, gather opinions from a broad spectrum of the of society and I thought that was a very interesting process to be part of.

“To get more involved as a citizen.”

None of the members claimed that compensation was a reason to participate.

Figure 19: Reasons for participating

Why did you decide to sign up for the Biergerkomitee 2050?



The fact that the Biergerkomitee was a unique process in Luxembourg also played a role for many members. When asked why they signed up, one member argued that:

“[The Biergerkomitee] caught my eye, I had not seen it in Luxembourg before. It is good that Luxembourg is taking such a step as there is a high number of foreigners who are not allowed to vote.”

Asked whether the members encountered hindrances to their participation, 37,5% of respondents to the second survey claimed ‘yes’. Figure 20 highlights the three obstacles most often identified: namely, work-related, personal life priorities (i.e., family, often children), and time and/or financial constraints. Another hindrance mentioned is the online conferences via Zoom, a necessary organizational decision due to the COVID-19 pandemic. About the COVID-19 pandemic, another member claimed “COVID-19 disrupted my professional life”, and thereby posed a problem to their participation in the Biergerkomitee. These hindrances made certain members question the ideal time for processes such as the Biergerkomitee. One member made the following suggestion:

“Ideally this [i.e., a citizens’ assembly] should be done during working hours, it’s not easy to have a family, COVID-19 restrictions, and a schedule on the side.”

Figure 20: Hindrances to participation

Did you encounter any hindrances to your participation?
Members were asked to select which hindrances they encountered.



As indicated before, one member who initially agreed to attend did not show up at the first session. The recruitment organization, Ilres, decided together with the organization not to replace them and instead continue the process with 29 members because 29 or 30 members do not make a difference to the overall process. Throughout the Biergerkomitee, seven further members dropped out. As stated

earlier, these members were not replaced because there had been no substitute members selected at the start of the process.

Three out of seven resigning members quit the BK due to time constraints. More precisely, family and/or work obligations had to take priority over their participation in the Biergerkomitee. For them, it was even with a heavy heart that they resigned, stating that they “will continue to follow the citizens’ committee in the press, and [are] already looking forward to reading its results and final proposals.” They did not criticize the process or the organization, “it was a great pleasure to be able to participate in all these conferences” and “thank you both for the opportunity and the whole organization”.

The other four resigning members gave more in-depth reasons for their resignation.

One of these four members claimed that the other participants talked too much and did not listen enough to the experts:

“Unfortunately, I see many people giving too much output, without knowing concretely from the experts, what is realistic and feasible or not. And that is a very frustrating situation for me. I feel as if there is far too much information, provided by the other participants, which at times is not necessary and that through many different channels. I could also be wrong, but it gives me the feeling that I can’t concentrate on the most important thing, and the way it was originally intended or was structured, sometimes listen, and ask questions yes, but most of all listen to the experts. I thank all of you that I was chosen. And leave, sometimes with a heavy heart.”

We can conclude that this member was not dissatisfied with the process but rather had a different vision of what a citizens’ assembly entails.

A second member who left due to dissatisfaction identified the following reasons: i) the lack of credibility of the initiative, ii) the risk of being exploited by politics, and iii) the composition of the Biergerkomitee. Concerning the composition of the BK, they claimed the following:

“If the m/f ratio and the demographic structure were correct, this was not true for the sociological structure: far too many people came from the public sector in the broad sense of the term and therefore did not have much to fear in the event of drastic measures.”

Additionally, they were dissatisfied with the experts and expert presentations, claiming they disagreed:

“With the chosen methodology characterized by long monologues, end-less power-point presentations and the absence of real discussion.”

But what they struggled most with was that they felt that they had no agenda- nor decision-making powers:

“The entire procedure should be reversed: initially, we should submit to citizens around ten subjects (emissions, agriculture, tourism, deposit system on cans and bottles, etc.) on which they would express their demands to the government while specifying which contributions (or sacrifices) they would be willing to make. It is only in the second phase that experts from all sides would have the task of examining which demands would be realistic and achievable. A third step should be to find common denominators.”

A third resigning member initially argued that their reasons for leaving were: i) difficulty following lectures in Luxembourgish, and ii) Zoom (or in general, remote meetings). However, in a follow-up email, they stated the following:

“We will officially be able to keep the linguistic excuse and the excuse of remote meetings due to the pandemic which did not allow us to unite this committee which ultimately does not know each other, but these are certainly not the only reasons for my abandonment.”

Aside from the multilingual and online environment of the BK, this person quit because:

“I was very disappointed by certain “solutions” proposed, incomplete statistics, unreal intentions, and incompatible projects or political comments. I concluded that all my criticisms would not be constructive for the rest of the adventure within the committee.”

Yet, they also claim that:

“The organization is good, all the subjects covered correspond to the objectives.”

The fourth resigning participant gave the following reasons for their resignation:

“I thought early on that we would not be up to our immense task, because it is not possible to become familiar with such a complex subject over a few video conferences. When it came to formulating proposals, my fear that we would be instrumentalized as a citizens’ committee was confirmed. We never constituted ourselves as a committee, nor did we have any exchanges among ourselves, so it was not possible to formulate joint positions. The secretariat took too much of an active role and acted in our place and wrote texts. This is not acceptable for me and that is why I resigned.”

We can then argue that three out of seven members who left the BK did so because they were disappointed by the concept (low added value of the conferences, fear of political exploitation, dissatisfaction with the results that were emerging, etc.). However, when individuals who are critical of the process decide to leave before its conclusion, this can have several implications and consequences for the process. A reduction in the number of participants can affect the quality of deliberations by limiting the diversity of arguments, depth of discussions, and the ability to explore various solutions thoroughly. The departure of critical participants can lead to a lack of diverse viewpoints in the assembly’s deliberations, potentially resulting in a more homogenous set of recommendations. Consequently, the loss of critical participants may undermine the legitimacy of the assembly’s decisions and recommendations, potentially leading to reduced public acceptance.

To address these implications, the BK secretariat maintained an open line of communication with all participants, including those critical of the process, and made efforts to address their concerns to the extent possible. They likewise ensured that participants could provide feedback and express their concerns about the process, identifying and rectifying issues as they arose. Moreover, they conducted exit surveys for departing members to gain insights into their reasons for leaving and to identify areas for improvement in the process. Additionally, two out of three members who resigned because of dissatisfaction with the process quit in October, meaning that they contributed to the BK up until the second phase. Critical voices and perspectives were thus present throughout the BK process.

5.2. Learning and knowledge gains

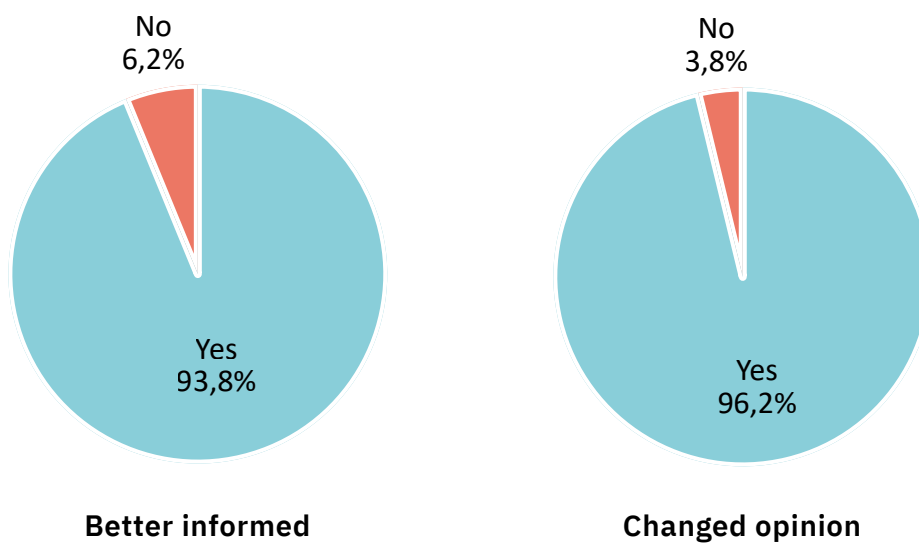
This section presents findings related to the Biergerkomitee’s members’ self-perceived learning and opinion changes.

5.2.1. Knowledge gains and opinion changes

When it comes to the depth of understanding members had about the matters being discussed, we relied on post-survey and interview data to gain insight into how members themselves perceived their knowledge gains. We assessed members' self-perceived knowledge gains by asking them to indicate if, in general, they felt better informed after the process. The majority reported feeling better informed because of their participation.

Within this process, we also assessed members' self-reported levels of change of mind. When asked in the post-survey if they changed their opinion, the majority responded positively. Whilst opinion change might not be a deliberative norm as such, listening with an open mind is. 81.3% reported changing their views throughout the process. Most respondents said they changed their views as a result of the received information and deliberations that followed. Figure 21 captures the members' self-reported impact the deliberations had.

Figure 21: Impact of deliberation on members



The question posed did not measure the precise ways in which participants' views changed. Instead, in answering this question, they reflected broadly on whether the deliberation had any effect on their opinions. With the open-ended survey questions and semi-structured interviews, members expanded upon what change of mind looked like for them and how it occurred:

“Throughout this process, I was able to acquire more detailed information on subjects in which I was interested: our environment in the current state, the changes underway for decades, visions for the implementation of positive changes in order to curb the massive destruction of our only planet at all.”

“I changed my opinion regarding the theme of food production on CO2 emissions and methane gas.”

“In fact, I realize that the complexity and interconnection of the different themes made me think about the concrete implementation of solutions for ordinary mortals. Not easy to find solutions without harming a large part of the world population, unfortunately.”

“During the whole process, one has become (more) aware of many things, and the urgency has become clear. Through the various conferences and exchanges with experts, I also gained a much more detailed insight into various subjects, which helped me to change (or strengthen) my opinion.”

Overall, it is clear that the Biergerkomitee did lead to knowledge gains and changes in opinions for the members. But whilst we can see self-reported shifts in knowledge and opinions, it remains hard to identify whether this means clarifying existing positions or completely changing opinions. In any case, we found that almost all members reported an increase in awareness.

