D5.4: Recommendations on new forms of public participation

WP5 – Dissemination and Engagement

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1.0 About this document

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This document provides a comprehensive overview of designing and running online participatory processes aimed for fulfilling scientific research objectives. It presents learnings and methods developed over the organization of Local Democracy Labs, a joint initiative by the City of Reykjavik and Democratic Society, as part of the PaCE project. The document aims for serving as a handbook for anyone organizing similar participatory processes – be it online, or in person events.

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The working language of this document will be English (EN), as required for reporting purposes by article 20.7 of the Grant Agreement.
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1.1 About PaCE

Across Europe there is a rise of political movements that claim to challenge liberal elites and speak for the 'ordinary person' - movements that can be loosely categorised as 'populist'. Many of these movements have undesirable tendencies. The Populism and Civic Engagement project (PaCE), with others, aims to better understand and respond to the negative tendencies of populist movements, to build upon the lessons of positive examples (such as Reykjavik), and hence play a part in constructing a firmer democratic and institutional foundation for the citizens of Europe.

PaCE will analyse, in detail, the type, growth and consequences of such movements in terms of their particular characteristics and context. From this, it will analyse the causes of these movements and their specific challenges to liberal democracy. In particular, it will focus on transitions in these movements (especially changes in leadership) as well as how they relate to other kinds of movements and the liberal reaction. PaCE will propose responses to these challenges, developing risk analyses for each kind of response, movement and transition. To this end, it will employ the agent-based simulation of political processes and attitudes to allow for thorough risk analyses to be made. Throughout the project, it will engage with citizens and policy actors, especially groups under-represented in public affairs, face-to-face and via new forms of democratic participation appropriate to our digital age to help guide the project and to comment on its outputs.

The project will develop new tools, based on machine-learning algorithms, to both identify and track populist narratives and aid online consultation. It will result in specific interventions aimed at the public, politicians, activists and educators. It will look further into the future, developing new visions concerning how different actors could respond to populism and it will warn about longer-term trends.

1.2 Consortium

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Table 1 Consortium Partners
2.0 Recruitment approaches and how to engage people into talking about research/politics

2.1 Recruitment approaches

Network based methods
The focus of a network-based recruitment approach is to activate a network of organisations or associations already known by the local organizers to reach specific groups and communities through them. As this requires using existing networks of the organizers, it works best for organizing events which are locally rooted and where the subject and context are highly local. One of the key strengths of this approach is that you can reach people through a network of ‘trusted community ambassadors’, bringing the benefits of ‘snowballing’ where those involved by others can also bring along their networks. The value of this not only lies in a faster and cheaper process when there is a limited budget or time available, but it can reach more deeply and widely into a community and a network. That said, the success of a network-based recruitment approach is highly dependent on the time investment in reaching out to local networks and building positive relationships.

Sortition methods
An alternative method for recruitment is random selection or sortition by invitation. This approach is used when it is important to select a group of participants proportionally representative of demographics and geographic location. Providing a representative group based on the chosen demographics is often used for research projects, citizen jury’s and citizen assemblies. As a sampling method, it is an effective way to reach beyond people already known and/or engaged in participation, however it does require enough budget and expertise for carrying out this process.

Communication approaches
Communications -based approaches are essential for all methods of recruitment. Especially when not using any other methods like sortition, and you don’t have an extensive network a communication approach can reach the right audience. You can use traditional media, for example by sharing a press release and social media. You can read more about this in the Chapter 6 on communication.

Targeted groups
In some circumstances it is important to hear from specific groups of people. This can be for a range of reasons, such as needing to hear directly from people who may be particularly interested/affected in a policy area, or from groups whose voices are missing from general insights. In these circumstances tailored recruitment and communications are essential. Connecting with specific organisations, civil society groups or users of particular services not only to reach, but to co-design the recruitment strategy is important to its success.

Recruiting for diversity
In recruitment for participatory events, it’s crucial to find a diverse group of participants in terms of gender, age and education level, to ensure rich discussion and multiple perspectives. When taking a networked method, local organizers must reach out to their local networks and contacts via as many different channels as possible: phone, email, social media channels and, if possible, preferably face-to-face. The more personal the contact, the
better the information will stick. With Sortition methods, creating the desired population sample will help determine who and how to recruit for diversity.

**Use of vouchers**
The use of ‘vouchers’, for people to receive compensation for their participation. We suggest considering vouchers, to enable people to take part at the expense of giving up other commitments and compensating them for their time invested, they could otherwise spend working or for childcare. The value this approach brings is worth consideration, as there is an improved level of participation, better representation of different groups, which leads to a more diverse group and thus more diversified outcomes.

