

Libraries as forums for democracy

Building a culture of participation

A new role for public libraries

Libraries as spaces for knowledge and lending

Libraries as community hubs

Forums for democracy

What we already do!



Ursula von der Leyen

6th Priority: new push for
democracy



Why

- Society in transition
- Climate change
- Challenges to democratic structures across the globe
- Increasing social division
- Loneliness and marginalisation
- Global pandemic

We believe libraries are the space to bring positive change

Different ways of working:

Engagement of citizens in:

- Framing
- Production and circulation of
- knowledge
- Implementation
- Evaluation

Mainstreaming:

- Institutionalisation of different citizen engagement practices, including deliberative democracy across Commission Services
- Leading by example on practice (public administration tools)
- Developing internal culture (competences)

Citizen engagement and deliberative democracy

Engaging with citizens already at the stage of **issue definition, onwards**

Appreciation of **diversity of knowledge** and experiences

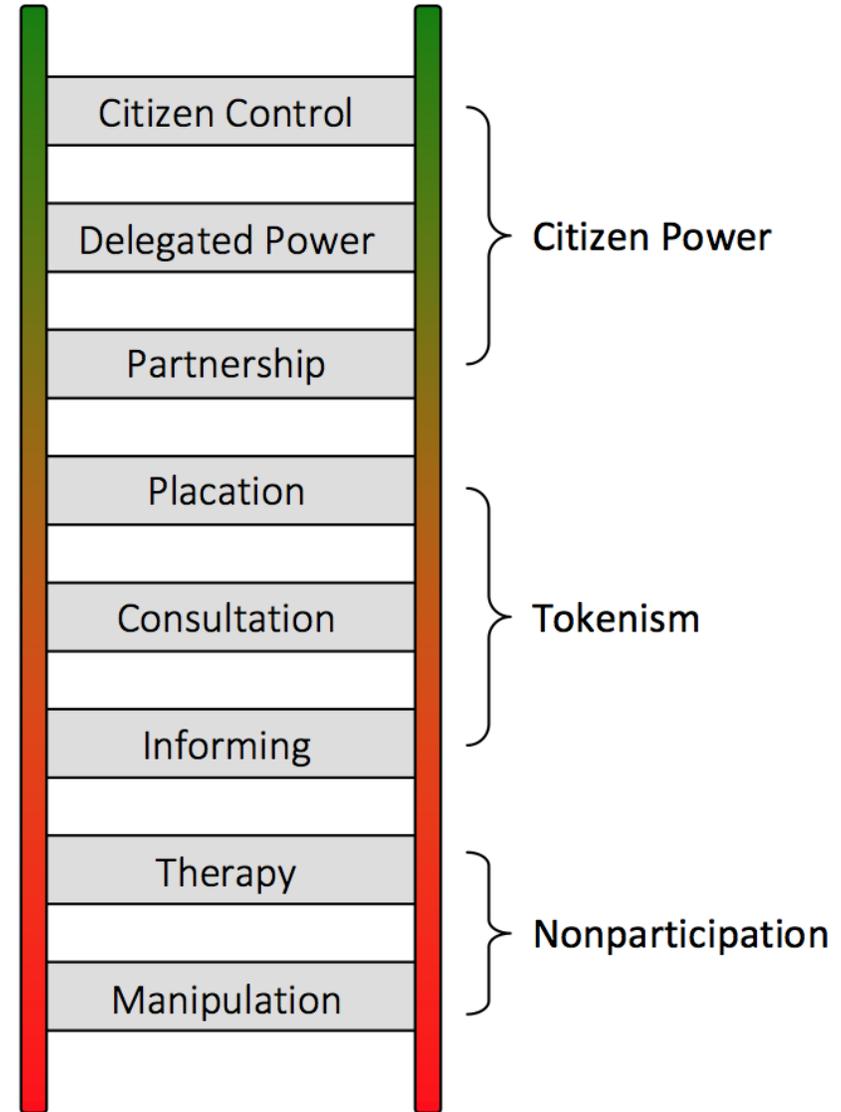
Effects on the policy and decision-making processes

Doing with: beyond self-interest, towards 'public good'

