

**Inclusive Citizenship in a  
world in Transformation: Co-  
Designing for Democracy**



# Inclusive Citizenship in a world in Transformation: Co-Designing for Democracy

## D1.3 Criteria and Indicators for Inclusive Participation and Engagement

26-04-2024

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**Grant Agreement 101094258**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union (INCITE-DEM, GA n° 101094258). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or of the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority (REA) can be held responsible for them.

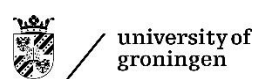
| <b>Deliverable</b>      | <b>Data</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Lead Beneficiary        | University of Münster  |
| Deliverable Number      | D1.3   |
| Deliverable Name        | Criteria and indicators for inclusive participation and engagement   |
| Work Package and Task   | WP1, Task 1.3  |
| Document type:          | Report   |
| Dissemination level:    | Public   |
| Number of Pages         | 11   |
| Key words               | Inclusive participation, inclusive engagement, socio-ecological, quantitative indicators, qualitative criteria, participatory processes, democratic quality  |
| Author/s:               | Fuchs, Doris (University of Münster); Schlipphak, Bernd (University of Münster); Treib, Oliver (University of Münster); Buth, Vanessa (University of Münster); Simsek, Caner (University of Münster) |
| Contributors            | All WP1 Partners   |
| Planned submission date | 30-04-2024   |
| Actual submission date  | 26-04-2024   |
| Reviewer                | ICS, FC.ID   |

### Document History

| <b>Version number</b> | <b>date</b> | <b>authors</b>   | <b>reviewers</b>                   | <b>description</b>  |
|-----------------------|-------------|--|------------------------------------|---|
| 1                     | 23.01.2024  | Fuchs, Doris;<br>Schlipphak, Bernd;<br>Treib, Oliver; Buth,<br>Vanessa; Simsek,<br>Caner | All WP1 partners                   | Review of the first complete draft  |
| 2                     | 19.02.2024  | Fuchs, Doris;<br>Schlipphak, Bernd;<br>Treib, Oliver; Buth,<br>Vanessa; Simsek,<br>Caner | Ines Campos and<br>Roberto Falanga | Complete draft of deliverable finalised and ready to review                         |
| 3                     | 26.02.2024  | Fuchs, Doris;<br>Schlipphak, Bernd;<br>Treib, Oliver; Buth,<br>Vanessa; Simsek,<br>Caner |                                    | Complete draft of deliverable finalised and ready to be discussed in the Consortium |

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# Executive summary

In systematising a set of criteria and indicators for inclusive participation and engagement (IncPE) for a socio-ecological transformation, one confronts several challenges. First, there is the difference between criteria to measure the empirical status quo and development of IncPE, on the one side, and criteria needed to conceptualise and measure its ideal type quality, on the other. In the following, we, therefore, split the discussion of criteria in two sections. In section 1, we are interested in quantitative indicators that focus on the existence and frequency of a certain form of participation taking place. In section 2, we concentrate on indicators of the quality of relevant participatory processes that aim to measure this quality against a normative standard of democracy.

Second and as described in Section 1, one needs to differentiate between the levels on which such conceptualization and measurement actually take place when systematising relevant criteria. These levels mirror the respective unit of analysis. Some approaches seeking to describe and measure forms of IncPE focus on individual participation processes, such as a participatory budgeting process in city A at timepoint B. Other approaches – especially those focusing on the description of trends – highlight the institutionalisation of specific forms of IncPE in a given country, and the frequency with which such IncPE forms are implemented in a given country during a given period of time (mostly, years). This results in two main challenges: A) Linking data from different approaches is a difficult endeavour. B) While approaches using the country as a unit of analysis miss the (quality) characteristics of specific processes, approaches using the processes as units of analysis miss important information on country and time contexts. Taken together and as we will outline in more detail below, these challenges make a comparative evaluation of participation and engagement, across countries and levels and over time, currently a complicated if not impossible endeavour.

