INTERNATIONAL CITIZEN'S FORUM

Report

Let's get Active! Incentives for citizens active participation in the democratic life of the European Union

15-17 October 2015

Nicosia, Cyprus

ACTIVITY 5

1.

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Produced by the ACTIVEU team: FOUNDATION OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES (FAEI), FUTURE WORLDS CENTER, ASOCIATIA EuroDEMOS, COOPERATIVA SOCIALE COOSS MARCHE ONLUS scpa

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The "Let's get Active! Incentives for citizens active participation in the democratic life of the European Union" project and the project team would like to thank the participants of the International Citizen's Forum for their enthusiastic contributions, time, energy and expertise they brought to the co-laboratory described in this report.

All 25 participants were willing to dedicate the time necessary to work together with understanding to identify changes that should be introduced to encourage democratic engagement and participation in the democratic processes. Their hard work and perseverance made the co-laboratory's experience both richly diverse and productive. The participants are the primary authors of views expressed in this document.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the results of the International Citizens Forum that took place in Nicosia, Cyprus in October 15-17, 2015. The Forum was organized in the framework of the "Let's Get Active! Incentives for citizens active participation in the democratic life of the European Union" project which is co-funded by the "Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union (EU). The programme's aim is to increase the involvement and participation levels of European citizens in public life of the EU and help them realise their own role in the making of European policy and the future of the EU in general.

Before the International Citizens Forum, there was an invitation to contribute ideas in regards to civic engagement and participation announced. Interested persons could contribute their ideas (answers to the triggering question used for the Structured Dialogic Design Process) by using Idea Prism, a mobile application (free of charge) specifically designed to enable on-line participation. The ideas gathered were then presented during the International Citizens Forum. The invitation to contribute ideas was published on the project's webpage and on the project's Facebook profile. Also the persons who declared interest in the project were notified by e-mails about such a possibility.

The Forum was implemented using the Structured Dialogic Design Process (SDDP) methodology. The SDDP methodology was chosen to support this initiative in structuring the stakeholder representatives' ideas on the action options regarding the active participation in the democratic life of the European Union. The SDDP supports democratic and structured dialogue among a heterogeneous group of stakeholders. It is especially effective in resolving complex conflicts of purpose and values and in generating consensus on organizational and inter-organizational strategy. It is scientifically grounded on seven laws of cybernetics/systems science and has been rigorously validated in hundreds of cases throughout the last 30 years.

Participants were asked to respond to a 'triggering question' – which is the main question of the co-laboratory around which at the following discussions are focused. In this particular co-laboratory the triggering question was chosen in order to address the subject of the particular activity which focuses around identifying solutions and recommendations for encouraging democratic engagement and participation in the democratic processes.

The *triggering question* that was selected in this co-laboratory was: **What changes should be introduced to encourage democratic engagement and participation in the democratic processes?**

After having participated in the structured dialogue it was expected that:

A. Participants would gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of the situation and the interconnections between "ideas";

B. Participants would have the opportunity to understand how the "others" may think or perceive the current situation or envision the "ideal" situation;

C. A "voted" consensus between all participants taking part in the co-laboratory would emerge in the "influence tree" as a joint product.

Following the presentation and discussion of the results, participants were expected to develop a roadmap to achieve progress. The results of this forum are also expected to assist in further development of ideas and policies. First of all – to develop recommendations/possible solutions for increasing the democratic participation in the democratic life of the European Union – that will be then presented to the relevant EU/ national institutions and organizations and other relevant stakeholders as well as disseminated among a wide public.

METHODOLOGY: STRUCTURED DIALOGIC DESIGN PROCESS

The SDDP is specifically designed to assist inhomogeneous groups to deal with complex issues, in a reasonably limited amount of time. It enables the integration of contributions from individuals with diverse views, backgrounds and perspectives through a process that is participatory, structured, inclusive and collaborative.

A group of participants, who are knowledgeable of the particular situation, are engaged in collectively developing a common framework of thinking based on consensus and shared understanding of the current or future ideal state of affairs. SDDP promotes focused communication among the participants in the design process and their ownership of and commitment in the outcome.

Structure and Process in a typical SDDP co-laboratory

When facing any complex problem, the stakeholders can optimally approach it in the following way:

1. Develop a shared vision of an ideal future situation. This ideal vision map serves as a magnet to help the social system transcend into its future state.
2. Define the current problématique, i.e. develop a common and shared understanding of what are the obstacles that prevent the stakeholders reaching their idealized vision.
3. Define actions/options or a roadmap to achieve the goals.

The three phases are done using exactly the same dialogue technique. Each phase completes with similar products:
(1) A list of all ideas [SDDP is a self-documenting process].
(2) A cluster of all ideas categorized using common attributes.
(3) A document with the voting results [erroneous effect=most popular ideas do not prove to be the most influential].
(4) A map of influences. This is the most important product of the methodology. Ideas are related according to the influence they exert on each other. If one is dealing with problems, then the most influential ideas are the root causes. Addressing those will be most efficient. If one is dealing with factors that describe a future ideal state, then working on the most influential factors means that achieving the final goal will be easier/faster/more economic, etc.

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In the following, the process of a typical SDDP session with its phases is being described more precisely:

First: The breadth of the dialogue is constrained and sharpened with the help of a triggering question. This is formulated by a core group of people, who are the Knowledge Management Team (KMT) and is composed by the owners of the complex problem and SDDP experts. This question can be emailed to all participants, who are requested to respond with at least three contributions before the meeting.