**Local Democracy Labs - How we did it**

Being clear about who we needed to engage with was the critical starting point. For the Democracy Labs, we aimed to recruit a diverse group that would reflect the main research objective: exploring the opinion dynamics based on the measures introduced by authorities and its impact on democracy. To fulfil this goal, we looked for professionals or employees from sectors particularly affected by the covid-19 pandemic situation and the resulting economic crisis (educators and teachers, health personnel, self-employed), migrants, members of minority and underrepresented groups.

Once this was determined, we collaborated with ‘local partner’ organisations to reach out to possible participants as a network-based recruitment approach, and developed a communication plan based on their existing networks, to ensure the context of the event was locally rooted.

We used different social media channels and mechanisms including creating a Facebook event, paid advertisements on Facebook, Twitter posts, a LinkedIn event, and Instagram posts. By

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**Create a recruitment plan**

It should contain a step by step guide of running recruitment activities and planning for communication materials you may want to use throughout the process.

**Create a network map**

Make a network list or ‘map’ of organizations and stakeholders that could help you spread the message - this might be organisations and people you worked with in the past, whose field of activity is related to the event.

**Use visuals & key information on what your event is about for communication**

Visual assets work better for online communication - be it social media platforms, or traditional websites, because pictures attract people’s attention faster than text. You may want to grasp users’ attention first with the picture or short text presented visually and then lead them towards more detailed information. For Democracy Labs’ assets, we used the prompting questions related to our events’ key theme. If you don’t have graphic designing skills or do not work with a professional, you can use one of the free, open-source online tools for creating simple comms visuals, like Canva, Easel or Crello.

**Direct contact is essential**

Warm networks are best to reach by direct communication, and phone calls are preferred over email, as it’s more personal and gives room for interaction on the relevance of the event. If you can’t reach somebody by phone, make sure you write the email as personal as possible and state why you think they should join the event. For example: “Your presence at the event is crucial because you are representing the homeless community in our city, and your voice is very important for changing existing policy.”

**Consider using vouchers**

Vouchers are a good way to compensate people for their participation, this will enable people to give up on other commitments (work, child-care) and could result in an improved level of participation, better representation of different groups of people and more diverse outcomes.
retrieving or sharing our posts, organisations or community leaders acted as ‘trusted community ambassadors’ for recruiting participants.

We kept the language friendly and informal to encourage a wide range of people to get involved. For example, partners invited people to have a coffee with us and to talk about the pandemic.

2.2 How to engage people into talking about research and politics

Encouraging people to talk about politics can be challenging, especially when you aim to hear from people from all walks of life. It’s easy to get into a trap of reaching out to those traditionally engaged or professionally interested in the topic, affecting the dynamics and outcomes of discussions. When reaching out to wider audiences, think of why they might be interested in joining your event - the topic and purpose need to be relevant for people. This means it should be close to their own lives: what do they worry about and what is important nowadays?

The way you communicate needs to demonstrate that you are interested in their opinions, thoughts, suggestions, their concerns. It’s also important to be very clear about how their contributions would be used and why their participation matters. Refer to aspects such as an opportunity to have a say on recent social issues, impact policy-making, participate in a prestigious research project, etc. Ensure participants are aware of the study their input will be used for and, if relevant, which academia and policymakers (local/national/EU) are connected to the project.

**Local Democracy Labs - How we did it**

During the Democracy Labs, we presented the objectives of the PaCE project and explained what would happen with the participants' contributions. It turned out that it worked better for discussions when presented after the round tables. We observed that giving too detailed information on the research objectives and approach at the beginning might have influenced people’s orientation and sometimes confuse them with the multitude of threads.

In communication before the event, we shared the purpose of people participating as: “By sharing your opinion on democracy, you will have a beneficial impact on the PaCE (Populism and Civic Engagement) research and voice in the process of evolution and development of democracy across Europe.”

2.3 Ethical and privacy compliance policy

We suggest when organizing an event like a Democracy Lab to have in place an ethical and privacy compliance policy. One of the important aspects is how to gather and store personal details. Make sure it’s compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in line with the legal procedures of the country’s where the event is carried out. It is a mandatory step to ask people for their consent to be contacted – required by the European law and equally important for ethical reasons. We think it’s also wise to already ask for their consent for using the recordings for reporting and/or publishing and using some photos or screenshots for social media purposes, which you also must do at some point.
Local Democracy Labs - How did we do it?
Example of Local Democracy Lab consent on the registration form:

- By sending this registration form, I agree to take part in the Democracy Lab online event and that my personal details are used solely for the registration process (contact via email or phone) and reporting for the research of the PaCE project;
- I consent to being photographed or recorded during or after the event and for these photos and videos to be used for dissemination purposes on the project website, report, and/or social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook).