5.2.2. Changing attitudes

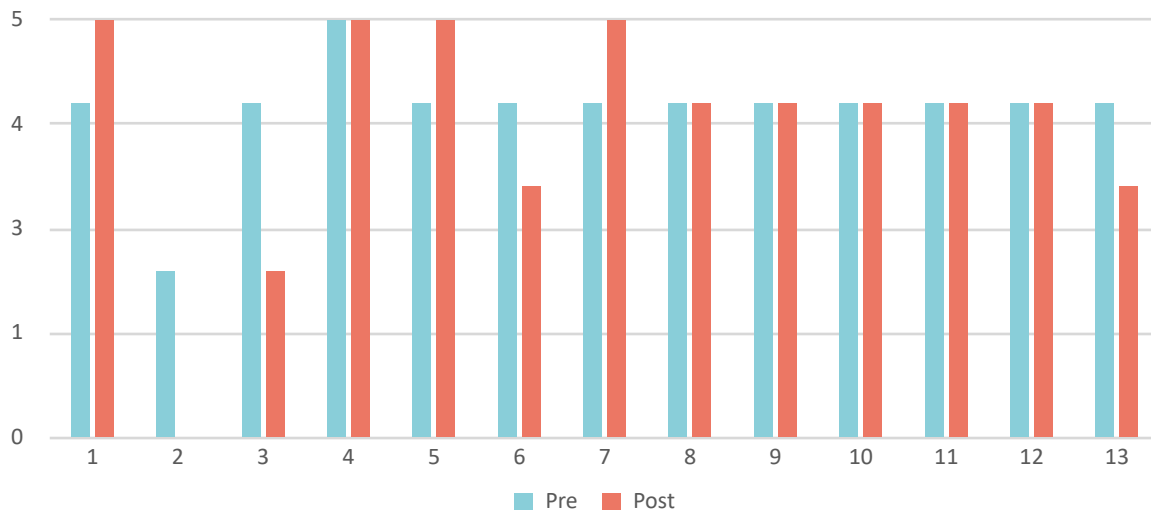
Biergerkomitee members were asked several questions relating to their trust in other individuals, the perceived clarity of the Biergerkomitee’s role, and whether the overall process of Luxembourg in Transition would be effective. To measure changes in participants’ attitudes toward the deliberative process, these questions were asked in the pre-and post-survey. The following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Capabilities of lay citizens to deliberate on complex issues: The pre-survey showed that the clear majority of respondents (86.2%) have trust in citizens’ capabilities. The post-survey indicated that a smaller majority (70.6%) trust citizens’ capabilities to deliberate complex issues. Comparing the opinions of those who filled out both surveys, we notice that the majority did not change their opinion, with three people indicating increased levels of trust but also three people indicating lowered levels of trust. Members may report lower levels of trust in the capabilities of lay citizens to deliberate after their participation for several reasons. During their participation, BK members may have encountered challenges in deliberating with a diverse group of lay citizens, such as handling conflicting opinions or addressing complex and contentious issues. These challenges can lead to a more realistic assessment of the difficulties involved in citizen deliberation. Similarly, before participating, members may have had idealized or optimistic expectations about the deliberative capabilities of lay citizens. Their direct experience may reveal the practical limitations of lay deliberation, leading to less trust. The complexity of the issues discussed can be daunting, and the experience

may highlight the challenges of making informed decisions on such topics. This complexity may contribute to a perception that lay citizens may struggle to deliberate effectively. It is, however, important to note that these changes in trust do not necessarily imply a negative evaluation of the process itself. Instead, they reflect a more nuanced and realistic understanding of the challenges and complexities associated with deliberative democracy, which can vary based on individual experiences and expectations, as mentioned by one member:

“The topics to be discussed in a deliberative process are not always easy to understand.”

Figure 22: Trust in citizens' capabilities (pre- to post-survey, individual level)

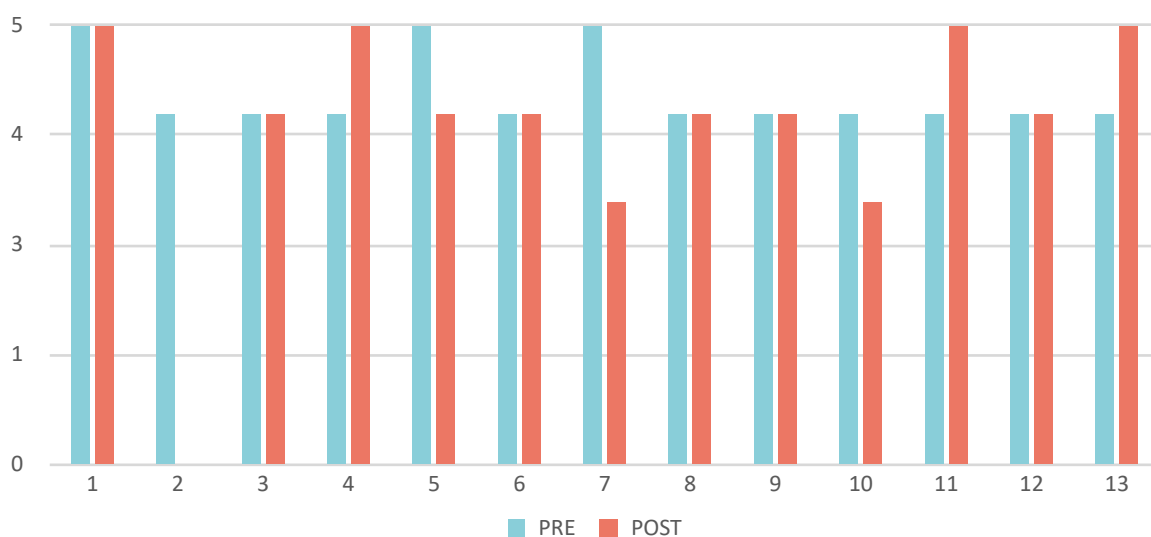


Note: each number denotes a single respondent, comparing their response in the pre- and post-survey. The closer to five, the more trust in lay citizens' capabilities to deliberate on complex issues.

- 2. Clarity of the Biergerkomitee and its role: The clarity of the Biergerkomitee's mandate has in most instances stayed the same or increased after participation in the Biergerkomitee. For three individuals, the BK's mandate was less clear after their participation. As members engage in in-depth deliberations, they may come to realize that the issues they are discussing are more complex and multifaceted than initially perceived. This complexity can make the mandate appear less clear, as members uncover layers of nuance and interrelated aspects. BK members engaged with a diverse group of fellow participants, experts, and stakeholders, each with their

perspectives and interpretations of the mandate. This exposure to diverse viewpoints can introduce ambiguity or differing interpretations of the mandate. Deliberation is an iterative process that involves refining and clarifying ideas. It is important to recognize that this perceived decrease in clarity does not necessarily reflect a negative evaluation of the process. Rather, it reflects the process's ability to foster deeper understanding and uncover complexities, which can lead to a more nuanced and informed perspective on the issues at hand. While the initial mandate may have appeared clear, the deliberative process often reveals the depth of the challenges involved in addressing complex societal issues.

Figure 23: Clarity of BK mandate (pre- to post-survey, individual level)



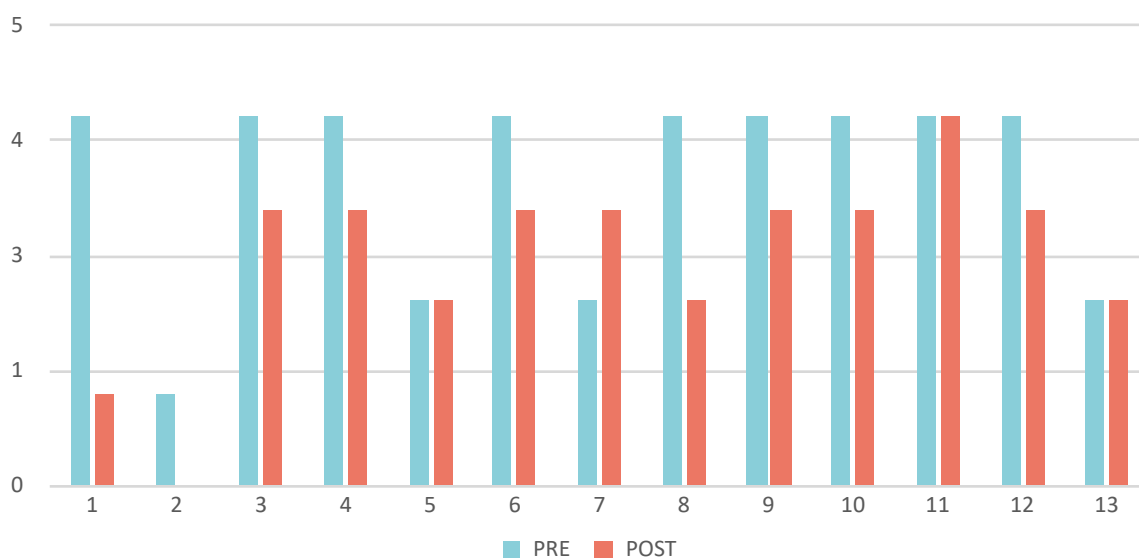
Note: each number denotes a single respondent, comparing their response in the pre- and post-survey. The closer to five, the clearer the BK and its role.

- 3. Effectiveness of Luxembourg in Transition realizing the objective of reaching climate neutrality by 2050: A comparison at the individual level of participants who filled out both surveys reveals that aside from three people who did not change their opinion, all respondents except for one reported having less trust in the LIT process achieving its objective. Members may feel that the expert consultation process did not effectively inform or support the deliberations in the BK. If they believe the experts' input had little impact on the assembly's outcomes, it can lead to decreased trust in the LIT process. It may also signify that members have limited trust that the LIT process will have an impact on decision-making. Another interpretation of this finding is that it may reflect increased awareness of the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the issue, as one member put it:

“The objective of being climate neutral by 2050 seems utopic.”

It is, nevertheless, important to note that lowered trust in the expert consultation process may not necessarily reflect a negative view of expert input itself but rather concerns about how that input is incorporated into the deliberative process. Addressing these concerns and improving the integration and transparency of the expert consultation can help rebuild trust and enhance the overall effectiveness of the processes.

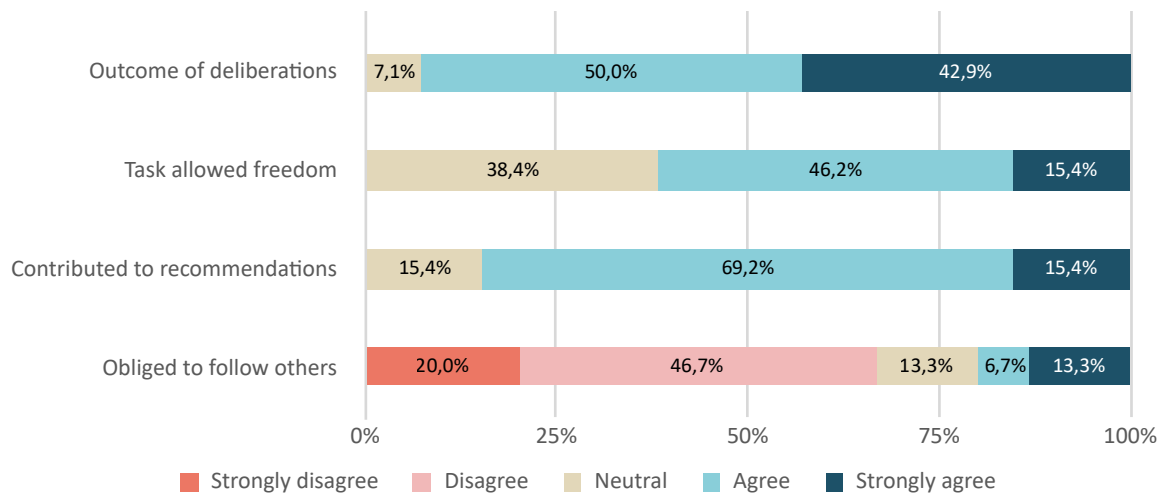
Figure 24: Trust in effectiveness LIT (pre- to post-survey, individual level)



Note: each number denotes a single respondent, comparing their response in the pre- and post-survey. The closer to five, the more trust in LIT's effectiveness.

5.3. Outcomes and recommendations

As described in [Section Three](#), the members were tasked with answering a specific question that was pre-determined by the Ministry; namely, **What should Luxembourg do to be climate neutral by 2050?** Throughout the Biergerkomitee, members heard from numerous experts on the issue and worked on developing and finetuning their recommendations to the question they were set. Between the meetings, the moderator consolidated the information drafted by the members. While this could have affected members' sense of ownership over the outcomes and recommendations, this does not seem to be the case as the members strongly supported the statement “my contributions were part of the recommendations” with the majority also claiming that they did not feel “obliged to follow others”.

