MOVE TOGETHER

Raising citizens awareness and appreciation of EU research on sustainable transport in the urban environment

Specific Support Action

D 1.5

Guidelines for Local Authorities
MOVE-TOGETHER

Deliverable 1.5 Guidelines for Local Authorities

Executive Summary

This document presents guidelines for local authorities interested in organizing citizen participation to obtain contributions for the design and implementation of sustainable urban mobility solutions. The guidelines are based on the state-of-the-art literature in the social sciences and the MOVE-TOGETHER know-how in this area. The guidelines can be summarized in seven steps as follows:

Step #1: The issues and stakes – is citizen participation appropriate?

1. Define and describe the issue at stake with reference to the various stakes involved.
2. Decide on the appropriateness of the instrument of citizen participation – the latter is only appropriate if the issue at stake can be clearly delineated and described, displays relevance for citizens' lives and when the local authority has resources available (human, financial and time) for implementing and following through the participation process.
3. Establish the stage of policy process – whether upstream or downstream – as this will impact on the objectives, scope and character of the participation process to be organized. Upstream citizen participation allows for more opportunities to impact on the policy process at the strategic formulation stage. Downstream citizen participation is more suitable for obtaining input to detailed design or technical issues.
4. Gauge general mood of population at time of the participation process.
5. Specify openly and honestly the objectives of the citizen participation process and what it is expected to achieve.
6. Decide on whether the process will be accompanied through a scientific evaluation.
7. Prepare short leaflet with preliminary information on the citizen participation process. The leaflet should contain information on all of the above.

Step #2: Who should be involved?

8. Define the target population for the participatory exercise – in terms of socio-demographics and attitudinal characteristics but also with respect to the ‘stake’ in the issue to be deliberated.
9. Use this information when drafting individual questionnaire to be used for filtering applicants and deciding on the final set of participants.
Step #3: What instrument of citizen participation should be applied?

10. Decide on the instrument of citizen participation to be used:
   a. Focus group (8-10 citizens)
   b. Citizen jury (25 citizens)
   c. Consensus conference (12-15 citizens)
11. Familiarize with methodological literature on each of the instruments with the help of these guidelines.

Step #4: Setting an agenda

12. Decide whether the agenda will be open-ended or closed. An open agenda allows citizens to determine the issues to be dealt with and the order in which they are addressed; a closed agenda is less flexible.
13. Specify in introductory text the overall objectives of the exercise and final output.
14. Specify number of sessions, their duration and timing.
15. Specify experts to be called in to provide evidence.
16. Explain role of facilitator and support personnel.
17. Explain role and use of recording equipment.
18. Introduce in agenda an introductory session for participants to meet each other and ask questions.
19. Include roadmap about the issues to be addressed and their order.
20. Include explanations about the organization of tasks during specific sessions.
21. Determine the number and duration of sessions only after a preliminary agenda has been established.

Step #5: Practical arrangements

22. Identify suitable location.
23. Identify organization to oversee and follow-through the process.
24. Hire professional moderator and provide training as to the objectives and structure of participation process.
25. Specify tasks of each support team member.
26. Identify and commission external experts.
27. Specify terms of remuneration of citizens – remuneration is especially recommended in those cases when citizen participation is organized top-down, i.e. by public authorities, which is a different setting than voluntary activity.
28. Arrange for breaks, lunches and, where relevant, dinners.
29. Make a budget for undertaking and adjust according to resources available.

Step #6: Recruitment of citizens

30. Disseminate information on participatory process through appropriate means.
31. Aim to solicit the interest of a sufficiently large number of citizens by using a transparent procedure of selection. Make public all information about the selection process and its results.
32. Use individual face-to-face or telephone interview to tap on applicants’ characteristics.
33. Monitor number and character of applications to ensure representativeness.

Step #7: Follow-through and follow-up

34. Print and prepare for dissemination the output of the deliberative process.
35. Ensure that everything that was originally announced is also implemented in terms of presentations to stakeholders or political institutions.
36. Monitor what happens with citizens’ output in terms of policy.
37. Debrief citizens and learn from their experiences.
1 Introduction

Transport is essential for the mobility of persons and goods and therefore a motor for the economy but also a key element of our modern way of life. At the same time it negatively impacts on the environment and the natural landscape, especially through pollution, congestion and undifferentiated land use.

Sustainable strategies in the transport sector include the reduction of private car use, advancing environmentally friendly modes of transport, improving the quality and convenience of public transport systems and curbing urban sprawl. Next to changes in transport infrastructure planning and management, it is important to raise awareness among citizens about the implications of their individual transport choices on economic, social, and environmental sustainability. For example, as pointed out in the Green Paper on Urban Mobility: towards a New Culture for Urban Mobility (EC 2007), cars users must share city space with the users of collective transport, freight services, pedestrians and cyclists. For cities to remain great places to live in, work and have fun, it is important to promote a more environmentally-friendly urban mobility. This will necessitate changes in the habits, behaviour, and working methods of public authorities, the economic and social actors, as well as the population.

The MOVE-TOGETHER project aims to support the establishment of this 'new culture' by fostering awareness of sustainable urban mobility through the active dissemination and discussion of related research findings. The project targets the two most important stakeholders for urban mobility, namely, citizens as users and local authorities as policy-makers. Furthermore it seeks to facilitate the active and continuous interaction between citizens and local authorities towards a two-way knowledge-sharing process.