Ask for consent
It’s necessary to have people’s permission or consent before contacting them, you can include consent questions into the registration procedure.

Safe storage of collected data
Plan how you are going to store and delete the data (how, when, who).
3.0 Framing the remit – how to ensure it’s meaningful

3.1 Topic, purpose and format

For every engagement exercise you invite people to take part in, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of what you’re asking them for and why this might be interesting for them. Doing participation in research is guided by the research inquiries; however, they may not always be exciting or understandable for the wider audience you wish to interact with. Therefore, you should spend some time with your team to think of the topic, purpose, and format that suit participants’ needs and research objectives.

**Topic**
A research team sets themselves specific research topics that they want to explore. The purpose of involving people is usually to support research with lived experiences of people on a relevant subject. It’s worth thinking from the ‘user’s perspective’, which aspects of your study are relevant to people, what moves them, what would make them interested in your field of research and encourage them to share insights and experiences. The challenge is to translate study objectives to a common language and current issues. There might be issues existing in the social sphere that are not explicitly mentioned in your research objectives but have a significant impact on the subject matter. For Democracy Labs, organized for the PaCE project, we tried to avoid talking about populism directly, as the term is tense, implies multiple interpretations and can lead people to formulating strong statements, rather than opening space for experience sharing. Instead, we focused the leading theme on democracy, which is a much broader term and opens room for story sharing. However, democracy itself can be an intimidating topic, commonly associated with academic deliberation - not everyone feels competent or even interested to talk about democracy. That is why, in the second step of formulating a topic, we have reflected on what is important to people nowadays, what is related to their everyday lives, in terms of democracy. In our context, it was the COVID-19 pandemic that had a massive impact on people’s lives. We somehow merged the pandemic with the democratic practice across Europe - how these two intersect and resonate with citizens, determine their daily choices.

**Purpose & format**
Having a relevant topic chosen, you can think of what are the reasons for engaging people. You may want to hear from citizens what their stand on the subject is, to feed in your research. Or rather, you aim for inviting them to a more open discussion, which will give them a space to share experience, have a deeper reflection, or formulate recommendations for actors who will draw on your research. Preparing a clear and feasible purpose for the engagement activities is crucial for developing a tailored event format. There are several options you can choose from. If your primary purpose is to seek people’s opinion of the research questions, a focus group is probably the best fitting format. If your main goal is to actively engage people with your subject matter and create a safe space for talking openly about their lived experiences, workshop-style techniques will work better. For PaCE Democracy Labs we have used a World Cafe format, adapted to an online setting, which is focused on creating a welcoming and informal environment for participants. There are a couple of virtual ‘discussion tables’ which people can join to have a coffee together and chat on the given topic. They change tables several times to meet other participants and exchange ideas with many people. Tables are hosted by professional facilitators whose role is to ensure everybody has an opportunity to speak out, is looked after, and the atmosphere encourages open and respectful conversation. Participants can use a piece of paper (or a virtual
whiteboard in an online setting) to capture their insights. While online, it can be challenging for people to have a lively discussion and take notes simultaneously, so note-taking was delegated to table hosts. World Cafe supports bonding processes between organizers and participants, and amongst participants themselves, makes people more comfortable and open to share with others. The format can be easily adapted to almost every topic and even to very large groups; be mindful each round (table) should gather about 5-7 people.

Local Democracy Labs - How we did it

When designing Democracy Labs, we identified our goals as ‘key’ (must-haves) and ‘subsidiary’ (nice to have).

The ‘key objectives’ (must have):
- To keep the research programme continuously connected to the lived experiences of participants;
- To think through, with participants, how they might want to be involved in making and shaping decisions that affect their lives;

The Subsidiary aims (nice to have):
- To produce rich qualitative data around the perceptions of power, trust, and democratic processes;
- To better understand how traditional and social media influence and shape political and social opinions;
- To better understand how community interactions influence and shape political decisions.

3.2 Formulating questions

Having a clear, positively and openly formulated question can be a powerful thinking tool, particularly when you organize an interactive session. The question should activate people, stimulate conversation, and invite them to speak. Clear and simply formulated questions can also help facilitators to guide participants. Stick to the rule of asking open questions (starting with ‘how?’, ‘what?’, ‘why?’) rather than closed ones, which could kill the conversation at the beginning. World Cafe encourages people to build on other participants’ stories and viewpoints, take advantage of this opportunity when formulating questions.