Figure 25: Members' opinion on outcomes and recommendations

Many respondents to the post-survey stated that the results adhere to their initial expectations of the process. Members expressed a high level of satisfaction with these outputs. The data illustrate a sense of collective ownership of the recommendations, with 84,6% agreeing that they contributed to the recommendations. The remaining 15,4% of respondents had no strong opinion (i.e., neutral) concerning this question. When asked in the post-survey, not a single participant reported supporting none of the recommendations, thus highlighting not just the inclusive and equal nature of the Biergerkomitee but also the fact that likely almost all members felt as having contributed to the recommendations, therefore also supporting the recommendations. 92,9% of respondents furthermore claimed that the final recommendations reflected the outcome of deliberations, which indicates that the Biergerkomitee succeeded in creating an environment conducive to genuine deliberation.

61,6% agreed that their task, and missions, allowed the necessary freedom to develop recommendations. 38,4% of the respondents selected 'neutral' as a response. There could be several reasons why members had no outspoken opinion on this matter. They might not have had a clear understanding of their task, having led them to choose 'neutral' as they were uncertain about their level of freedom. Additionally, if the instructions or guidelines provided to the members were ambiguous or open to interpretation, they might have felt unsure about the extent of their freedom in developing recommendations. Members might have been concerned about potential external influences, constraints, or limitations that could have had an impact on their ability to freely develop recommendations. Or more simply, they might have had different interpretations of the question or varying perspectives on what constitutes 'freedom'. The 'neutral' response might then reflect uncertainty with the question.

Nevertheless, during the final sessions and after the presentation of the final report, members expressed delight with the Biergerkomitee and its output, being

proud of having taken part, being insistent about demanding that their recommendations be taken seriously, and being passionate about continuing their work. Only one member commented negatively on the result. The specific member in question resigned towards the end of the process, perceiving the result as disappointing and not profound enough, or in their words:

“[Just] a booklet with little faces.”

In open-ended responses, members expressed their firm hope that the outcomes of the Biergerkomitee would be taken seriously and have an impact. In any case, members considered the weight of the process to be quite high, expressing the following hopes:

“I hope it gained enough visibility that it stays in people’s minds.”

“I hope it provides a starting point for further debates, it is not done.”

“The Biergerkomitee is just an example. People must talk about it. Somehow it might change something.”

For some members, there is more to the Biergerkomitee outputs than the recommendations simply being taken up:

“The Minister [i.e., Claude Turmes] takes note of it, there will be a press conference, and perhaps the future assembly of a hundred citizens [i.e., the Klima Biergerrot] initiated by the Prime Minister will be inspired by it.”

“Our recommendations should be read and understood first, [...] that would be the ideal case. It would also be desirable if all MPs read our recommendations.”

5.4. Future use of citizens' councils

The interviewees were asked whether they believed there was a future for citizens' councils in Luxembourg and whether such processes should be institutionalized. All interviewees had in common that they hope that the Biergerkomitee is just one of many and that it inspires the creation of many more such participatory deliberative processes. Table 12 summarizes the numerous reasons given as to why the interviewees believed that there is a benefit to organizing processes such as the Biergerkomitee, and why they can complement our existing democratic structures:

Table 12: Members' reasons for future citizens' councils in Luxembourg

"The more people can get involved, the better for the general civic education."

"Exposure to such processes would serve both the society and individuals well."

"People will be happy if they are asked for their opinions. People need to be consulted."

"It would be good because people are always questioning the democratic process."

"Citizens committees have no hidden agenda, citizens live with the consequences."

"Politics and decision-makers seem far way, it is a good idea to take citizens more into consultation."

"It creates a feeling of common decision."

"It is a means to have more power."

"If they are put in place for specific topics, they can provide a different input that is generally provided by the politicians/government."

Yet, some also expressed hesitations when considering the institutionalization of deliberative processes:

"I really hope that it becomes a kind of in-between process: not formal politically voting, not a purely unstructured grassroots level. It should sit nicely between formal and informal."

"Citizens are not professionals, the moment we turn professional it is lost."

"Spontaneity is important."

"Have to ensure that people are representative and really do it for the bigger good."

"It is not a survey, it is really about getting knowledge and working to get results."

6. Impact on Policy, Maxi-Public and Debate

The impact of the citizens' assemblies such as the BK can be measured along many dimensions. However, existing impact assessments of citizens' assemblies show that the impact in terms of policy uptake is a process that needs time to occur.³³ In forthcoming research, we will analyze the BK's impact in terms of policy uptake. For this evaluation, we focus on two other important aspects of impact. On the one hand, we examine the political weight (i.e., response and follow-up) given to the BK and its recommendations. On the other hand, we evaluate how the BK process was taken up by the media in the context of including the general public.

6.1. Response and follow-up

When the BK was initiated, it was stipulated that the BK would develop concrete proposals which would be presented in a final report that would be presented to initiating Minister Claude Turmes, as well as openly accessible to the public. On 18 January 2022, The Biergerkomitee's recommendations were presented to Claude Turmes, Minister of Energy and Regional Planning, Carole Dieschbourg, Minister of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development, Lex Delles, Minister of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Franz Fayot, Minister of the Economy, and Henri Kox, Minister of Housing. On 20 January 2022, the BK members held a press conference to present their final report and recommendations.

As intended, the Biergerkomitee also made their final report accessible to the wider public.³⁴ The full report includes a preface by Minister Claude Turmes, the Biergerkomitee's mission and working method, guidelines for change, strengths, and weaknesses of the country on the way to climate neutrality, a concluding statement, and the 44 recommendations for a climate-neutral territory with supporting statements on the following eight themes:

- 1. Governance
- 2. Regional planning and urban development
- 3. Resource-efficient mobility

33 Jacquet, V. & Van Der Does, R. (2021). The Consequences of Deliberative Minipublics: Systematic Overview, Conceptual Gaps, and New Directions. *Representation*, 57(1), 131-141 ; Vrydagh, J. (2022). Measuring the Impact of Consultative Citizen Participation: Reviewing the Congruency Approaches for Assessing the Uptake of Citizen Ideas. *Policy Sciences*, 55(1), 65-88

34 Link to the BK's final report: <https://gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/documents/actualites/2022/01-janvier/20-luxembourg-in-transition/Brochure-Biergerkomitee-Letzebuerg-2050-nos-recommandations-au-monde-politique-.pdf>

- 4. Unsealing and protecting soils
- 5. Architecture
- 6. Water management, sustainable agriculture, and protection of biodiversity
- 7. Growth and economy
- 8. Information and transparency

There was no legal obligation to implement the BK's proposals. Additionally, in contrast to other climate assemblies, no official response to the recommendations, from either Minister Turmes or the Government, was foreseen, or obligated. In other words, there were no formal commitments on how the BK input would be implemented.

On 2 February 2021, the secretariat shared, via email, a document clarifying the BK process and planning with the members. In this document, the BK's role was explained in the following manner:

“The citizens’ committee accompanies this [LIT] work, discusses the experts’ suggestions, and makes its own recommendations with regard to climate-relevant orientations for Luxembourg’s national planning.”

In this same email, the secretariat provided more explanation on what this entailed:

“Your recommendations will serve in the same way [as the LIT recommendations]: as an impetus, as an argument, as an indication to the government of what is possible to achieve. But it is clear that neither the government nor the ministry is promising you that they will do what you recommended. In the end, it’s up to them to decide. The value of your recommendations lies in their originality and consistency. [...]

One thing is certain, the Master Program is not yet written but will be in 2022, your input will be considered – and your speech will have an influence on the debate in general.”

In the BK final report, under the section ‘embedding in the political process’, the notion that the BK recommendations would serve as an inspiration for the PDAT was reiterated:

“The recommendations of the Biergerkomitee will give valuable impulses to the Ministry of Energy and Spatial Planning for the elaboration of the Programme directeur d’aménagement du territoire (PDAT). The PDAT is the document in which the government defines the major national planning guidelines and describes how it envisages the medium-term development of the territory.”

In September 2022, a draft version of the PDAT 2023 was published. The draft version refers to the BK 2050, although the document dealt more with the process than with a detailed overview of the recommendations and their uptake. On 21 June 2023, the Government adopted the new PDAT. Here, the following reference to the BK was made:

“Furthermore, it [LIT] has also adopted a citizen approach thanks to the establishment of the Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050 (BK2050). The results of the consultation clearly highlighted the role of territorial planning in the implementation of the ecological transition of the territory and the need to move towards a new culture of territorial planning. However, all the proposed strategies also highlight a common point: citizens and their way of life are the crucial elements of the ecological transition of the territory.”³⁵

This is the only reference to the BK in the entire PDAT, counting 220 pages. An explanation of the BK process can be found in ‘Addenda II: Processus Participatif 2018-2022’.³⁶

As the PDAT is not binding but rather a handbook including guidelines on how the Luxembourgish territory should develop, it is difficult to examine to what extent particular recommendations are/will be considered. There is a chance that the BK recommendations will flow into the PNEC (i.e., Plan National Énergie Climat), together with the KBR recommendations. However, whilst there is a clear and transparent follow-up of the KBR recommendations,³⁷ such a commitment is missing for the BK. There is limited to no official information about existing and planned policy related to the BK, making it difficult to identify the precise impact of the Biergerkomitee on policy. If and how the recommendations of the BK have been

³⁵ PDAT available at: https://amenagement-territoire.public.lu/content/dam/amenagement_territoire/pdat-programme-directeur-damangement-du-territoire-4072023.pdf

³⁶ Addenda II available at: https://amenagement-territoire.public.lu/content/dam/amenagement_territoire/fr/strategies_territoriales/pdat-2023/annexes/pdat-addenda-ii-proces-sus-participatif-2018-2022.pdf

³⁷ Follow-up KBR recommendations, available at: <https://data.public.lu/fr/datasets/sui-vi-des-recommandations-du-klima-biergerrot-et-de-lobservatoire-de-la-politique-climatique/>

and will be monitored and possibly implemented is hence unclear and a significant shortcoming of the process.

Aside from the currently minimal formal follow-up to the BK's recommendations, it is important to point out that the political arena has been responsive to the BK overall. The BK members have been invited to several events and sit-downs to discuss the process, their experiences, and the output. For example, on 15 March 2023, the group was invited to the Commission Parlementaire Environnement, Climat, Energie et Aménagement du Territoire to present its findings. Moreover, on 17 April 2023, the members, together with the KBR members, were invited to the presentation of the new PNEC. In addition to these more formal meetings, the members had the chance to meet with initiating Minister Claude Turmes as well as with other interested politicians such as François Benoy.

Moreover, in December 2022, the BK secretariat was contacted by the Ministry to ask whether the BK would be willing to submit its opinion on the draft PDAT. Throughout December and January, a group of BK members worked on reviewing the PDAT. On 20 January 2023, their 'Advice on the draft PDAT 2023' was sent to the initiating Ministry. In this document, the members set out that they have "doubts regarding the implementation of PDAT2023" which "should [however] not be understood as a fundamental criticism of the text, which we strongly support overall". Comparing their recommendations against the PDAT, the members conclude the following: "Against the background of our own analysis of the situation and development prospects of the country, we welcome the draft PDAT 2023." From this, we can conclude that the members endorse the PDAT, which they believe has sufficiently taken into account the BK's output.