In the following, we first depict the situation regarding the measurement of the empirical status quo and development of IncPE, that is, more quantitative indicators. Section 2 focuses on the conceptualization and measurement of the quality of IncPE, highlighting the need for (qualitative) indicators for inclusivity and empowerment and for the sustainability of outcomes, before also identifying relevant influencing factors. Please note that we provide more details for section 2, as we consider these criteria and indicators particularly important for the further development of our project. At the same time, we list the criteria and indicators in the form of bullet points - there only, for now, to allow for easy reflection and commenting.

# 1 Measuring Status Quo and Trends of IncPE: Quantitative criteria and indicators concepts

To quantitatively measure IncPE in democracy, we first of all distinguish between traditional and innovative forms of democratic participation. Among the former, which we conceptualise as a rather coherent form of democratic participation, we understand traditional forms of political participation such as voting, membership in political organisations, or civil society engagement. Regarding innovative forms of democratic participation, we differentiate between the four types highlighted in the scoping reviews of D1.1 and D1.2, participatory budgeting, deliberative mini publics, collaborative governance, and participatory governance.

Additionally, when thinking about measuring democratic participation in quantitative terms, we need to differentiate between two levels of participation in a given country. First, we are interested in whether a certain form of democratic participation is possible in a given country – that is, whether citizens are allowed by law or other forms of written rules to apply the respective form of participation. Second, if so, we are interested in the degree of frequency with which the respective form is actually applied or implemented in the country.

These two differentiations leave us with a 2 x 5 table summarising the available measures of each combination between the form and level of democratic participation. We then employed this table to search for existing datasets / indices providing items to measure these combinations.

*Table 1: Overview of indices containing indicators for combinations of forms and levels of democratic participation*

|   | Legally possible | Frequency of Implementation |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Traditional forms</b>  | V-DEM            | V-DEM                       |
| <b>Participatory Budgeting</b>  | PBATlas          | PBATlas / Pabulib           |
| <b>Deliberative Mini Publics</b>  | --               | IMP                         |
| <b>Collaborative Governance</b>   | V-DEM            | V-DEM                       |
| <b>Participatory Governance</b>   | V-DEM            | V-DEM                       |
| Legend: V-DEM = Varieties of Democracy ( <a href="https://www.v-dem.net/">https://www.v-dem.net/</a> ), PBAtlas = Participatory Budgeting World Atlas ( <a href="https://www.pbatlas.net/index.html">https://www.pbatlas.net/index.html</a> ), Pabulib = A Participatory Budgeting Library ( <a href="http://pabulib.org/format">http://pabulib.org/format</a> ), IMP = Inventory of Mini Publics ( <a href="https://politicize.eu/inventory-dmps/">https://politicize.eu/inventory-dmps/</a> ) |                  |                             |

What becomes obvious from Table 1 is that there currently is no index or database which comprehensively covers all combinations of forms and levels of democratic participation. In addition, the datasets contained in Table 1 all come with additional weaknesses, which we cannot outline in detail here, but which they themselves admit upfront on the respective websites. For example, IMP as well as PBAtlas are collecting data

based on the voluntary participation of country experts. The latter inform both projects about the existence / implementation of a certain form of deliberative mini public or participatory budgeting. But whether the current dataset is close to encompassing all instances of such events or suffers from a systematic bias in data collection stays unknown. In addition, we do not know of a database indicating something about whether a deliberative mini public is (legally) allowed or not in countries across the world.

Furthermore, and similar to the insights gained in our project's historical review of democratic innovations (see D1.1), differentiation between collaborative governance and participatory governance is difficult. In the V-DEM dataset – the most extensive and probably qualitatively most reliable dataset to date measuring the differences in democracy across countries -, some empirical items / variables can be identified as indicators that may measure both concepts, collaborative governance, and participatory governance, at the same time. For example, indicator 3.6.0.5 of VDEM measures the degree of engaged society by asking: "When important policy changes are being considered, how wide and how independent are public deliberations?" This indicator seems to measure both, the degree of collaborative governance (see Ansell & Gash, 2008) and of participatory governance (see Della Porta, 2013).