As you formulate questions, you can use the following formula:
- explorative - to introduce the subject, paint a bigger picture of the key theme, get people on the track
- deepening - to build upon what was discussed in the 1st round, narrow down the subject
- activating/reflective - to encourage participants to get in charge: formulate recommendations/action points based on the previous conversation
Local Democracy Labs - How we did it

There are three ‘rounds’ of conversation during the Democracy Labs with each one question. Each round has an objective of creating a ‘flow’ in the discussions:

1. Explorative question - about democracy and the pandemic in general
2. Deepening question - starting to get into the topic of how the government is dealing with the pandemic
3. Reflective or activating question - linking people’s thoughts on the pandemic into some ideas, suggestions and recommendations

The leading theme, describing what we want to get from people: How do the covid-19 restrictions by your government impact your trust in the government? (for internal use, not to be asked to participants directly)

Explorative questions - 1st round:
How do you feel your concerns related to the covid-19 crisis are being heard and addressed by the authorities? (local, regional and national)

Deepening questions - 2nd round:
How do you feel about covid-19 restrictions the authorities have implemented?

Reflective or activating question - 3rd round:
In a future pandemic related crisis, what would be your recommendation to the authorities? If you were in charge, what would you do?

Have clear objectives and purpose based on what is needed for the project or research objectives and relevant to people.

Framing the event with straightforward questions
Keep the questions clear, simple and formulated in an open fashion.

Put people first
Make sure the event is human-centred by using participatory methods.

Time and date
When setting up a date for the event, think of the local context: when the people you want to engage are most likely to take part, what is the working and resting model in the place you organize the event, look into bank holidays calendar, maybe it is a good idea to consider scheduling the event to the weekend to attract more people (or quite the opposite).

Timings of the event
In an online setting, it is essential to wisely assess the time needed for discussions and people’s capacity to participate online. While an in-person World Cafe event can take all day long, an online version needs to be significantly shorter. Given the participant’s ability to focus and actively participate, we recommend running the event for no longer than 3-4 hours, having a decent, regenerative break in between. It’s important to keep that in mind when designing a process as it impacts your objectives, event structure and ultimately the final outcomes.

Adaptability and sensitivity to the local context
If you design a process that would be implemented in different places (regions, countries) it’s desirable to have a comparative methodology, thereby the outcomes. However, be mindful of cultural and contextual differences that you may encounter, and address them accordingly. This may refer to adjusting event length, questions asked, timings, tools, etc. If you’re lucky to work with local partners, they could guide you through this process and help with tailoring the process without compromising the outcomes. If you run the process on your own, look for supporter(s) rooted in the local ground, who might advise on what to be aware of. Adaptability is also important for the ongoing process, designed for a longer period of time, consisting of a series of events. Take some time to collect and reflect on the learnings from past events to improve the process on the way.
4.0 Facilitation

A well thought out facilitation plan is crucial for every participatory event. The facilitators are the moderators and organizers who make sure the participants of the event are guided well. The facilitators need to be experienced and independent, who make sure everybody is given a voice and can contribute to the event. It is also important that facilitators apply the objective approach in taking notes in order to get the participants view rather than own interpretation.

We suggest you provide the facilitation team with a plan for the event. The facilitation plan contains a clear and detailed outline of the topics of the event, objectives, methodology, online tools and timetable of the event. The plan is used by the organizing team to have a common understanding of what the event contains and how to make it happen.

Local Democracy Labs - How we did it

The facilitation plan of the Local Democracy Labs covers the following aspects:

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<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
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<td>• Objectives (key and/or subsidiary)</td>
<td>• Location(s)</td>
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<td>• Any other accompanying software (i.e. Your Priorities)</td>
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4.1 Facilitators’ briefing

On the couple of days before the event you should organize a facilitator's briefing. During the briefing, facilitators and organizers receive more information on the event scenario, materials and online tools which will be used. Also, there will be time to discuss the timetable and the facilitation script, with all the roles and responsibilities, see the example below. Depending on the experience of the facilitators, you can consider running a simulation part of the event to test out how certain online tools work and to get facilitators comfortable with their role.
**Tech support**

Alongside the facilitation, we also provide additional support for participants during sessions. We always have a ‘tech support’ specialist on the call to help resolve any technical issues participants might be experiencing.

**Conversation guidelines**

At the beginning of the event we present the conversation guidelines, which are designed specifically for the event. We intend to make our events as inclusive as possible. In ideal scenario, the conversation guidelines are co-developed with the participants, as it enhances the sense of ownership. Due to time limitations, you can ask people to review the guidelines and add their input on how they would like to work together. This actively raises awareness that not everyone will feel equally as comfortable and included in the space and helps people self-govern their actions to support others.