This report of the MOVE-TOGETHER project contains guidelines for local authorities about how to organize citizen consultations to support effective two-way knowledge sharing thus improving urban transport and mobility policy. These guidelines build on the social science literature on the topic and the know-how of the MOVE-TOGETHER project in the field of the organization of focus groups. The deliverable is structured as follows: the second section that follows is a short overview of the MOVE-TOGETHER project, its overall aims and objectives, method and results so far. The third section summarizes the sociological and political science literature on local participation processes and concepts. The fourth section illustrates the application of theory with examples from the contemporary practice of citizen participation, including a detailed presentation of procedures followed in the MOVE-TOGETHER project. The fifth and final section pulls together the knowledge on effective local participation in a set of guidelines.
Overview of the MOVE-TOGETHER Project

The objective of the MOVE-TOGETHER project is to raise citizens’ awareness and appreciation of EU research on sustainable transport in the urban environment. The purpose is to demonstrate to the public how EU research in this field contributes to making urban transport more sustainable, i.e. making transport more efficient, more environmentally friendly, safer, and ultimately, improving our quality of life. The underlying assumption is that a better understanding of the impacts of individual mobility decisions will make citizens modify their behaviour towards making more socially responsible transport choices, either as users of the transport system or through the exercise of their citizenship rights. ‘More socially responsible transport choices’ refers to choices an individual makes that take into account not only his or her limited time and space resources, but those of all members of society.

The MOVE-TOGETHER project organized two focus groups. The first brought together citizens from all EU member states – 27 in total. This was a trans-national focus group with English as the main language of communication. The second focus group was more local and involved 25 citizens from all municipal districts of Rome and the metropolitan area. The objective of these focus groups was to discuss with citizens the results of European research on urban sustainable mobility and by doing this find out how to better communicate these results to the wider public.

Citizens introduced their own personal experiences and perceptions to the discussions, thereby helping converge scientific (‘formalized’) and personal (‘non-formalized’) knowledge. This formed a new perception of urban sustainable mobility and possible solutions to the challenges of urban transport. This new perspective, or convergence of knowledge, was elaborated in citizens’ statements and presented to policymakers, stakeholders, and the research community at a public workshop. The citizen statements included the focus group citizens’ appreciation of EU research on urban mobility issues as well as recommendations for policy-makers on improving the communication of research results.

Based on the input provided by citizens in the course of these focus groups, an exhibition concept was developed by the MOVE-TOGETHER partners for presenting the results of urban mobility research to a wider audience. This exhibition concept will be launched and demonstrated in Vienna in June 2009 to then travel to different cities around Europe. The exhibitions will be linked to events such as public discussions, prizes and competitions.

In brief, the MOVE-TOGETHER project has been used as a platform for testing and further developing citizen consultation processes and for putting these in use in communication and public relations. The present deliverable represents an attempt to generalize the lessons of the MOVE-TOGETHER project and translate them into guidelines for local authorities interested in actively involving their citizens in solving the contemporary problems of urban mobility.
Local Participatory Processes and Concepts

The nature and scope of democratic politics in modern societies has been a subject of academic and political debate since the early days. A key issue has always been the extent to which it is possible to sustain active and dynamic democratic practices in a large and complex polity. Already in the Federalist Papers, the founding fathers of American democracy Madison, Hamilton and Jay writing under the pseudonym ‘Publius’ debated the importance of federalism for a large, multi-lingual, heterogeneous and divided country like the United States at the time. One of their main arguments was that within a large polity federalism was a facilitator – and not an inhibitor – of democracy because only federalism with its many levels of government could ensure that there were enough checks and balances on central government but also on powerful interest lobbies. A few centuries later, the European Union finds itself facing similar, even if more complex, challenges as it seeks to advance beyond economic integration towards political integration within a multi-level governance framework.

Whether the European Union will evolve into a full federal state remains an open question. As this could imply a significant loss of national sovereignty it is evidently not favoured by either citizens or political elites. But even if the future of the European Union were to lie rather in inter-governmentalism, which delineates a regulatory model of loose coordination (Majone 1996) rather than a political model of institutional convergence, one thing is certain: that in a multi-level government polity it is no longer possible to rely alone on representative democratic institutions (such as the parliament) and procedures (such as voting) to obtain citizen input into decision-making. A complex democratic polity requires a multi-faceted public sphere (Habermas 1991, 1998) and this, in turn, calls for more stakeholder involvement in decision-making (hence governance rather than government – see EC 2002) as well as more latitude for deliberative processes (Schmitter 2000, Giorgi et al. 2006).

Unlike representative democracy which is conceptually based on the model of delegation, deliberative democracy calls for active citizenship (Barber 1984, Held 1996). Active citizens are those who mobilize within communities (Mark 2001) or social movements (Melucci 1996) and who thus endeavour to impact on policy-making. Active citizens are also those who take part in citizen deliberative forums organized by national or, principally, local governments for tapping on citizen views on specific policy proposals. The latter have been institutionalized in participatory technology assessment (Joss and Belucci 2002) and in environmental impact assessments (EIA) which apply to all major infrastructure projects, including transport.

Unlike bottom-up active citizenship (as in community organizing or social movements), citizen participation in policy forums are top-down as they are organized by public authorities. Both forms of active citizenship, but especially bottom-up community organizing or social movements, are often criticized for the single-issue orientation: their objective is to bring change in one policy area – and often within a strictly delineated sub-component – and this goal is pursued without due consideration to other effects or other groups of users. Top-down citizen participation is further
criticized for being more prone to manipulation given its dependency on public authorities or ‘the policy-maker’ for infrastructure and funding. Even though these are dangers that must be borne in mind, it is equally important not to fall into the trap of magnifying them beyond proportion. The conception that democratic politics can ever be ‘free’ or ‘pure’ in the sense that they involve no strategic considerations – hence the possibility of manipulation – is misplaced as is well-known from studies about strategic voting, lobbying or populism in representative politics or studies of the civil society in deliberative politics (Giorgi et al. 2006).

**Within the realm of top-down deliberative politics much, in fact, depends on the organizational format and procedures followed. This is also the main justification for guidelines of the type presented in this document.** If top-down deliberative processes were to be only a matter of bringing citizens together to discuss policy proposals, then there would be no need to think in terms of research, handbooks or guidelines. The latter are only useful if the form is thought to influence the content – and indeed like in democracy more generally this is known to be the case.