Second: All contributions/responses to the triggering questions are recorded in the CogniScope II software. They must be short and concise, hence contain one idea in one sentence. The authors may clarify their ideas in a few additional sentences.

Third: The ideas are clustered into categories based on similarities and common attributes. A smaller team can do this process to reduce time (e.g., between plenary sessions).

Forth: All participants get five votes and are asked to choose their favorite (most important to them) ideas. Only ideas that received votes go to the next and most important phase.

Fifth: In this phase, participants are asked to explore influences of one idea on another. For example, they might be asked to decide whether solving problem x will make solving problem y easier. If the answer is yes (great majority) an influence is established on a map of ideas. The way to read that influence is that items at the bottom are root causes (if what is being discussed are obstacles), or most influential factors (if what is being discussed are descriptors of an ideal situation or actions to take). Those root factors must be given priority.

Sixth: Using the root factors, participants develop an efficient strategy and come up with a road map to implement it.

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INTERNATIONAL CITIZEN'S FORUM
Factors proposed by participants

On 15-17 October 2015, 25 participants from Europe, met in Nicosia, Cyprus to engage in a structured dialogue focusing on the triggering question:

What changes should be introduced to encourage democratic engagement and participation in the democratic processes?

The participants described 65 ideas during the dialogue with the entire group. Table 1 'List of Ideas'(see the annexes) summarizes all options and factors proposed by the group, which, if achieved, would contribute significantly to encourage democratic engagement and participation in democratic processes.

Clustering the Factors

Clustering took place after clarifying the factors. This part of the process is where ideas get tested against each other in order to form groups. Participants discussed among each other and formed the following clusters.

Cluster 1: Accessibility and Transparency
6: Accessibility of information
10: Effective information - dissemination
37: Transparency and dialogue

Cluster 2: Education
2: Centers for training civic leaders
3: Training specialists and promoters of active citizenship
4: Formal and non-formal civic education
5: Building democratic activity traditions
7: Awareness concerning democracy
9: Showing good practices
14: Political education at secondary school
17: Implementing workshops and political education at universities
21: Empower citizens to participate in democratic process,
by developing skills and tools
22: Showing the benefits of being active
23: Integrating simulation of active participation and experiential civic education throughout schooling
34: Raising awareness among public that active participation can change things
57: Showing the consequences of not being active
62: Better quality of English teaching

Cluster 3: Bottom-up
8: Creating a platform of discussion between generations
13: Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation
18: Strengthen the connection between civil society, local authorities and the EU
38: Mobile citizen's activity centers, reaching also smaller cities
40: Schedule democratic meetings at local levels
48: Loose forms of direct democracy without the use of technology for local communities

Cluster 4: Re-design
11: Make parliamentary participation a lottery
12: Lower wages and benefits for elected politicians

15: Introduce quotas for youth participation in the parliament
16: No more than 2 terms for elected politicians
28: Political campaigns can only be funded through controlled crowdfunding (3 Votes)
29: Massive increase in the number of members of parliament
31: More mechanisms for effective accountability
42: Feedback walls for politicians
44: You need to pass a test to vote
47: More checks and balances on corporate takeover during policy formulation
49: All age groups should be represented equally in politics

Cluster 5: /DELETED/

Cluster 6: /DELETED/

Cluster 7: N/A
30: Make participation appealing by using marketing tools and rewards (incentives)

Cluster 8: Media & Technology
20: Mass media involvement in democratic activities
33: Loose forms of direct democracy with the use of technology
45: Live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions
55: Strengthen and support independent media
56: Online platforms that enhance interactions and questions between citizens and politicians
61: More community based radio stations and media projects

Cluster 9: N/A
35: Democracy through performances
36: Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence

Cluster 10: NGO related
41: More NGOs activities
50: More support to NGOs
51: Competition for performance
53: Civic activity is not only a charity
54: Less tyranny of the interest groups, fewer NGOs

Cluster 11: /DELETED/

Cluster 12: Legislation

1: Minimize bureaucracy
52: Legislation to protect active citizenship from political pressures
58: Being more efficient to expose and punish corruption
59: Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists
63: Protect and promote freedom of speech
65: Wealth disclosure for everybody

Cluster 13: Trust in democracy

19: Active participation in society
46: Work to eliminate the attitude of powerlessness
60: Increase trust in democracy by role modelling

Prioritizing the factors

During this phase participants voted on the factors they believed were a priority in achieving the goal of encouraging engagement and participation in democratic processes. Each participant could vote for 5 different factors. There was a total of 65 votes casted. From the 65 factors, the 27 received votes. This is described scientifically by the parameter of Spreadthink4 or divergence (ST or D respectively), whose value in this case is 38% of disagreement. According to numerous studies, the average degree of spread think is 44%. Spread think is defined as $(V-5)/(N-5)$ where N is the total number of ideas and V is the number of ideas that received one or more votes.

The following ideas received the most votes:

23: *(9 Votes)* Integrating simulation of active participation and experiential civic education throughout schooling
21: *(7 Votes)* Empower citizens to participate in democratic process, by developing skills and tools
13: *(4 Votes)* Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation
49: *(4 Votes)* All age groups should be represented equally in politics
59: *(4 Votes)* Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists.

Influence Map

The factors in the map were structured on three levels and are related according to the influence they exert on each other. The ideas which appear lower and are positioned at the root of the influence tree have more impact in terms of influence than those at the higher level.

That means that if we achieve the ideas that lies deeper within the structure, that would influence the achievement of ideas higher on the tree with less effort and resources. Therefore, one should focus on ideas that are on the bottom.

