

# LET THE PEOPLE SPEAK

DELIBERATIVE MINI-PUBLICS: A PATHWAY  
TOWARDS A PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY?

FRANZISKA ECKARDT



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DELIBERATIVE MINI-PUBLICS: A PATHWAY  
TOWARDS A PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY?

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**FRANZISKA ECKARDT**

born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 1993

in Tübingen, Germany

This dissertation has been approved by:

**Promotor:**

prof. dr. ir. M.J.G.J.A. Boogers

**Co-Supervisors:**

dr. H. van der Kolk

dr. D.F. Westerheijden

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## **GRADUATION COMMITTEE:**

**Chair/secretary:** prof. dr. T.A.J. Toonen

**Promotor:** prof. dr. ir. M.J.G.J.A. Boogers

**Co-supervisors:** dr. H. van der Kolk  
dr. D.F. Westerheijden

**Committee members:** prof. mr. G. Boogaard  
prof. dr. S.A.H. Denters  
prof. dr. F. Hendriks  
dr. A. Michels  
prof. dr. R. Torenvlied  
prof. dr. G. Smith

This book is dedicated to my parents  
who always encouraged me to achieve my dreams through my own  
persistence and dedication.



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Every journey comes to an end at some point. I never saw a doctorate as a means to an end. For me, a doctorate is more about learning, developing, and getting the best out of myself.

Although this personal journey is not yet over for me, part of it ends with this book you are holding in your hands right now. ‘Let the People Speak’ concerns a topic that is very close to my heart: the desire to find a way towards a more inclusive, fair, and just society. As I will argue in this dissertation, the G1000 is just one step or instrument that could point the way in this direction, a path that continuously leads to a better way to develop modern democratic societies.

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# Chapter 1



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Why is there a need for more citizen involvement in political decision-making?

Solving complex societal problems demands wide social support for policies to be legitimate. The social support can be delivered by political parties, but given the strong divide between parties about many topics, and given the dwindling societal embedding of those parties (declining party memberships), there is a need for additional ways to retain social support. Moreover, in response to the growing awareness that many of these societal problems (e.g., climate change mitigation; the Dutch nitrogen crisis) cannot be solved by the state on its own, calls for a more inclusive participatory society and more democratic renewal are becoming louder from various groups in society (see e.g., Tweede Kamer, 2020; “*Betrokken bij Klimaat*,” 2021). In doing so, the importance of involving the interests and wishes of citizens in political decision-making is increasingly highlighted. An example is the appeal of Ed Nijpels (driving force behind the 2019 Climate Agreement and former VVD Minister of the millennium) in September 2020, in which he argued that the climate goals can only be achieved through the more active involvement and shared responsibility of governments, companies, the financial world, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, such as citizens. Another example is the more recent

advice of a state committee on the democratisation of the energy debate, which recommends the use of democratic innovative practices, such as citizen panels, as a means to increase citizens' involvement in important social issues, such as the climate issue and the energy transition (see e.g., Tweede Kamer, 2020; "*Betrokken bij Klimaat*," 2021).

Yet the increasingly vociferous plea from various groups in society towards politicians and governments to involve citizens more in collective or collaborative decision-making processes is not a new phenomenon. Already since the early 1960s, a few so-called participatory democracy theorists criticised the prevailing aggregative view of democracy by pointing to the need for a 'stronger' democracy through more citizen involvement (Barber, 1984). Since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the modern democratic discourse has taken a so-called "deliberative turn" (Bohman, 1997; Manin, 1987). With this turn, communication and reflection became increasingly central to democratic discourse (Habermas, 1995). From a science-philosophy perspective, this turn was characterised by the idea that individuals should be regarded as competent and rational actors/agents who can reflect on their preferences in open dialogues and therefore should be more closely involved in everyday politics (Chambers, 2003; Ganuza & Francés, 2012). From this perspective, citizen involvement in policy-making is sought from the normative ideal that those who are considered competent and rational should have a greater say in policy-making to make better decisions.

Based on this normative ideal, several so-called 'micro deliberation theorists' and practitioners began to explore and experiment with practical applications of participatory and deliberative democratic approaches as an attempt to integrate citizens' voices in (local) policy-making (e.g., Dryzek, Bächtiger, & Milewicz, 2011; Hendriks & Michels, 2011; Setälä, 2014). Although some of these participatory approaches have already a long heritage as integral parts of the common political

institutions in some representative models of current democracies (e.g. binding referenda in Switzerland; citizen juries in the United Kingdom and the United States), other, more recent developments are still considered ‘experiments’, e.g., large-scale deliberative participatory approaches, such as ‘participatory budgeting’, ‘mini-publics’, ‘citizens’ assemblies’ (Smith, 2009). But whether it concerns old or new participatory approaches, Smith (2009) argued that these participatory approaches can be considered as ‘democratic innovations’, because they, at least in theory, go “beyond familiar institutionalised forms of citizen participation such as competitive elections and consultation mechanisms” (Smith, 2009, pp. 2, 1). These new participatory approaches, therefore, seem to be a tool not only to improve the governability of contemporary governments by informing them about the acceptability of different policy options and strategies to the public but also by making them more inclusive to the ideas and wishes of ‘the people’.

## 1.2 Deliberative mini-publics: an inclusive way to involve citizens in decision-making?

In this dissertation, the focus lies on one particular type of these democratic innovations, the so-called ‘deliberative mini-publics’. According to Smith (2009), deliberative mini-publics can be defined as “forums that are constituted by (near-)randomly selected citizens” (p. 4). Most deliberative mini-publics differ from each other in their design and have been implemented in a wide range of themes and contexts but have in common that they aim to enhance small-group deliberation as well as citizen engagement (Goodin, 2008). In addition, as already implied in Smith’s definition of mini-publics, mini-publics use sortition (quasi-random selection techniques) to “increase the (descriptive) representativeness of the participants” (Michels & Binnema, 2018, p. 3). The reason for using sortition is based on the assertion that quasi-

random mechanisms would lead to a more inclusive, diverse and, therefore, more responsive form of democratic politics (Michels & Binnema, 2018). Some of the most popular examples of deliberative mini-publics are Citizens' Juries, Consensus Conferences, Deliberative Polls, Citizens' Assemblies and the Belgian and Dutch G1000 initiatives. In recent years, deliberative mini-publics have been used as experiments to test the normative ideals of participatory and deliberative democratic theory (Setälä & Herne, 2014). As we will show in the next chapter, although deliberative mini-publics arose in many different shapes and sizes, they all have in common that they aim to strengthen modern democracies by advocating a more inclusive and active form of citizen involvement in political processes. The underlying goal of deliberative mini-publics is mainly based on the deliberative democratic ideal to improve the quality of the political decision-making by giving an inclusive group of citizens affected by a collective decision the equal chance (right, ability and opportunity) to engage in the deliberation on the content of that decision (Dryzek, 2009). Thus, deliberative mini-publics aim for (1) inclusiveness, (2) high quality of deliberation and decision-making, as well as for (3) influence on policy-making. Especially the third aim is why some contemporary authors categorise these mini-publics as democratic innovations (cf. Geissel, 2013; Michels, 2011; Ryan & Smith, 2014; Smith, 2009).

