

European Research towards a sustainable “City of Tomorrow”: Raising citizens’ awareness and commitment

Guidelines for the implementation of RAISE citizens’ conferences



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Foreword

Citizen participation in policy-making is of major importance for modern democracies. The failure to involve citizens in decisions which affect their daily lives contributes to the growing dissatisfaction with the European Union (EU) and political institutions more generally. This phenomenon can be witnessed across all EU Member States.

The RAISE Citizens' Conference set a sign in the opposite direction, establishing a 'public space' for European citizens to discuss possible options for a better quality of life in urban areas stemming from EU research on urban sustainability. The conference provided a select number of citizens with the opportunity to evaluate and test the acceptability and usability of the research outcomes of the "City of Tomorrow and Culture Heritage" Key Action of the 5th RTD Framework Programme.

The RAISE project tested for the first time this approach at the EU level, forming a panel of 26 European citizens, randomly selected from each of the 25 EU Member States in the year 2005, plus one of the two candidate countries (Romania) who were involved in the review and evaluation of acceptability and practicality of EU research on urban sustainable development. The outcome of the process was a "Citizens' Declaration" presented at the European Parliament in December 2005 (available in all EU languages at www.raise-eu.org).

The follow-up project RAISE-PLUS made a further step, testing the approach at local level, in the town of Lefkara, Cyprus, where the panel of 26 European citizens met local citizens to discuss how EU research on urban sustainable development may help to face local sustainability challenges. The local conference triggered in Lefkara a process of active citizens participation to build together a more lively and sustainable "city of tomorrow". This experience can be replicated elsewhere.



Introduction

This document describes the RAISE citizens conference process, and it aims to give guidelines for new implementations of this citizens' participation approach at EU and local level.

In a nutshell, the approach gives the opportunity to panels of European citizens selected randomly from each Member State to meet and:

- 1) learn more about the goals, outcomes and future impact of EU urban research on their daily life and society as whole;
- 2) to discuss their questions and ideas with leading European researchers, experts and policy makers;
- 3) to contribute to a report (citizens declaration or assessment) detailing what the panel's members believe to be achievable and desirable to implement in the domain of urban sustainable development research;
- 4) to submit their recommendations on future developments in the urban sustainability research domain to European Union policymakers and stakeholders who would be in charge of implementing the outcomes in society;
- 5) to participate in follow-up conferences at local level, meeting local citizens to discuss how EU research on urban sustainable development may help to face local sustainability challenges. These local conferences may trigger processes of active citizen participation to build together a more lively and sustainable "city of tomorrow".

TIP: Similar approaches have been developed and applied recently also to other science fields - as for instance was for the Meetings of Minds project, which gave a panel of European citizens the opportunity to meet and discuss the societal and ethical aspects of brain sciences (see www.meetingmindseurope.eu) - and policy oriented initiatives, namely the European Citizens' Consultation on the Future of Europe (see <http://www.european-citizens-consultation.eu>) and the European Citizens' Panel "What roles for rural areas in tomorrow's Europe?" (see <http://www.citizenspanel.eu>). Together all these initiatives contribute to set a standard for transnational public deliberations.

The key challenge now is to extend the application of this transnational citizens' deliberation approach, and exploit fully its potential role:

- **To strengthen democracy providing a European public space for citizens deliberation:** Representative democracy is based on the representation of the public will by elected politicians who take up the responsibility for policy decisions. Other organised sectors of the society, often referred to as "stakeholders", coalesce to represent their specific interests, lobbying to influence public affairs. Finally, there is the layer of not organised individuals, the vast majority of people. Whatever the form of how democracy is organised in practice, it is important to have a deeper involvement of and better interaction with this layer of "lay citizens" in decision-making processes. Therefore, the aim of a citizens' conference process should be to find means and 'spaces' to ensure a stronger inclusion of lay citizens in decision and/or policy assessment processes. The RAISE conference format answers to this need, allowing randomly selected lay citizens to discuss and make an informed and reasoned assessment of issues of general interest - and in particular urban sustainable development issues - without the need for them to be organised in specific interest groups.
- **To improve political decision-making and governance connecting people at the EU and local level:** The complexity and diversity of modern societies render it impossible for political institutions to have all the necessary knowledge that is required for decision-making. Moreover, those who take the decisions may not be those who are mostly affected by them. There is an increasing reliance on public opinion surveys as a way of hearing citizens' voices, but it is important not to confuse the

information provided by opinion surveys, which conveys only the individual judgement of the interviewed people, with the collective intelligence of the issue elaborated by a group of citizens in a citizens' conference process. Individual judgments are usually based on limited information available from the media, acquaintances, etc, and often biased by personal prejudices, which are reflected in the answers to the questionnaires. The citizens conference format offers instead the chance to develop a critical discussion where any decision based on the politicians' and experts' judgment is confronted with the knowledge from those affected, the citizens, and the result may be a shared understanding of the decision and its possible consequences. However, citizens conferences do not automatically produce a "better" output in terms of such "collective intelligence" of the issues which will be more than the sum of former individual opinions: to produce this synergy citizens shall be provided first with a clear and comprehensible digest of the issues of concern and of the related research outcomes. Moreover, the citizens' conference process only reflects the opinion elaborated together by the selected citizens, whereas the public opinions survey has the potential of providing a representative view of the population, depending of course on the number of persons interviewed. Nevertheless, the random selection of 26 European citizens allowed to have a more comprehensive, qualitative and in-depth evaluation of a complex policy topic - urban sustainable development - than would have been the case with a questionnaire survey. This has to be seen as an input of direct citizens participation complementary to other political arenas and public spheres in the EU governance setting.

- **To embed science work in society:** Another important dimension is the governance of European research and science and the role of research in society. Referring to previously made experiences of bringing together researchers, policy-makers, civil society representatives and citizens in deliberations about socio-technological issues, the former EU Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin, announcing the European Research Framework Programme in the year 2000, called for more systematic, European-wide forms of dialogue, also including citizens, in order to engage not only in scientific discourse but also, and equally, in a broader public debate. Thus, there is increasing attention paid to the social embedding of scientific work and results. The RAISE citizens' conference process, with its objective to evaluate the acceptance and usability of urban sustainable development research outcomes, is an example of such inclusive approach.
- **To raise citizens' awareness and trigger behavioural change:** As could be observed during the preparatory meetings and the drafting of the Citizens' Declaration, a citizens' conference process can trigger a learning process among the participating citizens with regard to the topics of concern and the whole policy- and decision-making process. Involving citizens in policy-making processes will increase their competences on these topics as well as their self-confidence towards participation in public choices. This in turn may have a life-changing impact, leading to substantial changes of individual behaviour, where this is perceived as needed to achieve shared goals and a common interest (as for instance the decision to adopt more sustainable forms of consumption, mobility etc.).

However, a practical challenge is to ensure the right time and resources for citizens participation. Indeed, the preparation and organisation of a citizens' conference process involves important issues which need to be taken into account very early in the planning stage. Of particular importance are the selection process of citizens, the set-up of the preparatory meetings as well as the presentation of the outcomes of the citizens' conference process. One main issue to be taken into account is the time and budget allocated for the citizens' conference process.



General description of the method

These guidelines describe how to realise a participatory process aiming 1) to raise the awareness of citizens across the whole Europe of EU research on urban sustainable development and the EU urban policy agendas and 2) to create a more active citizens commitment towards sustainable change at individual, local and regional level.

The method of participation was developed as an integral part first of the RAISE project - which ran from 2004 until 2006 involving a transnational group of 26 European citizens - and second of the RAISE-PLUS project - which ran in the second half of 2007 involving the same transnational group of European citizens of the RAISE project (the "RAISE group") and local citizens of Lefkara, a small town in Cyprus, who met together to discuss topics related to the "sustainable Lefkara of Tomorrow".

Some of the key features and lessons learned in RAISE would be common to any European citizens' deliberation process - i.e. are independent from the specific science and policy domain of concern - whereas other are specific for the urban sustainable development topic.

Key features

The features which are common to any transnational public deliberation initiative are:

1. **Complexity:** transnational public deliberation is a complex participation process of deliberative assessment by pan-European panels of randomly selected citizens, in close cooperation with experts and stakeholders. It is time-consuming and requires the investment of substantial resources - it takes about two years to set-up and implement a project - calling for a long-term commitment from organisers and participants alike. Even if the needed time and resources are found, there is still a dangerous tendency of the method to end up being with the same group of citizens, who become de facto experts as well. This shall be avoided, creating opportunities for the involvement of new groups of citizens over time.
2. **Choice of the issue:** the issue under consideration must be sufficiently prospective and feature on the European agenda in the near future. This approach follows the tendency to involve the public earlier on in the process in order to avert avoidable conflicts at a later stage. The issue must appeal to the public and be of relevance both to individuals and to society.
3. **European dimension:** participants need to be encouraged in particular to consider the European transnational policy developments of the issue in question and to contribute towards a European public debate. This means that the design of the participatory process and the choice of the issue should make the initiative relevant and interesting to members of the public across Europe. Public and media access must be built into the initiative.
4. **Citizens' deliberation:** a special feature of the method is public deliberation by European citizens who volunteer to take part on a transnational basis. The citizens involved should have sufficient opportunities to deliberate amongst themselves and interact with the relevant scientists, experts, stakeholders and policymakers, thereby enabling the sharing of information, in-depth assessment, open debate and a reciprocal learning process.
5. **Expert and stakeholder involvement:** another feature of the method is all about setting up and linking the various actors: citizens, experts and policymakers. A continuous effort has to be undertaken to raise the interest of stakeholders and thereby make them readier to engage in debate with the panel members, participate in public dialogue on the relevant issues and formulate their reactions on the citizens' assessment report
6. **Link with the policy process:** it is important to understand how deliberation may support and improve the decision-making process, by enhancing the citizens' comprehension of complex issues and the capability to support sustainable strategies and courses of action. Indeed, citizens' deliberation is an

informal process helping the citizens, the policy makers and the stakeholders involved to share knowledge about future challenges and opportunities. As a result, the citizens may change their individual behaviour as well as express more informed preferences at formal elections, referenda etc., and the policymakers may take decisions supported by a greater citizens' understanding and acceptance.