Level I: 49, 30, 52 31, 13, 23

Level II: 55, 2, 50, 45, 59

Level III: 36

According to this map the most influential idea that according to the collective wisdom of the participants needs to be addressed with priority is:

Idea 36 –Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence:

Clarification: All the citizens involved in democratic activities know very well that without social intelligence, or better said that the social intelligence is the base of our success. The involvement of the citizen, the active citizenship develops this social intelligence through the fact that it offers us many opportunities to effectively contribute to the common good and to the social good and it give us the opportunity to solve social problems. The first beneficiary of all of this is the active citizen. If the people would know about all of this, if this concept which is valuable thanks to its results would be promoted, than we will automatically have a beautiful society and a truly functional democracy.

During the phase of tracing influence relationships between factors there were cases where participants identified factors which influenced each other in both ways. This phenomenon is called a "cycle" and in this SDDP two cycles have been identified.
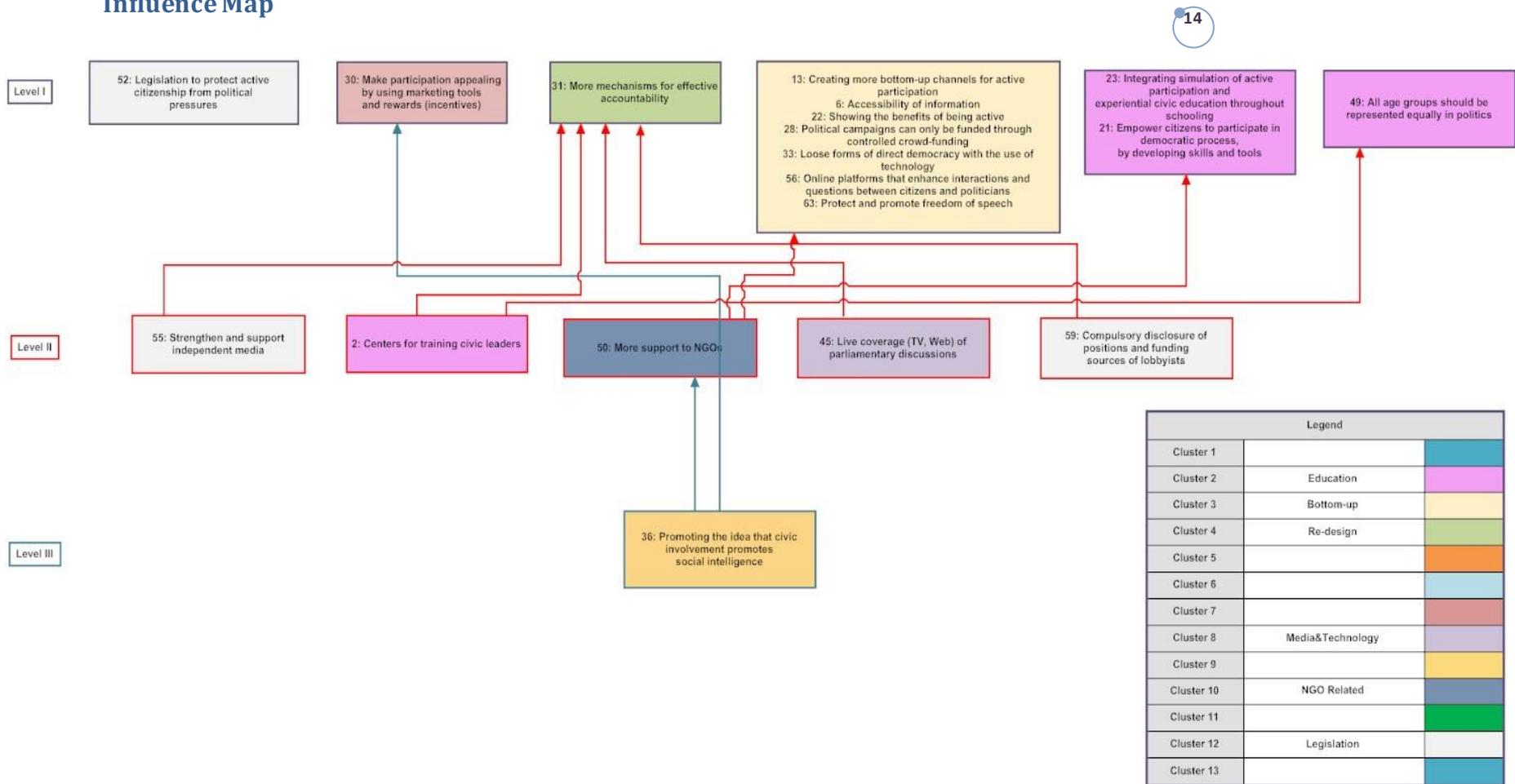
Idea 23 in cycle with idea 21.

Idea 13 is in cycle with ideas 6, 22, 28, 33, 56, 63.

Such cycles are indications of the complexity of the situation being addressed and need to be taken into account when designing an action plan to address the ideas.