Citizen participation differs in terms of its objective (why is citizen participation being sought? What will the final output be?), design/methodology (who will participate and how will participants be selected? What instrument will be implemented to achieve the objective?), as well as scope (how many citizens should participate? How long and how often will meetings take place? What resources are available?). Despite the various forms citizen participation can take, the underlying purpose should be the intensification of effective participation in and influence of ordinary citizens on policy development and formulation, particularly when their lives and communities are impacted by these policies. Ideally citizen participation should also be experienced as ‘empowering’, meaning that citizens emerge out of the participatory experience with greater knowledge and the feeling that they wish to continue to actively contribute to policy-making in their role as citizens (Fung and Wright 2003).

Much of what is known about the organization of citizen participation is owed to the social sciences and, in particular, the sociology of action and qualitative methodology (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). There are three main instruments of citizen participation and these are described below.

A **Focus Group** is an instrument for gauging public opinion and identifying citizens’ concerns, needs, and expectations. It consists of a small group of participants (8-10) who meet to discuss and provide input on a specific topic under professional leadership. Focus group participants can be randomly selected for representation of all segments of society, or specifically targeted if the objective is to gain insight into the perceptions of a particular group (for example, experts or underrepresented groups). The typical objective of a focus group is to tap on participants’ opinions, insights, and views through conversation and interaction. Different methods can be used to elicit these opinions or discussion. Two frequently used methods are brainstorming and scenario-writing. Brainstorming involves the free exchange of ideas around a central question or theme. Scenario-writing delineates a structured method for imagining futures and describing their various components. The individual views of
focus group participants are usually explored by the focus group facilitator(s) in advance and at the end of the focus group. This allows also the exploration of the way in which group discussions and dynamics impact on individual opinions. The length and format of focus groups depends on its subject. Focus groups used in public opinion research usually comprise a single session of around 3-4 hours. Focus groups in qualitative social research for exploring the opinions of participants about a specific policy issue tend to extend over time comprising 2-4 sessions either over a concentrated period of time (2-4 days) or longer (2-4 months). This is especially when they employ more than one method.

Citizens Juries bring together a panel of randomly selected and demographically representative citizens for a period of a few days to discuss specific policy issues.¹ Unlike focus groups which target only 8-10 citizens, citizen juries tend to have on average 25 members. The deliberations are conducted by a neutral facilitator and often involve experts on the given issue(s) to deepen the debate. What citizen juries aim to achieve is finding a ‘common ground solution’ on the topic of discussion that is presented to the public (Jefferson Center, 2004). This also means that citizen juries aim to represent a great variety of views through relatively large numbers of participants, diverse backgrounds and divided opinions. The term ‘jury’ taken from the court case discourse is here intentionally selected. In a way analogous to a court jury, a citizen jury is called to weigh the pros and cons of a particular policy proposal in order to decide on its merits but also for identifying its failings. The information thus gained is subsequently used by policy-makers to revise the policy towards greater balance. This, in turn, can lead to greater acceptance. Some city councils have implemented a particular version of the citizen jury in the form of a citizen panel meeting regularly (physically or over the internet) to exchange views on various (rather than a single) policy proposals on different issues.² This idea is also one of those proposed by Dahl (1991) for advanced democracies and Schmitter (2000) for European democracy. So-called student parliaments implemented in various schools are another variation of the citizen jury model of deliberative democracy.

A Consensus Conference is different from a citizen jury in that it aims explicitly at arriving at consensus on a particular topic. A consensus conference is often also organized by non-governmental organizations that are not directly involved in the design of a policy. Even if such non-governmental organizations are often operating under the auspices of public authorities, their involvement as organizations with ‘no stake in the outcome’ (People & Participation Online³) is meant to guarantee that the process of opinion-formation initiated by the consensus conference remains free from influence from political ideology. The size of consensus conferences with 12-14

¹ It seems that the first to conceptualize and introduce citizen juries was Peter Dienel (of the University of Wuppertal) in Germany in the 1970s. There citizen juries are known by the name of Plannungszelle (planning cells).
² This is one of the governance best practices reviewed by the Interreg project Knowledge Network. The best practice was presented by the city of Almere in the Netherlands. See www.knowledge-network.org
³ See www.peopleandparticipation.net
citizens tends to be in-between that of focus groups and citizen juries. This is because as is known from social psychology the reaching of consensus through direct interaction is easier in smaller than in larger groups. Prior to the conference, the panel participants usually attend preparatory events for raising their knowledge level on the issues addressed by the conference. Another novelty of consensus conferences is that participants are given the initiative with regard to the detailed structuring of the agenda, the questions to be posed but also the experts to be consulted. The ultimate objective of consensus conference is for citizens to draft a report outlining their conclusions and recommendations, which are circulated to decision-makers and the media. Consensus conferences like citizen juries tend to extend over a few days or a longer period when preparatory meetings are also taken into account. Consensus conference have been systematically in use in Denmark – hence the frequent reference to the so-called ‘Danish model’ when referring to consensus conferences (Grundahl 1995).

Focus groups, citizen juries and consensus conferences all face similar methodological challenges:

**The selection of participants and question of representativeness:** Obviously representativeness is a difficult and often unattainable goal for any small-group activity involving 8 (focus groups), 14 (consensus conference) or 25 (citizen juries) citizens. However, a careful selection procedure can result in the representation of a good spectrum of opinions and relevant socio-demographic characteristics. Important in this respect is that the announcement for any citizen participation reaches a large number of citizens and that a significant higher number than the set target is mobilized to apply for participation in the consultation process. In some consensus conferences and citizen juries the dissemination target is set as high as 1,000 persons. Such high numbers are easily achievable when the organizers have access to census or register address databases. Equally high dissemination targets can however also be achieved with less intrusive means through the distribution of information in local newspapers, at the city council, through religious or social institutions or the internet. A dissemination strategy targeting some 1,000 citizens and resulting in some 100 to 200 contacts can be considered a success. The final selection follows on the basis of short individual interviews (face-to-face or by telephone) to tap on basic socio-demographic and attitudinal characteristics.