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**Getting to know the team**

Have an introduction round and a check-in with facilitators to get to know each other

**Make sure to go over the whole facilitation script**

Take the time to discuss every aspect of the event: detailed timetable, materials and online tools needed, roles and division of tasks

**Leave enough room for questions**

During and after going through the script questions can arise and adjustments of the script might be needed

**Test online tools**

If the facilitation team is not familiar with some of the online tools you are using during the event, make sure you reserve time to test these, for example setup a Jamboard and see how the recording button in Zoom works
5.0 Stakeholder management – working with partners

For organising a series of events across different locations, you may need to collaborate with external partners, who speak the local language (if relevant) and know the local context. Why this is important and what to look for when you seek one:

- **Rooted in the local ground** - local organizations have exceptional knowledge of the local context and networks in place. This can be invaluable when adapting the process to the local needs and for reaching out to different communities. People are more likely to take part in the event recommended by someone they know and trust. Partner’s networks can serve as multipliers for reaching out even further to different groups.

- **Experienced in facilitation and participation practice** - the success of the event depends hugely on the team. It is their role to create a safe and welcoming space for the participants, which is even more challenging online. Experienced facilitators look after every single participant, ensuring everyone can have a say and know how to prevent or handle conflicts in a group. It is especially important when organizing World Cafe exercises, which are informal in nature and based on a comfortable conversation.

- **Building relationships with participants** - as a locally embedded team, a local partner has better capacity for building meaningful relationships with the participants, also before and after the event. It is crucial for a successful recruitment to stay in regular contact with people who registered or were chosen to participate: ensuring all their physical and mental needs are satisfied. This rule applies to post-event activities too.

- It is advised that the partner organisations have some experience in comms and public relations, as they’re also responsible for this part of the job. Effective communication and contacting local media increase recruitment effort and may attract actors from the public and private sphere, interested in your project, thereby supporting dissemination. If relevant to your project, local partners can also connect you with the local authorities who might want to hear from their constituency.
Look for a ‘matching’ partner organization
Use your networks to recruit the ‘right’ people who will support you not only with implementation, but will also contribute to project’s development.

Be flexible
Recognise different styles of working, levels of experience and cultural differences when working with partners.

Setup clear documents and templates
To ensure an effective collaboration and smooth event it is essential to have a solid and reliable event plan and facilitation script. For other accompanying activities, it might be useful for your partners to have event-related templates, such as: registration form, recruitment guide, evaluation form, press release, sample of visual assets, template and guidelines for completing the report.

Regular check-in moments
To discuss progress and practical matters, during the preparation of the recruitment it can be weekly calls, and more frequent when recruiting.

Make sure partners are properly presented
Put partner’s logos in all relevant comms materials, give them a space to present themselves at the event.

For finding the right partner organization we recommend using a network-based approach, liaising with people and organizations from your network. Look for organizations or groups known for working in the fields matching the topic of your event or research. For PaCE we focused on organizations whose background is in open government, civic engagement, open data, participatory research, local democracy, strengthening civic institutions, polarization, and migration. It might also be useful to do some Internet search: social media platforms (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook), websites of social and research international projects (look into consortia partners), university websites and channels, public institutions websites to look for their collaborators, etc.

As the individual approach is needed for working in different cultural contexts, so is the collaboration with partners. Be mindful of partners’ different levels of experience and take this into account when planning and working together. For some facilitation online can be a new professional challenge, others might need more guidance and support with comms, or recruitment. Just like with participants, take enough time to spend with the local team to answer their questions, consider different options and train them (if required). As a commissioning partner, it is a good practice to create a set of useful templates the team can use directly or adapt.

Working together is also a great learning journey, which both you and your partner can benefit from. Partners can introduce novel approach(es) of addressing different aspects of event organisation, facilitation, communication, recruitment, dissemination, etc.

6.0 Communication

The communication model you adopt primarily depends on the purpose and target group. If your key goal is to attract potential participants you will use different messaging and channels than with communicating to stakeholders who could benefit from the research (i.e. policy actors). For Democracy Labs, the leading purpose of comms activities was to support the recruitment efforts, thus the presented model can be best used for similar goals.

The approach presented here is a model which should be tailored to the local circumstances in every case.
We can divide the communication activities into three phases: preparation, action and post-event.
Phase A: Preparation - about 6 weeks prior to event

- Define target groups and ways to reach them.
  - Who do you want to reach?
  - Where to find these people?
  - How can we reach them?
  - Who can connect us?
- Create an online single-entry point where people can find all the relevant information and register for the event. You may use existing registration platforms which streamline the registration process such as Eventbrite.