The ideas are illustrated in the influence map below:

Influence Map

Level I

52: Legislation to protect active citizenship from political pressures

30: Make participation appealing by using marketing tools and rewards (incentives)

31: More mechanisms for effective accountability

13: Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation
6: Accessibility of information
22: Showing the benefits of being active
28: Political campaigns can only be funded through controlled crowd-funding
33: Loose forms of direct democracy with the use of technology
56: Online platforms that enhance interactions and questions between citizens and politicians
63: Protect and promote freedom of speech

23: Integrating simulation of active participation and experiential civic education throughout schooling
21: Empower citizens to participate in democratic process, by developing skills and tools

49: All age groups should be represented equally in politics

Level II

55: Strengthen and support independent media

2: Centers for training civic leaders

50: More support to NGOs

45: Live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions

59: Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists

Level III

36: Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence

Legend		
Cluster 1		
Cluster 2	Education	
Cluster 3	Bottom-up	
Cluster 4	Re-design	
Cluster 5		
Cluster 6		
Cluster 7		
Cluster 8	Media&Technology	
Cluster 9		
Cluster 10	NGO Related	
Cluster 11		
Cluster 12	Legislation	
Cluster 13		

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CONTRIBUTORS

Participants:

1. Romina Borasco
2. Lorenza Lupini
3. Mihaela Bolohan
4. Maria Magdalena Oanca
5. Morel Bolea
6. Agnieszka Dadak
7. Rafal Dadak
8. Jerzy Kraus
9. Yiannis Clerides
10. Nicolina Karaolia
11. Derya Yuksek
12. Marianna Charalambous
13. Christine Shahbenderian
14. Dimitrios Economou
15. Maria Georgiou
16. Chrysoulis Zampas
17. Andreas Andreou
18. Ana Tomasko Plucavec
19. Eleni Philippou
20. Memnon Arestis
21. Sophia Arnaouti
22. Paul Drousiotis
23. Fatema Islam
24. Katerina Fotiou
25. Costantina Spanoude

The Facilitation Team of the Let's Get Active co-laboratory consisted of:

1. Yiannis Laouris (Lead Facilitator)

2. Eleni Philippou (Assistant Facilitator)

3. Katerina Fotiou (Assistant Facilitator)

CONCLUSIONS FOR FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The International Citizen's Forum has given the opportunity to citizens from across Europe to express their ideas in a structured form, decide which ones are the most efficient and examine how these ideas (solutions) influence each other.

The proposed solutions/ recommendations have been structured in the influence map illustrated in the previous chapters and shows how by making progress (i.e promoting/implementing) in the idea that is located at the 3rd level we will make progress in achieving the ideas at the 2nd and 1st level. The idea that is the most influential one is: **Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence** (36). During the structuring process, many participants have seen a strong link between idea 36 and the ideas that received votes. It was the idea with the strongest connection between the one that receives votes. Participants have seen a strong connection between social intelligence and civic engagement and believed by capitalizing on the promotion of the idea that civic engagement promotes social intelligence we will be more efficient: a) in developing "Centers for training civic leaders" (2), b) in implementing "Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists" (59), c) in having "Live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions" (45), d) in "Strengthening and supporting independent media" (55) and e) finally in giving more support to NGOs (50).

During the structuring process, the above mentioned solutions have been paired with all of the ideas that received votes and most of the participants have agreed that by implementing them we will achieve the desired results.

Based on the above presented statements our recommendations are to:
1) Enable the steps that would strengthen the link between social intelligence and civic participation
2) Focus on creating centers for training civic leaders and thus addressing the need of people to be more informed about civic engagement
3) Making the process of the decision on public matters taking more transparent, by disclosing the positions and funding sources of lobbyists
4) Promoting independent thinking and limiting media propaganda by promoting the idea of having live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions
5) Strength and support independent media
6) Strengthen the importance of NGOs and thus making them an internal part of the governing process.

By making progress in the above mentioned recommendations we will tackle the roots of limited participation in the democratic processes and achieve change in many other areas such as the ideas illustrated in level in the influence map.

STRUCTURED DIALOGIC DESIGN PROCESS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does SDDP stand for? What is the difference with SDP?

The Structured Design Process (SDP) or Structured Dialogic Design Process (SDDP) is a methodology that enables groups of stakeholders to discuss an issue in a structured democratic manner that enables them to achieve results. It is a deeply reasoned, scientific, psychosocial methodology that has evolved from over 30 years of development to its current implementation as a software-supported process for large-scale, collaborative design.

When was the first time that structured dialogue was considered necessary?

The need for such an approach was first envisioned by systems thinkers in the Club of Rome (Ozbekhan, 1969, 1970), and systematically refined through years of deployment in Interactive Management (IM), to emerge as methodically grounded dialogue practice that now is supported by software specifically designed for the purpose (e.g., CogniScopesystem). Interactive Management, originally developed by John Warfield and Alexander Christakis in the early 1970's (Christakis, 1973; Warfield & Cardenas, 1994), has evolved into its third generation as SDDP.

What does Agoras mean?

The agoras were the vital centres of the Greek cities. The outdoor markets and convention halls of Athenian Agoras is where gossip mixed with politics. The agora of Athens was the birthplace of democracy. Here the town's citizens discussed pressing issues and made decisions on the basis of popular vote.

What is the Institute for 21st Century Agoras?

The Institute for 21st Century Agoras is a volunteer-driven organization dedicated to vigorous democracy on the model of that practiced in the agoras of ancient Greece. It employs Co-Laboratories of Democracy that enable civil dialogue in complex situations. Systems thinkers who were also presidents of the International Society for Systems Science (ISSS), such as Bela Banathy and Alexander Christakis, founded the Institute.

What is the Club of Rome?