But do these innovative practices work as intended by giving the people a greater say in decision-making? When looking at the empirical evidence on deliberative mini-publics, one can quickly notice that experiences with these different deliberative mini-public designs are mixed (Bächtiger, Setälä, & Grönlund, 2014). As for the representative quality of these designs, a great number of authors criticized these new participatory mechanisms for being insufficiently representative and diverse (e.g., Boogaard, Michels, Cohen, Smets, Binnema, & Vlied, 2016; Flinders et al., 2016; Fournier, Van der Kolk, Carty, Blais, & Rose, 2011; Michels & Binnema, 2016). In terms of mini-publics' deliberative

quality, the evidence seems to be more promising indicating that deliberation can lead to *cognitive effects* (e.g., information gain, change of opinion and preferences (e.g., political refinement), political knowledge, higher quality of argumentation) as well as *behavioural effects* (e.g., more informed judgment, more mutual understanding and consensual thinking, higher political interest, and commitment) (Zhang, 2015). Nevertheless, some studies suggest otherwise, namely that deliberation in some mini-public designs does not solve the conflict but leads to opinion polarisation and bad decisions. Based on this rather negative evidence, Bächtiger et al. (2014, p. 225) and O’Flynn and Sood (2014) claimed that little is still known about the internal inclusiveness of mini-public designs; how and whether they provide participants with equal opportunities to learn, express and reflect on their preferences. Regarding the final goal of mini-publics, exerting influence on (local) decision-making, some scholars have argued that the outcomes of mini-publics would not have a ‘real’ influence on local decision-making. The reason for this is that citizens’ ideas and proposals are often not effectively integrated into local decision-making processes or simply left unattended by local authorities (Boogaard et al., 2016). This is also why Michels and Binnema (2018) argued that “connecting [the outcome of mini-publics] to the political sphere remains [still] the most difficult [challenge] to meet” (p. 10).

Given the existing mixed evidence, the views of scholars on the future of deliberative mini-publics and their potential as democratic innovation practices are also divided. Some scholars wonder whether these often ‘unrepresentative’ deliberative forums have at all created more or new space for citizen participation within existing local government structures and whether they enable citizens to influence local decision-making processes (c.f. Boogaard et al., 2016). But despite the negative evidence, some scholars and practitioners see in these mini-publics an inclusive way of integrating the voices of citizens into political decision-making (Hendriks & Michels, 2011; Smith, 2009). This

is also why some scholars advocated for a more ‘integrative approach’ when it comes to the design of new forms of deliberative mini-publics. By a more integrative approach, it is meant that these scholars advocate the development of new deliberative mini-public designs that create ‘interactive places’ where both government actors and citizens can interact (see e.g., Setälä, 2017). In line with this, some scholars have even proposed the institutionalisation of deliberative mini-publics within existing governmental institutions (e.g., Fishkin, Luskin, & Jowell, 2000; Goodin, 2008; Setälä, 2017; Smith, 2009; Michels & Binnema, 2018).

In response to these claims, several new integrative mini-public designs have emerged in recent years. Think, for example, of the “Ostbelgien Model”, designed by the Belgian G1000 organization. This new design aims to promote long-term citizen participation in the form of a permanent citizens’ council consisting of 24 randomly selected citizens who, on their own initiative or upon request, make a recommendation to the elected Parliament (“The Ostbelgien Model,” n.d.). To ensure the quality of deliberation, the Citizens’ Council is supported in its efforts by independent, short-term citizens’ assemblies. The influence of the Citizens’ Councils is guaranteed by the Parliament’s commitment to respond to the proposed recommendations. Another interesting example is the Dutch G1000 initiatives, which will be the focus of this dissertation. By developing a multi-level deliberative design (consisting of one large and a number of smaller deliberative events), the Dutch G1000 has recently attracted the attention of academics, practitioners, and policymakers, as it leads to a ‘binding’ Citizens’ Decision. By giving citizens, experts, and policymakers a seat at the table, the G1000 aims not only at more consensual decisions but also at decisions that are supported by all relevant actors in a local community.

The rapid development of these new integrative mini-public designs in recent years has led to a rising research interest in these integrative mini-public designs. Especially because previous studies have left open the



question of how such deliberative mini-publics function within today's representative democratic institutions, either as a complement (by adding additional democratic value) or even as a practical alternative. This is also why several authors argued that more research and experiments need to be conducted on new forms of mini-publics that aim to better facilitate and integrate citizen involvement in local decision-making processes (by providing citizens with formal political decision-making powers in local policy-making) (cf. Fishkin, et al., 2000; Fishkin & Luskin, 2006; Michels & Binnema, 2018).

### 1.3 Research objective and contribution

This dissertation aims to shed light on how these new integrative deliberative mini-publics function. Previous studies on mini-publics tell us a lot about the extent to which mini-publics meet or fulfil certain predefined normative democratic ideals/standards. Yet, we find that these studies tell us rather little about the human interaction that takes place within these mini-public designs (cf. Bächtiger et al., 2014; O'Flynn and Sood, 2014). Quantitative methods provide us with a tool to assess whether a mini-public complies with the normative ideals that underlie it, but these methods are limited when it comes to understanding the underlying causal process of human behaviour or the context in which people behave. Thus, because most mini-public designs are judged based on a number of objectively measured criteria, little attention is paid to participants' perceptions and experiences with these deliberative mini-public designs. Do the participants believe that mini-publics work as intended by giving them more say in decision-making? In line with Zhang (2015), we, therefore, argue that research into political involvement in mini-publics should go beyond objectively measuring the frequency of different activities (e.g., whether or not someone spoke, or how long participants have spoken) and should also

include the more subjective perception of the participant's experiences in the evaluation.

To fill this gap in recent literature, we propose a more comprehensive approach to assessing the functioning of mini-public designs, involving both objective measures and the subjective perceptions and experiences of the participants. This more comprehensive approach is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, we know from studies of social networks and research into public opinion and bounded rationality that the perception of participants can differ significantly from the objectively measured 'truth'. For example, what a researcher considers to be a justified procedure is not necessarily perceived that way by the participants. And secondly, from a constructivist point of view, the perceptions, and experiences of one participant can be very different from those of another participant in a mini-public. But instead of taking a purely positivist or constructivist perspective on science, we want to study a mini-public (as a social system) in a comprehensive way using objective and subjective methods. Consequently, to gain a better insight into the general functioning of deliberative mini-publics, we claim that a mixed-method approach is needed.