For Democracy Labs we have set up dedicated websites with e.g., Google sites, as we aimed for having one unique source of information in the local language. Open-source WordPress templates may serve for this purpose as well.

The website contains all the basic information people might need to know when considering participation: name and purpose of the event, registration criteria, date and location, profiles of the organizers and facilitators, agenda, registration process, FAQ and contact details. Be mindful of an inclusive language - it can be a tricky task to translate research-focused objectives into simple language so ensure you save some time for it. You may ask for feedback of someone from outside your professional circle to see how the message is being received by ‘external’ actors.

- Create a coherent branding - logo(s), colours, font type(s). Having recognisable brand assets and using them consistently would improve the visibility of your initiative and streamline all media appearances.
- Create copies and visual assets for social media communications, in line with your branding and tone of voice. Beware of not using the same copies for different events in a series.
- Create a media database who you want to reach with information about the event. This should include: media name, editor name and contacting details, brief description of key interests. Draft a press release.
- Set up a registration form.

Figure 2 The homepage of the Local Democracy Lab Poland
Phase B: Action (recruitment phase) - starting 2-3 weeks ahead of the event

We suggest launching your comms campaign 2-3 weeks ahead of the event - starting too early might result in a high level of no-shows (people’s plan may change), while starting too late increases the risk of insufficient number of participants.

- Social media - decide whether it is useful for you to advertise in social media and which to choose. For some context and location, Twitter may work better than Facebook, and the other way around. You should decide this upon having your target groups identified (where your target audience is). Facebook events are a popular way of communicating about events (both on- and offline) in some countries, while tweeting works better for others. If you want to attract people from your professional network, consider setting up a LinkedIn event.

- Whichever channel you decide to use, remember to post frequently and take care of the quality of your posts - pushy advertising can be counterproductive and discourage people. Take it as an opportunity to build relationship with your participants - share information about people involved (facilitators), share details on what is planned, present a ‘teaser’ of what’s going to happen, invite to online discussion by asking prompting questions, share ‘behind the scenes’ information (i.e. photo from the organizers’ meeting), etc.

- Mobilize your (or partner’s) networks to spread a word of the event. Direct and personal contact proved to be the most effective way of recruiting participants.

- Contact local media from your database. Remember not to share information on Fridays as it’s too late for journalists to include your topic for the next week's communication.

### Table 1 An example of communication plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Message or post</th>
<th>Format/s</th>
<th>Who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Do you want to discuss the condition of democracy in Hungary through the lens of present challenges?</td>
<td>Tweet <a href="https://twitter.com/popandce">https://twitter.com/popandce</a></td>
<td>Comms officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>🚀 We’re delighted to announce that the fourth online Local Democracy Lab will take place in Hungary! We invite all Hungarian residents to join a discussion on the condition of democracy nowadays and recommendations for political leaders. Check out the details below 🚀</td>
<td>Linkedin + FB</td>
<td>Comms officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Send emails to organizations below (network list)</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>Post visual + question on visual: What impact do the media have on people's perceptions of the pandemic?</td>
<td>Twitter, LI, FB</td>
<td>Comms officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase C: Post-event - right after and 1 month from the event

- Posting about the event on social media
- Publishing the outcomes report and sharing with the participants
- Circulating the report amongst relevant stakeholders (institutions, organizations, policy makers, etc.)
Table 2 Overview of the possible channels for different messaging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Channels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic information about the Democracy Lab</td>
<td>• Dedicated website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Press release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Social media assets/visuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Event page on different social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Registration form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Livestream Q&amp;A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is it about and what will be done with the outcomes</td>
<td>• The partners of the Democracy Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Slides from a presentation or any other material giving insights into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Testimony from past organizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusiveness and diversity</td>
<td>• Explaining criteria to join, who took part and how it broadly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>matches the wider public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Testimonials by past participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How the wider public can get involved, online and offline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.0 Online tools & asynchronous participation

Capturing input for research
When you want to use the input for research purposes we suggest you think how to collect and save the input you collect. Several video conferencing tools offer the possibility to record the session. Don’t forget to ask for people’s consent to be audio or video recorded. Also, there are many online whiteboard tools where you can capture notes of the event.

Online tools
Hereby we give some examples of tools you can use, this certainly is not an exhaustive list. It’s up to you to decide which one works best for you, your team and participants.