**The location and setting:** There is no a priori appropriate or less appropriate setting for a citizen participation process. However the location chosen should display the following quality characteristics: be spacious allowing different sitting arrangements but also the possibility for brainstorming quietly in small groups if this is desired; allow the non-invasive use of recording or sound equipment; have enough and good lighting and a good temperature and ventilation system; and make it possible to set writing or display boards as necessary and at ease. To ‘neutrality’ of the location chosen must also be addressed so as to ensure that no specific private or political interests are seen as having an unequal influence on agenda-setting.

**The role of the facilitator, experts and other supporting personnel:** A key to the success of citizen participation events is the choice of the facilitator. He or she should
ideally not represent any of the organizations with a stake in the consultation process and should also not be an expert. He or she is expected instead to have expertise in the moderation and psychology of discussion. The role of the moderator is not only to implement the agenda (thus also keeping to the latter’s timing) but also, primarily, to make sure that all opinions are heard and that all participants get their fair share of the discussion. This is an especially sensitive issue to manage considering that people vary quite significantly with regard to their verbosity but also their capability to articulate their views. Giving every participant his or her fair share of the discussion should however also not result in a situation where participants are ‘forced’ to speak when they do not wish to. A careful balance must, in other words, be established and doing this is the role of the moderator. Moderators are also those in charge of setting the rules of interaction such as who takes the floor when, how long one speaks, how does one intervene in the discussion etc. Such procedural elements are especially important for the success of citizen participation as they ensure ‘civility’ in debates.

The role of experts in citizen participation events is that of committed outsiders. They are expected to intervene at specific times to provide expert knowledge not available to the citizens and to answer questions. They should be chosen according to the criteria of impartiality and the ability to communicate difficult or complex subjects.

Supporting personnel are necessary for assisting the moderator and or experts – thus for taking minutes, collecting or distributing documentation, moving boards, adjusting equipment and the like. Support personnel are not expected to actively participate in discussions.

The agenda of the meetings: Even in consensus conferences, which tend to follow an open agenda format, it is important that both organizers and participants are aware of the significant role of procedure in participation processes and the agenda has here a central role to play. Setting an agenda means quite fundamentally deciding what is to be discussed and in what order but also what is to be left out from the discussion. It is therefore important to devote sufficient time to the setting of the agenda as this often determines how issues are approached and, especially, in what depth they can be discussed. There are in the meantime some standard agenda templates that have proven quite successful for specific discussion formats and which are often adopted. For instance, for a meeting aiming at discussing ‘futures’ it is commonplace to start with a general brainstorming around the key questions of the ‘drivers’ and ‘trends’. This is followed by an analytical or ‘clustering’ phase when the issues identified are re-examined from the perspective of their similarities and differences. Following expert hearings, the group will then move on to engage in scenario-writing first individually or in small groups and then as a collective.

A common complaint in participation events which links to the question of the agenda has to do with the timing of the participation in relation to the policy process. Participants in deliberative forums will often complain that the agenda is too rigid and that specific issues which they think relevant are not addressed. This often has to do with whether the participation is taking place ‘upstream’ or ‘downstream’, meaning early or late in the decision-process. Obviously there are issues that are irrelevant in a ‘downstream’ consultation process because they are already decided. A typical
example is the routing for a road link or the location of a bridge or a tunnel. Such issues are legitimate issues for debate but only 'upstream' in the consultation process. The failure of the organizers to situate the participation process within the policy cycle can lead to serious misunderstandings and disaffections among participants with negative implications for the participation process as a whole.

A final key issue for all participation processes is the dissemination and use of the results of the consultation exercise. One of the first things citizens invited to participate in consultation processes want to know is how the outputs of their discussions will be used and by whom. Honesty is here called for in order to avoid citizen alienation later in the process. The majority of citizen participation events have a consultative role, representing one input among many in the decision process. At the same time, the impact of the participation will often depend on the ability of the organizers to disseminate information about the process and its outputs to a wider audience within and across the community borders.

Examples of contemporary applications of citizen participation in various policy domains in Europe are provided in the annex to this report.
The ‘MOVE-TOGETHER Process’

The objective of the MOVE-TOGETHER process has been to raise citizens’ awareness about urban mobility challenges and possible solutions to existing problems. This is understood as a ‘knowledge process’: citizens are expected to better understand mobility problems and solutions based on scientific research and new technological advancements they were previously unaware of. However, the ‘knowledge process’ promoted by the MOVE-TOGETHER project is a two-way process – transport experts and policy-makers can equally benefit from citizens’ personal knowledge and understanding of local conditions and needs. A convergence of formalized and non-formalized knowledge increases the shared perception of urban challenges, possible solutions, and best practices.

Based on these insights, the MOVE-TOGETHER project aimed to translate this ‘knowledge process’ into practice. This was done through two focus groups, a transnational and a local one. The European focus group involved 27 European citizens (one citizen from each EU Member State) while the local focus group taking place in Rome involved 25 citizens. The focus groups were organized to deliberate urban sustainable transport issues and challenges from the personal perspective of participants’ experiences (i.e. their ‘non-formalized’ knowledge). Simultaneously, citizens were introduced to ‘formalized’ knowledge (EU-funded research projects on urban transport-related issues). The aim of the exercise was to produce ‘Citizen Statements’ that combine the personal understanding of sustainable transport issues with the appreciation of EU research results in the field. To support the citizens in their work, a systematic analysis of urban sustainable transport issues, policies, and related EU-funded research was carried out by the organizers and forwarded to the participants in advance of the in-depth discussion sessions. The citizens received a synthesis of the results of the individual research projects (i.e. scientific, ‘formalized’ knowledge) in a more simplified and less technical language form. They were also asked to review project Websites and to write up their individual appreciation of the different research fields in urban transport.