The Club of Rome was founded in April 1968 by Aurelio Peccei, an Italian industrialist, and Alexander King, a Scottish scientist. The Club of Rome is a global think tank and centre of innovation and initiative. As a non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO), it brings together scientists, economists, businessmen, international high civil servants, and heads of state and former heads of state from all five continents who are convinced that the future of humankind is not determined once and for all and that each human being can contribute to the

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improvement of our societies. Hasan Özbekhan, Erich Jantschand Alexander Christakis were responsible for conceptualizing the original prospectus of the Club of Rome titled "The Predicament of Mankind." This prospectus was founded on a humanistic architecture and the participation of stakeholders in democratic dialogue. When the Club of Rome Executive Committee in the summer of 1970 opted for a mechanistic and elitist methodology for an extrapolated future, they resigned from their positions.

How are co-Laboratories different from workshops?

Many group processes engender enthusiasm and good feeling as people share their concerns and hopes with each other. Co-Laboratories go beyond this initial euphoria to:

- Discover root causes;
- Adopt consensual action plans;
- Develop teams dedicated to implementing those plans; and
- Generate lasting bonds of respect, trust, and cooperation.

Co-Laboratories achieve these results by respecting the autonomy of all participants, and utilizing an array of consensus tools including discipline, technology, and graphics that allow stakeholders to control the discussion. Co-Laboratories are a refinement of Interactive Management, a decision and design methodology developed over the past 30 years to deal with complex situations involving diverse stakeholders. It has been successfully employed all over the world in situations of uncertainty and conflict.

What are usual purposes applications of SDDP?

SDDP is the perfect tool to support a diverse group of stakeholders resolve conflicts and work together in designing by consensus a new vision/solution/strategy/roadmap. It is perfect for:

- Resolve issues among diverse stakeholders
- Democratic large-group decision-making
- Policy design & decision-making
- Complex (wicked) problem solving
- Strategic planning & effective priority setting
- Portfolio & business asset allocation
- Problem identification

How many hours does a group need to invest on a co-laboratory?

The duration of a typical co-laboratory ranges from a minimum of 10-20 hours to over 100 hours. The application of virtual technologies has made it possible to shorten the time required for an SDDP application, while securing the fidelity of the process and of the products. Parts of the co-laboratory are done asynchronously (e.g. through email communication having the facilitators compile and share all data) and others synchronously, in a physical or virtual

environment. The virtual SDDP model has been described in a paper by Laouris& Christakis.

Is the SDDP grounded on solid science?

The SDDP is scientifically grounded on seven laws of cybernetics recognized by the names of their originators:

1. Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety (Ashby, 1958);
2. Miller's Law of Requisite Parsimony (Miller, 1956; Warfield, 1988);
3. Boulding's Law of Requisite Saliency (Boulding, 1966);
4. Peirce's Law of Requisite Meaning (Turrisi, 1997);
5. Tsivacou's Law of Requisite Autonomy in Decision (Tsivacou, 1997);
6. Dye's Law of the Requisite Evolution of Observations (Dye et al., 1999) and
7. Laouris Law of Requisite Action (Laouris& Christakis, 2007).

Which are the four Axioms of Dialogic Design?

1. COMPLEXITY: We live in a world that is very complex. Problems are complex & interconnected.
2. PARSIMONY: Human cognition & attention is limited. Attention and cognition is usually overloaded in group design.
3. SALIENCY: The field of options in any evaluation is multidimensional. "Salient synthesis" is difficult.
4. ENGAGEMENT: Disregarding the participation of the stakeholders in designing action plans is unethical and the plans are bound to fail.

ANNEXES

Table 1: List of Ideas

1: Minimize bureaucracy

2: Centers for training civic leaders

3: Training specialists and promoters of active citizenship

4: Formal and non formal civic education

5: Building democratic activity traditions

6: Accessibility of information

7: Awareness concerning democracy

8: Creating a platform of discussion between generations

9: Showing good practices

10: Effective information - dissemination

11: Make parliamentary participation a lottery

12: Lower wages and benefits for elected politicians

13: Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation

14: Political education at secondary school

15: Introduce quotas for youth participation in the parliament

16: No more than 2 terms for elected politicians

17: Implementing workshops and political education at universities

18: Stregthen the connection between civil society, local authorities and the EU

19: Active participation in society

20: Mass media involvement in democratic activities

21: Empower citizens to participate in democratic process, by developing skills and tools

22: Showing the benefits of being active

23: Integrating simulation of active participation and experiential civic education throughout schooling

24: [DELETE]* Citizens skills in democratic process

25: [DELETE] Rewards for being active

26: [DELETE] Show how a specific activity could change something for the better

27: [DELETE] Civic training throughout schooling

28: Political campaigns can only be funded through controlled crowdfunding

29: Massive increase in the number of members of parliament

30: Make participation appealing by using marketing tools and rewards (incentives)

31: More mechanisms for effective accountability

32: [DELETE] Integrating experiential civic education

33: Loose forms of direct democracy with the use of technology

34: Raising awareness among public that active participation can change things

35: Democracy through performances

36: Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence

37: Transparency and dialogue

38: Mobile citizen's activity centers, reaching also smaller cities

39: [DELETE] A more simple and clear language

40: Schedule democratic meetings at local levels

41: More NGOs activities

42: Feedback walls for politicians

43: [DELETE] Effective accountability of decision makers

44: You need to pass a test to vote

45: Live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions

46: Work to eliminate the attitude of powerlessness

47: More checks and balances on corporate takeover during policy formulation

48: Loose forms of direct democracy without the use of technology for local communities

49: All age groups should be represented equally in politics

50: More support to NGOs

51: Competition for performance

52: Legislation to protect active citizenship from political pressures

53: Civic activity is not only a charity

54: Less tyranny of the interest groups, fewer NGOs

55: Strengthen and support independent media

56: Online platforms that enhance interactions and questions between citizens and politicians