- Registration or sign-up platform - MS Forms, Google form, Typeform, Eventbrite
- Video Conferencing tool - Zoom, Jitsi, Teams, Whereby, Meatbutter, Webex
- Virtual whiteboard - Jamboard, Miro, Mural
- Creating insights database - Airtable
- Transcription tool - Happyscribe, Sonix, otter.ai
- Creating visual assets - Canva, Easel, Crello
- Online interaction boosters - Mentimeter, Sli.do, tschekin
- Website creation - Google sites, WordPress
Asynchronous participation – online deliberation platforms

To complement the online event, you can choose to use an online deliberation platform. This offers people the opportunity to discuss certain topics further online. To facilitate this process, you can demonstrate how the platform works during the event and add initial ideas in there, so that the platform is having interesting content and people feel they want to join the conversation. It’s crucial to give the right amount of attention to this tool, as people are mostly new to it and it requires introduction a short test session.

Local Democracy Labs - How we did it

For Democracy Labs we used the online deliberation tool by Citizens Foundation: ‘Your Priorities’, https://www.yrpri.org/. Your Priorities connects governments & citizens through constructive ideas and debate that minimizes personal arguments and trolling. It is developed by the Citizens Foundation from Iceland.

Your Priorities is an online platform intended to foster idea generation, deliberation and decision-making, connecting governments and nonprofits with citizens. The platform makes it possible for citizens to contribute with ideas, explore/view other people’s ideas, and take part in an effective debate about each idea exposed. For each idea, citizens have the opportunity to add points for or points against. Once a debate point is added, other citizens can vote the point up or down, but they can’t comment directly on it – they will have to write a standalone counterpoint that has no direct connection to the initial point. This makes trolling almost impossible, defangs and downplays any personal arguments between participants, and is the key to fostering high-quality online engagement. Citizens can submit content as text, video and audio and upload images with their ideas.
8.0 Wrapping up and next steps

During & after the event
At the end of the event you can ask people to think of something they will bring along after the event, or their biggest insight. If time allows you can let (some) people share their insights.

After an event you can share an evaluation form where people can share their feedback anonymously. This allows for optimal learning and possible improvements by the organizers. You can also use these learnings for reporting purposes.

Debrief with your team
Together with the local organizers and facilitators you can hold a debrief meeting. We suggest you express your appreciation to the local team, who have pulled together the event. They are the driving force behind the scenes and it’s very important for everybody involved to get acknowledged. In this meeting everybody gets the opportunity to share their experience of the meeting: what went well and what can be improved. This is also a good moment to discuss the reporting, the dissemination of findings and next steps needed for this.

Report
When the Democracy Lab has taken place, we suggest you collect the different outcomes (recordings, whiteboard notes, feedback), and turn them into a report to tell the story of the event and the outcomes of the discussions, including recommendations to policymakers. We suggest including visuals in the report to make it attractive for the reader. The report should roughly demonstrate: the context, the purpose, main objectives, the structure or process (workshop methodology used), description of participants, outcomes of the event, biggest insights, learnings for the team and feedback. During the debrief you can share a template for reporting with the local team. The City of Reykjavik, with the support of the Democratic Society, created a report template to assist local organisations in editing the main outcomes. If the report is for research purposes, it is necessary to work in collaboration with professionals experienced in providing a qualitative interpretation of the outcomes. If the report is elaborate, it would be practical to have a summary in the beginning with the most important outcomes. To show the richness of discussions you can include in the outcomes section a summary of the virtual whiteboard notes into clusters, see below the example of Democracy Lab Spain.

Figure 3 Summary of discussions round 1, Democracy Lab Spain
Follow-up event
To have a lasting impact, the event can have a follow-up event, to get connected to policymakers and/or academia working in the field. The event can be a way to present the outcomes and discuss proposed ideas or recommendations. Make sure you get policy makers involved enough time ahead of the event, to ensure they can make sure the topics discussed are of their interest.

Local Democracy Labs - How we did it
After Democracy Lab Iceland there will be a follow-up event to present the research outcomes to policymakers. Ideally this would take place with some of the participants of the actual event, so the presented outcomes are represented by the community creating them.

Output
For the Local Democracy Labs, we have created a list of outputs, so each local organizer can support with realizing these outputs, see below.

The output from each Democracy Lab will be:
- Giving citizens a voice into our project;
- A set of participants’ insights on the perception of trust and democracy and the role of government and governance in relation to COVID-19 pandemic across Europe to inform the PaCE project research;
- A report in English and local language about the process and outcomes of the event by the local partner;
- A range of raw digital outputs such as digital notes on jamboards, to show the range of issues raised in the room;
- Event recordings (Zoom);
- Photos/screenshots and quotes by participants for social media purposes, taken by local partners;

Possibly:
- A group of participants informed and enabled them to become an active voice in the process of evolution and development of democracy across Europe. DemSoc and local partners link insights to local policy makers and/or politicians. Apart from that there will be a European Democracy Lab in Brussels by the end of the project, taking forward the results of all the Local Democracy Labs.