The ‘Citizen Statements’ were presented to urban transport policy makers at public conferences. The statements presented the synthesized perspectives of the participants and their new understanding of the issues at hand. These insights were merged into documents that were then presented to policy-makers detailing the citizens’ needs with regard to mobility freedom and how research findings can better be communicated to the public to ensure that citizens become ‘informed’ citizens. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on citizen involvement at every step of the way, i.e. on collaboration between decision-makers, the scientific community, and ordinary citizens to ensure that the most suitable and most effective solutions to today’s mobility problems are developed.

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4 A first MOVE-TOGETHER launching conference was held at the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels on 16th June 2008. This was followed by a local citizens and stakeholders conference hosted by the Municipality of Rome on 27th November 2008.
The procedures followed in MOVE-TOGETHER for setting up the local (Rome) focus group are summarized below:5

**Recruitment of participants:** An announcement was placed in local media and on Websites of transport stakeholders and institutions; the aim was to recruit 25 local citizens, and at least one from each of Rome's 19 city districts and six surrounding municipalities.

**Selection of participants:** The criteria of selection to ensure statistical representativeness included geographic, demographic and socio-economic distinctions, different categories of transport users (i.e. an elderly person, student, business man/woman, parents of small children, etc.). The actual selection of the 25 participants was carried out by using specific software for random selection, which listed the applications received from potential participants in ascending order (from districts with few to those with several applications from residents). Citizens were selected randomly from each district, taking the demographic and socio-economic criteria into consideration. A second citizen from the given districts and municipalities (i.e. a deputy panelist) with similar characteristics was also selected, in case the initial panelist was not able to take part at a later stage.

**Provision of information on the criteria for participation:** During the interview process, the candidates were informed of the criteria of participation, namely the commitment over a period of two months involving the participation in a total of three meetings (2 preparatory meetings, and the participation in the final Local Citizens and Stakeholder Conference).

**Organization and moderation of the citizens’ panel workshops:** The Municipality of Rome's local authorities involved in urban transport initiated the participation process and presented its policies, plans, and projects on sustainable transport and the EU's involvement in these activities. The main objective of the participatory process was to introduce the activities carried out by the local institutions to the citizens with the purpose of producing recommendations for sustainable transport based on the citizens' personal, non-formalized knowledge, as well as the formalized knowledge provided by the local authority on the local transport policies and that derived from EU-funded research projects. To produce these recommendations, two workshops were organized at which the citizens deliberated sustainable urban transport and prepared the Citizens' Statement. This was then presented and discussed at the Citizens' Conference, which included local stakeholders and decision-makers. A neutral facilitator ensured that the citizen workshops and discussions were adequately moderated.

5 Here, the approach taken for the Rome exercise is presented, since these guidelines are specifically addressed to local authorities and because the focus group participating at EU-level primarily involved citizens who participated in the RAISE project (Raising Citizens and Stakeholders’ Awareness, Acceptance and Use of New Regional and Urban Sustainability Approaches in Europe). That is, the majority of participants for the EU-level focus group did not have to be recruited, which saved a considerable amount of time and reduced the costs associated with recruitment and organization significantly.
Organization of local citizens' and stakeholders' conference: The objective of the final event was to improve the awareness of EU research achievements, to introduce and discuss the citizens' recommendations, and have a debate on future opportunities to increase the sustainability of the city of Rome. Moreover, a shared citizens' and stakeholders' vision was produced based on the results of the conference, the MOVE-TOGETHER Commitments. These commitments by both the citizens and the local authority were recommendations for the different actors and stakeholders who cooperate to achieve the goals of sustainable mobility, namely policy-makers, local transport organizations and citizens.

The MOVE-TOGETHER citizen participation exercise was judged as useful and as worth continuing.
5 Guidelines for Initiating a Local Participatory Process

Before establishing a participatory process, several issues need to be clarified, such as the level of participation, which method to apply, what will be done with the output, and what the disadvantages or possible pitfalls are. The present guidelines are based on the state-of-the-art as well as the experiences of the MOVE-TOGETHER project and aim to provide local officials, who have the task of initiating and coordinating a participatory process, with some ideas and suggestions of how to go about.

Participation processes are generally built around four phases: initiation, preparation, participation, and continuation (Wilcox, 1994). During the initiation phase, the details of the participation process are considered, such as what it is the initiating authority intends to achieve by involving citizens and what precisely this entails. An agenda is outlined to determine who will administer, convene and pay for the process, what the participation process should achieve, what the key interests in the community are, and what level of participation is suitable for the issue at hand. During the preparation stage, the initiator should clarify what precisely it is the participation process is to achieve – is the objective to build working relationships, improve the quality of the outcome by involving all stakeholders, or increasing the acceptability of the solution? Furthermore, this stage includes the selection of citizens, the establishment of communication lines, and the decision on what participation strategy to implement to reach the objective. During this part of the process, the selected participants will be provided with information on the issue(s) to be focused on and the details with regard to their role. Details, such as the main deadlines, required resources, and the available technical support are dealt with as well.

The participation phase involves the actual events and activities that are carried out jointly with the citizens. The organized events, which can take many forms depending on the objective of the participation process, should provide citizens the opportunity to “widen their perceptions of the choices available and to clarify the implications of each option” (Wilcox, 1994, p. 18). Finally, continuation refers to what will ultimately be done with the recommendations received by the citizens or proposals agreed on and how citizens will be kept informed about the consequences or development of their feedback. Participation does not advance on a predetermined route and it is therefore not possible to establish a step-by-step guide or handbook. These guidelines are thus intended to be a resource for local authorities, to further develop according to their own intents and purposes. Key questions to be considered when setting up a participatory process like the one used for MOVE-TOGETHER are presented to provide local authorities some ideas of what to bear in mind.