However, as this occurred almost a year after the end of the process, the document was not signed by the entire BK but instead by seven individuals representing the Biergerkomitee. Nonetheless, the document was circulated to all members so that they could suggest modifications and give their agreement. Although it is a plus and an important strategy to involve members in the impact assessment, it is difficult to reengage members that long after the process has been concluded. Several strategies could be employed to encourage active participation after the process has been concluded, involving a combination of effective communication, motivation, and flexible scheduling. While it should be foreseen that results and impact take time, it remains a tough task to get all members reinolved, as shown by the fact that just seven members worked on the BK's response to the draft PDAT.

In addition to examining the impact on the PDAT and members' opinions on the PDAT, we also measured (in the pre-and the post-survey) participants' opinions on the political follow-up of the recommendations.

10,3% of the respondents to the pre-survey agreed with the statement "the recommendations will be widely taken into consideration", and 55,2% agreed that "the

recommendations will be moderately taken into consideration”. 20,6% claimed that “the recommendations will be little or not at all taken into consideration”, while 10,3% had no response to this question. When asked, the members gave a multitude of reasons for their varying degrees of trust in the political follow-up:

“The choice of a political decision is much more complex than just meeting the expectations of a committee.”

“Everything will depend on our work and our work ethic.”

“This will depend on the quality and the degree of the proposals and opinions developed.”

“The vision of politics is generally short-term.”

After the Biergerkomitee, 6,7% of the respondents to the post-survey agreed that “all recommendations will be taken into consideration”, and a further 13,3% agreed that “half of the recommendations will be taken into consideration”. 26,7% claimed that “a few recommendations will be taken into consideration”, whilst 46,6% believed that “little to no recommendations will be taken into consideration”. 6,7% of respondents had no answer to this question.

We thus see a significant change in members’ trust regarding the political follow-up of the recommendations. In the pre-survey, 20,6% claimed that “the recommendations will be little or not at all taken into consideration”. In the post-survey, this number has more than doubled: 46,6% believed that “little to no recommendations will be taken into consideration”. Members may report less trust in the political follow-up of recommendations after their participation for numerous reasons.

They might have expected prompt action on the recommendations they had developed. If there is a delay in the political follow-up, they may perceive the process as ineffective, leading to decreased trust. Similarly, if members feel that their participation in the assembly was merely tokenistic and that politicians are not genuinely interested in their recommendations, trust can diminish. Members may recognize that the implementation of their recommendations faces political obstacles or opposition. This can undermine their confidence in the willingness of politicians to act on the suggestions. Members may perceive a lack of commitment or efficacy on the part of politicians in translating recommendations into policies. This can erode trust in the political follow-up process. Inadequate communication between organizers, members, and political leaders about the progress and status of recommendations can contribute to decreased trust. Members’ comments from the post-survey and interviewees do indeed indicate diminished trust in the political follow-up of recommendations:

“We had a nice brochure, but what happens with it? The formal aspect of what was supposed to be the outcome could be improved, I like to see more clearly what is done with the recommendations.”

“They will be put in a drawer by the government.”

However, other members had a more positive attitude, claiming:

“They will be published, discussed, some adopted, others not detailed enough or too utopian reworked or abandoned.”

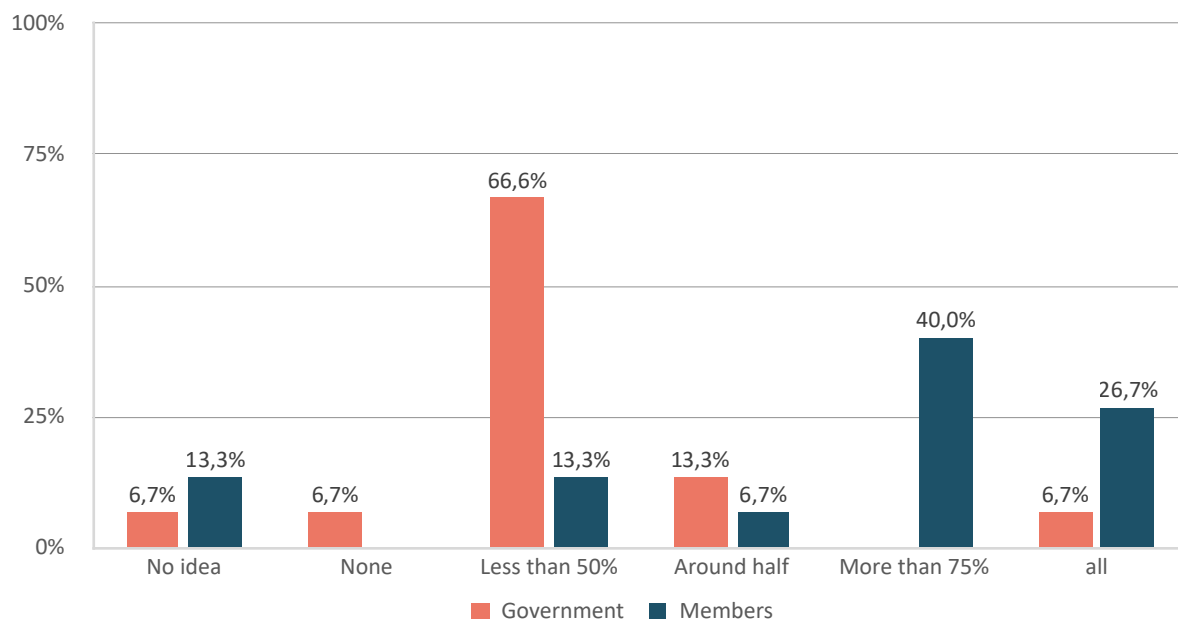
“These recommendations will feed into the reflections of the ministries concerned by the energy transition and regional planning. It is of course clear that this is not a binding text.”

“The recommendations drawn up by the BK 2050 will be integrated (but without commitment), in part, into the Master Program for Territorial Development (PDAT).”

It is, nevertheless, important to note that lower trust in the political follow-up process does not necessarily indicate a negative evaluation of the BK itself. It reflects the broader challenges and complexities associated with translating deliberative outcomes into political action, which can be influenced by various political, institutional, and societal factors. Efforts to improve communication, transparency, and accountability in the political follow-up process can help rebuild trust and enhance the effectiveness of citizens’ assemblies.

Recommendation 10: Establish a clear and transparent commitment to the political follow-up of recommendations, including regular updates on the implementation status. Ensure that the process is responsive and that recommendations are taken seriously.

To fully measure members’ views on the recommendations, we also asked the members about the extent to which they would adopt their recommendations. 40% of the respondents to the post-survey would adopt “a large majority of recommendations (more than 75%)”, and a further 26,7% would adopt “all recommendations”. 6,7% would adopt “half of the recommendations”, whilst 13,3% would only adopt “little to a few recommendations”. A further 13,3% had no answer to this question. Whilst most respondents would adopt all or majority of their recommendations, they – realistically – believed that only a few would be adopted by politics.

Figure 26: Adoption recommendations members-government (aggregate level)

The difference between the number of recommendations that citizens' assembly members would adopt and the number of recommendations they believe politicians will adopt can be attributed to several factors. Members may recognize that politicians face constraints such as party politics, electoral considerations, and interest group influence. This awareness can lead them to be more cautious in their expectations of what politicians will realistically adopt. Members may prioritize recommendations differently than politicians. They may emphasize recommendations that align with their values and the deliberative process, whereas politicians may prioritize recommendations that are more politically feasible. Members may be aware that political will and commitment are essential for recommendation adoption. They may have doubts about politicians' genuine commitment to the recommendations. The political process often involves negotiation and compromise. Members may anticipate that some recommendations will be subject to changes and compromises before adoption. Citizens' assembly members may not expect all recommendations to be adopted immediately but rather over a longer time frame, while politicians may prioritize more immediate concerns. Members' expectations may be influenced by the level of communication and transparency regarding the political follow-up process. Namely, a lack of information can lead to more conservative expectations.

These differences in perception are, nevertheless, a natural part of the deliberative process. BK members have a more idealistic or values-based perspective on recommendations, whereas politicians need to consider the practicalities of implementation, political dynamics, and public support. Bridging this gap often involves effective communication and feedback loops between members and political representatives to align expectations and build trust in the follow-up process. It is thus essential for organizers, initiators, and politicians to be transparent

about the challenges and constraints of the political system and to provide regular updates on the status of the recommendations. Additionally, ensuring that citizens' assembly recommendations are seriously considered and incorporated into the political decision-making process can help preserve participants' trust in the effectiveness of this democratic tool.

6.2. Impact on the general public

The impact on the general public is difficult to measure, although three elements are worth mentioning here. First, all virtual meetings with experts were open to the wider public. Specifically, the expert sessions were advertised on social media channels, and interested people were invited to register by sending an email to the organizing committee, upon which they then received the link to tune in. The expert sessions have been documented on the Biergerkomitee's website with short written summaries and videos documenting each expert presentation.³⁸ That is, the BK meetings have been documented on the LIT website.

Second, the Biergerkomitee aimed to explain their decisions to the public by publishing a brochure in French, German, and English. The brochure provides ample information, including the members' mission and method, the principles they followed, the strengths and weaknesses of Luxembourg when it comes to carbon neutrality, and the 44 recommendations. In their brochure, the members also call for the active involvement of all citizens. One interviewee argued that they were "very conscious of the bigger society" when developing the recommendations.

Third, the media has a role to play in getting the message across to the population. To ensure that deliberative processes receive appropriate media exposure and to maximize the impact of deliberative processes in the wider public sphere, organizers must ensure a decent communication strategy based on openness and transparency. The BK organization, together with the members, decided on a media strategy in which participants were interviewed throughout the process to provide inside information on what their participation entailed, without providing too much insight into the specifics, to avoid too much outside influence. In the pre-survey, the members were asked about the media follow-up and to consider to what extent the media would show interest in the Biergerkomitee and its output. 42,9% agreed that the media would largely show interest in the BK and its recommendations, and a further 25% claimed that the media would moderately show interest, whilst 17,9% believed that the media would be little to not interested. In the next section, we consider the media coverage in depth.

38 Recordings available on the Biergerkomitee website: <https://luxembourgtransition.lu/envenements/>

6.3. Impact on debate

The media coverage analysis in this report focuses on editorial media coverage in Luxembourgish outlets. Data was collected using the following data sources: 1) the database of the Revues de Presse, and 2) the search function on the website of the Luxembourgish editorial media outlets. In both instances, the term ‘Biergerkomitee’ was used as a keyword to search for relevant coverage. This led to the collection of 64 articles, including op-eds. The first step in the analysis involved the collection of media mentions and the provision of statistics on these mentions, including the title of the article, the name of the media outlet, the type of media (print or online), the author, and the month and year of publication. In a second step, the articles were read, and the following data was gathered: whether the article focused on or simply mentioned the Biergerkomitee, the position of the article (neutral, positive, negative, or balanced), and whether the article contributed to a wider debate. The final database gives insights into the amount and nature of the coverage, including how it changed over the course of the Biergerkomitee. The analysis spanned 28 months, from the first article published in December 2020 until March 2023. The analysis is structured into four phases:

Table 13: Media coverage analysis by phases

Phase 1	December 2020 - February 2021	Covers the announcement and beginning of the Biergerkomitee
Phase 2	March - December 2021	Covers the period of the Biergerkomitee
Phase 3	January - February 2022	Covers the end and final report of the Biergerkomitee
Phase 4	March 2022 onwards	Covers the follow-up of the Biergerkomitee

6.3.1. Amount and type of media coverage

A total of 64 articles were identified and analyzed across the four phases, from a total of 13 news media outlets. For a small country such as Luxembourg, it can be said that the number of articles is relatively high. It should be noted that the Biergerkomitee may yet receive further coverage following further policy responses and developments.