Having feedback mechanisms in place
Have both during and after the event the possibility for participants to give feedback.

Take the appropriate next steps
For example a debrief with a team, writing a report, organizing a follow-up event with policymakers.
9.0 Inclusion & equality

Inclusion is the guiding principle for every type of participatory event. We refer to inclusion in different chapters of this handbook. This chapter is a summary of what to keep in mind when designing participatory processes.

Set demographic goals
As you begin with the recruitment of participants, you will need to decide what would be the desired demographic characteristics. To gather an inclusive and diverse group of participants, this would require diversity in gender, age, location of residence, ethnicity or cultural background and sexual orientation. The context and goals of the event can shape the criteria you choose.

When it’s difficult to get a response from a particular group of people, you could try to build partnerships with certain ‘community ambassadors’, who have access to their community and are trusted by them.

Having a relevant topic
Another important aspect is the relevance for people, making sure the topic of the event matches the lived experience of participants. It’s best to have a ‘test’ phase where you can ask a small group of people for input on the event, the topic and the communication material. This could mean you need to reframe your event or the messaging you are using.

Take away practical barriers, accessibility
Whether people will be interested in attending your event is highly dependent on practical matters, such as the time and day: is it during working hours, in the evening or on the weekend. If people are working it’s understandable they won’t be able to join an online event, thus it could be worth considering evening hours or weekends.

We suggest you pick the most accessible online platform and ask yourself if people are familiar with using certain online video conferencing tool(s). Make sure you are using tools which are accessible and easy to use, such as Zoom or Jamboard.

To ensure everybody is at the same level, you can put effort in ensuring people feel comfortable with using online video conferencing tools in a separate call or mini workshop.

Focus on an inclusive recruitment approach
Make sure you reach a diverse network and go beyond the ‘usual suspects’ by having a diverse recruitment team or a team with diverse networks in for example LGBT, migrant, ethnic minority, cultural minority, homeless, elderly, youth and people with a (mental) disability networks.

Offer technical support
Ask in the application form if participants need any support on using Zoom or other technicalities. If needed you can also have a dedicated training on how to join and participate in an online event.

Inclusive design
We strive to make the design of participatory processes as inclusive as possible. You can also be inclusive in your design process by involving participants in the design of your process and facilitation plan. This actively raises awareness that not everyone will feel equally as comfortable and included in the space and helps people self-govern their actions to support others.

There are also some tutorial videos available which you could share with participants before the event, for example: How to join a Zoom meeting.
You can also make people aware beforehand of some practical issues, such as having a comfortable place to take part, a stable internet connection and headphones.
Also, spend some time in the beginning of each event explaining the basics; how to mute and unmute, how to raise your hand and having a gallery view or speaker view.

Gift of thanks
Another issue which was discussed before in the recruitment approach is to thank people for their time and effort paying them, either in cash or with a voucher. This helps to ensure people feel valued for their time invested and goes some way to support those with financial security to be able to participate.

Inclusive language and guidelines for a conversation
In the conversation guidelines you want to make sure people feel welcome to share their viewpoints, even though it might be completely the opposite to what others are saying. Let people know it’s okay to disagree with each other. Also, do not address a person directly, but refer to the argument they made. Ensure everybody gets a chance to speak, also the quieter or less heard voices. You can mention in the guidelines, it’s both important to share, but just as important it is to listen to each other. Build on what the other has said. It’s important to set the standard about wording and language, that it must always be respectful and mindful, including body language.

Local Democracy Labs - How we did it

Language & tone of voice
For Democracy Lab in Scotland we re-shaped the messaging and discussion questions that had been asked in the workshop, such as around the influence of media: What impact do the media have on people’s perception of the pandemic? This way people were already activated to think about certain issues raised during the event. It can also give a better understanding of what the event will be about.

Also, during the participants’ recruitment for Democracy Lab Spain, we adjusted the tone of voice to better match the lived experiences of the interested participants. It means we used more informal and inviting language, see the banner below: “Do you think the government's response to the pandemic affected the quality of democracy? Coming Friday 12th of March we will come together online to have a coffee and discuss how the situation has affected the institutions. It’s an open and free meeting. Are you joining?”. 
Appendix

Below are presented materials and templates you may find useful when organizing similar participatory processes.
Documents are in pdf format, placed on the project website www.popandce.eu.

1. Facilitation plan template
2. Facilitation script template
3. Communication and recruitment plan template
4. Local Democracy Lab Iceland report
5. Local Democracy Lab Spain report
6. Local Democracy Lab Scotland report