57: Showing the consequences of not being active

58: Being more efficient to expose and punish corruption

59: Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists

60: Increase trust in democracy by role modeling

61: More community based radio stations and media projects

62: Better quality of English teaching

63: Protect and promote freedom of speech

64: [DELETE] Creation of network groups for easier access to political institutions

65: Wealth disclosure for everybody

*[DELETE]: *When two or more participants decide that their ideas are very similar they have the option to merge their ideas in one answer and delete the other ones. This only happens the owners of the ideas are in agreement.*

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Table 3. List of votes

21: *(7 Votes)* Empower citizens to participate in democratic process, by developing skills and tools

13: *(4 Votes)* Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation

49: *(4 Votes)* All age groups should be represented equally in politics

59: *(4 Votes)* Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists

28: *(3 Votes)* Political campaigns can only be funded through controlled crowd-funding

33: *(3 Votes)* Loose forms of direct democracy with the use of technology

56: *(3 Votes)* Online platforms that enhance interactions and questions between citizens and politicians

2: *(2 Votes)* Centers for training civic leaders

22: *(2 Votes)* Showing the benefits of being active

30:*(2 Votes)* Make participation appealing by using marketing tools and rewards (incentives)

36: *(2 Votes)* Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence

45: *(2 Votes)* Live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions

50: *(2 Votes)* More support to NGOs

52: *(2 Votes)* Legislation to protect active citizenship from political pressures

63: *(2 Votes)* Protect and promote freedom of speech

6: *(1 Votes)* Accessibility of information

8: *(1 Votes)* Creating a platform of discussion between generations

9: *(1 Votes)* Showing good practices

10: *(1 Votes)* Effective information - dissemination

11: *(1 Votes)* Make parliamentary participation a lottery

12: *(1 Votes)* Lower wages and benefits for elected politicians

14: *(1 Votes)* Political education at secondary school

16: *(1 Votes)* No more than 2 terms for elected politicians

17: *(1 Votes)* Implementing workshops and political education at universities

31: *(1 Votes)* More mechanisms for effective accountability

54: *(1 Votes)* Less tyranny of the interest groups, fewer NGOs

60: *(1 Votes)* Increase trust in democracy by role modelling

1: *(0 Votes)* Minimize bureaucracy

3: *(0 Votes)* Training specialists and promoters of active citizenship

4: *(0 Votes)* Formal and non formal civic education

5: *(0 Votes)* Building democratic activity traditions

7: *(0 Votes)* Awareness concerning democracy

15: *(0 Votes)* Introduce quotas for youth participation in the parliament

18: *(0 Votes)* Strengthen the connection between civil society, local authorities and the EU

19: *(0 Votes)* Active participation in society

20: *(0 Votes)* Mass media involvement in democratic activities

24: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE]* Citizens skills in democratic process

25: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] Rewards for being active

26: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] Show how a specific activity could change something for the better

27: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] Civic training throughout schooling

29: *(0 Votes)* Massive increase in the number of members of parliament

32: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] Integrating experiential civic education

34: *(0 Votes)* Raising awareness among public that active participation can change things

35: *(0 Votes)* Democracy through performances

37: *(0 Votes)* Transparency and dialogue

38: *(0 Votes)* Mobile citizen's activity centers, reaching also smaller cities

39: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] A more simple and clear language

40: *(0 Votes)* Schedule democratic meetings at local levels

41: *(0 Votes)* More NGOs activities

42: *(0 Votes)* Feedback walls for politicians

43: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] Effective accountability of decision makers

44: *(0 Votes)* You need to pass a test to vote

46: *(0 Votes)* Work to eliminate the attitude of powerlessness

47: *(0 Votes)* More checks and balances on corporate takeover during policy formulation

48: *(0 Votes)* Loose forms of direct democracy without the use of technology for local communities

51: *(0 Votes)* Competition for performance

53: *(0 Votes)* Civic activity is not only a charity

55: *(0 Votes)* Strengthen and support independent media

57: *(0 Votes)* Showing the consequences of not being active

58: *(0 Votes)* Being more efficient to expose and punish corruption

61: *(0 Votes)* More community based radio stations and media projects

62: *(0 Votes)* Better quality of english teaching

64: *(0 Votes)* [DELETE] Creation of network groups for easier access to political institutions

65: *(0 Votes)* Wealth disclosure for everybody

Chosen Clarifications

Idea 1: Minimize bureaucracy

I feel there is too much bureaucracy in the public services e.g. when I have to submit an application to a public/government body. I think that by minimizing bureaucracy I could trust the system more.

Idea 2: Centers for training civic leaders

Idea 3: Training specialists and promoters of active citizenship

Idea 4: Formal and non -formal civic education

Civic education is very important and the information is very important in order to participate and have an active saying in the democratic life of the European union but also at local level. And it is very important youth to become active citizens in order to be active and have access to information. Both formally at schools but also non-formal to make it applicable in the society.

Idea 5: Building democratic activity traditions

There are many people in Poland who come from homes where there are no democratic activity traditions. People traditionally do not go to vote, do not take part in many citizens initiatives, not involved in NGOs are not interested in what is happening around them and they don't have an influence on the reality they live in. The challenge is to deliver a kind of support to the children and the youth who are raised in these family with no activity traditions. The idea is to introduce civic education in an early age on the average stage of the formal and non -formal education. Maybe educational programs for parents. Maybe the NGOs could take responsibilities for those activities and support the kids and the youth with tools which are helpful and worth using.