Finally, combining the measures of each of the indices into a meta-index to measure democratic participation in an encompassing way seems to be effortful, to say the least, as the different datasets follow different logics of choosing the unit of analysis. In the IMP and the PBAAtlas (as well as mostly in the Pabulib), the unit of analysis is the respective process of a certain mini public or participatory budgeting taking place. In the V-DEM dataset, the unit of analysis is the country, in which a certain number of collaborative governance processes took place or in which a certain share of citizens did (not) vote.

Hence, researchers interested in using a comprehensive quantitative measure of the institutionalisation or status quo and the development of participatory governance will in the future need a) to solve remaining issues of overlapping conceptualizations, b) to themselves identify items appropriate for a systematic data set on traditional and innovative forms of participatory democracy, and c) to themselves collect these data at least in parts.

## 2 Conceptualising and measuring the quality of IncPE: Qualitative criteria and indicators

For the qualitative criteria and indicators, specific events are the unit of analysis. As pointed out above, these indicators focus first and foremost on the democratic quality of the given participatory process. In addition, criteria can be identified for a normative assessment of the output achieved. Given that our project is interested in inclusive democratic innovations for socio-ecological transformation, the criteria suggested below focus on sustainability. Finally, core influencing factors are named – many more could be identified, but we focus on the most crucial ones here. These factors are not criteria of democratic quality themselves but are highly likely to exert a strong influence on a given process' potential to achieve a high level of democratic quality. At the same time, they tend to be easier to assess and thereby can help in carrying out evaluations of the democratic quality of a given process. In what follows the qualitative criteria are described and are equally illustrated in Figure 1.