7. **Communication and policy advice:** the implementation of a stakeholder and policy advice action plan is needed, both at European and national, regional or local level as appropriate, to link the results of the (informal) participative process to the (formal) policy process.
8. **Transparency and accountability:** both the implementation of the initiative and the organisations involved must be transparent and accountable. External observers (including policymakers, civil society groups, the media and the wider public) should have access to the proceedings.

The features which are specific of the RAISE citizens' deliberation process are:

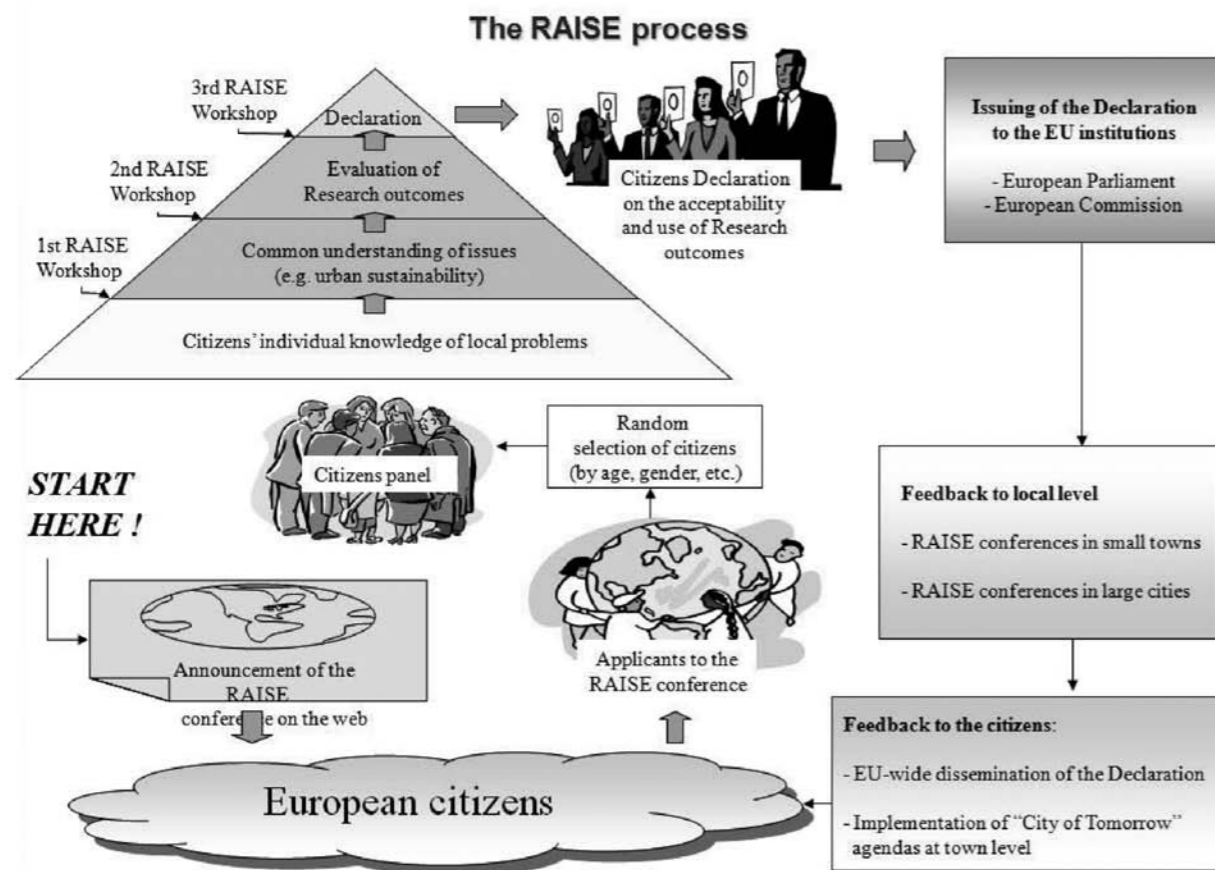
1. **Focus on EU urban sustainable development research and policies for the City of Tomorrow:** "RAISE" is the acronym of "Raising Citizens and Stakeholders' Awareness and Use of New Regional and Urban Sustainability Approaches in Europe". The focus of the RAISE project was therefore since the beginning the acceptance and usability of results achieved by EU research on urban sustainability issues. The latter includes in particular about 140 projects funded in the context of the EU FP5 key action "City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage" and other projects in the on-going FP6 and future FP7 research programmes, focused on urban governance, cultural heritage, the built environment and urban transport.
2. **Citizens' assessment of sustainability agendas at the EU level:** the assessment of EU research and policies for the sustainable city of tomorrow is summarised in the "*Citizens' Declaration on the European City of Tomorrow*". The key messages of the citizens are that we need all to take care of: 1) how to incorporate the voice of the citizens into the urban governance process; 2) how to make a radical change in transport habits in order to facilitate more sustainable transport; 3) how to get a more sustainable built environment, e.g. by reusing what we already have; 4) how to integrate cultural heritage in our everyday life, encouraging people to feel ownership and appreciate our diverse and shared cultural heritage; 5) how to increase awareness and education on sustainability of people; 6) how to help people making commitments at local level towards small changes in their daily life and share across cities in Europe the knowledge of "what works and what doesn't"
3. **Citizens' assessment of local sustainability issues at the town level:** taking the "Citizens' Declaration" as a reference, local participation processes can be replicated in several towns of Europe: a first successful experiment was done in Lefkara, thanks to the follow-up project RAISE-PLUS. Local events involve local citizens and citizens of the transnational European panel to discuss questions related to urban governance, sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, education on sustainability - mentioned in the Declaration - and/or other relevant sustainability issues (e.g. combating climate change, sustainable growth, etc.). The aim is to support the local policy making process with an informal critical discussion of sustainable development issues, involving local and transnational citizens, who may bring their own perspective and experience of how the same universal issues are handled in their countries and towns.
4. **Life-changing impact:** one of the most significant outcomes of this process of public participation is the level of good will, motivation and community spirit which is able to create among the participants, and the life-changing impact of the experience. Throughout the RAISE process, there was a great emphasis on individual commitment and action. Participants were asked to reflect on how they felt they had been changed by the experience, how their attitudes had changed and what, if any, changes they had made to their behaviour.
5. **Strengthening of European citizenship:** interest, understanding and engagement of people involved may change immeasurably. For instance, in the RAISE group the whole attitude towards the



European community changed, in that participants felt now far more “at home” as a member of the European community that they have felt in the past. The levels of goodwill and emotional commitment between the participants were an amazing testimony to the ability of people to reach out to other people as individuals. The idea of these “citizens-meet-citizens” events is that not only top politicians, experts, business people and the inner circle of grassroots organisations should meet face-to-face across country borders, to discuss issues of common European interest. Indeed, it is crucial that the largest number of people possible can put a face on other countries of Europe: it is in meeting people from other countries, that we realise that we have a lot in common.

Overview of the process

The overall RAISE citizens conference process is illustrated in the figure below:



In a nutshell, the process starts with the announcement of the conference on Internet, then the collection of citizens’ application forms, the selection and recruitment of a representative panel of citizens from all EU countries, the work with the panel in three workshops and finally the presentation of a citizens assessment report (“Citizens Declaration”) to the European Parliament or another EU institution. This process helps the citizens involved in the panel to evolve from their individual knowledge and perceptions of local problems to a common understanding of the urban sustainability issues and what EU research is doing, and then to the evaluation of the acceptability and usability of EU research outcomes.

A further step of the process is to organise local RAISE citizens conferences at town level (as it was done in Lefkara, Cyprus, with the support of the RAISE-PLUS project), using the Citizens Declaration issued at the EU level as the basis to trigger a debate with local citizens on urban sustainability issues, which may be framed as “City of Tomorrow” agendas. This was done for instance in Lefkara, Cyprus, where transnational and local citizens mixed together to discuss the issues related to urban governance, sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, education to sustainability and other sustainability concerns at local level.

A summary of the single phases of the method and their key objectives is presented in table format below:

Phases of the method	Key objectives
Issue analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To map and pre-frame aspects of the issue ⇨ To map the policy context ⇨ To assemble and compile information in accessible format
Selection and recruitment of the European citizens’ panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To announce the European Citizens’ Conference on Internet (Letter of Invitation) ⇨ To collect application forms (questionnaires) from the citizens ⇨ To select candidates for the panel based on clearly defined criteria ⇨ To recruit the selected candidates
First citizens’ workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To create an opportunity for citizens to get to know each other (team building) ⇨ To learn about the issue in question ⇨ To trigger an initial brainstorming
Second citizens’ workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To create a common understanding of the issues at stake ⇨ To meet invited policy makers and stakeholders and discuss with them ⇨ To start thinking to the citizen assessment report: how it should be framed? What it should include?
Third citizens’ workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To elaborate the citizens’ panel assessment report (Declaration)
European Citizens and Stakeholder Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To present and discuss the Citizens Declaration with European policy makers and stakeholders)
Policy advice and dissemination events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To establish a link with the policy process at EU level ⇨ To establish a link with the policy process at local level
Organisation of local citizens’ conference(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To organize “City of Tomorrow” conferences in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small towns • large cities ⇨ To trigger permanent citizens’ participation and discussion of “City of Tomorrow” agendas at local level
Communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ To disseminate on Internet information about the RAISE process and events ⇨ To ensure media coverage at EU level (e.g. Euronews) and local level, as appropriate ⇨ To address with targeted dissemination activities (e.g. e-newsletter) public authorities in charge of participatory assessment tasks, as required by EU conventions and regulations (e.g. Aarhus Convention on environmental information, etc.)