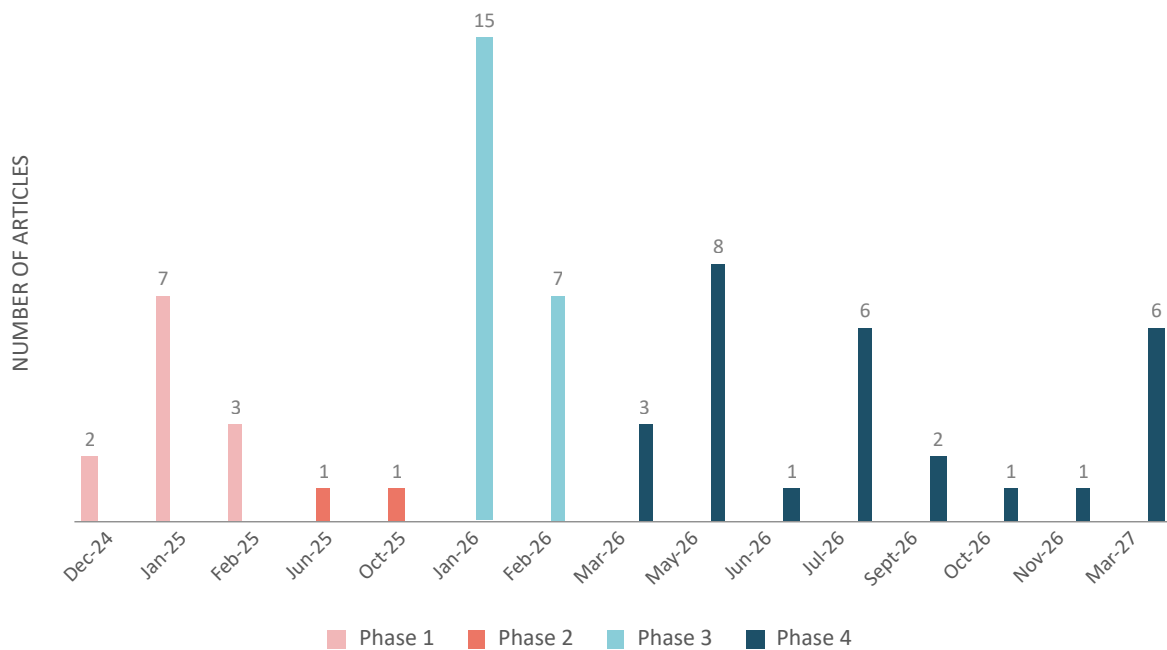
Figure 27 shows the extent of media coverage for each phase by month. In keeping with other citizens’ assemblies³⁹, the media coverage was greatest around the launch of the Biergerkomitee final report (phase 3) when journalists had tangible outputs to report and discuss. There were also spikes in coverage at the start

39 Elstub, S., Farrell, D. M., Carrick, J., and Mockler, P. (2021). Evaluation of Climate Assembly UK, Newcastle: Newcastle University., Available: <https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/get-involved2/climate-assemblyuk/evaluation-of-climate-assembly-uk.pdf>

of the process (phase 1), in May 2022 (phase 4), and in March 2023 (phase 4). In May 2022, the Luxembourg magazine ‘Forum’ launched an issue specifically focusing on citizens’ participation, which can explain the spike in interest in the Biergerkomitee. The third spike in March 2023 coincides with an official meeting between the members of the Biergerkomitee and MPs. Additionally, it is likely also due to a debate in the Chamber organized by MP François Benoy (déli Gréng) to underline the need to develop additional ways of citizen participation in Luxembourg.⁴⁰ Citizen participation was thus higher on the news agenda at that time, thereby renewing interest in the Biergerkomitee.

The Biergerkomitee remained relatively long in the media. This could be due to the media’s focus on the Klima Biergerrot (i.e., the Luxembourg Citizens’ Assembly on Climate initiated by Prime Minister Xavier Bettel) throughout 2022.

Figure 27: Media article coverage of the Biergerkomitee, per month and phase

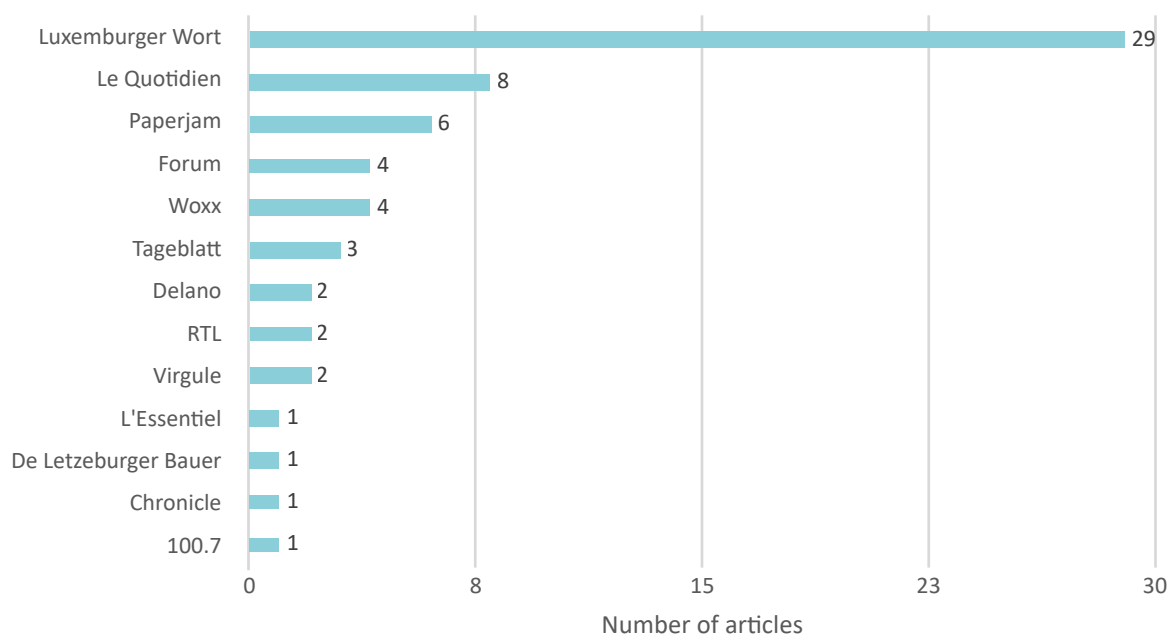


40 Debate in Chamber, available at: https://www.chd.lu/fr/motion_resolution/4103

I. Distribution

The distribution of the articles amongst the outlets was varied. In total, 13 outlets covered the Biergerkomitee (see Figure 28). Figure 28 shows the number of articles per outlet. The figure shows that media attention was concentrated in only a few outlets. One outlet, the Luxemburger Wort, produced 45.3% of the media coverage, followed by Le Quotidien with 12.5%.

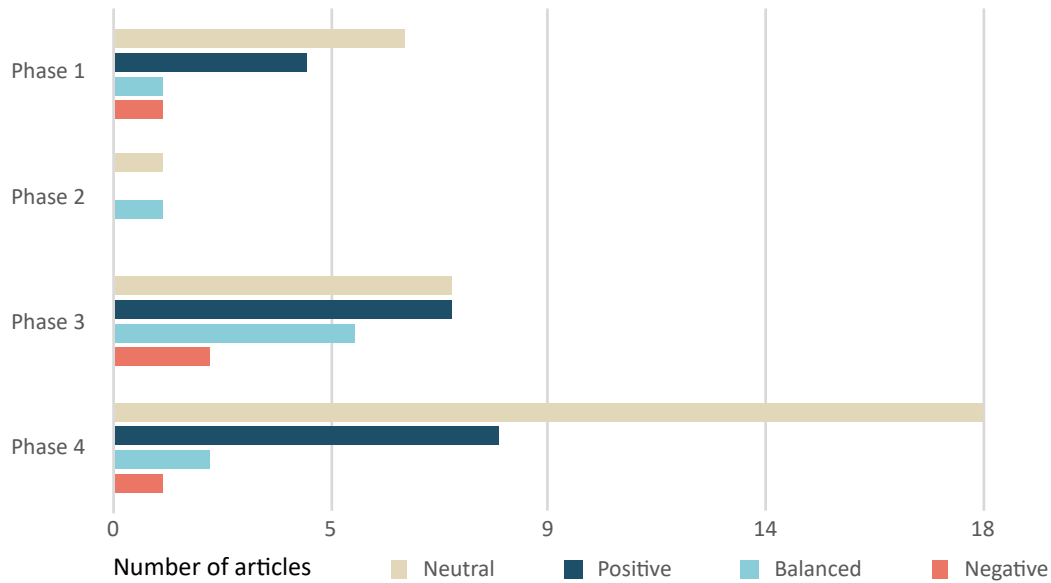
Figure 28: Distribution of articles, per outlets



II. Position of articles

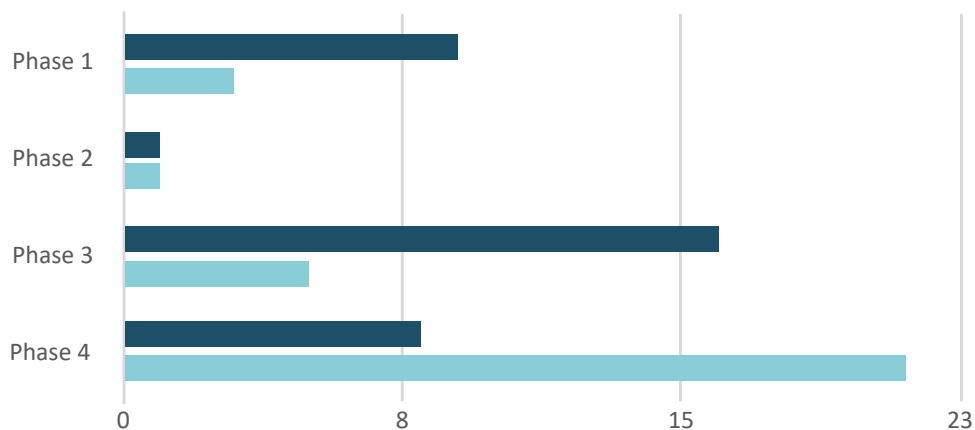
The position of the media coverage refers to how the Biergerkomitee was portrayed in the media and can be: neutral (the Biergerkomitee and/or its outputs are primarily described without evaluation), positive (the article provides positive comments on the Biergerkomitee), negative (the article provides negative comments on the Biergerkomitee), or balanced (the articles provides both positive and negative comments on the Biergerkomitee).

Half of the articles concerning the Biergerkomitee are neutral. In 29.7% of the articles, the Biergerkomitee is portrayed positively, whilst 14.1% consider the Biergerkomitee in a balanced manner. 6.3% of the articles (i.e., four articles) regarding the Biergerkomitee are negative. The few negative articles critique the final report and recommendations, claiming they are nothing new, and the overall process and citizens' participation generally. One article also criticizes the secretariat and its relationship with the Government, arguing that they are responsible for multiple government-related tasks (Woxx, December 2020).

Figure 29: Distribution of articles, by position and by phase

III. Coverage

Of the 64 articles, 53.1% focused on the Biergerkomitee whilst 46.9% only mentioned it. As shown in Figure 30, in Phases 1 (at the start of the process) and 3 (the presentation of the final report and recommendations) the Biergerkomitee tended to be the main focus of the coverage.