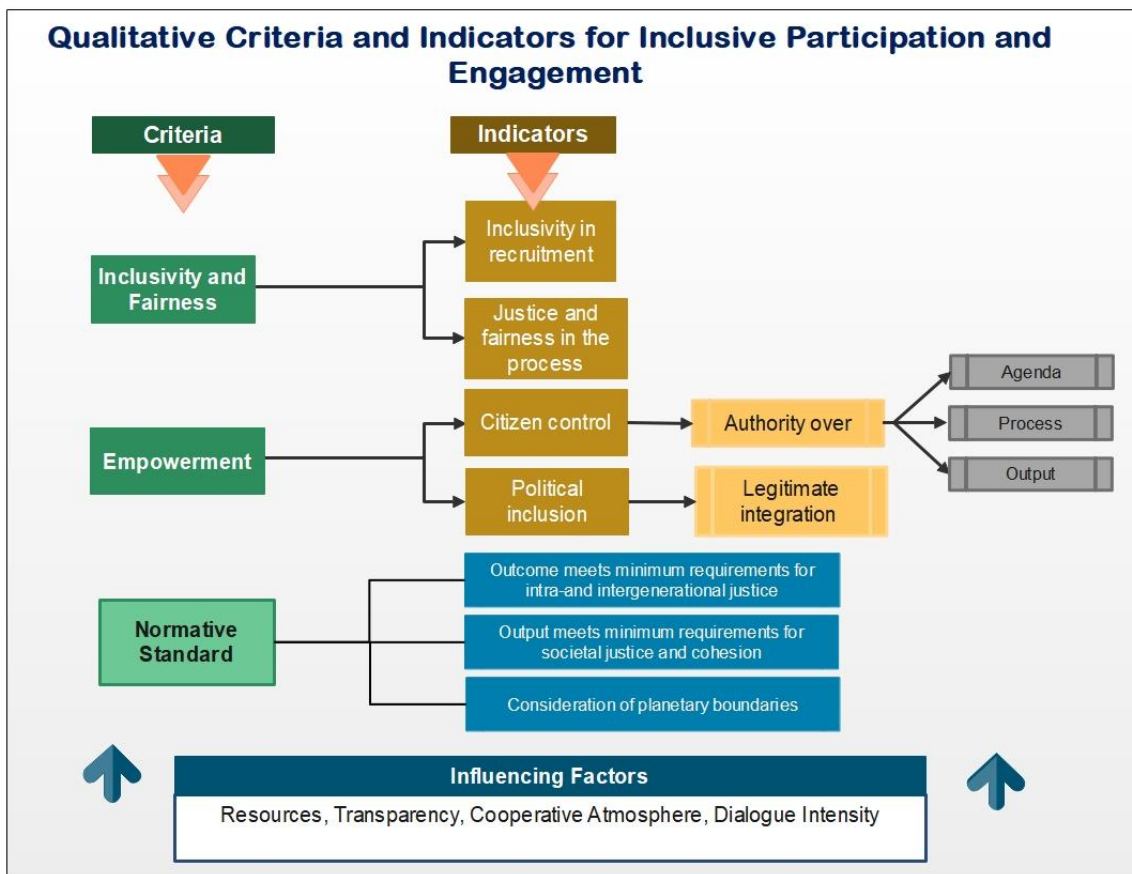


Figure 1 Summary of qualitative criteria and Indicators for Inclusive Participation and Engagement

## 2.1 Inclusivity and fairness

- a. Inclusivity in recruitment
  - i. Does the recruitment process consider all relevant target groups and reduce unequal opportunities for access and participation? (Particularly taking into account: unequal opportunities for participation in terms of income, education, gender, age, migration background and equal opportunities for different types of interests, also in terms of degree of organisation and short/long-term nature of interests)
  - ii. Does the final composition of participants broadly mirror the demographic and attitudinal profile of the population at large? (Note however, that recent literature suggests to overrepresent those otherwise underrepresented to ensure justice and fairness in process and output)
- b. Justice and fairness in the process
  - i. Does equal opportunity for all participants to influence the output of the participatory process exist? (e.g., are all perspectives given communicative space and taken seriously? Are asymmetries in communicative or cognitive skills balanced out?)

## 2.2 Empowerment

### 2.2.1 Citizen control

- a. Citizen authority over agenda
  - i. Do citizens decide the substantive area, issue, and scope of the participatory process?
- b. Citizen authority over process
  - i. Do citizens decide the characteristics of the process (e.g., length, frequency of meetings, processes in and between meetings, etc.)?
- c. Citizen authority over output
  - i. Do citizens have control over the contents and format of the output?
  - ii. Can citizens plan with necessary resources to allow an implementation of the achieved output?
  - iii. Can citizens follow up and assess the rigour and quality of the implementation of the output?

### 2.2.2 Political inclusion

- a. Meaningful and legitimate integration of the procedure into political process
  - i. Is a process in place that commits political decision-makers to a meaningful engagement with the output of the participatory process? (e.g., prescribed voting results in terms of a 2/3 majority or such for not implementing the results)
  - ii. Is there a follow-up process for implementation and its evaluation?

## 2.3 Normative standard

(No contradictions between the outcome of the dialogue and substantial requirements of social and environmental sustainability.)

- a. Output meets minimum requirements for social justice and societal cohesion
  - i. Does the output adequately consider the rights and needs of other persons and groups of persons within the community/society and align with fundamental justice requirements? (e.g., not impose further harm on the weakest members of society)
- b. Outcome meets minimum requirements for intra- and intergenerational justice
  - i. Does the output adequately consider impacts on people living outside the given community/society?
  - ii. Does the output adequately consider impacts on future generations?
- c. Consideration of planetary boundaries
  - i. Does the outcome reduce or at least not further increase the potential for the overstepping of planetary boundaries by human consumption and production?

## 2.4 Crucial influencing factors for the democratic quality of participatory processes

- a. Transparency
  - i. Is the process clear and comprehensible to participants in terms of its process characteristics, potential results, and their further handling? Is all relevant information easily accessible?
- b. Dialogue intensity
  - i. Is there an actual exchange between participants rather than an unidirectional communication?
  - ii. Is the process long enough to allow for in-depth deliberations and negotiations?
- c. Cooperative atmosphere
  - i. Do the participants experience the process and its output as relevant and fair? (This, in turn, will tend to depend on effective trust building, skilled and neutral moderation,...)
- d. Resources
  - i. Are sufficient resources (financial, personnel, know-how) provided for an effective process to take place?

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