The RAISE recipe ingredients

We may see the RAISE European deliberation method as a “recipe” combining several ingredients:

- **Citizens:** they are of course the driving force of the assessment process. Their participation is voluntary. They shall be selected randomly in a pool of applicants from all EU Member States. The pool of applicants should be as wide as possible, but to facilitate the European panel work there may be additional requirements, besides that of being a resident in an EU country. For instance, for the purpose of the RAISE project, it was required to have an adequate command of English and access to email and the Internet, and no direct personal or professional stake in the urban sustainable development field.

TIP: when - due to budget limits or the specific purpose of the citizens’ conference - there are additional requirements which narrow the range of citizens eligible for selection, the citizens panel sorting out from the selection process cannot be considered representative of the “average European citizen”. For instance, the pool of applicants to the RAISE project had a higher level of education than the European average, with 88% holding a university degree. However, the aim of the project was not to carry out an experiment in direct democracy per se, but to evaluate the awareness and acceptance of City of Tomorrow research results, and the bias towards more highly educated people, likely to be more aware of and interested in research findings, was acceptable.

- **Facilitator:** a trained facilitator plays a central role in the European Citizens Deliberation method as manager of the deliberative process amongst the citizens themselves and with the other participants. His/her role consists of fostering team building within the panel, supporting citizen interaction, and easing communication across linguistic and/or cultural barriers. It is interesting to note that the citizens themselves, being continuously involved in team work, learn to act as facilitators themselves, showing a growing confidence in the process. For instance, after the experience at EU level, the citizens of the RAISE group were able to facilitate the discussion with the local citizens in the Lefkara conference.

TIP: Don’t forget that even English speaking people has often a different understanding of terms and concepts according to their national cultures. It is important therefore to devote enough time to the common understanding of key issues and questions in the deliberation process. The use of too technical jargon - e.g. the term “congestion pricing” used by transport planners - shall be avoided, and even complex research outcomes and deliverables shall be translated in clear “Micky Mouse” concepts, understandable to all the citizens of the panel.

- **Resource persons:** these include scientist, experts, policy makers, civil society associations and stakeholders who provide input into the discussions with the citizens’ panel. In the RAISE project, the interaction with the experts were of great value for the citizens. The interaction with experts enabled citizens to obtain both in-depth information about certain aspects of urban sustainable development and practical examples of sustainable development policy-making. The citizens could reflect upon and compare the presented case studies with the situation in their own cities and their own life experiences.

TIP: Policy makers and stakeholders, when they act as “resource persons” in the citizens deliberation process, should transmit to the citizens their personal experience and views about the topics of concern. It is a kind of more intimate transfer of knowledge, ideas, visions, opinions etc., something different from the more official positions that the stakeholders and policy makers invited at the final European conference may take at the end of the day, reacting to the final citizens’ assessment report. This direct dialogue and interaction between “experts” or “politicians” and “lay citizens” is another aspect of the fundamental value of the RAISE approach: the policy makers may tell their opinions and feelings more freely in the citizens conference space than in their usual policy arenas where they take more official roles.

- **Writers’ group:** this is the group of citizens responsible for the editing of the European citizens’ assessment report (declaration). The overall writers’ group keeps track of, summarises, writes up and presents drafts of the topics covered. The group may involve all the members of the citizens panel, and in this case is usually divided in smaller sub-writers groups involved in drafting the assessment on specific sub-topics. The group shall be assisted by a writer-editor, providing general writing and editorial assistance and helping with the preparation of the final declaration for presentation in the European Parliament or equivalent EU institution.

TIP: Keep the citizens assessment report short (ideally 1 page per sub-topic) and simple, mainly a collection of key messages from the citizens.

- **Observers/Evaluators:** these are experts who attend the citizens meetings to gather information with a view to writing an impartial assessment and evaluation of the European citizens deliberation process. This is an internal evaluation process, based on feedback from the citizens which may be collected informally with face-to-face contacts and more formally by regular questionnaires circulated after each meeting. These questionnaires should not focus only on logistical aspects, but also cover process design, the facilitation provided, the quality of issue framing, etc.. The internal evaluators can hear also the opinions of key stakeholders involved in the process, by means of face-to-face interviews after the final European conference.
- **European Stakeholder Group:** this may consist of experts, stakeholders and policy makers with a European profile. Target European stakeholders shall be identified since the project start, and they should be made aware of the initiative’s goals, developments and outcomes, whilst also seeking input when necessary (even acting as resource persons in the process if appropriate). The stakeholder group shall be involved in the final European deliberation event, and it could be involved also in some intermediate meetings with the citizens.

Besides the above mentioned ingredients, the overall European citizens deliberation process shall be supported by the work of the **project management team**. This shall include partners with competences at least on: 1) method implementation; 2) issue framing; 3) project impact assessment, dissemination and communication.

Description of the single methodological steps

Preparation

The preparation stage includes two main steps.

Issue analysis

This step serves two major goals, i.e. 1) clearly pinpointing which aspects of the issue need to be assessed and 2) producing input for the citizens’ information brochure. For instance, the main task of the RAISE citizens panel was identified as being to envisage the “city of tomorrow”, and consider ways in which the results of EU urban research can be used to help improve its attractiveness and sustainability: the key question was not simply to evaluate various aspects of cities, but to suggest how local governments can make a city attractive and sustainable, and how EU urban research can help to this purpose.

At this stage, existing literature can be used to draw up an overview of the issue (provide a snapshot, detail societal aspects, mapping the policy context, hint of future developments, and so on). But it might



be interesting to take issue framing a step further and organise a workshop bringing together top researchers, policy makers and stakeholders. Drawing on their expertise, the issue can probably be framed in a much more enlightening way than can be achieved via a summary of the literature alone. Another major advantage of this approach is that it involves the major stakeholders in the initiative right from the beginning.

All the material produced in this first step of the process forms a basis for the citizens' information brochure. This brochure, 30-50 pages long, must be easy to read and written in a neutral manner, explaining all the various angles of the issue. In RAISE the preparatory document, of 46 pages with a 59 page annex, laid out the aims and procedures of the project, and what was expected of the participants, who were asked to formulate their view on the acceptance and use of selected urban sustainability approaches, technologies and solutions coming from EU research findings. The document described the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy, and the role of research, particularly the Key Action "City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage" as part of the Community Research Framework Programme.

Selection and recruitment of the members of the European citizens panel

Recruiting citizens is important for lending legitimacy to any participatory initiative. The first thing to do is take a pool of citizens from each EU Member State who would be interested to be involved in the panel and be available to participate at the panel's meetings dates.

Citizens are informed by posting on the project web-site announcements of the European citizens deliberation process and a standardised letter of invitation to any citizen of Europe to submit his/her own application. The letter of invitation shall explain the purpose and process of the citizens' conference in a simple and attractive way, identifying the partner organisations and explaining all the practical arrangements, including specifying any key dates. The letter must be very clear about what is expected of panel members and should stress that prior knowledge of the issue in question is not a prerequisite for selection. The letter of invitation shall be accompanied by an application form to submit the citizen candidature, including a short questionnaire asking for the individual's age, educational and professional background, and other features related to his/her city life experience (e.g. home location, mobility habits etc.), as well as the motivation for participation and any preliminary view they may have of the topic of concern (the "city of tomorrow" in the case of RAISE).

The citizens conference shall be adequately advertised, for instance by means of a press release announcing the event on the European Commission or other EU institutions' web-sites, media news and/or by sending the letter of invitation and application form directly to contact lists of citizens (e.g. RAISE used the "Your Voice" contact list, which includes the citizens that addressed the European Commission asking questions about EU issues).

TIP: a method of "spreading the word" more widely is needed. Now that a first RAISE experience and group of citizens has been established, the citizens themselves can help suggesting a network of organisations in their own countries which could be approached to disseminate more widely. Ideally, in order to have a more evenly spread number of applications from all Member States, it would be necessary to establish national contact points (institutions or individual persons) that can foster the distribution of the information material and application forms in the individual countries.

Once the stipulated deadline for application forms to be returned has been reached (normally citizens are given one month to return the application forms), the received forms are processed and the selection process can start. In the RAISE project the selection of the European citizens panel was done using a [specific software tool](#) to select randomly a group of 26 citizens from the pool of 570 applicants. The software allowed to select one citizen for each of the 25 EU countries in the year 2005, plus another citizen from Romania. The other country candidate to enter the EU in 2007, Bulgaria, was excluded because the applications were far less than those from Romania.

The software can be adapted as appropriate and used again to select new groups of European citizens for new European citizens conference projects, based on information to be provided in the application forms. It works as follows:

- 1 EU countries are ordered in ascending order of number of applications received, from the countries with few applications to those with more applicants.
- 2 A citizen is selected randomly from each country of the list, and the features of the citizen - gender, age, social status etc. - are recorded. A second citizen is extracted in each country to serve as deputy panellist, in case the selected candidate of that country will renounce to commit him/herself to participate.
- 3 At each random extraction, the software controls that the selected candidates have as a whole almost the same distribution of characteristics - gender, age, social status, etc. - of the total population of applicants, in order to ensure the representativeness of the citizens panel.

In the RAISE project the outcome of the random selection was the panel of 26 citizens and the related deputy candidates that have been shown on the project web-site. In order to avoid the inclusion of "too expert" people (e.g. people currently involved in European research projects) and, on the other extreme, people whose English language proficiency could not be ascertained because they didn't answer to the open questions, we classified these applicants as "experts" or "not providing information on their motivation/perception". These have been excluded from the random selection process. All the others entered instead with a weight "high", "medium" or "low". The weights assigned to each citizens' application have been independently evaluated by 8 members of the RAISE project management team, based on the quality of the answers given by the citizens to the open questions. Reading all the application forms, the 8 evaluators gave a score high, medium or low according to their opinion of each candidate's suitability. The final score assigned to each citizens' application was the most frequent sorting out of the 8 parallel evaluations. The applications with "high" score were given a double probability of being extracted of applications with "medium" score, who in turn had a double probability of being extracted than people with "low" score.