5.1 Step #1: The issues and stakes – is citizen participation appropriate?

Citizen participation is not always an appropriate instrument for obtaining input into policy. Used without due consideration or preparation it can easily turn into a populist
instrument of manipulation or result in the increase of citizen mistrust vis-a-vis public authorities. Citizen participation is appropriate in those cases where the policy issue at stake is clearly delineated and can be expected to engage citizens’ interest because it relates to their lives as urban residents and users or consumers of public utilities. Additionally the local authority must consider whether it has the appropriate human, financial but also time resources for actively engaging and following through the participation process. The issue at stake must therefore also be one for which it is possible to identify and mobilize expertise for compiling and communicating value-free information.

Establishing whether citizen participation is an appropriate instrument will thus force the local authority to delineate and describe the policy issue in question and the stakes involved. By ‘stakes’ is meant the various interests (and groups or stakeholders) impacting on the policy. This could be economic interests as represented by the local industry, resident interests as represented by the inhabitants of the immediate vicinity, or environmental interests as represented by environmental movements or parties, to name a few.

The following ‘ideal case scenarios’ represent typical situations which may arise in local settings with respect to urban transport. We will use these to exemplify the guidelines to follow:

A. Infrastructure construction or upgrading (example: construction of a city bypass or new peripheral road; extending of a district road to allow better feeding of transit traffic; construction of bridge) with implications for urban traffic or urban landscape (like reduction of green area or elimination of a square).
B. Re-routing of traffic in the framework of new traffic system management plan with uneven results for different urban population segments
C. Introduction of traffic calming measures
D. A new master plan for public transport (underground and busses) including opening of new lines, introduction of a traffic management system but also increase of prices
E. Design of cycling lanes to cover extensive parts of the city
F. A vision for urban transport for year 2020+
G. Introduction of urban pricing

Also included in the strategic stage of problem definition is the provision of answers to the following questions:

At which stage of the policy process are we at?

The citizen participation will be presented and organized differently depending on the stage of the policy cycle, namely, early or late or, alternatively, upstream or downstream. Upstream citizen participation is likely to be more flexible allowing for an open agenda and more generally providing the opportunity for citizens to engage in conceptual work. Downstream citizen participation will instead tend to be more technical in orientation and more focused on detail.
What is the general mood of the population?

The general mood of the local population at the time of the launch of the citizen participation process needs to be kept in mind as a possibly external influencing factor. If the local population is dissatisfied with the local government, mistrust is likely to emerge also during the participation process and this will impact negatively on the proceedings unless addressed directly and honestly.

What is the overall objective of the citizen participation process?

One of the first things citizens will want to know is the expected outcome of the process. Indeed the clearer this is communicated in the information material prepared by the local community for recruiting citizens, the greater the response. It is therefore important for the local authority to be clear already at the stage of planning a citizen participation process whether what they are looking for is mere feedback to their plans or a full-fledged opinion on the various aspects of a slowly-emerging policy. It is equally important to define how the output will be used: that is, either informally by the local politicians and their experts, or formally through hearings in local council meetings or beyond.

Will the process be evaluated?

The legitimacy of the citizen participation process is likely to increase if the local authorities are perceived as willing to scientifically accompany the process through the commissioning of external evaluation. Clearly this is also a significant cost factor and therefore external evaluation should only be considered when there are adequate resources. Over-investment in evaluation and parallel under-investment in the mechanics of the participation process itself does not make for the best appearance.

What information should be provided to participants in advance?

Once the above questions have been answered it will be much easier to take preparatory steps and measures for ensuring that the participants are well-informed about the purpose of the participation process and their role. It is recommended that local authorities prepare a leaflet which is structured pretty much according to the issues raised in this section of the guidelines. This leaflet should be made available in print and on the internet through the various communication channels available to local authorities and with the support of local social and non-governmental organizations.

5.2 Step#2: Who should be involved?

Step #2 is specifying who should be involved in the participation process. Clearly each citizen participation process will seek to select citizens that are representative of the local constituency, however, depending on the subject at hand it might not be necessary to seek overall representativeness but only representativeness of one or more specific groups.
For instance, in the case of the ‘ideal case scenario’ G (road pricing) it would be important to ensure that the citizen group includes a fair share of car users, public transport users and mixed transport users. This in turn means that the individual questionnaire used to filter applicants should include a question about the use and frequency of different transport modes next to tapping on socio-demographic characteristics.

Similarly in the case of the ‘ideal case scenario’ B (re-routing), it will be important to obtain feedback from those population segments that are differentially affected by the re-routing. Accordingly the individual questionnaire should include a question on place of residence, economic position, and opinion about the re-routing plans.

These two examples illustrate that the question of ‘who is to be involved’ is not merely to be answered with reference to the statistical representativeness of the citizen group. Specifying more carefully the target population will also help in identifying the most appropriate communication channels for disseminating information about the event. It is also useful for designing the individual questionnaires to be used for filtering citizens applying for taking part in the process. As mentioned earlier in this report, it is important in this connection to reach out to a significantly larger group of citizens than the one eventually selected.

5.3 Step#3: What instrument of citizen participation should be applied?

Three possible instruments of citizen participation have been outlined in this report. To briefly reiterate these are:

- A focus group comprising 8-10 citizens brought together to brainstorm policy ideas. The advantage of the focus group is its small size and its flexible character: it can be used for brainstorming, scenario-writing or for arriving at consensus on a contested issue.
- A citizen jury or panel comprises 25 participants brought together to judge specific policy proposals. The key objective of the citizen jury is to display and explore the contested views and explore compromise possibilities.
- A consensus conference comprises around 12-15 participants and can – but need not be – open-ended in terms of the agenda. From among the participatory instruments consensus conferences are the most elaborate not only by reason of their larger number and longer duration but also because they aim at arriving at a citizens’ statement on a particular topic for consideration by political institutions.