The contribution of this dissertation is therefore both theoretical and practical. As far as the theoretical contribution is concerned, this dissertation contributes to the existing public administrative and political literature by focusing on new 'integrative deliberative mini-publics' (as new participatory forms of government) and their function within the current representative democratic institutions. We do this by applying a more comprehensive research design which, using a mixed methodology, aims to understand the overall functioning of one integrative deliberative mini-public designs: the *Dutch G1000*. To gain a better understanding of how the Dutch G1000 works, we use a longitudinal case study design. By following three G1000 initiatives in the Dutch province of Overijssel over three years, we aim to

systematically analyse and compare the effects of these new forms of mini-publics on citizen participation in local governance. In terms of practical contribution, this dissertation aims to open the ‘black box’ of democratic innovative practices. By gaining a deeper insight into new integrated forms of participatory governance arrangements, we present policy recommendations for both practitioners and policymakers at the end of this dissertation.

## 1.4 Research questions and dissertation outline

To examine the functioning of new integrative forms of deliberative mini-publics on citizen involvement in local decision-making processes, we aim to address the following exploratory research question in this dissertation:

*To what extent can deliberative mini-publics contribute to greater citizen involvement in local decision-making?*

We will explore this main research question throughout this dissertation by addressing four sub-questions.

- What normative conceptions of democracy underlie the common design ideals of the various deliberative mini-publics, of which the G1000 is one?
- To what extent were the G1000 populations a good reflection of the wider local populations?
- To what extent was a high quality of deliberation and decision-making achieved in the three G1000 initiatives?
- To what extent did the G1000 initiatives exert both political and social impact?

To answer these questions, this dissertation is structured in ten chapters. In **chapter 2**, we aim to place the main research question in a broader social and political science perspective (macro-level theories) by first

zooming out to discuss two contrasting classical normative theories on democracy: the direct or participatory view and the liberal or representative view of democracy. In the second part of chapter 2, we introduce a third conception of democracy, the deliberative democratic view, by briefly summarizing the normative core ideas that drove the modern democratic discourse in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter 2 ends with a brief comparison of the three democracy theories and their views on how citizens should be involved in the political process. **Chapter 3** then introduces the concept of deliberative mini-publics and different types of mini-publics are presented, of which the G1000 is one. In what follows, we elaborate on the common underlying normative design ideals that all these different mini-public designs pursue. In **chapter 4**, we first consult the existing literature on the actual functioning of deliberative mini-publics. Do these deliberative practices fulfil the normative ideals that underlie them? To answer this question, we structure the literature review along three dimensions: Participant selection (inclusion), communication and decision-making (quality of deliberation and decision-making) and the degree of authority and empowerment (influence). Moreover, based on social and political science theories, we will formulate some theoretical ideas and expectations about the functioning of mini-publics, which we will explore in more detail in the analysis part of this dissertation.

In **chapter 5**, we introduce the Dutch G1000 and discuss why it is so interesting to study the Dutch G1000. We start the chapter with a brief overview of the background of the Dutch G1000 and its methodology. In discussing the G1000 methodology, we will describe the current “rules in use” and the recent developments and changes in the G1000 methodology that have led to a ‘new’ G1000 design. In what follows, we explain what makes the Dutch G1000 so interesting to study. The final part of chapter 5 contains a detailed description of the three individual case studies used in this dissertation.

Before we get into the actual analysis part of this research, we explain how we studied the functioning of a mini-public in **chapter 6**. We first provide the reader with more insight into the methodological choices underlying this research and how these choices have led to the chosen research methods (mixed-method approach), or more specifically, how the data were collected and analysed. In the second part of chapter 6, we present the operationalisation of the main concepts and variables of the analytical framework to answer the question of how we have made the effects of the Dutch G1000 initiatives measurable. In the final part of Chapter 6, we discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the research design and its limitations, as well as the interpretation and generalisability of my obtained research results.

In **chapter 7, 8, and 9**, the analysis of this research is presented. To assess the functioning of the mini-public designs thoroughly, we analyse in all three analysis chapters both the objectively measurable functioning of the G1000 initiatives and the subjective perceptions and experiences of the participants. In **chapter 7**, we focus on the inclusiveness of the three G1000 initiatives. By comparing the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants with the respective local population, we investigate not only whether the G1000 population was a good reflection of the local population but also the possible factors that promoted or undermined the inclusiveness of the G1000 initiatives. In **chapter 8**, we focus on the deliberative quality of the G1000 processes by investigating the extent to which organizers of the G1000 initiatives succeeded in establishing a high quality of deliberation and decision-making in the participation process. Finally, we address in **chapter 9** the final normative objective of mini-publics, their influence. To this end, we investigate to what extent the G1000 initiatives had a political and social impact on the local governments, the participants, and the local community.

In **chapter 10**, we synthesise the main findings of the previously presented case studies in a broader discussion on the functioning of deliberative mini-publics on citizen involvement in local policy-making and the contextual circumstances that seem to influence their functioning. More specifically, answering the question to what extent deliberative mini-publics can contribute to greater citizen involvement in (local) decision-making and thus can pave a possible new pathway towards a participatory democracy. Finally, based on the implications of our main findings, we will present recommendations for action for future research and policy makers/practitioners in this field.



# Chapter 2





## 2 DEMOCRATIC DISCOURSE: SHOULD CITIZENS RULE OR BE RULED?

The basic idea of democracy as “rule by the people” is a contested concept in academic literature (Gallie, 1955; Pennock, 2015). Different normative views have been developed that relate to questions about:

- *The people* (Who are to be regarded as the ruling people in a democracy?);
- *The role of ‘the people’* (What is the role of common citizens (‘the ruled’) in a democracy?); and
- *The nature of the political process* (How are legitimate decisions made in a democratic system?) (Held, 2006, p. 1).

In the first part of this chapter, we will focus on two strongly contrasting normative views in democratic theory: the direct or participatory view and the liberal or representative view of democracy (Held, 2006). While adherents of the first view emphasise the intrinsic value of citizen involvement in the democratic process (rule of the many), adherents of the second view emphasise the more instrumental value of citizen involvement in the political democratic process (as a means to an end

(e.g., electing a suitable political elite to rule the many)). In what follows, we introduce a third conception of democracy, the deliberative democratic view, which emerged from a revival of modern democratic discourse triggered by modern participatory democrats in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both modern conceptions of democracy served as the conceptual basis for the development of several innovative democratic practices at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (such as deliberative mini-publics). Yet, as their conceptions of how to involve citizens in the political decision-making process differ, we will briefly contrast these differences in the last part of this chapter.