Figure 30: Distribution of articles with Biergerkomitee focus or mention, by phase

The articles focusing on the Biergerkomitee focused on two main elements: the Biergerkomitee process, specifically its design, and the Biergerkomitee final report including the 9 principles for a successful transition policy, Luxembourg's strengths and weaknesses, and the 44 recommendations. Those mentioning the BK merely describe the Biergerkomitee either as complementary to the LIT process or in relation to the Klima Biergerrot. Other articles mentioning the BK, use

the process and/or its recommendations as an example of citizens' participation in Luxembourg.

6.3.2. Contribution to climate change debate

16 articles on the Biergerkomitee contributed to the wider climate change debate (25% of all coverage). The proportion of articles discussing climate change was particularly high in Phases 3 (62.5% of all articles on climate change) and 4 (37.5% of all articles on climate change), when the final recommendations were made public and could hence be discussed and analyzed in the wider debate on climate change.

In its first recommendation, the Biergerkomitee pleads that the political arena must face the urgency of the climate issue. Consequently, articles encouraging politics to step away from the status quo or covering the urgency of actions required are manifold. For example:

“And they will come across a whole series of points that have been on the political agenda for a long time - but which nobody has dared to tick off to date.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2022)

“If, for example, the recommendation is to phase out tank tourism, abandon the growth-dependent economic model, or separate the municipal and national mandates - with the Biergerkomitee choice of words giving the recommendations a quasi-demanding character - politics cannot remain in the status quo mode.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2022)

A further topic covered in the articles contributing to the climate change debate is ‘climate justice’:

“Climate protection dominates in the guidelines; the ‘Biergerkomitee’ demands that the climate protection measures must be democratically legitimized and comprehensible, perceived as fair and based on scientific research; they should not be based solely on voluntariness. In general, climate policy must send a positive message, and individual freedom and social responsibility should go hand in hand.” (Luxemburger Wort, May 2022)

Regarding changes required to tackle climate change, articles tended to refer to transformational rather than incremental change:

“And the “Biergerkomitee”? Its ideas are characterized by their radical nature and show that climate neutrality by 2050 cannot be achieved by small course corrections.” (Luxemburger Wort, March 2023)

“Almost all of these recommendations have in common that they are based on a certain radicalism and that if they are implemented, Luxembourg would have to say goodbye to customs that have existed for decades.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2022)

“It will now be Claude Turmes’ task to persuade his blue-red-green ministerial colleagues to take the results - a strengths/weaknesses analysis, nine principles, and 44 recommendations - into account in further policy-making.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2022)

On the other hand, a limited number of articles pointed out that the recommendations are nothing new:

“Anyone who has already dealt a lot with the topic of sustainability in Luxembourg [...] will find out little that is new in the BK2050 document. The 44 recommendations are also largely well-known demands from civil society, so the four points on “resource-saving mobility” could also come from the Mouvement écologique or ProVélo.” (Woxx, February 2022)

With the general elections in view, several articles also made the connection between the Biergerkomitee, its output, the wider climate change debate, and voting. For example:

“The members of the ‘Biergerkomitee’ do not see their mission as being over with the final report. With a view to the super election year of 2023, they want to sensitize their fellow citizens to the issue so that they can base their voting behavior on it.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2023)

“Many of the recommendations read like templates that can be included in the election programs in the coming year. The parties should at least take the opportunity to take a stand on individual, more radical points.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2022)

6.3.3. Contribution to the debate on citizens’ participation

Besides the debate on climate change, the Biergerkomitee featured strongly in 22 articles that discussed citizens’ participation in Luxembourg (34.4% of all coverage). The proportion of articles discussing citizens’ participation was particularly high in Phases 3 (45.5% of all articles on citizens’ participation) and 4 (45.5% of all articles on citizens’ participation). Almost half of the articles relating to the

wider debate on citizens' participation were published in Phase 4, which is likely due to increased interest in the topic following the debate in the Chamber organized by MP François Benoy (déi Gréng) to underline the need to develop additional ways of citizen participation in Luxembourg.

The majority of articles considered the Biergerkomitee a novelty. For example:

“I hope that the committee can, throughout this process, become a laboratory of democracy.” (Delano, January 2021)

“Luxembourg is currently still in an experimental phase. After the Ministry of Energy and State Planning had gained experience with the Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050 in 2021, the State Ministry is currently organizing a Klima Biergerrot in cooperation with the Environment and Energy Ministries.” (Forum, May 2022)

“Current citizen participation is a model for other policy areas.” (Luxemburger Wort, February 2022)

Other articles considered citizens' participation a benefit to Luxembourgish society:

“Citizens' councils have the ability to strengthen trust in politics - especially in the case of democratic deficits like in Luxembourg, where many people cannot vote.” (Tageblatt, October 2021)

“Citizen participation “is a solution, because representative democracy can no longer integrate politically the whole population”, according to Jürgen Stoldt, coordinator of the committee.” (L'essentiel, January 2022)

“With the current challenges, we need more citizen participation and a strengthened democracy. Participatory democracy is a process that can take weeks, months, with coaches who promote the leveling so that the citizens have the same information as political decision-makers, and bring about a peaceful dialogue between even very controversial ideas.” (Paperjam, February 2022)

Another topic frequently touched upon is 'accountability' and 'follow-up'. In these instances, most articles made clear that politicians should have to be accountable and ensure the impact of citizens' processes:

“Citizens should generally be included more consistently with the participants of the committee. In addition, the citizens’ committee naturally hopes that the brochure they have prepared will also be taken seriously and consulted by politicians.” (RTL, January 2022)

“However, there is a lack of a structured embedding in the political process, so that in the end a lot of intellectual energy may be wasted. In the end, the hope remains that these statements from society as a whole create background noise that is perceived by the political parties.” (Forum, May 2022)

Similar to the wider debate on climate change, articles also referred to the upcoming elections, connecting it to the debate on citizens’ participation. For example:

“[...] With a view to the upcoming election dates in the coming year, that this participation should not be interpreted as pure consultation, where politicians take stock in front of their citizens and point out upcoming tasks.” (Luxemburger Wort, July 2022)

“Also with regard to the electoral system - more and more residents without the right to vote - the Biergerkomitee advocates greater involvement of civil society and science in the discussion and decision-making processes.” (Luxemburger Wort, January 2022)

With the growing interest in citizens’ participation from all sides, including the political arena, articles considered the next steps for citizens’ participation, linking it to increasing talks of institutionalization whilst guaranteeing the quality of processes. For example:

“A particular concern of the “Citizens’ Committee” is citizen participation. These must not have a mere alibi character and the created bodies must therefore be equipped with sufficient resources. In addition to the definition of a concrete mandate, this also includes the same access to information as is granted to politicians.” (Luxemburger Wort, March 2023)

“We must therefore create real citizen participation. There are already good examples [...] also with the initiatives of citizens’ assemblies such as the Biergerkomitee [...]. Now we need to think about how citizen participation can be further developed or even institutionalized in order to strengthen our democracy. For the Greens, this is a priority for the coming years.” (Paperjam, November 2022)

“The fear of instrumentalization could have already come true in one form: Xavier Bettel advertised the alleged success of the BK2050 for his Klima Biergerrot.” (Woxx, February 2022)

7. Conclusion

This report provided an evaluation of the Biergerkomitee Lëtzebuerg 2050 which was held from January 2021 until January 2022. The BK was commissioned by the Ministry of Energy and Land-use Planning, Department of Land-use Planning, more precisely Minister Claude Turmes. We evaluated the BK in relation to three broad themes: learning, impact, and lessons for comparable initiatives in the future. In particular, our evaluation of the BK assessed what happened within the assembly and how it relates to wider society. For the internal aspects, we evaluated the deliberative process and its quality, including participant recruitment, information, facilitation, deliberative quality, and decision-making. Additionally, we examined the extent to which the members learned and changed their views because of their participation. Concerning the external aspect, we evaluated the impact the BK had on policymaking. We also analyzed public awareness of the process and the media's role in this. To produce this evaluation, we adopted a mixed-method approach. This mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods included surveys (a pre- and a post-survey), interviews (with members and the organization), non-participant observation, content analysis, and media coverage analysis.

7.1. Discussion

Inclusivity is a fundamental pillar of effective citizens' assemblies, ensuring that a diverse range of voices and perspectives are heard. Although diverse, the BK faced challenges in ensuring inclusivity. The BK members were not adequately representative of the broader population in terms of socio-economic status and other key demographics, particularly in accommodating less-educated and working-class individuals. Due to the integration of multilingualism without translation, certain groups or individuals were likely excluded. Additionally, compared to the general Luxembourgish population, BK members were highly interested in politics and climate. However, when the BK fails to represent the full spectrum of opinions and experiences, the deliberative process may become more homogenous, potentially sidelining crucial perspectives. The public may perceive the process as unrepresentative, which can undermine trust in its recommendations and the overall democratic process.

Other vital aspects of the process are the deliberations, recommendations, and ultimately political follow-up. Members engaged in well-informed and nuanced discussions, aided by expert input, access to comprehensive information, and well-structured deliberative processes. This contributed to the assembly's effectiveness in addressing complex issues. The BK managed to achieve consensus on 44 recommendations, demonstrating that it effectively harnessed the collec-

tive intelligence of a diverse group of participants. The assembly generated public awareness and engagement, with publicly accessible expert sessions, and media coverage increasing the reach of the deliberative process. However, there were some concerns about the BK's immediate impact. When political follow-up is untransparent, members' confidence in the BK's effectiveness and the political system may wane.

Despite these challenges, our prevailing conclusion is that the BK was a respected process that served as a vital platform for democratic deliberation, fostering diverse perspectives, informed discussions, and consensus-building. In the ever-evolving landscape of participatory democracy, the Biergerkomitee served as a valuable model for deliberative decision-making, demonstrating both the possibilities and the areas in which improvements are needed. Building on the process' successes and addressing its challenges will be essential in further strengthening citizens' participation in Luxembourg. As citizens' participation moves forward, continued efforts to enhance inclusivity, reduce resource intensity, and expedite policy impact will be key in further solidifying its success as a democratic instrument.

7.2. Evaluation summary

In this section, we summarize our key findings. Our evaluation considered the organization, the deliberative process, the impact on the members, and the impact on policy, maxi-public, and debate. Table 14 provides an overview of our conclusions. The plus (+) sign represents a positive evaluation, whilst the minus (-) sign indicates a negative evaluation. A plus/minus sign (\pm) stands for a mixed evaluation; namely, both positive and negative aspects. Table 14 shows that the evaluation of the citizens' assembly revealed a complex and nuanced landscape with both positive and negative aspects, but when viewed holistically, the BK can be deemed a success.

Table 14: Conclusions

1. Organization		
Governance & roles	Organization	+
Remit & framing	Independence	\pm
Design	Task & mission	\pm
2. Deliberative process		

Participant recruitment	Inclusive	±
Balanced information	Representative	±
Facilitation	Diverse opinions	±
Deliberation	Relevant expertise	+
Decision-making	Balanced information	+
	Deliberative quality	+
	Ownership	+
3. Impact on members		
Evolution of members knowledge	Better informed	+
Political engagement	Knowledge gains	+
	Opinion change	+
4. Impact on policy, maxi-public and debate		
Political follow-up	Accountability & commitment to respond	-
Media coverage	Engagement with recommendations	±
	Extent & nature of media coverage	+

7.2.1. Organization

We analyzed the Biergerkomitee's governance, remit and framing, and design. The BK's governance was peculiar in that one individual was responsible for both the organization and the facilitation. Although such a double role may call the independence of the process and the neutrality of the moderation into question, we did not observe any issues. Instead, this double role facilitated streamlining the planning and execution whilst ensuring consistency throughout.