TIP: Although representative of the entire population of applicants, it is clear that the low number of possible participants in the citizens' conference process means that the panel cannot be representative of European citizens across countries and social strata in the statistical sense. In the RAISE project this was the consequence of three facts: 1) first, the application forms were sent out electronically via e-mail or could be filled out on the RAISE internet homepage, introducing a bias towards citizens which have easy Internet access; 2) second, eligibility for participation was tied to a solid knowledge of the English language; 3) third, the theme of EU research and policy-making as such is more likely to attract people with a higher educational background and more likely to be interested in the European integration project, even if not necessarily in favour. All in all, the selection process for the RAISE citizens' conference enhanced the chances to be selected of those citizens that appeared more motivated and aware of the citizens conference focus and issues at stake.

When the selection is accomplished and posted on the web-site, the selected citizens are contacted by e-mail and phone by a member of the project management team to have a short interview. The aim of this interview is to explain again the whole process, lining up the different dates, to discuss the expectations and to get the final adhesion of the selected candidate. It is not unusual for one or more citizens to respond negatively to their selection. Any citizen who withdraw have to be replaced by others with the same socio-demographic characteristics, and this is done by contacting the deputy panellist in the reserve list. Once all the selected citizens have confirmed their participation, they are sent a common memorandum of understanding to be signed, which outlines their role, tasks to be undertaken and their expected commitment to the project. Finally, thank-you letters are sent to all candidates, promising them



that they will be informed of the results of the project.

Implementation of the European citizens conference

The general idea of a citizens' conference is that citizens come together to deliberate on an issue of common (public) concern in order to produce a common output. In the case of the RAISE project, the common output is the Citizens' Declaration. Producing a common output necessitates reaching some kind of consensus or compromise among the participants. This cannot happen without discussions and interactions among the citizens.

The implementation stage includes therefore a number (actually three in the RAISE project) of citizens meetings, where the citizens of the panel work together with the help of the facilitator and based on inputs provided by the project management team and some resource persons (invited experts, policy makers, stakeholders). The final step is then the European Citizens and Stakeholder Conference, to be held at the European Parliament or in another EU institution (e.g. the European Economic and Social Committee). Such citizens' conference process is extremely demanding. Participants – who, on average, are not experts of the particular field they deliberate – are expected to concentrate during the conference meetings while receiving a lot of new information. Therefore, they should be given the time and space to process this information.

TIP: The role of the moderator in any citizens' conference process is of great importance. The moderator must ensure that the time plan is kept but also that everyone has adequate time to express their views, that the discussions are not dominated by one single participant, that even those not keen to talk are encouraged to do so, etc. An important success factor for a citizens' conference is that a sentiment of trust is established between the participants and the moderator. However, it does not have to be the moderator who always answers the questions posed by the participants. It is usual in citizens' conferences to call in experts. Both the moderator and the experts should be adequately prepared, keeping in mind how important it is to communicate things in a user-friendly way to the citizens.

The activities performed during the workshops and the debate undertaken by the participants shall be extensively reported in the workshops minutes. However, if there is a budget available for this, by far the most effective way to illustrate the citizens activity and disseminate this later to the public is to produce a video. The **RAISE ABU video** (available on request) illustrates the overall RAISE citizens conference process, since the first meeting of the citizens in Vienna until the final conference, held at the European Parliament on 5 December 2005.

First citizens workshop

The goals of the first workshop are threefold: 1) to create an opportunity for citizens to get to know each other (team building), 2) to learn about the issue in question, and 3) to trigger an initial brainstorming, formulating questions, identifying concerns, suggesting points to discuss, and so on. The focus of the meeting must be on getting to know each other and establishing respect for each others' opinions and backgrounds.

Suitable hotel and meeting facilities need to be booked several months before the meeting. Booking decent hotel accommodation is one possible way of showing appreciation for the effort put into the project by the selected citizens. Make sure that the location is more or less central and easy to reach by public transport.

Normally each citizens workshop shall last 2 full days, preferably on Friday-Saturday. It is useful to draft a complete and detailed programme of the first workshop four to five weeks before the event. However, the facilitator should be left free to adapt the programme on the spot, based on the reaction of the

citizens. It is also important to ensure that enough time is left for informal activities. Standard equipment should include flip charts, post-its, screens and so on.

At least three weeks before the workshop, all members of the panel should be sent the citizens' information brochure and any necessary information about the meeting: how to get to the venue, time schedules, an overview of the programme and proceedings, etc.

TIP: The first RAISE workshop, predictably, focused on introducing the participants to the process, to the issues of concern (urban sustainability research), and to each other. This did not always go smoothly: at first the participants were unclear over what was being asked of them, and some of the presentations were perceived as being very technocratic and confusing. However, the process was designed to be as interactive as possible, with the organisers taking on board comments from the participants.

Second citizens workshop

The aim of the second workshop is to create a common understanding in the citizens' panel of the issues of concern. For instance, in the RAISE second workshop, the citizen participants were to be presented with a selection of issues and results from EU urban sustainability research activities, based around four main areas: 1) urban governance, 2) sustainable transport; 3) sustainable built environment; 4) cultural heritage. Considering the difficulty encountered by the citizens in the 1st workshop to digest and understand the complex information about EU research goals and outcomes, the project team provided as supplementary input synoptic and more legible overviews of EU research in the four areas, to be read by citizen participant at home before the 2nd workshop. The citizens were asked to answer to some questions aiming to grasp their understanding of the topics presented in the overviews, and to elicit a preliminary judgement of their usability and acceptability.

The second workshop shall be planned to include presentations from stakeholders and policy makers, interspersed with small group activities and discussions. Given the material to be assimilated, and the short time available, the sessions of the second RAISE workshop were necessarily very intense. Much of the discussion was done workshop-style in small groups to gauge initial responses to the presentations, each group then reporting back to the whole group for a wider discussion. The participants were asked to draw heavily not just on the material presented to them, but also on their experience and vision of what they wanted from their cities. At the end of the second workshop, online homework shall be planned to let the citizen participants prepare a first draft of the declaration before the third workshop and to finalise the text thereafter.

TIP: One comment made by the RAISE project team in their assessment of the project was that over time the citizens came to behave more like experts. Although the citizens understandably asked for simple explanations, such explanations could not do justice to the inherent complexity of the subjects being discussed. In a sense this is a circle which cannot be squared. Only by becoming in part "experts" themselves did the citizens become enabled to evaluate the material and make reasoned judgments.

Third citizens workshop

The aim of the third workshop is to elaborate the citizens assessment report to be presented in the final Citizens and Stakeholder Conference at the European Parliament (or other EU institution). Usually is an internal workshop, involving only the citizens panel, the facilitator, and the internal observer/evaluator, without guest and external speakers.

In RAISE the citizens assessment took the form of a "**Citizens Declaration on EU Research for the City of Tomorrow**" now available in all Community languages at www.raise-eu.org. The third workshop, held in Brussels, allowed the participants to clarify what was to be included in the Declaration. The



citizens structured the declaration along four topics - i.e. urban governance, sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage - and education to sustainability became a fifth topic, to be considered fundamental to the success of the other themes. They decided that each of the four sub-groups specialising in the 4 areas should produce a section of 2 pages each, while the Declaration subgroup developed the introduction and conclusions (the participation of the entire citizens' panel to the drafting of the Declaration, and not only of the "writers" group, was an outstanding fact in the RAISE process). Initial drafts were far longer than could be accommodated, and led to heated online debates. Drafts were circulated through the forum available on the project website, via email, and also using an online text development package suggested by one of the participants. The final version of the declaration ran to 9 pages. An A3 3-fold summary version was also produced.

European Citizens and Stakeholders Conference

The implementation stage of the European Citizens Deliberation process shall be concluded with a final Citizens and Stakeholders conference, where the citizens' panel presents the results of the assessment to an arena of European stakeholders and policy makers.

The final output of the RAISE project, the "Citizens' Declaration on the City of Tomorrow", was presented at the European Commission and the European Parliament in Brussels, on 5 December 2005. Invitations for the presentation event were sent via e-mail to members and representatives of the following institutions/organisations:

- European Commission;
- European Parliament (in collaboration with the Intergroup Urban:Logement);
- Committee of the Regions;
- European Economic and Social Committee;
- European City Networks (e.g. EUROCITIES, ICLEI, POLIS);
- Individual European Cities;
- European Urban Knowledge Network;
- Various Stakeholder groups (e.g. European Council of Town Planners, International Association of Public Transport, European Federation for Transport and Environment, European Environmental Bureau, European Construction Industry Federation, etc); and Ministries from individual Member States.

The Citizens' Declaration was presented in two different settings: in the morning at the European Commission (Charlemagne Building), to about 20 stakeholders representatives, and in the afternoon at the European Parliament, to about 40 policy-makers and stakeholders. In the morning session, after the introduction by the European Commission officer, Eric Ponthieu, and the RAISE project coordinator, Carlo Sessa (ISIS, Rome), the Declaration was presented by the citizens themselves, and a discussion followed. In the afternoon, at the European Parliament, an introduction was given by Jean Marie Beaupuy (Chair of the Intergroup Urban Lodgement) and Pierre Valette (European Commission, DG Research), followed by the citizens' presentation and discussion of the Declaration.

Some of the most interesting comments from the stakeholders are given below:

- Citizens involvement in science is not only a moral need, but also a way to better understand behavioural dynamics; there is a problem of continuity and long-term relationships with the politicians, often changing due to the electoral turnover (CNRS-France).
- There is a strong gap between what the citizens want and what the politicians think they want, and this Citizens' declaration was successful in showing how this awareness gap could be filled;

the citizens are the key actors in the play, they make the city dynamic (UITP).