## 2.1 Two 'classical' views on democracy

When defining democracy as a form of government, one can distinguish between two major groups of thinkers in the democratic discourse until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Held, 2006).<sup>1</sup> The first group of democratic thinkers define democracy as “popular rule in a broad and general sense”: *rule by the people* (Maduz, 2010, p. 1). Conceptually inspired by the model of classical Athenian democracy<sup>2</sup>, these thinkers refer to democracy as a direct or pure form of government, in which active political participation is valued for its own sake; as a way of self-realisation<sup>3</sup> and/or a source of legitimacy.<sup>4</sup> According to this direct or participatory view of democracy, citizens are capable of recognizing collective problems and of serving the common good and should, therefore, be ‘directly’ involved in ongoing civic and official democratic processes (Habermas, 1994, p. 22; Held, 2006, p. 14; Maduz, 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> The deliberative democratic theorist Habermas (1994) also referred to this dichotomy in his writings as the ‘republican paradigm’ and the ‘liberal paradigm’.

<sup>2</sup> Ancient democracy, as an innovative form of government, was developed around the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC in the ancient Greek city-state of Athens. The Athenian model of democracy was also adopted by other Greek cities at that time and is nowadays regarded as the birthplace of democracy (see Held, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> In the Athenian city-state, political participation was an integral part of civic virtue.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Marsilius of Padua (c. 1275/80 – c. 1342) argued in *The Defender of Peace*, that democracy would be the best way to produce outcomes that are most likely to be obeyed by the people, since these are based on citizens’ consent (see: Held, 2006, pp. 36-38).

From this perspective, democracy can be understood as a ‘strong democracy’, because active political engagement is seen as a way of life, as an essential part of good citizenship (Barber, 1984). Moreover, by emphasising the educational value of political participation, some participatory democrats argue that political participation helps individuals to develop social and political capacities through their active involvement in the political process. Inspired by the model of Athenian citizenship, direct or participatory democrats advocate that the right to participate in democratic processes should be granted equally to all citizens<sup>1</sup>, regardless of their wealth, knowledge or class (Kagan, 1998). In line with this, supporters of this view argued that sovereign power (the power to discuss, decide, and enact laws) should lie with *the people* since they are part of a solidary and knowledgeable citizenry. From this perspective, self-government is seen not only as a way of making collective judgments that serve the common good but also as a source of personal freedom: when citizens themselves govern, they cannot be ruled/dominated by others. Moreover, supporters of this view argue that political decisions should be based on ‘proper discussions’ within the political community. Decisions should be based on an “inclusive opinion- and will-formation in which [these] free and equal citizens [can] reach an understanding on which goals and norms lie in the equal interest of all” (Habermas, 1994, p. 23; Held, 2006, p. 15). Participation within the democratic political process must be guided by the principles of liberty and equality, and all citizens must have equal rights to speak, vote, and raise issues in these discussions (Held, 2006). Moreover, to treat everyone equally, collective judgments should be based on majority voting. From this perspective, free and unrestricted discourse and decision-making can only take place in the form of self-governing institutional mechanisms (e.g., citizens’ assemblies, referenda, citizen

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted here that the notion of citizenship in Athenian democracy did not grant equal political rights to all people living in Athens. Athenian citizenship was highly restricted to adult men (over the age of 20) of indigenous origin only. Women, children, immigrants, and slaves had no political rights and were therefore excluded from the political life (Kagan, 1998).

initiatives) which make use of procedures that are based on the principle of equality (e.g., equal voting power, equal chances to participate and holding office).

Since the downfall of Athenian democracy around 409 BC<sup>1</sup>, the possibility of direct democracy as a form of government had not been considered seriously. It was even severely criticised by some theorists<sup>2</sup> as being too disordered and inherently volatile due to peoples' changing moods (e.g., susceptible to the influence of, e.g. a good speaker or corruption). Drawing on the ideas of Plato and Aristotle, the Renaissance philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli claimed that all democracies would decay into anarchy after some time due to their "inability to protect itself from 'the arrogance of the upper class' and 'the licentiousness of the general public'" (Held, 2006, pp. 40-41). Like other philosophers before him,<sup>3</sup> Machiavelli, therefore, preferred a mixed form of republican government to democracy (Matić, 2016).

However, Enlightenment thinkers challenged this prevailing negative view on democracy (e.g., John Locke, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant<sup>4</sup>) by laying the foundation for another conception of democracy, the so-called liberal or representative view on democracy. Like proponents of the direct or participatory view on democracy, they argued that political affairs should be guided by the principles of liberty and equality. Since all human beings should be considered equal (by nature), political authority, they argued, cannot be justified by "noble blood", "birthright" or "in the name of God" (Held, 2006).

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<sup>1</sup> After the defeat of Athens in Sicily in 409 BC, the Athenian democracy was replaced by a system of oligarchy.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., based on critiques of Athenian democracy, influenced by critics such as Thucydides (c. 460 – 399 BC), Aristophanes (c. 446 – 386 BC), and Plato (c. 427 – 347 BC).

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Plato (427 – 347 BC), Aristotle (c), and Cicero (106 – 43 BC).

<sup>4</sup> Democratic theory is strongly linked to normative political philosophy, or to be more precise, to different moral views on politics, such as its autonomy and legitimacy. See for example, Kant's theory of morality (Kant, 1785) or John Rawls's theory of Justice (Rawls, 1958).

This second group of democratic thinkers argued that the decision-making authority should not lie with *the people*. Since human beings are considered as ill-informed, selfish, and acquisitive individuals, *the people* would not be capable of making decisions that serve the same interests of all. Politics should, therefore, be left to leaders and experts (Held, 2006; Escobar, 2017). From this perspective, democracy is less about the self-government of *the people* and more about finding a method to select leaders who can best represent the interests of *the people* and take decisions on their behalf (Escobar, 2017). Supporters of this view, therefore, believe in the instrumental value of democratic politics (or democracy as such). Democracy is a means to an end rather than an end in itself (Held, 2006). To warrant ideals such as liberty and equality among people, a democratic process would be necessary to find a compromise between the competing private interests of self-interested actors. Hence, the *raison d'être* of a representative form of government lies in the aggregation of private interests (or individual preferences) through political parties and interest groups (Habermas, 1994; Escobar, 2017). Liberal or representative democratic theorists argue that unlike a monarchy, oligarchy or clerical rule, representative political institutions exist to serve *the people* by enacting laws ‘in the name of *the people*’ that apply to both the ruling people and the governed people (also known as the ‘rule of law’). According to this rule of law, citizens should enjoy the same rights (individual freedom of thought, speech and religion, and economic freedom) and government protection as long as they pursue their private interests within limits set by legal status (Habermas, 1994). To guarantee a legitimate political process, supporters of the liberal or representative view stress therefore the importance of popular sovereignty.