Regarding the Biergerkomitee's purpose, we conclude that the right question was asked. By framing the question as follows: **What should Luxembourg do to be climate neutral by 2050?** It helped the members, and thereby the discussion, to focus on concrete and measurable solutions. It was a plus that the Biergerkomitee had to provide an answer to a specific, rather than a general question.

Compared to other deliberative processes, the Biergerkomitee had multiple missions focusing on different aspects. Namely:

- 1. The BK must make themselves available to the various teams of experts of Luxembourg in Transition for exchanges during their scenario development phase.
- 2. The BK must develop an understanding of how Luxembourg should position itself by 2050 to achieve climate neutrality.
- 3. The BK must make recommendations to politicians on how the territory should be organized so that Luxembourg becomes climate-neutral.

Whilst we expected that a manifold of missions would lead to confusion for the members, the data suggests that this was not the case. Instead, the vast majority agreed that the Biergerkomitee's mission was clear. We did, however, remark that when asked about the missions, the members referred only to the second and

third missions since, in practice, mission one had been disregarded by all parties involved. In conclusion, we found that the problem and its wording (i.e., the missions and overall question) did not pose any problems for the members. However, it should be noted that only two of the three missions were fulfilled.

Besides the remit and framing, we also considered the Biergerkomitee's design. The structure set up by the Ministry gave the delivery body significant control over the design of the Biergerkomitee. The particularities (i.e., the program and working methods) were determined by the secretariat before the first meeting. Yet, the agenda-setting process remained partially open: the members were presented with the organization's structure, to which they agreed, but had the choice to add topics and relevant experts. The members took this opportunity and added three additional meetings, also choosing the relevant experts for these meetings.

Because of its incorporation with Luxembourg in Transition, the Biergerkomitee was embedded in a very specific social and political context. The media and politicians also tended to frame the process in such a way. However, coupling a citizens' consultation with an expert consultation is beneficial in that technical expertise complemented by the perspectives, values, and lived experiences of citizens ultimately benefits the overall process and its contribution to the PDAT.

All in all, the BK's successful organization hinged on its effective governance and defined roles, a clear remit and framing of the BK's purpose, and a thoughtful design that promotes inclusivity and engagement. With these elements carefully orchestrated, the BK can serve as a powerful platform for democratic participation.

7.2.2. Deliberative process

To analyze the BK's overall process, we focused on several elements. More precisely, participant recruitment, balanced information, facilitation, deliberation, and decision-making.

I. Participant recruitment

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 BK, three obstacles to this criterion were observed. First, passive understanding of Luxembourg's three official languages. Here, it should be considered for future citizens' assemblies whether at least other languages often spoken in Luxembourg should be used, for example, English. Second, little to no incentives to get under-represented groups involved. It is important to exercise due diligence concerning the involvement of under-represented and traditionally under-served groups during the recruitment process. Third, the recruitment process did not take into consideration applicants' attitudes towards climate change. Recruitment

should employ transparent and impartial participant selection processes that prioritize diverse representation.

We can conclude that the Biergerkomitee members were not broadly demographically representative of the Luxembourg population in the sense that the Biergerkomitee was slightly dominated by those who usually participate in political processes, such as highly educated and middle-aged individuals. The results of the first survey indicate that the Biergerkomitee members were broadly representative of the Luxembourg population in terms of sex. The Biergerkomitee members differed significantly from the general population of Luxembourg in terms of age and nationality. The BK had a significant overrepresentation (27,4%) of 25-34 year olds. On the other hand, the youth (16-24 years) and elderly (65+) were seriously underrepresented in the BK. In terms of nationality, we found that there were 26% more BK members with Luxembourgish nationality than in the general population of Luxembourg. Furthermore, the data and comparison of the BK members with the Luxembourg population shows that participation followed the unequal distribution pattern of political engagement and awareness concerning climate change: BK members had an above-average level of political interest and commitment and were much more interested in and worried about climate (change). Self-selection bias was thus a particular shortcoming of the BK, as well as that the process did not include any climate skeptics.

The BK likely faced challenges with representativity due to factors such as the difficulty of recruiting a truly diverse cross-section of the population, partially because there were only 30 participants. Such a size has both advantages and limitations. The consequences of having a relatively small assembly size can impact the depth of deliberation, representation, and the diversity of perspectives. A group of 30 participants may not fully represent the diversity of a larger population, potentially excluding marginalized or minority voices. It may then be challenging to ensure a comprehensive range of expertise in a smaller assembly, potentially limiting the depth of discussions. Smaller groups may be more susceptible to groupthink, where participants are influenced by dominant voices and conform to majority opinions.

Nevertheless, a smaller group is easier to manage, facilitating smoother logistics and communication during the process. With fewer participants, there may be more time for in-depth discussions, allowing for a thorough exploration of complex issues. Smaller groups may foster stronger connections and trust among participants, potentially leading to more productive deliberations. The success of a smaller consultation such as the BK relies on the balance between its advantages and limitations and careful planning to address these challenges. The BK recruitment strategy did, however, fall short in ensuring a representative process.

II. Balanced information

Throughout the Biergerkomitee, the members heard from more than 25 (inter) national experts. The experts represented different institutions and various disciplines, covering a wide range of expertise needed to provide accurate and relevant evidence in the field of climate change and climate neutrality. The experts were selected in such a manner to ensure that all members had a similar and balanced knowledge base on which they could work. It can be said that the members were presented with a full spectrum of perspectives, as the experts came from different walks of life. However, there was a lack of gender diversity among the experts.

The majority of respondents felt that the information received was easy to comprehend and balanced. There was strong support for the statement that the experts were competent. Yet, the members argued that, at times, the scientific lectures were structured like university lectures, including too many graphs and jargon and not enough time for sufficient, in-depth explanations. This led to several members claiming that they suffered from an information overload.

III. Facilitation

The moderator(s) received resoundingly positive evaluations from the Biergerkomitee members, with the vast majority agreeing that the moderator(s) was an added value to the process. Many members positively perceived the facilitation because the moderator(s) ensured that everyone felt comfortable participating and that all arguments were considered leading to rich deliberations. Only a small percentage of the members were dissatisfied with the moderator(s), in particular one member who left towards the end of the BK. They believed that the moderator(s) influenced the process. Other members, however, refuted, these statements. Overall, the members perceived the quality of facilitation to be good, with a supportive approach including encouraging members to be respectful.

IV. Deliberation and decision-making

The members perceived the BK's deliberative quality to be very good: the majority overwhelmingly perceived the tone of fellow participants as respectful, which is an important finding given that the members also pointed out that most did not share the same opinions. Moreover, the majority felt free to express a different opinion. The different perspectives and opinions of the citizens were presented as valuable and essential for the success of the process.

When it comes to the online and multilingual setting, many did not encounter any serious issues. Yet, the online environment did impact the process because members felt that it involved the juxtapositioning of ideas, which was not necessarily engaging. Hence, the participants seem to agree that there was more and better deliberation during the in-person sessions. But at the same time, the members appreciated that the online setting allowed the Biergerkomitee to continue. Mul-

tilingualism, by contrast, did not seem to negatively impact the quality of deliberation. According to both the members and the moderator(s), this can be attributed to the fact that multilingualism is at the core of Luxembourg's society.

Members of the Biergerkomitee successfully created an atmosphere conducive to genuine deliberation. Our evaluation finds compelling evidence that participants felt able to meaningfully contribute to the deliberations. Overall, during the process, the participants experienced the positive effects of respectful dialogue as a means for knowledge exchange, mutual learning, and fostering group cohesion.

There was strong agreement amongst the members that they had sufficient time for thorough argumentation and information exchange. While the secretariat provided the structure for decision-making, the members were always closely involved, ensuring that the recommendations were ultimately theirs. The vast majority of respondents to the second survey contended that they contributed to the recommendations. Consequently, the decision-making was not entirely a bottom-up process, but neither was it a top-down process.

Based on the above, we can conclude that the quality of deliberation was perceived to be (very) good, with the members indicating having had enough time for deliberations and consequently developing recommendations. Additionally, the quality of deliberation and decision-making is also reflected in the outcome with a consensus being reached. Members claim that they did not feel pressured to follow the group, that the outcome was the result of actual deliberation, and that each participant had a chance to contribute to the final recommendations.

7.2.3. Impact on members

Our evaluation has shown that the majority of members approached the process with an open mind and that they were willing to learn and listen. Accordingly, most claim to have changed their opinion(s) on the topic at hand and feel better informed. In other words, participation in the Biergerkomitee had an impact on the members. Yet, while we can see self-reported shifts in knowledge and opinions, it remains hard to identify whether this refers to clarifying existing positions or completely changing opinions.

The vast majority stated that the results adhered to their initial expectations of the process. Members expressed a high level of satisfaction with these outputs. The data illustrate a sense of collective ownership of the recommendations, thus offering further evidence that the Biergerkomitee succeeded in creating an environment that was conducive to genuine deliberation. Many expressed pride in having taken part and were adamant about demanding that their recommendations would be taken seriously. It can thus be argued that the members' attitudes toward political participation evolved, with the majority being passionate and insistent about continuing their work.

7.2.4. Impact on policy, maxi-public, and debate

There was no legal obligation to implement the recommendations. Additionally, in contrast to other climate assemblies, no official response to the recommendations, from either Minister Turmes or the Government, was foreseen, or obligated. In other words, there were no formal commitments on how the BK output would be implemented. It was, however, shared early on that the BK's output would serve as an inspiration for the new PDAT. The members responded to the draft PDAT 2023, stating that although they support the overall PDAT, they have “doubts regarding the implementation of PDAT2023”.

Such doubts may be linked to the fact that the PDAT is not a binding document. Instead, it is regarded as a handbook with guidelines on how the Luxembourgish territory should develop. Hence, as there is no actual policy in the PDAT, it is difficult to identify the precise impact of the Biergerkomitee on policy. Moreover, transparent and public communication regarding if and how the recommendations of the BK have been and will be monitored and possibly implemented is limited to non-existent.

Regarding policy and impact, we concluded that members' trust in the political follow-up of the BK recommendations diminished significantly. In the pre-survey, 21.4% claimed that “the recommendations will be little or not at all taken into consideration”. In the post-survey, this number has more than doubled: 46,7% believed that “little to no recommendations will be taken into consideration”. Additionally, we observed that members would adopt all or majority of their recommendations whilst they believe that only a few will be adopted by politics. There are multiple reasons for such findings, as we highlighted in [Section Six](#). However, it is likely that the level of communication and transparency in the political follow-up process significantly influences members' expectations, with a lack of information leading to more conservative expectations. As we have shown throughout the analysis, clear and transparent communication is key for processes such as the BK.

Our results demonstrated that the Biergerkomitee process itself was transparent in numerous ways. First, all virtual meetings with experts were open to the wider public. The recordings of these events were subsequently placed online, alongside a small summarizing article. Second, the Biergerkomitee aimed to explain their decisions taken to the maxi-public by publishing their final report in French, German, and English. Third, a media strategy was chosen in which participants were interviewed (on the radio) throughout the process to provide inside information on what their participation entailed, without providing too much insight into the specifics.