Defining the instrument to be used will help answer a set of other questions such as the information to be provided to participants in advance, the length and timing of the sessions and the number and type of experts to be invited to give evidence.
5.4 Step#4: Setting an agenda

Setting an agenda for the citizen participation process is possibly the most critical aspect. A good agenda operates like a road map making it clear how the various process components relate to the objectives of the exercise but also its output.

The first thing to decide in this respect is whether the meeting will follow an open or a closed agenda. An open agenda means that the citizens are given the opportunity during their first meeting to determine the agenda details, that is, the issues to be addressed, the procedures to be followed including the timing and the experts to be heard. The advantage of an open agenda format is that it empowers citizens and contributes to their commitment to the project. The main disadvantage is that it can leave local authorities unprepared causing a short-term delay of the participation process until the required expertise has been commissioned.

A closed agenda will specify the following elements as a minimum requirement:

a) The overall objectives of the exercise and the final output
b) The number of sessions, their duration and their organization over time
c) The externals experts to be called in to provide evidence - with names, credentials and topics addressed
d) Explanations about the role of the facilitator and other support personnel
e) Explanations about the use of recording equipment if any
f) It should include a first introductory session for all participants to meet each other and the facilitator and experts – this session should be kept informal and provide the opportunity to all those involved to also say something about their personal motivations for becoming involved in the process and their expectations
g) A roadmap as to what issues are to be addressed at what stage, in what manner and the logic for the chosen approach
h) Information regarding the organization of tasks during specific sessions (such as working individually, in teams or collectively)

Only once the agenda has been defined – either by the organizers of the citizen participation alone or in consultation with the citizens –, will it be possible to determine the duration of the process and the number of sessions needed. As a general thumb’s rule, any single theme that is clearly delineated will necessitate a minimum of 15 minutes for one roundtable discussion, including a short follow-up, within a group the size of the focus group (i.e. 8-10 citizens). The greater the number of participants the greater the time needed, assuming of course that the process is inclusive, that it the overall aim is to engage, if possible, all citizens in the discussion.

The agenda should include breaks at reasonable time intervals. No single session should last for longer than one and a half hour and breaks should last for at least 20 minutes.
5.5 Step#5: Practical organizational requirements

Settling practical organizational requirements implies sorting out the following:

- Identifying a suitable location – this should be an adequately spacious place with good lighting and ventilation, which allows the placing of recording and other seminar organizing equipment and provides for opportunities for group work if required.
- Hiring a professional moderator and providing training and information as to the subject of the participation exercise. The moderator need not be an expert in urban mobility but he or she should have professional skills in the facilitation and organization of discussions.
- Specifying the tasks of each member of the support team and arranging for the availability of all relevant equipment or seminar material.
- Identifying an organization to oversee and follow-through the process on behalf of the local authority.
- Identifying external experts to be called to supply evidence and specifying format for their input.
- Specifying the terms of remuneration for participant citizens
- Arranging for lunches, dinners and coffee breaks during the meetings.

This stage of the preparation is also important for establishing a budget for the exercise. It is possible to economize on resources by arranging for the meetings to take place at the city council and by using in-house equipment or support staff; also by relying on in-house services for the provision of coffee breaks, lunches or dinners. It is however not possible to do without an external facilitator, an external agency for overseeing the process and external experts.

5.6 Step#6: Citizen recruitment

Information on the citizen participation process should be disseminated as widely possible, the objective being to obtain as many as 7-10 times the number of applications as compared to the targeted number of citizens.

An individual questionnaire tapping on socio-demographic characteristics and attitudes as well as traits of special interest for the subject of the participatory process should be used to characterize the applicant group and on this basis decide on the participants. For each participant winning a place in the citizen group, a substitute should be established (and notified) for inclusion in case the original member drops out for whatever reason. Substitution of participants only makes sense at the outset of the process or early on; substitutions at a later stage can be counter-productive.

In case the recruitment process is not successful in that it does not reach specific sub-groups of citizens, a decision will have to be made as to whether representatives of a particular group will be left out or additional attempts of outreach will be made. The
latter approach is preferred. The former approach should be used only in exceptional cases and with good justification.

5.7 Step#7: Follow-through and follow-up

A successful participation process is that which delivered according to plan and to the satisfaction of the participants. It is for this reason that it is important to ensure that the output of the citizen participation process has been put on paper and distributed in accordance with the original objectives. This means that if the original plan was to deliver a citizens’ statement on the future of public transport (ideal case scenario D) then such a statement should be clearly identifiable at the end of the process, printed and distributed to the various stakeholders as proposed in the agenda and discussed at the various decision forums at different levels. Alternatively if the objective was to provide feedback to the proposals of the city council regarding traffic calming measures (ideal case scenario C), then these proposals should be distributed and discussed at the city council at clearly specified times.

The ultimate success of a citizen participation process is when it can be shown that the proposals advanced by citizens have been translated – even if only in part – into policy. This type of follow-through is often the greatest weakness of citizen participation processes and the reason why such processes are often viewed with mistrust. It is therefore important to not only ensure that citizen deliberative panels produce outputs but also to document how these outputs are disseminated and, subsequently, used by policy-makers.