Like participatory democrats, supporters of representative democracy think that the source of a state’s political power (the power to make legitimate decisions) must be generated and maintained by the consent of the people (by majority rule). However, they argue this is to be

generated in periodically returning elections. To this end, they stress the importance of competition among political elites, the separation of powers (e.g., elected leadership, the representative composition of parliamentary bodies), universal and equal voting rights for all citizens, and fair decision-making rules (e.g., secret ballots) (see Rawls, 1958; Dahl, 1989; Habermas, 1994).

## 2.2 The revival of the democratic discourse in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

The ideas of liberal or representative democrats formed the basis for a series of reforms and revolutions<sup>1</sup> in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the period following the American Revolution of 1776, liberal ideology spread among the populations of North and South America and Europe, leading to the abolition of absolutist monarchies and the establishment of an increasing number of unified, independent constitutional states with an elected parliament based on the rule of law during the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the 1960s saw a revival of the participatory democratic discourse challenging the dominant liberal theory by emphasising the shortcomings of modern liberal representative democracies (Benhabib, 1996; Bohman, 1997; Held, 2006).

So-called ‘modern participatory democrats’ interpreted the rise of left-wing political activism and new social movements that emerged in a number of Western societies at the end of the 1960s as signals of citizens’ dissatisfaction with the institutions and procedures of modern liberal representative democracies. Whereas “old social movements” (19<sup>th</sup>-century movements) rose in times dominated by “extreme material hardship and social exploitation”, these new social movements

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the American Revolution (1776) and the French Revolution (1789) led to the declaration of independence by the United States and the first efforts to implement human rights.

advocated for greater emancipation, participation, and democracy, as well as a post-materialistic value change (Swyngedouw & Moulaert, 2010, p. 31). According to Pateman (1970, 1981) and Barber (1984), the rise of new social movements in liberal democracies during the 1960s was caused by a conceptual failure of liberal theory and its central individualist principles. In their view, liberal democracies, or what Barber (1984) called 'thin' democracies, failed to secure equality and freedom for all individuals because modern forms of life would exhibit power inequalities in terms of economic resources, class, gender, and race.

According to modern participatory democrats, the first explanation for this failure of liberal democracies lies epistemologically in the rise of (neo-)positivist theories that emerged in the 1960s and a resulting technocratic mindset. In his book 'Risk Society', the German sociologist Ulrich Beck (1992) claimed that new forms of risk in modern societies, such as social inequality, job insecurity or the erosion of traditional family patterns, emerged as by-products of modern technologies and techno-industrial strategies (Fischer, 2000). As a result of the emerging need to increase control and manage modern liberal democracies more effectively, policymakers began to rely on the role of experts and specialists in increasingly complex policy-making processes. Consequently, several modern participatory democrats claimed that decision-making processes in modern liberal representative democracies were increasingly dominated by the technocratic thinking of unelected experts rather than democratically elected politicians. Since the political power of the state in modern liberal representative democracies would no longer be generated and sustained by popular sovereignty (see, e.g., Offe & Preuss, 1990; Pimbert & Wakeford, 2001; Beck & Grande, 2010), Barber (1984) and Fishkin (1991) criticized the increasing influence of democratically unelected experts on political decision-making as having serious consequences for the legitimacy of political decisions.

In addition to the increasing involvement of unelected experts in policy-making, a few modern participatory democrats blamed the shift from old forms of bureaucratic governance to increasingly complex network forms of governance for the growing dissatisfaction and political alienation of citizens from their governments (Offe & Preuss, 1990; Fishkin, 1991). As a result of the emergence and spread of the neoliberal concept of democracy in the 1980s, it is argued, that a new notion of economic democracy or consumer democracy emerged that not only relegated citizens to passive ‘consumers’ but also replaced forms of accountability and participation with managerialism, governance practices, and competitive pressures (Brown, 2015). In this context, Barber (1984) and Fishkin (1991) noted that the increasing complexity of political decision-making processes in modern societies has led to a growing disconnect between the intentions and interests of increasingly well-informed citizens and those who make decisions and act on their behalf. Furthermore, Pateman (1981) and Barber (1984) claimed that political alienation since the 1960s has also been caused in part by a growing tension between electoral promises and actual decisions in modern liberal democracies. This is the case, they argued, because voters mandate politicians and governments to make decisions about matters of public interest at a time (the time of the election) when the nature and content of those matters are often completely unknown to voters (Offe & Preuss, 1990).

To counter the democratic unease of citizens toward their representative governments and the perceived lack of legitimacy, modern participatory democrats, therefore, stressed the need for more inclusive and direct forms of citizen involvement (e.g., grassroots organisations) in political decision-making. In addition, by putting more emphasis on citizen participation, they stressed that democratic experimentation and innovation would be necessary within the framework of existing representative democracies to solve the



perceived democratic deficit of representative models of democracies (Barber, 1984; Offe & Preuss, 1990; Benhabib, 1996).

## 2.3 Deliberative democracy as a 'third' view on democracy

During the 1980s, the modern democratic discourse took a so-called *deliberative turn*<sup>1</sup> (Manin, 1987; Bohman & Rehg, 1997; Dryzek, 2002). This turn was marked by the idea that the exchange of information between different actors in pluralistic societies could improve the quality of decision-making on increasingly complex political issues of public interest. Deliberative democrats, therefore, focused on the question of how to improve the quality of political decisions.