- This event is an important example of how to let citizens feel themselves really "European". The approach should be then implemented further, talking with other EU institutions but also with national institutions; it is important to develop national debates starting from the Citizens' Declaration as the first product (European Commission, DG Education and Culture).
- The RAISE process is perhaps even more important than the specific outcome, i.e. the Citizens' Declaration on the City of Tomorrow; this seems the real way to communicate with the citizens. Open questions are how to continue with this participatory approach, and which mechanisms could be put in place (European Commission, DG Research).
- The RAISE experience shows how important is to let lay citizens become aware of the research undertaken in Europe, and of the goals or outcomes of this research. In doing this, science results must be made clear and simple for the people to understand (Ministere de l'Equipment, des Transport e du Logement, France).

TIP: many citizens were disappointed that there was no proper final event for their group after the presentation events. Some citizens had to leave early, during the presentation at the European Parliament, others left immediately after the event. Therefore, it is not only important to have a good organisation of the preparatory meetings and the presentation events in a citizens' conference process, but also a proper ending which allows the participants to share their impressions and experiences made during the whole process.

Besides the reactions gathered at the final conference, some main lessons emerged from the overall citizens assessment exercise of EU research on urban sustainable development:

- The citizens' expressed the view that the link between EU-funded research projects on urban sustainable development and the dissemination of their outcomes is not satisfactory. They also identified not sufficient impact of research outcomes in urban areas and the improvement of the quality of life in cities. The key question raised was: "how can potentially important research outcomes influence urban policy-making?" A further discussion of this issue is necessary, also in order to show how research efforts can inform policy decisions.
- During the preparatory meetings of the citizens conference, a constantly growing learning process among the citizens could be observed. After initial problems of making themselves familiar with the topic and process of a citizens' conference, the participants developed a dynamic role in the process. Therefore, a citizens' conference process can trigger a learning process among the participating citizens regarding the concept of sustainable development, the outcomes of EU funded research projects as well as the complexities of policy-making in an urban context.
- While deliberating the issue of urban sustainable development, the citizens expressed the need to reflect intellectually, emotionally and socially upon sustainable development and policy processes in order to fully understand the concept and its meaning in practice. The citizens expressed several negative experiences they made in relation to what they refer to as rapid economic growth and social modernization. This is an important aspect which refers to the Lisbon Strategy of the European Union and the need to establish the European Single Market. The citizens expressed their wish to consolidate the objective of economic growth with the need to solve social problems in Europe.



Policy advice and impact assessment

The European citizens' deliberation process does not end once the final European Citizens Assessment report has been presented to the European policymakers and stakeholders. On the contrary, the best-case scenario is that you will gain good media coverage and elicit some promising opinions from policymakers and stakeholders. However, don't make the mistake of thinking that the results of the citizens' work are so important that they will find their own way to policymakers and the media. Disseminating results is all about investing a lot of time in writing, talking, organising events, and in particular organising local citizens conferences to disseminate the Citizens Declaration key messages at local level and trigger participatory processes on sustainable development strategies at the town or regional level. The key challenge is to deliver on the promise of policy impact made to the citizens, which justifies the substantial investment made in the European deliberation project.

Creating an impact requires financial and human resources and the issue of coordination and better connection between the EU policy level and the national, regional and local levels - where decisions shaping the future urban environment are concretely taken - needs to be considered. A "bottom-up" process of citizens involvement to deliberate on urban sustainability issues would be hardly feasible without a more constant support of the normal EU policy networks and institutions. At this regard, we endorse the following recommendation from the ECD project Meeting of Minds:

"We need to find new institutional ways to make these kinds of citizens deliberation processes become a part of the political culture within the political institutions. This aspect is essential if pan-European participation is to have a greater impact on policy processes over a longer period of time and must be developed further in future projects, for example by institutionalising public participation at European level. An institution could be created, perhaps at the European Parliament, like STOA or an independently-funded European foundation, to organise deliberation in a fast and responsive way as required, because the public needs to be involved at EU level. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that the process does not become a top-down mechanism that could only be activated by officials in Brussels but rather something that can play a genuine participatory role."

In the specific context of the RAISE initiative, the expected 'impact' of the citizens' conference process relates to the involvement of citizens and the quality of decision-making processes for urban and regional sustainable development. It is important to reflect upon the possible uptake of this participatory model in decision-making or assessment processes on the various political levels (European, national, regional and local). The implicit expectation is that decision-making with participatory assessment processes may lead to more informed decisions than would otherwise have been the case. In the context of urban sustainable development issues, this means the integration of citizens' knowledge and expert knowledge in order to reflect upon policy options for integrated sustainable solutions (involving economic, social and environmental considerations).

Especially in the context of complex problems, which are likely to emerge in urban sustainable development, the combination of scientific expert knowledge and local knowledge of citizens may offer some important contributions for possible solutions. Additionally, the awareness raising of lay citizens about complex issues and problems will oblige researchers and experts to clarify their assumptions, approaches and outcomes and to avoid a too technical jargon. The aim of RAISE in 'raising awareness' about EU funded research was therefore to produce two immediate impacts:

- First, to make the involved citizens more aware of the research objectives and outcomes as well as their possible impacts on their daily lives.
- Second, to make politicians, researchers, experts and other institutionalised stakeholders more aware of what the selected 26 citizens think about the research results and what suggestions they give for the potential translation of these results into concrete policies (through the "Citizens'

Declaration" that was drafted by the citizens themselves).

After the final Citizens and Stakeholders Conference of December 2005, the RAISE project team assessed to what extent these immediate impacts have been achieved, by means of face-to-face interviews of three Members of the European Parliament and e-mail interviews of stakeholders working on the European level, as well as of the group of citizens that participated in the citizens' conference process. The following are the most interesting reactions:

Policy makers and stakeholders

- Concerns about the emotional attitude of the citizens' group: The interviewed MEPs had some reservation with regard to the extent that the "average European citizen" – even properly selected – is able to understand the role and content of research being carried out at the European level. Research outcomes in sustainable development, especially when involving technologically advanced issues of urban development, are not easy to understand by non-experts even if they are presented by a project team and experts. The interview partners argued that the opinions of citizens are mainly based on their emotional approach to particular urban development problems, and a mismatch may emerge between scientifically elaborated suggestions and emotional responses from the citizens.
- Concerns about the representativeness of the citizens' group: the interviewed MEPs stressed that the citizens' conference process shall not be mixed with the idea of a public opinion survey process. Although the final opinion of 26 citizens has substantial value, it does not express of course the opinion of the whole EU population. At this regard, public opinion polls would bring better results, like the ones which are undertaken by the Eurobarometer surveys. According to one MEP, a citizens' conference process should be undertaken with participants being allowed to speak in their native language or translations should be offered in order to avoid possible self-restrictions when the citizens present their opinions, misunderstandings, generalisation of final results and further comments. Furthermore, the number of applications to select a representative group of 'average citizens' in such projects should be increased to a level from 3,000 to 5,000 per country.
- Suggestions about applying the approach to more conflictual policy fields: One MEP argued that the citizens conference process should not be applied to 'trivial' fields where there is less confrontation of opinions (e.g. the need to improve environment conditions), but rather to policy fields where the decision-making process would need strong compromises and trade-offs (e.g. the Community budget). He suggested the following fields for a possible application of a citizens' conference process: the Common Agricultural Policy, TEN infrastructure, Science and Technology development. Furthermore, the involvement of citizens in the implementation of the sustainable development concept could be valuable, too.
- Highlights on the usefulness of citizens' conferences: On the topic of how a citizens' conference could contribute to the decision-making process in a specific policy field or political debate, one stakeholder argued that the most important contribution is feedback to the decision-makers. More specifically, the stakeholder refers to "better public policies, sense of ownership, closing the gap between citizens and decision-makers, strengthening citizens' participation in the decision-making process and thus enhancing democracy in general". However, there are also some reservations regarding a more general use of citizens' conferences. One stakeholder argued that, although citizens' conferences could have a positive impact on policy decision processes, they should be applied rather selectively otherwise "Europe will be in danger of setting yet another bandwagon rolling which may call into question its inherent value to all the other citizens".



Citizens:

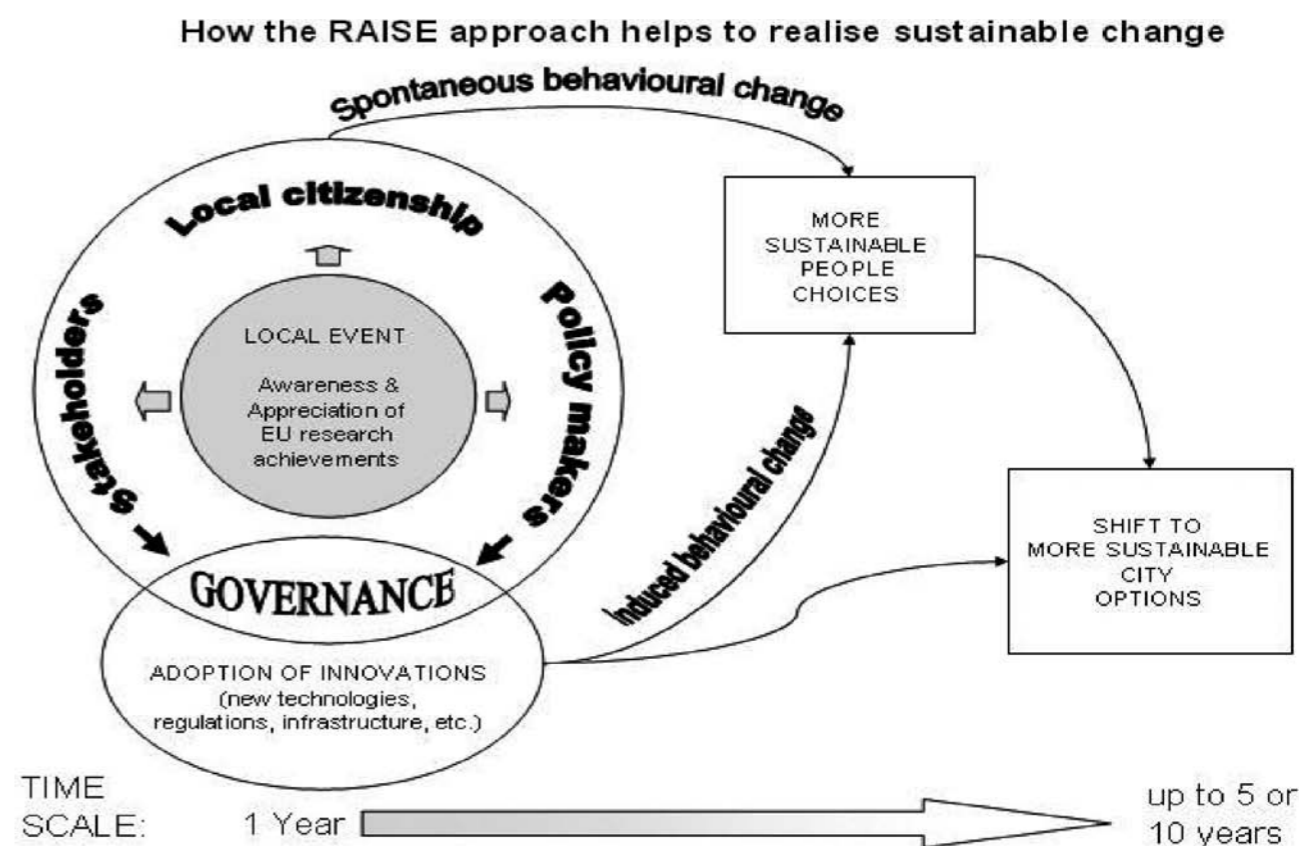
- What was striking for many of the citizens was that 26 people from 26 different countries and various backgrounds were able – within a comparatively short period of time – to work together, exchange their daily-life experiences and finally reach an agreement in the form of the Citizens’ Declaration. There was a “European spirit” emerging between the citizens throughout the preparatory meetings and the final presentation event. The collaboration among the citizens was seen as very enjoyable and enriching. This feeling of being a community of selected European citizens could also be felt by the RAISE consortium. It was a mutual feeling among the citizens that they became friends. Therefore, the selection of the citizens, as one of them put it, was an “excellent choice (...) everybody was A-quality stuff – and this helped us immensely to achieve our goals” (Greece).
- Many citizens, though, found it rather difficult at the beginning to find a clear understanding of what was concretely expected from them in the citizen’ conference process. On the one hand, people found it difficult to identify a clear target of the citizens’ conference. Some citizens “could not follow and find the track the organisers were leading us to, the why, what for and when [was unclear]” (Poland), and would have needed “a better overview of where we were going, and how we were supposed to get there” (Sweden). On the other hand, there was some frustration because of the high expectations and the enormous task that was lying ahead of the 26 citizens. These issues could be solved to some degree as the RAISE project team increased its efforts to explain thoroughly the objectives of the citizens’ conference and prepared background material on the subjects of concern for the citizens.
- It is most striking to notice the change that the citizens noticed for themselves and their relation to the European Union. They feel “more informed and connected” (Netherlands), “like an EU citizen after the conference” (Cyprus), “more involved about what is going on and concerned about the developments in the EU” (Italy), “[the] difference on how I see the EU and how I feel as an EU citizen now” (Latvia), “far more ‘at home’ as a member of the European Community than I have felt in the past” (UK). Additionally, some argue that they are now more interested in the subjects and policy fields that were discussed in the citizens’ conference: “I’ve changed my attitude towards the subjects involved. I’m interested in knowing what happens in the fields of cultural heritage, built environment, transport and governance.” (Italy). Some other interesting issues that emerged were the following:
 - Being more aware of the European dimension of research and policies (Austria).
 - Giving more value to citizen participation, bottom-up approaches and democratic values (Cyprus).
 - Increased knowledge about the problems of other cities and countries (Denmark).

Producing impacts at city level: the RAISE local citizens’ conference format(s)

The RAISE citizens deliberation method can produce an important impact at city level by means of local events, where local citizens and the citizens involved in the transnational project group are mixed together. The aim of these local conferences is to improve the awareness and appreciation among European citizens on a regional or local level of the importance of European research and of the development of new technologies and sustainability approaches. Starting from the “Citizens’ Declaration on the European City of Tomorrow” - which is taken as reference - citizen participants may be asked to reflect on how advancements in the domain of urban sustainable development are helping - and will help in the future - our cities to be more sustainable.

However, besides the appreciation of how EU research achievements could contribute to a better city of tomorrow, another perhaps more important aim of implementing local RAISE conferences is to create active local citizens and stakeholders commitment to support sustainable changes of the city life.

This strategic impact of the RAISE approach at local level is illustrated in the figure below:



The idea is that the local event may trigger a local governance process, involving local citizens, stakeholders and policy makers in the critical discussion of the city sustainable development challenges and how the EU research and policy agenda may help to address these challenges. In short, we may describe this process as a public discussion of the “City of Tomorrow” agenda, whose ideal outcome should take the form of commitments:

- **for the decision makers**, to adopt innovations and best practices learned from EU research as appropriate for the local context. Although informal, these commitments may help policy makers to take later formal decisions in the appropriate policy arenas (e.g. the city council);
- **for the citizens** themselves, to accept and support those innovations, even when they require substantial behavioural changes from their side.

The final medium to long-term impact of this process would be a possible shift to more sustainable city options as a consequence of the policy and market innovations and of the citizens behavioural changes (“spontaneous”, as a result of the citizens increased awareness of sustainability concerns, or “induced” by new regulations and policy measures).

There are two formats of local citizens’ conferences based on the RAISE approach:

- **Small town conferences:** these concern cities of few thousands inhabitants, where local conferences can be organised with the participation of the citizens of the European panel and the open participation of local citizens, without a formal random selection of local citizens which usually is not needed in a small town setting.



- **Large city conferences:** these concern metropolitan areas with a large central city, usually divided in districts, and other surrounding municipalities connected to the central city by important commuting flows (i.e. living outside the central city by working, shopping, etc in the central city). Here local conferences can be organised again with the participation of members of the European panel and of a randomly selected group of local citizens, at least one for each district of the central city and surrounding municipality.

The methodology to implement these two formats is illustrated below. The description is based on the experience already done of a small town conference in Lefkara, Cyprus, whereas for the large city conference we anticipate the main features of the citizens conference on urban sustainable transport which will be organised in the context of the EU 7th Framework MOVE TOGETHER project for the Rome metropolitan area.

TIP: As it concerns the implementation of the RAISE citizens conference process in a large city setting, the guidelines will be updated after the end of the MOVE TOGETHER project, to take into account the lessons learned from the citizens' participation in that project.

Implementation of the RAISE citizens' conference process in a small town

An example of a RAISE small town conference was the **Lefkara Citizens Conference**, organised in the context of the RAISE-PLUS project funded under the Europe for Citizens Programme. The conference was held in Cyprus from 2 to 5 October 2007, mixing most of the members of the original RAISE citizens' panel and local citizens and stakeholders from Lefkara and surrounding villages.

This event was successful, showing that it is possible to have fruitful critical discussions with local citizens of sustainability concerns because these are universal - the same problems challenge the quality of citizens' life everywhere in Europe, including climate change, air pollution, traffic, noise, environment protection etc.. Moreover, these issues are addressed by common EU urban sustainable development research and policy agendas - and claim for concerted actions to build a better city of tomorrow, at local as well as at global level.

The conference lasted in total 4 days, of which the first 2 involving the RAISE transnational citizens' group only and the other 2 days open to the participation of citizens of Lefkara and surroundings. The organisation of the conference days provides a model for other similar conferences:

- **First day - Introduction of the RAISE transnational group of citizens to the Lefkara context:** The first day was devoted to understanding the local needs and situation in Lefkara and to what extent and how the RAISE Citizens' Declaration may be relevant and used in the local context. This understanding needs to be theoretical and practical. The understanding of practical aspects was facilitated by a morning "walking tour" within Lefkara, guided by the Mayor. In the afternoon the citizens worked to develop more conceptual feedbacks about how they think the RAISE declaration recommendations may be useful in the local context.
- **Second day - Reflection on the RAISE vision and process of implementation at local level:** In the second day the transnational group of citizens made an assessment of the RAISE vision behind their Citizens' Declaration and discussed how to "sell" it to the local citizens, adapting the recommendations to the local needs. This was done by working mainly with the Mayor of Lefkara (who was also the Cyprus member of the RAISE citizens panel): questions to the Mayor were prepared by dividing the citizens in small-groups, related to different fields: sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, urban governance, education to sustainability.
- **Third day - The Lefkara European Citizens Conference:** The third day was the core conference

day, opened to the participation of the citizens of Lefkara. They were invited to discuss the "Lefkara of Tomorrow" (i.e. how to ensure a sustainable future for our town?). The morning session was devoted to introduce the local citizen participants to the RAISE project experience and the Citizens' Declaration, by means of speeches of the RAISE project coordinator and some members of the citizens' panel and the projection of the RAISE ABU Video. This was particularly effective to illustrate the RAISE process in a lively way. Key messages of the Citizens' Declaration have been also showed on the screen, and then the people of Lefkara has been given 30 minutes to reflect on the most fundamental sustainability issues and challenges to be addressed, writing their thoughts on post-its to be put on the wall. Based on these post-its, the single conference topics have been identified and classified in five "city of tomorrow" themes: 1) urban governance, 2) sustainable built environment, 3) cultural heritage, 4) education to sustainability and sustainable transport (the latter was considered to be a less urgent problem in the context of a small town as Lefkara), 5) other (including mainly natural environment protection). In the afternoon, the local citizens and the members of the transnational groups were mixed and divided in five subgroups, to analyse the five themes identified in the morning and produce reports of the citizens views for the plenary session at the end of the day. Plenary sessions were assisted by simultaneous translation English - Greek, while in the small subgroup work the citizens were free to work in national language.