The results have also shown that the Biergerkomitee featured rather prominently in the news media coverage. More generally, the media played a significant

role in granting the Biergerkomitee visibility as well as in framing the BK. The media coverage analysis moreover highlighted that the media connected the Biergerkomitee, both the process and its output, to wider political debates. This may count as evidence that the Biergerkomitee has contributed to the climate change debate in Luxembourg. Additionally, the Biergerkomitee had an even broader impact by contributing to the debate on citizens' participation in Luxembourg. Yet, more research is needed over the longer term to assess the extent of its impact with regard to influencing specific changes in debate, and policy, in the coming months and years.

7.3. Considerations for future citizens' consultations

7.3.1. Recommendations

Throughout the report, we formulated ten recommendations for future citizens' consultations:

- 1. **Ensure that the missions are concrete and do not overwhelm the consultation's agenda.**
 - To ensure the effectiveness and success of future citizens' consultations, we recommend a clear articulation and prioritization of missions. This will help guide participants and streamline the consultation process. Before launching a citizens' consultation, conduct a thorough review and refinement of the missions. Each mission should be precise, actionable, and clearly worded. Ambiguities and overlapping objectives should be addressed. Ensure that the missions align with the broader policy or decision-making goals of the consultation. The missions should be directly related to the issues at hand and contribute to informed recommendations. If a consultation has more than one mission (as with the BK), assign priority levels to each mission. Designate primary missions that are of utmost importance and secondary missions that are valuable but may be addressed if time and resources permit. This prioritization will help participants focus on key tasks. Additionally, participants can be involved in the mission clarification and prioritization process.
- 2. **Ensure substitute members from the start of the assembly's design to maintain representativity and adaptability throughout the deliberative process.**
 - To uphold representativity and adaptability throughout the citizens' consultation, a comprehensive substitute member plan should be established.

This plan must include clear guidelines for the selection, qualification, and integration of substitute members when necessary. This strategy ensures that the assembly continues to reflect the diversity and dynamics of the community it serves, even in the event of member resignations or replacements.

— **3. Remove obstacles to participation to foster an inclusive and representative decision-making process, ultimately resulting in a more diverse range of voices.**

- To promote inclusivity and maximize participation in citizens' consultations, it is essential to address and remove potential barriers that may deter individuals from taking part. Develop a diverse set of outreach strategies to reach a wide range of potential participants. Use traditional and digital channels, community organizations, and social networks to ensure that information about the consultation is accessible to all. Develop specific strategies for engaging underrepresented groups, such as minorities, marginalized communities, or those with limited political engagement history. Create strategies to engage young people, including educational institutions and youth organizations, to involve the next generation in civic participation. Ensure that materials and communication are available in multiple languages, especially but not only the official languages of the country. Language should not be a barrier to participation. Make physical and digital spaces accessible for individuals with disabilities. This includes providing sign language interpreters, captioning for online content, and physical spaces that are wheelchair-friendly. Consider the geographic distribution of participants to ensure that individuals from different regions and communities have an opportunity to participate. Host meetings and events in various locations to minimize travel barriers. Offer financial support or compensation to participants to alleviate financial barriers. This should include covering transportation costs, providing childcare services during meetings, or offering stipends. Run public awareness campaigns that not only inform the public about the consultation but also highlight the importance of their participation in shaping policy decisions.

— **4. Offer minimal information about the precise topic of the consultation to reduce self-selection bias and promote a more diverse participant pool.**

- To limit, or minimize, self-selection during recruitment, provide minimal information about the specific issue or topic to be addressed in the consultation. This approach prevents individuals from self-selecting based on their pre-existing preferences or biases. Instead, it encourages the involvement of individuals with varying degrees of interest in the subject matter. Reducing self-selection bias in citizens' consultations is crucial to creating a more

equitable and effective deliberative process that truly represents the interests and perspectives of the entire population. By reducing self-selection bias, citizens' consultations can better mirror the demographic and attitudinal diversity of the broader population. This ensures that a wider range of perspectives and voices are heard. Moreover, minimizing self-selection bias contributes to the perceived fairness and legitimacy of the consultation process. This, in turn, enhances public trust in the outcomes and recommendations generated.

- 5. **Broaden the sampling process by incorporating attitudes towards climate change as a selection criterion, promoting a more comprehensive and well-balanced citizens' consultation.**
 - To broaden the spectrum of perspectives and enrich the deliberative process, attitudinal sampling should be included. Prior to the consultation, conduct surveys or use existing data to assess the attitudes and opinions of potential participants regarding the consultation's topic. Use this information as one of the selection criteria. In recruitment efforts, specifically target individuals with diverse attitudes. This may involve tailoring messaging to appeal to different segments of the population. As attitudinal sampling goes beyond traditional demographic criteria, it allows for the inclusion of individuals with varying beliefs, values, and attitudes toward the consultation's topic. Including participants with different attitudes and positions on the issue provides a more nuanced understanding of public sentiment. This diversity can lead to well-informed recommendations that consider a wider range of viewpoints. Attitudinal sampling ensures that the consultation accurately represents the attitudes and concerns of the population, making the outcomes and recommendations more relevant to the broader community.
- 6. **Promote diversity in expert selection by considering not only the experts' disciplinary and field diversity but also their socio-demographic backgrounds.**
 - To enrich the quality of expertise and broaden the perspectives presented during citizens' consultations, it is advisable to select a wide range of experts representing various fields and disciplines relevant to the consultation's topic to ensure comprehensive coverage and well-rounded insights. It is equally important to pay attention to the socio-demographic diversity of the chosen experts, including factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, and cultural background, to provide a more inclusive and representative set of perspectives.

- **7. Enhance the effectiveness of citizens' consultations by allocating sufficient time for members to process information comprehensively. Similarly, ensure that members can thoroughly engage with the content, fostering a more informed and productive deliberative process.**
 - To optimize members' ability to process information effectively and promote a more inclusive learning environment during citizens' consultations, several practices can come in handy. Break down complex information into manageable, structured segments, ensuring that members can absorb it in smaller, more digestible portions. Provide clear and specific learning objectives for each segment of information to guide members in their understanding and engagement with the content. Establish a feedback mechanism that allows members to express when they are feeling overwhelmed or in need of additional support. This will enable facilitators to tailor their approach to the group's specific needs and adapt accordingly. Ensure that the information is accessible to all members, taking into account different learning styles and needs. Offer various modes of learning, such as written, visual, and verbal materials, to accommodate diverse preferences. In doing so, citizens' consultations can create a more supportive and adaptable environment for members to process information, enhancing their overall participation and learning experiences.
- **8. Enhance member engagement and participation in citizens' consultations conducted in an online setting.**
 - For citizens' consultations conducted predominantly or entirely online, it is crucial to ensure the effective engagement and satisfaction of participants. Choose or design an online platform that is user-friendly and accessible. Ensure that participants can easily navigate the platform to access information, interact with fellow members, and provide feedback. Offer technical support to participants. This can include providing guidance on using the online platform, troubleshooting assistance, and addressing connectivity issues promptly. Furthermore, establish and convey explicit instructions to participants concerning the utilization of an asynchronous channel. Furthermore, guarantee the presence of moderators to supervise the asynchronous channel and conduct routine assessments to promptly identify and rectify any disruptive or unsuitable conduct.
- **9. Incorporate multilingualism as a fundamental principle in citizens' consultations in Luxembourg. Provide resources for translation and interpretation services to ensure all participants can engage effectively in their preferred language. Encourage the use of Luxembourg's official languages and consider adding English as an additional accessible language to foster inclusivity and mirror the nation's linguistic diversity.**

- To respect the linguistic diversity of a country but also strengthen the legitimacy and effectiveness of citizens' consultations, multilingualism should be integrated. Multilingualism ensures that all residents can participate, irrespective of their language preference. To uphold the principles of democracy, all voices must be heard, which necessitates accommodating various languages. The inclusion of multiple languages showcases the cultural richness and diversity of a country, promoting a sense of belonging among participants. Make consultation materials available in all official languages. Allow participants to express their language preferences, and ensure all languages are equally supported. Utilize digital platforms and tools that support multilingual interactions, enabling participants to communicate and contribute in their chosen language. Ensure that individuals with varying linguistic proficiencies or language needs can participate by providing language-learning resources or assistance where required. Provide professional translation and interpretation services to facilitate communication.
- **10. Establish a clear and transparent commitment to the political follow-up of recommendations, including regular updates on the status of implementation. Ensure that the process is responsive and that recommendations are taken seriously.**
- To enhance transparency and accountability in the political follow-up of citizens' consultation recommendations, a well-defined protocol should be established. This protocol must outline the steps, responsibilities, and timelines for politicians to consider, discuss, and act upon the recommendations. Additionally, mechanisms for reporting the progress and outcomes related to each recommendation should be included in the protocol, ensuring that the citizens are continuously informed and engaged in the follow-up process. By implementing such a protocol, the citizens' consultation can strengthen the link between deliberative processes and concrete policy actions, building trust and confidence in the system.

7.3.2. Institutionalization

Institutionalizing citizens' consultations in Luxembourg involves incorporating these deliberative processes into the regular functioning of government and policymaking. Based on our evaluation of the Biergerkomitee, we put forward 14 considerations for achieving this:

- 1. **Legal Framework:** Develop a legal framework or legislation that formally recognizes and mandates citizens' consultations as part of the policymaking process. This framework should outline the objectives, procedures, and responsibilities, providing legitimacy and clarity.

- 2. **Independent Oversight:** Establish an independent oversight body responsible for ensuring the fairness, transparency, and impartiality of citizens' consultations. This body could oversee the selection of participants, monitor the consultation process, and report on its outcomes.
- 3. **Integration with Government Structures:** Integrate citizens' consultations into existing decision-making structures, such as the parliament or relevant ministries or departments. This ensures that the outcomes of the consultations directly inform government decision-making.
- 4. **Mandatory Participation:** Consider making citizens' consultations mandatory for certain types of policies or decisions, particularly those with significant societal impact, such as climate action, healthcare, or education reform.
- 5. **Engage with Civil Society:** Collaborate with civil society organizations and NGOs to facilitate citizens' consultations. These organizations can help with participant recruitment, information dissemination, and public awareness. Additionally, they can be consulted at any point during the process.
- 6. **Resource Allocation:** Allocate adequate financial and human resources to support citizens' consultations, including funding for experts, facilitators, and administrative staff.
- 7. **Training and Capacity Building:** Train government officials and facilitators in the principles of deliberative democracy to ensure a well-informed and effective process.
- 8. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Develop mechanisms for tracking the implementation of recommendations and providing feedback to participants and the public. Regularly report on the progress made on recommendations.
- 9. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Conduct public awareness campaigns to inform citizens about upcoming consultations, the importance of their participation, and the impact of their input on policymaking.
- 10. **Continuous Evaluation:** Implement a system for ongoing evaluation and improvement of citizens' consultations. Use feedback from participants and the public to refine the process.
- 11. **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensure that all aspects of citizens' consultations, from participant selection to the use of recommendations, are transparent and accountable. Make all relevant documents and information publicly available.
- 12. **Civic Education:** Promote civic education in schools and within communities to foster an understanding of the importance of citizens' consultations and participatory democracy.

- 13. Collaboration with Research Institutions: Partner with research institutions and universities to conduct independent evaluations and research on the impact and effectiveness of citizens' consultations.
- 14. Political Leadership: Encourage political leaders to actively support citizens' consultations and demonstrate a commitment to listening to citizen voices.

By carefully considering these factors, Luxembourg can institutionalize citizens' consultations as a regular and meaningful part of its democratic governance, enhancing citizen engagement and contributing to more informed and inclusive decision-making processes.