From a deliberative democratic perspective, the legitimacy of democratic decisions lies in the quality of deliberation. While supporters of the liberal view regard the aggregation of preferences through an electoral contest and interest groups as a necessary and sufficient precondition for creating legitimate and democratic political outcomes, deliberative democrats emphasise the need for reason-giving as an important (pre-)condition for the creation of better political outcomes (Habermas, 1994). The idea of public reason as a fundamental aspect of democracy and a more just political society (see also Rawls, 1958) is based on the ideal that all parties involved in society would be subject to the principle of reciprocity (Escobar, 2017). Accordingly, individuals must not only emphasise their preferences<sup>2</sup> during dialogues but also explain and justify their political positions and decisions to each other (p. 769). Deliberative democrats, therefore, view democracy more as a “discursive forum for the exchange of public reasons and the creation

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<sup>1</sup> Initial ideas about deliberation as a decisive element of democracy can be traced back to classical democrats such as Aristotle (384-322 BC) (Elster, 1998). However, the term “deliberative democracy” was first coined by Joseph Bessette in 1980 and did not appear in a series of academic publications until the late 1980s (Bohman & Rehg, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> E.g., through a walk to the ballot box or the use of the majority rule.

of public agreement” rather than as “a market for the exchange of private preferences” (Escobar, 2017, p. 426). In a well-functioning discursive public sphere and fora, Young (2002) notes that individuals would make their decisions not “by counting what preferences have greater numerical support but by determining which proposals the collective agrees are supported by the best reasons” (p. 23). According to Landwehr (2014) and Lafont (2006, p. 7), the process of contesting and challenging validity claims, settling disputes and ultimately achieving a consensus based on the force of the better argument (to use Habermas’s terminology) would be of particular importance to increase the “epistemic quality of political decisions” on the one hand and to ensure the legitimacy of the results of democratic discourse on the other. In this sense, the deliberative conception of democracy, as opposed to the more intrinsically direct or participatory democratic conception, underlines the instrumental value of citizen participation in the political decision-making process.

## 2.4 Participatory and deliberative democrats’ contrasting views on citizen involvement

Today, the terms participatory and deliberative democracy are often used synonymously. One reason for this is that both normative democratic views differ from liberal or representative democratic views in the sense that they both favour the direct participation of citizens in political decision-making processes beyond the election of representatives through free and fair elections (Carson & Elstub, 2019, see Table 1). Both participatory and deliberative democrats advocate a more inclusive and active form of citizen involvement in political processes to strengthen modern democracies. They are therefore both critical of the existing architecture of representative democracy and seek to renew its institutions by opening it to greater citizen involvement. Yet, as we have shown above, participatory, and deliberative democrats’

ideas differ when it comes to answering the question of how citizens should be more actively involved in the political process (see Table 1). Following Carson and Elstub (2019), the main differences between the two views in this respect are: [1] the number of participants; [2] the type of participation; and [3] how citizens should be selected (selection method).

In terms of the number of citizens who should be involved in political processes, *participatory democrats* generally want to involve a **large number of participants** in political processes, ideally the entire demos. They regard all citizens as equal and therefore argue that all those affected by a particular decision or all citizens (or residents) in a particular jurisdiction should also be involved in the process of making these decisions (Carson & Elstub, 2019). Participatory democrats main aim is, therefore “to achieve breadth” (Carson & Elstub, 2019, p. 1). *Deliberative Democrats*, on the other hand, are more concerned about the quality of decision-making and therefore argue that only a relatively **small (but representative) group of citizens** should be involved in political processes. In their view, high-quality deliberation, or “deep deliberation”, can only be achieved among a small number of people (Carson & Elstub, 2019, p. 1).

As regards the type of participants envisaged for citizens, we illustrated above, that participatory democrats wish to see citizens more actively involved in all aspects of life. By considering active political participation as a way of life (Barber, 1984), as a path to self-realization and as a source of legitimacy, *participatory democrats* argue that citizens should be **more actively involved** in both the political and public spheres. However, since all citizens should have the same right to participate in the political process, they should also have the free choice to do so. Therefore, participatory democrats believe that all citizens who wish to participate in any form of political processes should have the same right to do so. In contrast, *deliberative democrats* envisage a more

specific form of political participation for citizens. In their view, citizens should be actively involved in (political) **deliberation** to improve the quality of political decision-making. Proponents of the deliberative-democratic view, therefore, believe that by involving citizens in political deliberations they would be better informed about the policy issue at stake. They also claim that the process of weighing different perspectives and arguments against each other would enable them to arrive at a more considered and informed judgement, probably to a higher quality of decision-making.

Finally, as to the question of how citizens should be selected to participate in political processes, *participatory democrats* favour **self-selection**. Everyone affected by a political decision should have the equal right to participate in the development of that decision. *Deliberative democrats*, on the contrary, tend to favour **random selection** above self-selection as a way to provide all citizens affected by a particular decision with an equal chance to participate in the deliberation on the content of that decision.

Because of their opposing views on citizen involvement, participatory and deliberative democrats also developed different ideas on how more inclusive democratic institutions should be developed. Advocates of the participatory democratic view encourage the use of instruments that promote a more direct form of citizen participation. While some of these instruments, such as referendums, plebiscites, and citizens' initiatives, have been known for centuries, others only came into being since the early 1960s (e.g., participatory budgeting, town meetings/21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meetings). In contrast, deliberative democrats started to emphasise during the 1980s the need for the development of new deliberative fora and deliberation procedures (e.g., randomly selected citizens' juries, citizens' assemblies, deliberative polls).

**Table 1.** The three normative views on democracy compared.

	Description	Direct and participatory view on democracy	Deliberative view on democracy	Liberal or representative view on democracy
Inclusiveness of the democratic process	<i>Who participates</i> in the democratic process?	A large group of individuals, ideally everyone from the demos	Small (representative) sample of individuals from the demos + (elected political elite)	A small group of political elites elected by the demos
	What <i>type of political participation</i> is envisaged for citizens?	Active participation in all aspects of politics	Active participation in deliberative fora	Active participation in periodic popular elections
Democratic decision-making process	Under which <i>conditions</i> is citizen participation envisaged?	Equal right to participate in the political process	Equal chance to participate in deliberative fora	Equal right to participate in free and fair elections
	How are legitimate political decisions made in the democratic process?	Process of reaching a decision based on the majority voting	Process of reaching a more considered and informed consensual decision based on public reason	Process of negotiation and decision-making between political elites in the name of the people (based on the aggregation of individual preferences through free and fair elections)
Citizens' influence on political decision-making	To what extent exert citizens authority and power in the political decision-making process?	Citizens exert direct decision-making authority	Citizens exert advisory influence through the public sphere and more consequential influence through interactive fora	Citizens exert advisory and consultative influence (e.g., interest group representatives) on decision-making

## 2.5 Conclusion

Without claiming to offer a complete overview of all democratic approaches, we wanted to highlight three opposing views on democracy in this chapter (see Table 1 for a brief overview). The liberal view is an example of an aggregated form of democracy that today dominates most Western democratic societies. As opposed to the direct/participatory democratic view and the deliberative democratic view, which challenged this dominant aggregated view by emphasising the importance of greater citizen involvement in the democratic process. But as we have shown in the previous section, direct/participatory democrats and deliberative democrats envisaged citizen involvement in different ways. As a result, they have also developed different views on what more inclusive democratic institutions should look like and what democratic standards they should meet.