- **Fourth day - Conference conclusions:** In the fourth day the Lefkara and transnational citizens meet again all together, only in a morning session, to discuss further the "Lefkara of Tomorrow" issues as emerged by the small groups discussions and reports of the day before. The citizens worked again in small groups to elaborate their key messages to the Major in relation to the conference themes (urban governance, sustainable built environment, etc.). These key messages have been reported in a final plenary session.

The following are the key messages from the citizen participants:

Urban governance and citizens participation:

- Voluntary activities are done in Lefkara always by the same people. We need to educate our children in the primary school to participate to city life.
- Regional cooperation is done only in the education sector. We need more region-wide cooperation on other issues, e.g. on transport matters. We need also to tailor the timing of participation to the very different needs of men and women, who have very different daily activities and time loads.
- Young people: we need to create more opportunities to live in Lefkara for the young people. They have not enough services, job and other social life opportunities to live in the town. We need to create job opportunities too. For instance, create a coop of women not only to deal with lace but also with food traditions, which may attract people to buy food products. They could do this as a part time job. We could facilitate also the renting of refurbished traditional houses to young couples running agri-tourism activities.

Sustainable transport:

- Make our city more accessible, creating a parking space and transport services to connect with the larger cities around (Nicosia, Lefkara, Lemassol)
- There is a problem of noise and safety to be better regulated. Motorbikes should not be allowed in the narrow streets, and we should have pedestrian areas in the centre.
- The delivery of goods should be taken early in the morning, before 9.

Sustainable built environment:

- How to deal with the many abandoned houses which belong to owners abroad since many years? We need to register them, find the owners, and we need legislation and subsidies for the renovation



of the houses

- We need a better local development plan, and also a specific regulation of shop signs (neon, etc.) which can injure the town landscape.

Cultural heritage:

- Our traditional craft production (lace) is going to disappear, because nobody is teaching it to the new generations. We would need to create a training centre in Lefkara and teach it also in the primary schools, for many more hours. We need to use local human resources for this (women teaching at school)
- We need to preserve the architecture of the town, e.g. being very careful with the color we use for the facades, avoiding badly constructed buildings etc. We need to renovate the small churches.
- We need more cultural events, besides those organised in summer: for example organising lectures, or also traditional music in restaurants, with the participation of groups from other countries. We need to organise conferences and to promote this form of tourism.

Education to sustainability:

- We need to educate children to care of animals and nature, and produce an impact on their families. There could be an expert teaching in schools.
- We need to educate the young people to become volunteers, promoting activities such as cleaning squares, school projects etc.
- We need to educate people of old age to be more satisfied with what they have, e.g. by means of activities where people may mix with others. The municipality could organize a presentation about best practice in other countries. Students could do some community work for the older people and learn from them.

Other:

- We need to recycle waste, organising differentiated garbage collection extended to all other surrounding villages (being so small we cannot recycle alone!).
- We need to protect the birds stopping in Lefkara surroundings during their migration, instead of shooting them. The municipality should collect the license fees from the dog owners, and start with these tax revenue a programme on animals protection and respect complying with existing EU regulations.

However, the most outstanding outcome of the RAISE conference in Lefkara was by far the adoption of a **“Lefkara of Tomorrow” agenda** and the start of a permanent citizens’ consultation process supported by the Lefkara Municipality.

Implementation of the RAISE approach in a large metropolitan area

The first example of implementation of the RAISE approach in a large metropolitan area is provided by the MOVE TOGETHER project, funded under the new EU 7th Framework Programme. The project applies the approach:

- to raise the citizens awareness and appreciation of EU research of urban sustainable transport and the active citizens commitment to urban mobility change. The RAISE citizens group will act in the project as a transnational focus group, to produce a deeper assessment of sustainable transport research;
- at local level, in a large city (Rome), where a panel of 25 randomly selected local citizens will be

involved in a local citizens and stakeholders conference process;

- elsewhere in Europe, to disseminate the MOVE TOGETHER concept by means of exhibitions organised at some major international transport conferences (e.g. World Sustainable Mobility Forum in Nantes, UITP Conference in Vienna, etc.).

The MOVE TOGETHER key message is “we do not move alone, we always move around the city together with many other people”. In other words, the key assumption is that better awareness of the social and environmental implications of individual mobility choices may lead to more responsible choices - letting people to move away from the use of their cars or mopeds as the preferred option in any circumstance, even when time and space resources are severely limited as in today urban environments.

Starting from this concept, and a systematic mapping of the EU urban sustainable transport research undertaken by the MOVE TOGETHER project team, the transnational focus group of citizens is expected to produce an assessment on:

- What are the aspects of urban sustainable transport and related EU research that appear to be most relevant?
- What are the choices in our daily life that are potentially affected? How?
- If we could co-produce a show presenting that work to our neighbourhoods, what would we do?
- What are the existing information tools from the European Commission and the project that we consider as the most “citizens friendly” and “valuable for the citizens”?

This assessment will be presented in a MOVE TOGETHER Citizens and Stakeholder Conference, planned for June 2008. The most original part of the MOVE TOGETHER will be however the local citizens conference process organised afterwards in the Rome’s large metropolitan area setting. This process:

- will start with the announcement of the local citizens conference on the local institutional web-sites and local media, inviting lay citizens to submit their applications;
- then, once collected the applications, the recruitment phase will select a representative panel of 25 citizens. The criteria of selection of participants will include demographic (age, gender) and socio-economic characteristics, as well different categories of city users (e.g. commuters, students, elderly, etc.) in order to have a citizens panel including a variety of citizens profiles and urban mobility needs. The random selection of the citizens will be performed applying the RAISE software to the population of applicants, divided into the 19 Rome districts and 6 surrounding municipalities, in order to have one participant selected for each area of the urban region. The criteria of participation will be made explicit, in particular the need to commit oneself for a total of about 10 days during a period of 2 months, to take part to 2 preparatory meetings and the final citizens and stakeholders conference in Rome;
- after the selection, the panel of 25 citizens will meet in 2 preparatory meetings, to discuss the recommendations produced by the transnational focus group of citizens at EU level and the local policies - including practical initiatives co-funded by the European Commission in the Rome area - which aim to more sustainable transport in the urban environment. The working language of the panel will be Italian, and the citizens will be assisted in their work by a team of facilitators, including a professional mediator and some citizens of the transnational focus group.
- finally, the citizens and stakeholders conference will aim to produce as final outcome a shared vision, taking the form of “Move Together Commitments” (practically a City of Tomorrow agenda focused on urban mobility issues) drafted by the local citizens panel and integrated with the recommendations of local stakeholders.



Communication strategy

An effective media and stakeholder communication strategy should be developed from the start in order to achieve a good coverage of the proceedings and generate interest and commitment from key stakeholders with a view of maximising impact.

For media communication, the project team shall develop an integrated communication plan indicating the key messages and objectives for each stage of the project. Common templates for press releases on key European events are useful, but for local events more tailored communication would be needed to outreach local media market.

Stakeholders shall be involved with a targeted communication, according to their specific interests and the requirements of the project. Setting up a “stakeholder group” would be useful to facilitate stakeholders involvement, but if this is not possible the key stakeholders should be at least identified and regularly informed about the initiative.

Communication tools to realise the communication strategy can include, among other things:

- **European Commission press releases:** these are essential to give a patent of “officiality” to the citizens conference project, and attract people and media players both at the very beginning, when the conference is announced on Internet and the submission of citizens’ application is open, and at the final conference.

TIP: The publication on the CORDIS web-site of a press release announcing the RAISE conference and the possibility of submitting free applications caused the number of applications received to grow almost suddenly - in less than one week - from less than 100 to more than 500 (the minimum number necessary for the success of the first RAISE initiative).

- **Conference video:** this is an invaluable tool to illustrate the overall citizens’ conference process, from the first meeting of the citizens until the final conference outcomes, involvement and opinions of the participants. In RAISE a 20-minute video about the citizens’ conference process (RAISE-ABU) was produced and displayed to the audience in the final conference in Brussels. This video had the intention to show the process of the preparation of the Citizens Declaration throughout the three preparatory meetings. Through the video, the audience had the possibility to get a sense of how the Declaration was developed and how the citizens interacted with each other during the preparatory meetings. As stated from one invited stakeholder, while the presentation of the citizens declaration in the conference appeared as artificial with lack of spontaneity, from the video appeared more clearly that there was enough room for the citizens to express their views and contribute their individual ideas to the drafting of the declaration. The same video was completed after the conference recording the last conference day event and final outcomes.

TIP: the RAISE-ABU video is a very effective dissemination mean, and it was very useful to introduce the overall RAISE process and goals to the citizens of Lefkara, Cyprus, who participated to the local RAISE conference. The vision of how the process worked with the citizens in Brussels create almost immediately a feeling of trust into the process for the local citizen participants.

- **Press conference:** this shall be organised and held at the final conference event, in order to have media coverage of the citizens conference process.
- **Web-site:** a more permanent communication tool is obviously a web-site. The RAISE project web-site is available at www.raise-eu.org. This is a static web-site, providing information on the original RAISE project consortium, the citizens conference process and the final Citizens Declaration on the European City of Tomorrow. The information on the follow-up activities stemming from the RAISE project are now provided in the RAISE-PLUS project web-site: www.raise-plus.org. This aims to be

a more dynamic and interactive web-site, constantly updated with the information on the RAISE related events and accessible to a growing community of citizens interested to join the RAISE initiative and participate in new European citizens conference initiatives.