Dialogic way to address tensions and increase mutual understanding

Quality of knowledge and policy production

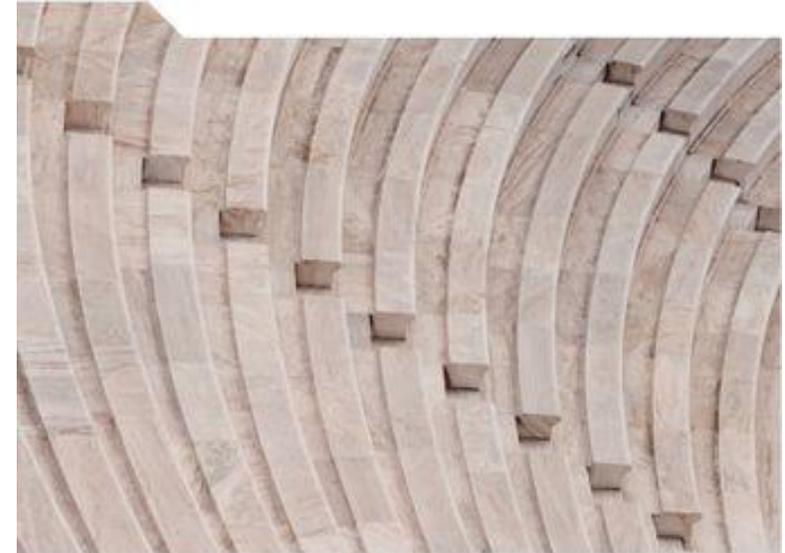
Ladder of citizen participation
Sherry Arnstein 1969



A movement



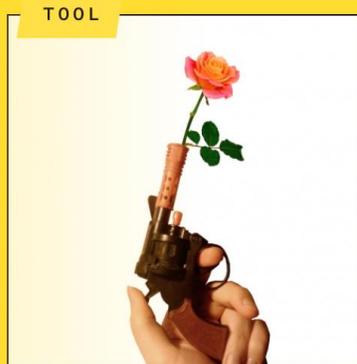
 **Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions**
CATCHING THE DELIBERATIVE WAVE



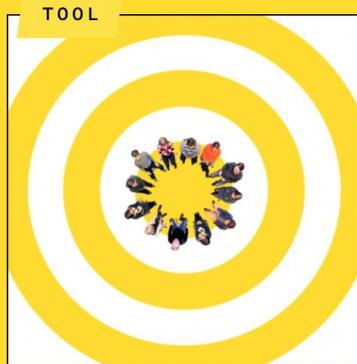
Timeout.org

There is no discussion without planning!

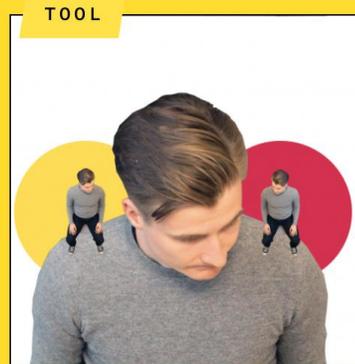
Start, prepare and invite.



Stages and objectives of the discussion - Start here



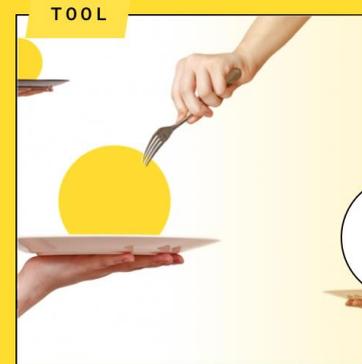
Defining the participants



Acting as a participant and listener in a discussion



Inviting participants



Choose the method



**Ve
ma**

What if....

‘What if libraries were the democracy hubs of Europe?’

‘What would change would we see in society if 10% of all libraries were democracy hubs?’

‘Can we co-create a design-thinking inspired democracy toolkit accessible for every library in Europe?’

Piloting
libraries as
forums for
democracy

ECF European Challenge

BiodiverCities

Democracy pilot in
Finland

ECF European Challenge

”The programme will explore and redefine how libraries can be fundamental public spaces, which enable citizens to engage in learning and democratic conversations and have a say in how this should work.”

- Happening in 7 libraries across Europe (the Netherlands, Latvia, Slovenia, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and Spain)
- Challenges include:



Digital Divide
Digital Citizenship
AI for transforming public space



Debate club
Democratic Dialogue
COVID 19 conversations



Lifelong learning
Children’s literacy and Language



Municipal identity
European Identity

BiodiverCities

- Led by the European Commission Joint Research Centre.
- Ambition to create different ways of working and making citizen engagement practices more mainstream and institutionalized
- Focus is on green infrastructure in cities
- Libraries from Varese, Stavanger, Palma, Novi Sad, and Lisbon are involved

Finnish democracy pilot

Happening in 3 big cities and 3 small cities

Budget:

- 60k€ for big cities
- 30k€ for small cities

Going into nationwide pilot of 1m€

What's next?





- Going to places where people go
- Create partnerships with those spaces

The PL2030 project

Build a network of pioneering libraries across Europe that develop and implement citizen engagement and participation projects

Develop a toolkit and manual, based on a co-creation process that libraries can use freely in their activities