Inspired by the ideas of both participatory and deliberative democrats, a rich variety of new forms of participatory and deliberative processes and practices has developed over the last half-century, thanks to the inventiveness of several practitioners and so-called micro deliberation theorists (Pimbert & Wakeford, 2001; Goodin, 2008; Warren, 2009; Elstub & Escobar, 2017). It is in this context that the terms *democratic innovations* and *mini-publics* were coined to describe these new forms of citizen involvement processes and practices. While the former term – *democratic innovations* – has emerged in more recent years as an umbrella term to refer to the variety of new civic participation processes and practices in a more general way (cf. Smith, 2009; Michels, 2011; Geissel, 2013; Ryan & Smith, 2014), the second term – *mini-publics* – has for years referred to a rather vaguely defined concept in academic literature (Ryan & Smith, 2014). It is only in recent years that the term mini-publics has manifested itself as a term referring to a number of new deliberative fora and deliberation procedures with a set of more clearly defined

design principles (cf. Carson and Elstub, 2019). In the next chapter, we will take a closer look at these deliberative mini-publics and their underlying design principles to get a better understanding of what these new deliberative processes and practices look like.

# Chapter 3





# 3 DELIBERATIVE PRACTICES: WHAT ARE MINI- PUBLICS?

The idea of a mini-public was first introduced by Robert Dahl in 1989, who in his work *Democracy and its Critics* a Citizens' Forum described a *mini-populus* or *mini-demos*, consisting of thousands of randomly selected citizens, who collectively would deliberate on current political issues, form opinions and/or set the political agenda (Setälä, 2014). By envisioning a *mini-populus* as a complement to the existing representative democratic institutions (legislative bodies), Dahl (1989) argued that “judgements of a *mini-populus*” would “derive their authority from the legitimacy of democracy” since they would represent the considered judgement of the people (Dahl, 1989, p. 340). Since Dahl's vision of a *mini-populus*, the term mini-publics has been used in the academic literature to refer to several new deliberative citizens' “for[a], usually organised by policymakers, where citizens representing different viewpoints are gathered together to deliberate on a particular issue in small-N groups” (Grönlund, Bächtiger, & Setälä, 2014, p. 1).

However, when it comes to the question of which deliberative fora can be considered as mini-publics, the opinions of scholars are quite diverse.

The main reason for this is that the concept of a mini-public is an evolving concept based on “combinations of theoretical and empirical insights” (Ryan and Smith (2014, p. 22); see Figure 1). This is also the reason why, in the past, it has been difficult to define the scope of the mini-public concept more precisely (see also Ryan and Smith’s (2014) attempt to define mini-publics). In this chapter, we will first present several deliberative fora that are nowadays considered to be mini-publics by most scholars. We will show what the distinguishing features of these contemporary deliberative mini-publics are and which common underlying design ideals most mini-publics strive for. Also, we explain why the G1000 initiatives, investigated in this dissertation, are part of the expansive definition of the mini-public concept.

### 3.1 Which contemporary deliberative mini-public designs can be distinguished?

Contemporary mini-public designs can be distinguished under three aspects:

1. the way these designs grant access to the participants (*selection method and number of participants*);
2. how these designs bring people together to deliberate and take decisions (*process duration and activities*);
3. the way these designs empower the citizen to influence political decision-making (*results and destination of the results*).

In the following, we will shortly introduce six contemporary mini-publics and their design features, which are: Citizen Juries, Planning Cells, Consensus Conferences, Deliberative Polls, Citizens’ Assemblies and the G1000 initiatives (see Table 2 for a brief overview).

### 3.2.1 Citizen Juries and Planning Cells

From a historical perspective, the first designs that can be considered as deliberative mini-publics are *Citizen Juries* and *Planning Cells* (see Figure 1). These two designs were invented by the American researcher Ned Crosby, founder of the Jefferson Center for New Democratic Processes, and the German professor Peter Dienel of the Research Institute for Citizens' Participation before the deliberative turn and Dahl's vision of a *mini-populus* in the 1970s (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). About the first design, for a Citizen Jury, a stratified random sampling method is used to select a group of 12 to 24 citizens from the affected population (Smith & Wales, 2018)<sup>1</sup>. In stratified random sampling, the affected population is first divided into strata or homogeneous subgroups (e.g., by gender or age) of individuals. In a second step, from each subgroup, a sample of participants is randomly selected. According to Crosby and Hottinger (2011), Citizen Juries aim to ensure that "a group of people – randomly selected and demographically balanced – have enough time to learn about the issue from witnesses and to be able to talk among themselves about what they are learning" (p. 321). Originally, a Citizen Jury takes 2 to 5 days. Contemporary models of a Citizen Jury can also vary between two and four days. Before the event, the participants receive intensive preparatory material on the problem/question chosen by the commissioning body. On the first day of the jury process, the participants deliberate in smaller groups and receive expert advice on the topic. In the following days, the participants can cross-examine witnesses and other interesting parties for more information. In a plenary session led by a neutral moderator (often an expert), the entire jury discusses and formulates a final judgement and recommendations

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<sup>1</sup> In some cases, also quota sampling is used, which is a non-probability version of stratified sampling. Unlike stratified random sampling, in quota sampling individuals are not randomly selected from each subgroup.