Idea 6: Accessibility of information

It is fundamental to make all information available for all the community, but to be accessible, information must have several characteristics. They should be tailored on different target group, both for what concerns languages, contents and also for what concerns the media or the channel used to disseminate them (a platform, a website, a radio/TV station, newspaper, etc.).Above all, information should be easy to be find (according to each media) an available in real time, in order to be more effective as possible.

Idea 7: Awareness concerning democracy

The LGA project experiences underlined that citizens need and know more about democracy and democratic processes. To be effective, this democratic awareness has to be focused on different target groups (youth, adult, elderly, etc.), though specific tools and methods.

Idea 8: Creating a platform of discussion between generations

The idea is to create common skills for the seniors and for the youth so they can work together. The councils which will advise to the authorities on the local level how to shape their policies so the needs of the citizens will be heard and implemented in the local politics.

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Idea 9: Showing good practices

Idea 10: Effective information - dissemination

Definition of Effective: citizens have access to information in a variety of ways, they become informed for what the government is about to decide and they get involved if they so wish. For the information to be effective it should also be bidirectional from the citizens to the decision makers and from the decision makers to the citizens. Effective, easy to use and easily accessible channels should be created and standardize so that all stakeholders are aware and able to utilize   them.

Idea 11: Make parliamentary participation a lottery

Idea   12:   Lower   wages   and   benefits   for   elected   politicians

Idea 13: Creating more bottom-up channels for active participation

For citizens to have a say or have a proposal for a political issue, there should be established channels for them to communicate this to policy makers and to other citizens. One example is the Cyprus peace process, when politicians ask citizens to take the solution into their own hands but there are no channels for citizens to participate in decisions to be made about solutions.

Idea 14: Political education at secondary school

Idea   15:   Introduce   quotas   for   youth   participation   in   the   parliament

Young people are not represented enough in politics and are almost completely absent from parliaments. For this reason many young people feel there is no one to represent them and they abstain from voting and from participating in public life, since they see all politicians as being very far away from them. By introducing quotas for people under 30, youth will have a voice in parliament which will represent their interests, thus making them more willing to participate   and   feel   like   they   too   have   a   say   in   the   public   discourse.

Idea 16: No more than 2 terms for elected politicians

Idea   17:   Implementing   workshops   and   political   education   at   universities

Implementing workshops and political education at universities. It is important to educate young people, because right now a lot of them think that politics and participation has nothing to do with them, which is critical, because they are a very important voting group. They are not aware of how democracy works. They need to make aware of what their role is and that they can change things and design a better future for themselves and other people.

Idea 18: Strengthen the connection between civil society, local authorities and the EU

There should be a greater cooperation between civil society, local authorities and the EU and this might be achieved by increasing understanding between the three. The EU should be able to listen to its people and the LAs should work with civil society.

Idea 19: Active participation in society

Idea 20: Mass media involvement in democratic activities

The mass-media's involvement in the democratic activities cannot exist without well prepared journalists in the democracy field. Unfortunately, mass-media is like the majority of the

population who doesn't have any idea about the importance of the active citizenship. So we cannot talk about a mass-media which knows how important are the civil society and active citizenship... and mass-media cannot support these concepts without being informed first (or the journalists to be informed first) about them. So it cannot exist one without the other. Only like this can be involved mass-media. But it has to exist also a legislative factor which can help mass-media to understand the role and importance of the active citizenship's support and promotion.

Idea 21: Empower citizens to participate in democratic process, by developing skills and tools

It is important, in order to participate, citizens to have knowledge, the proper skills and competences and also the tools that society is providing them and to know how to use them. We need to empower citizens to have a saying on democratic life.

Idea 22: Showing the benefits of being active

To show that being an active person can bring you benefits by showing good examples. For example, you took part in a participatory budget and you have a pavement in your living area or a playground. You have been volunteering for an NGO and now you have skills thanks to which you have now a better job. Give good examples showing that being democratically active brings you benefits and it's worth doing it.

Idea 23: Integrating simulation of active participation and experiential civic education throughout schooling

Civic education usually is very theoretical so if we really want to cultivate active citizenship we should introduce a more experiential angle to it. Students could participate in simulations like model United Nations and model EU, visit politicians and talk to them about what to do, they can visit the parliament. In this way they learn experientially and that will make them engage more in citizen's issues.

Idea 24: [DELETE] Citizens skills in democratic process

Idea 25: [DELETE] Rewards for being active

The idea is to use marketing tools to promote activity and to introduce some rewards for being active. Every person who is taking part in democratic processes will feel it brings some benefits to her or to him.

Idea 26: [DELETE] Show how a specific activity could change something for the better

Idea 27: [DELETE] Civic training throughout schooling

The idea here is the continuation of education. Civic duties may be taught in age appropriate ways from kindergarten to university level and beyond. Over the years, this will achieve a level of civic society that will be instrumental in ensuring democratic policies.

Idea 28: Political campaigns can only be funded through controlled crowd-funding

Every political campaign can only be funded through crowd funding. In that way, every donation that a politician receives, has to be cut at a certain amount. A politician can receive

and have as much money as he likes to fund his political campaign but each donor can fund a certain amount and therefore it demarketises the monetisation of political campaigns.