Resource considerations

Based on the time and resources needed to perform the RAISE and RAISE-PLUS projects, we can extrapolate a typical work-schedule and budget requirements for organising RAISE-like citizens conference processes. The information is provided separately for the EU level and local conference proc

Typical work-schedule

European RAISE citizens conference (project duration: 12 months):

Timing	Activity
Month 0 to 3	Issue analysis
End of month 1	Project web-site available on-line
Month 1 to 3	Announcement of the RAISE citizens conference on the web-site, invitation and collection of applications from EU citizens candidates
Month 2	Official press release announcing the conference + targeted dissemination on relevant web-sites, citizens contact lists etc.
Month 4	Evaluation of citizens’ application forms
Month 5	Random selection of the 25 panellists and deputies, phone interviews of the selected candidates.
Month 6	Recruitment of the panel
Month 7	Info-pack sent to the panel participants
Month 7	First announcement on Internet of the final conference at the European Parliament (or other EU institution); targeted dissemination to relevant stakeholder categories
Month 8 to 10	Citizens preparatory meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ First Citizens Workshop at the end of month 8 ⇨ Second Citizens Workshop at the end of month 9 ⇨ Third Citizens Workshop at the end of month 10 Production of a video of the citizens conference process (optional)
Month 9	⇨ Second announcement of the Final Conference; letter of invitation sent to key stakeholder representatives at EU level
Month 11	⇨ Final drafting of the Citizens’ Declaration (citizens’ assessment report)
End of month 11	⇨ Final conference at the European Parliament (or other EU institution)
Month 12	⇨ Assessment of the final conference and final reports of the project. Production of a second version of the video including the also the final conference (optional)



It is important to note that any European Commission funded project should include also, after the conference, adequate time (let say further 6 to 12 months) and budget resources for dissemination and exploitation activities, aiming to spread the citizens' conference results across Europe, to targeted stakeholders and the general public

Local RAISE citizens conference (project duration: 6 months):

Timing	Activity
Month 0 to 2	Set out travels and accommodation arrangements of the transnational citizen participants
End of month 1	Draft programme of the conference to the transnational citizens participants
End of month 2	Announcement of the citizens conference to the local citizens Arrangement of local facilities (conference room, catering, translation services)
End of month 3	Local citizens conference (4 days event): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇨ First day: introduction of the RAISE transnational group to the local context ⇨ Second day: reflection on the RAISE vision and process of implementation at local level ⇨ Third day: "Town" European Citizens Conference ⇨ Fourth day: Conference conclusions
Month 4	Assessment of the local citizens conference; production of draft reports (minutes)
Month 4 to 6	EU-wide dissemination on Internet of the conference results; targeted dissemination to local stakeholders (in the country where the conference takes place). Final report to the European Commission (if the event is EU co-funded).

Budget requirements

The budget requirements are illustrated in two separate tables, for the EU level and the local citizens conference processes.

European RAISE citizens conference:

Main budget items	€	Comments
European citizens panel cost per workshop:		Costs related to the participation of 27 European citizens, one from each Member State, to a 3-days workshop located in an European city.
Citizens time compensation fees	6.750	The fee to compensate for citizens time availability (3 days) is set at 250 € per workshop.
Travel	10.000	Travel costs are estimated in relation to an average location in Europe (they could be less for central locations as Brussels and more for peripheral locations, e.g. Cyprus)
Daily allowances	9.720	The daily allowance to cover hotel and meal costs is set at 120 € (the average for meeting in Brussels). National daily allowance parameters should be used for other locations.
Other workshop costs (room, catering, local transport)	2.500	
Citizens participation to the Final Conference:	15.000	These include travels to Brussels of the 27 European citizens and daily allowances for 2 days (the direct costs of the final conference are not included because it is assumed that the conference room, translation etc. is provided by the EU institution hosting the event)

<i>Order of magnitude of costs for the citizens participation to 3 workshops plus the final conference:</i>	8.500 - 9.500	
Media coverage costs:		
Video production	50.000	This cost covers the production of two versions of the conference video (the first illustrates 3 preparatory meetings, the second adds the final conference)
Euro news spots	30.000	This cost estimate includes a short video (1 min. 30 sec.) to be broadcasted 6 times on all EuroNews channels (4 times in primetime and 2 at night) in 6 languages in all EU countries, plus a reportage of 5 minutes to be uploaded on the project web-site
<i>Order of magnitude of media costs:</i>	75.000 - 90.000	
Project management team:		
Personnel costs (including overheads)	200.000	These costs refer to an estimated effort of about 24 person months of the project team
Travel costs	10.000	Travel costs cover the participation of the project staff to the workshops and internal meetings
<i>Order of magnitude of project team costs:</i>	200.000-250.000	
Total project cost (order of magnitude):	360.000-440.000	

Local RAISE citizens conference:

Main budget items	€	Comments
European citizens panel cost:		Costs are estimated based on the Lefkara citizens conference costs. Travel and subsistence costs should be adapted for other locations in Europe.
Travel	11.000	
Accommodation, lunches, coffees	7.500	
Local transport	750	
Logistic cost (room, translation)	2.750	
Project management team	Not applicable	The professional work for the Lefkara conference of the RAISE project coordinator and facilitator was provided on voluntary basis. Otherwise, the professional effort could have been estimated in the order of magnitude of € 5.000-10.000
Total cost (order of magnitude):	20.000 - 25.000	Including the professional fees the order of magnitude becomes € 25.000 - 35.000



Funding opportunities

Several funding opportunities can be found at EU level to support European and local citizens' conferences following the RAISE format.

EU Research Framework Programme (FP7)

The EU Research Framework Programmes (FPs) calls for proposals may include citizens raising awareness tasks whose purpose is to fund participatory assessment projects in different research fields. Usually these projects are considered "support actions", and as such are 100% funded by the European Commission. This option can be used therefore to promote RAISE-like citizens deliberation projects at the EU level.

Examples of tasks financed in the past by the European Commission include of course the EU 6th Framework RAISE project and the new EU 7th framework MOVE TOGETHER project, respectively focused in urban sustainable development research and on the more narrow field of urban sustainable transport research. Other examples include the Meetings of Minds project in the field of brain science, and the task of the EU FP7 Science and Society sub-programme entitled 'Framing the deliberative process on the responsible development of nano-science and technology (NS&T)'. Both examples relates to the nano field, which today represent one of the frontier areas for emerging technologies and new scientific insights.

Europe for Citizens Programme

This European Commission programme usually provide funds to cover the direct cost of organising citizens participation activities (travel and subsistence, logistic costs, dissemination tools, etc.) across Europe. The option is therefore useful to finance local events, where the EU funds can support the participation of transnational citizens, covering their travel costs. However, European funds do not cover other costs of the organisers (professional fees, etc.), which should be covered by local co-financing sources (sponsors, etc.).

As described in the Programme Guide (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.htm) the "Europe for Citizens" Programme will run from 2007 to 2013, with the objectives of:

- giving citizens the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing an ever closer Europe, which is democratic and world-oriented, united in and enriched through its cultural diversity, thus developing citizenship of the European Union;
- developing a sense of European identity, based on common values, history and culture;
- fostering a sense of ownership of the European Union among its citizens; enhancing tolerance and mutual understanding between European citizens respecting and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue;
- bringing together people from local communities across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build for the future.

All these objectives, and especially the latter, fit well with the purposes of the RAISE citizens deliberation process. Under the Programme, priority is given also to some themes which are of particular interest for RAISE:

- **People's wellbeing in Europe: employment, social cohesion and sustainable development.** The European societies are changing rapidly. For example issues like globalisation, transition towards a knowledge based economy, demographic developments, immigration, increasing individualism are common challenges. The Europe for Citizens Programme will encourage actions dealing with these issues, giving a European perspective to people's everyday life experience and demonstrating how the EU can improve their wellbeing in an evolving environment.
- **Impact of EU policies in societies.** The Programme has as an objective to bring Europe closer to its citizens. A very important aspect in this exercise is to raise citizens' awareness of the results

achieved through European policies and actions in various policy fields.

In order to achieve its objectives, the Programme proposes actions and measures, of which the following are relevant for RAISE:

- **Town-twinning:** this measure is aimed at activities that involve or promote direct exchanges between European citizens through their participation in town-twinning activities and encourage networking and cooperation between twinned towns.
- **Citizens' projects and support measures:** under this measure, a variety of projects of a transnational and cross-sectoral dimension, directly involving citizens, can be supported. Those projects should gather citizens from different horizons, who will act together or debate on common European issues, at local and European level. Innovative methods enabling citizens' participation should be applied. In order to improve town-twinning and citizens' projects, support measures are being funded to exchange best practices, to pool experiences between stakeholders and to develop new skills.
- **Support for projects initiated by civil society organisations:** the aim of this measure is to support cooperation on concrete projects of civil society organisations from different participating countries. A variety of organisations, established at local, regional, national or European level, can be involved.

The above mentioned funding opportunities can be explored to find ways of financing new initiatives, including for instance:

- **New projects for raising awareness** of on going EU research on urban sustainable development issues, funded under the FP7 programme.
- **RAISE Town Twinning:** twinning of cities taking the RAISE Declaration as a common starting point to develop active participation, networking and cooperation on sustainable development issues, co-funded under the "Europe for Citizens" programme.
- **RAISE citizens conferences:** events at local level, like that performed in Lefkara, to be replicated elsewhere in Europe, co-funded under the "Europe for Citizens" programme

All these initiatives should endorse the RAISE approach and keep the Citizens Declaration as starting point, should be connected to EU sustainable development policies and research, could use the RAISE methodology to involve new groups of randomly selected European citizens and, last but not the least, should be financially sustainable. The latter means that, besides EU-cofunding, the local initiatives shall find other funds, e.g. from local sponsors.

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