Finally, an equally important follow-up is to debrief citizens but also the participating experts and local authority representatives about how they experienced the process, how it changed their views (if so), what they liked and what they could not stand and more generally their expectations for the future. This type of follow-up, which can easily be made part of an evaluation, can produce useful lessons for future citizen participation processes in the field or urban mobility.
Annex. Contemporary Citizen Participation Processes

Citizen participation is today quite widespread in the field of technology assessment. The recent years have seen a surge of deliberative fora on new emerging technologies such as nanotechnologies or converging technologies. These technologies are thought to represent the next technological revolution with applications in materials science, medicine, biotechnology and information technologies. However their environmental and health impacts are still not entirely understood and there are concerns about the short- and long-term risks for both human health and the environment. In the name of ‘anticipatory governance’ (Barben et al. 2008) and in order to avoid opposition of the type observed with GMOs in the 1990s, several research councils engaged in the design of research programmes and the distribution of research funds have sought to tap on the opinions of citizens on the opportunities and risks of these new emerging technologies. Examples of citizen participation events include:

- The Nanodialogues project was a joint project by the liberal think-tank DEMOS and Lancaster University and involved the set up and running of four participatory events on nanotechnologies in 2006 and 2007 on issues such as upstream regulation or ethics of biomedicine.  
- VivAgora, a French non-governmental organization devoted to the organization of deliberative participatory events on science and technology issues organized on behalf of the cities of Grenoble and Paris and with the support of the inter-ministerial committee on nanotechnologies a series of events on the various applications of nanotechnologies and their legal, social and ethical implications.  
- In the United States a similar exercise was initiated by the Centre for Nanotechnology in Society at Arizona State University – six forums together comprising 74 citizens were organized in 2008 and produced a report for the National Science Foundation (CNS-ASU 2008)  
- In Germany, the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment organized a consumer consensus conference on nanotechnology in 2006. This presented recommendations for the labelling of nanoproducts  
- At European level, the King Baudoin Foundation organized on behalf of the European Commission the so-called ‘Meeting of Minds Citizens Deliberation’

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6 The citizen opposition to GMOs in several countries in the early 1990s led to the implementation of a 10-year moratorium on the GMO Directive which many consider the source of the EU lagging behind in terms of research and development in this field (in comparison to the United States). Since that time the EC has been more eager to ‘anticipate’ opposition through timely citizen participation that informs about citizen concerns but also contributes to raising awareness about scientific innovations (see Homeyer in Giorgi et al. 2006).

7 See http://www.demos.co.uk//projects/thenanodialogues/overview

8 See http://www.vivagora.org/

9 See http://cns.asu.edu/

10 See www.bfr.bund.de/cmw5w/sixcms/detail.php/8601
in 2006 to debate on the social, ethical and legal implications of advanced in the brain sciences. The forum brought together citizens from nine European countries.\textsuperscript{11}

In terms of format most of the above deliberative forums were modelled according to the literature on citizen juries and consensus conferences whereby the term ‘jury’ is often avoided as the term ‘citizen jury’ is under copyright protection in the United States. With respect to consensus conferences, the model mostly used is that of the Danish consensus conference (Grundahl 1995). In the course of the 1990s the Danish Board of Technology used systematically consensus conferences for obtaining citizen input into the various aspects and, in particular, the opportunities and risks of various new technologies. Each consensus conference was organized by a steering committee and involved an extensive preparation for selecting citizens, getting them to know each other and to formulate questions for experts prior to the consensus conference as such. The consensus documents prepared by citizens were presented to the Danish Parliament and used when elaborating legislation on new technologies.

In the non-technological field, citizen participation has been extensively used by the Labour Government in the UK since 1997 to inform policy debates in the fields of health, gender mainstreaming of the devolution process (Maer 2007). Recently it was used at EU level for exploring European citizens’ views regarding the legitimacy crisis of the European Union. Following the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands, the European Commission – in particular Margot Wällstrom, Communication Commissioner – launched the so-called ‘Plan D’ where ‘D’ stands for democracy for revitalizing debate on the social and political future of the European Union through greater citizen participation (EC 2005, COM(2005) 494 final). This Plan D involved a series of national debates modelled according to the consensus conference model for discussing the challenges faced by the European Union and the way forward. The national debates were followed by a European consensus conference which brought together representatives from all EU countries to draft recommendations for the European institutions. These were presented to the European Council in the framework of the Austrian Presidency in June 2006. Currently the ‘European Citizens’ Consultation’ programme is running a series of national debates (mobilizing up to 100 citizens per country) on the future of the EU in advance of the European Parliament elections in June 2009. The key question driving the debates is ‘What can the EU do to shape our economic and social future in a globalized world?’ The debate was launched first in the internet (December 2008 to March 2009). Following the conclusion of the internet debate, national conferences in all 27 member states will discuss the various recommendations and come up with a shorter list. This list will be subsequently voted upon by all participants of the participation process and the shorter list will be further debated and finalized at a European Summit of Citizens (with 150 participants) in May 2009. The

\textsuperscript{11} See \url{www.meetingmindseurope.org}
recommendations will be subsequently discussed with the newly elected members of the European Parliament and at regional level in the autumn of 2009.\textsuperscript{12}

Transport is more known for bottom-up mobilization against the construction of specific infrastructures (roads, bypasses, bridges) or transit traffic (as in the Alpine region) (Giorgi and Schmidt 2005). Beginning in the late 1980s and following the enactment of the EU Directive on EIA in 1985 (Directive 85/337/EEC) an attempt was made to contain some of this opposition through the institutionalization of environmental impact assessment inquiries (EIA). EIAs represent public inquiries for discussing governmental plans for the construction of new infrastructure. These usually take place ‘downstream’, hence rather late in the decision process after the completion of feasibility plans and cost-benefit assessments and the near-complete specification of the routing. Citizen input in these inquiries tends therefore to result mainly in design rather than routing changes, such as the introduction of congestion calming measures or better noise protections.

Citizen participation would appear ideal for addressing urban transport issues but here it is used rarely or only on small scale (Wood and Blancher 1999). An exception at European level was the RAISE project – the forerunner of MOVE-TOGETHER – which organized a European focus group bringing together citizens from all EU member states to discuss the results or urban research in different areas, including transport.

\textsuperscript{12} See \url{http://www.european-citizens-consultations.eu/uk/}
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