Idea 29: Massive increase in the number of members of parliament

Idea 30: Make participation appealing by using marketing tools and rewards (incentives)

The goal would be to use the marketing tools, being normally used in trade, to create a system of incentives (introducing an activity = reward rule). The aim of the marketing tools would be to show benefits, that could be available for socially active person or organisation (I am active – so I'm receiving something, for example some useful books or an opportunity to advertise of my local NGO's activities in the all-country media). This kind of actions would strengthen the synergy effect: The citizen – NGO – involvement. (jestem aktywny – coś otrzymuje, np. drobne książki albo reklama działań lokalnych NGO w mediach centralnych).

Idea 31: More mechanisms for effective accountability

Introducing implementing mechanisms which will hold politicians at all levels accountable of action, in proportion to the effect that they are having on the population. It is a concept that might have not been introduced before but it is the most important think, politicians to know that when they are elected, they are responsible for their actions. The youth can become again active in this domain, because one of the main reasons is because politicians can take any decisions but no effective punishment is placed on them.

Idea 32: [DELETE] Integrating experiential civic education

Learning about civic education in theory doesn't make young people active citizens. The way to learn about society should be experiential, with on-site visits, discussions and simulations of the way the parliament works. Having experiential civic education throughout schooling is the most effective way to develop skills that will make children become active citizens.

Idea 33: Loose forms of direct democracy with the use of technology

Idea 34: Raising awareness among public that active participation can change things.

Raising awareness among public that active participation can change things. People have a mindset that nothing will ever change whether they participate or not, so they usually choose not to participate. Awareness that they can make a change should be raised through education, communication and discussion.

Idea 35: Democracy through performances

Why this kind of method? Because through the performing arts it can be promoted new ideas and concepts and it can be presented to the people in a very clear way how it can be a certain concept implemented.

Idea 36: Promoting the idea that civic involvement promotes social intelligence

All the citizens involved in democratic activities know very well that without social intelligence, or better said that the social intelligence is the base of our success. The involvement of the citizen, the active citizenship develops this social intelligence through the fact that it offers us many opportunities to effectively contribute to the common good and to

the social good and it give us the opportunity to solve social problems. The first beneficiary of all of this is the active citizen. If the people would know about all of this, if this concept which is valuable thanks to its results would be promoted, than we will automatically have a beautiful society and a truly functional democracy.

Idea 37: Transparency and dialogue

Idea 38: Mobile citizen's activity centers, reaching also smaller cities

Idea 39: [DELETE] A more simple and clear language

Idea 40: Schedule democratic meetings at local levels

Occasional meetings on events are not effective to encourage participation and engagement. Scheduled local opportunity of democratic participation should represent a path involving citizens as active actors.

Idea 41: More NGOs activities

The idea is that the NGOs leaders will get more politically involved so, for example, they could be on the lists for the local parliament as well. The other thing is that trust between NGOS and their clients, the people they are serving for, should be upgraded. The NGOs should also work for simplifying the language which we use to speak about being locally active, so the language can be understandable for the average people.

Idea 42: Feedback walls for politicians

The main purpose of this idea is to create a possibility of the real assessment of the decision makers during their tenure. Of course we can take part in an election but by a feedback wall I mean assessment of the politicians in the short intervals, that would be then published on the specially created website.

Idea 43: [DELETE] Effective accountability of decision makers

Decision makers must be accountable for their decisions and behaviour and in the event where they are either is in any way within the realm of abuse of power, abuse of position or breach of trust to the citizens, they should be made to assume responsibility as appropriately.

Idea 44: You need to pass a test to vote

Idea 45: Live coverage (TV, Web) of parliamentary discussions

For people to have direct information and not rely on journalists and to know who voted what. That would help them vote the next time.

Idea 46: Work to eliminate the attitude of powerlessness

Idea 47: More checks and balances on corporate takeover during policy formulation

Idea 48: Loose forms of direct democracy without the use of technology for local communities

Idea 49: All age groups should be represented equally in politics

All age groups should be represented equally in politics. A lot of times politics only caters to a certain age group, especially young people are seriously underrepresented and that means that they have no one to represent their interests, so they have no motivation to actively participate. We must represent all of the age groups and their interests equally.

Idea 50: More support to NGOs

The contributions of the NGOs should be strengthened. The private sector could attribute a part of their work to NGOs, same with the government/ or public sector.

Idea 51: Competition for performance

Idea 52: Legislation to protect active citizenship from political pressures

Idea 53: Civic activity is not only a charity

Idea 54: Less tyranny of the interest groups, fewer NGOs

Simply because an organization is non-governmental it does not necessarily mean that the organization has the best interests of the general public at heart. Often, groups with very specific interests when organized impose their will to the majority at the expense of democracy.

Idea 55: Strengthen and support independent media

Idea 56: Online platforms that enhance interactions and questions between citizens and politicians

Idea 57: Showing the consequences of not being active

Idea 58: Being more efficient to expose and punish corruption

Being more efficient to expose and punish corruption It usually takes a long time to expose corruption, there should be more and better investigations. Also most of the time politicians are not held accountable for their actions, because of their status. Everyone should be punished fairly and equally no matter who they are or what connections they have.

Idea 59: Compulsory disclosure of positions and funding sources of lobbyists

This comes as a check and balance for idea 54 - to ensure transparency and limit the tyranny of the interest groups

Idea 60: Increase trust in democracy by role modeling

Idea 61: More community based radio stations and media projects

Idea 62: Better quality of English

Most documents at the European level are in English. Also, if you like to watch the recordings from the EU parliament debates or go through some papers, documents, regulations, most of them are available in English. The citizens need a better knowledge of this language, better command to be able to understand those documents. Not everybody can have this level of command of a foreign language, but the language should be taught better so the people can use it better.

Idea 63: Protect and promote freedom of speech

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