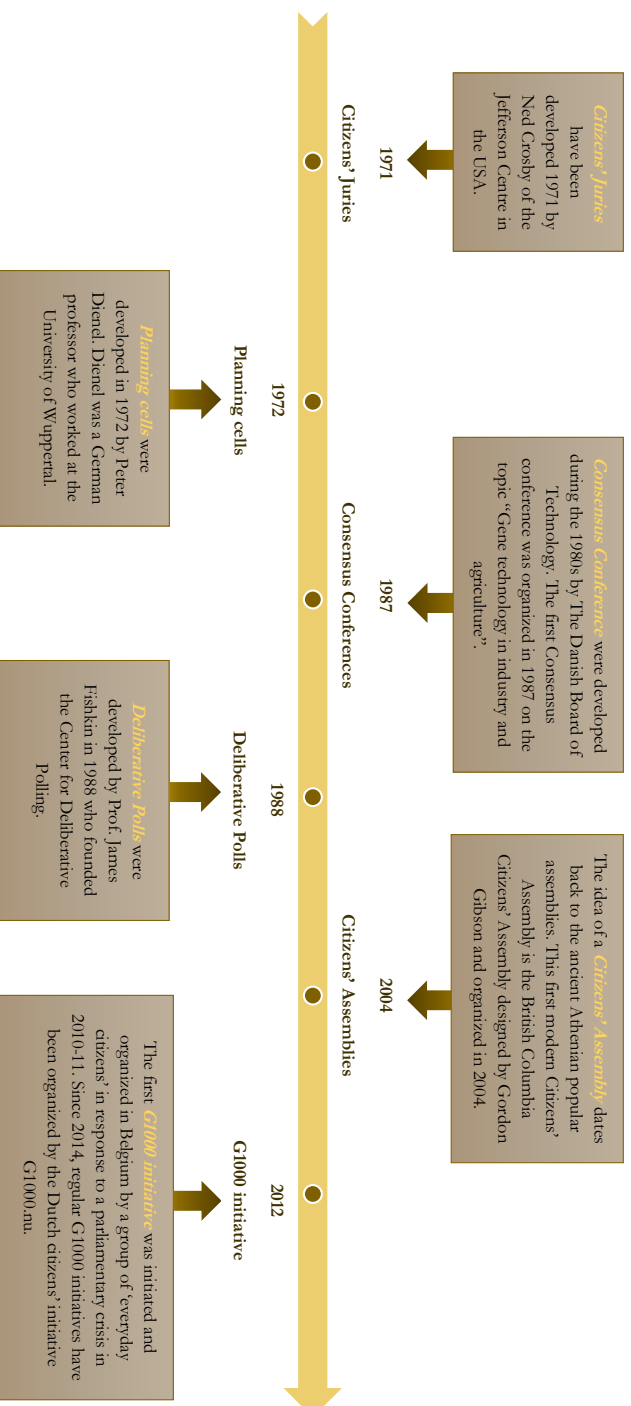
on the subject, which are presented to the commissioning body as a collective position report and then published by the media (Flynn, 2009; Leyenaar, 2008).

A planning cell(s) (*Planungszelle(n)*) consists of 25 citizens selected at random from the affected population (Ryan & Smith, 2014; Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). For this purpose, a quasi-random sampling technique (either stratified random sampling or quota sampling method) is used. The participants meet for a few days (4 to 5 days) to discuss a political problem delegated to the cell by the commissioning body (usually a city or a country) (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). In general, about 100 to 500 citizens participate in a Planning Cell, as 6 to 10 cells are often held simultaneously on the same political issue (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). During the facilitated deliberation process, the participants in the individual planning cells are informed about the respective political issue (e.g., expert advice, lecture series, written brochures, etc.) (see Participedia, n.d.). In a second phase, the 25 participants of each Planning Cell are divided into smaller groups (5 people) to reflect on the subject and develop a possible approach with a set of recommendations (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017, see also Participedia, n.d.). In the final phase, the small groups present their recommendations to the larger 25-person Planning Cell, which then evaluates the proposed alternatives by completing a personal evaluation form (see Participedia, n.d.).<sup>1</sup> Based on these evaluation forms, the moderators prepare a final report (called citizens' report) for the commissioning body, which is approved by a selection of citizens from the different cells after the end of the participation process (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017; Ryan & Smith, 2014).

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<sup>1</sup> In some cases, other evaluation procedures are used, e.g., the giving of marks and points or voting in plenary on the various alternatives proposed (see Participedia, n.d.).

**Figure 1.** An overview of contemporary deliberative mini-public designs.



*Source:* Based on information from Participedia.net.

### 3.2.2 Consensus Conferences

Consensus Conferences were developed by the *Danish Board of Technology* during the 1980s. Consensus Conferences are “typically organized around a controversial scientific and technological development” (Ryan & Smith, 2014, p. 12). Regarding their design, Consensus Conferences are similar to those of the Citizen Juries. The main difference, however, lies in the selection method used. Like Citizen Juries, 10 to 25 participants are selected for a Consensus Conference using a stratified random sampling method (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). However, unlike other mini-publics designs, a random sample is not taken from the affected population, but from a sample of interested citizens (Ryan & Smith, 2014). Consensus conferences, therefore, contain an element of self-selection since citizens can put themselves forward to get selected. As in the case of Citizen Juries, participants in a Consensus Conference receive information about the issue before the start of the facilitated deliberation process (3 to 7 days) and can ask questions during question-and-answer sessions with experts and policymakers. At the end of the participation event, the participants are asked to come up with a consensual conclusion and policy recommendations. The final results are disseminated through the media to the broader public and policymakers (Einsiedel & Eastlick, 2000; Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017; Hendriks, 2005).

### 3.2.3 Deliberative Polls

According to Grönlund et al. (2014), from the 1990s onwards, the deliberative theory had a strong influence on later mini-public designs by shifting the focus to the question of how to optimise deliberative quality within a mini-public. The best-known example of a mini-public design addressing this question is probably Deliberative Polling, developed by James Fishkin and Robert Luskin in the early 1990s (Grönlund et al., 2014). Deliberative Polls aim to reveal the effects of

deliberation and learning by showing what decisions citizens would have made if they had been involved in informed and reasoned deliberations on a particular subject. A Deliberative Poll consists of 100 to 500 randomly selected citizens (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). Contrary to the mini-public designs discussed earlier, a random, representative sample of the affected population is selected for the Deliberative Poll using a simple random sampling technique. In contrast to quasi-sampling methods (stratified random sampling or quota sampling), a simple random sampling technique is based on the principle that every individual in the affected population has the same probability of being selected. Participants are invited to a 2 to 3 day facilitated deliberation event to discuss a specific topic (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). Before the deliberation event, the participants fill in a questionnaire with questions on the subject (pre-opinion poll). During the participation process, the participants received balanced briefing materials from experts and policymakers. In addition, they can ask questions during a plenary session. At the end of the deliberation, the participants are asked to complete a second questionnaire containing the same questions as the first questionnaire (post-opinion poll). To measure the change of opinion and knowledge of the participants, the results of the pre-and post-polls are compared. The results are made available to policymakers and the general public (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017; Fishkin & Farrar, 2005; Ryan & Smith, 2014).

### 3.2.4 Citizens' Assemblies

In addition to Fishkin and Luskin's more research-oriented design of a deliberative mini-public, an increasing number of more contemporary mini-publics are theoretically based on the interface between participatory and deliberative theory. One of these mini-public designs is the Citizens' Assembly. According to Escobar-Rodríguez and Elstub

(2017), Citizens' Assemblies would be the "potentially most radical and democratically robust of all the mini-publics types developed to date" as they aim to improve the quality of decision-making (deliberation) and give citizens a greater say in political decision-making (citizen empowerment) (p. 3). To date, however, only a few cases have been organised that bear the name of Citizen Assembly. Two famous examples are:

- The *British Columbia Citizens' Assembly*, which engaged citizens in the development of a new provincial electoral system (Warren & Pearce, 2008), and
- the *Irish Citizens' Assembly*, trying to develop a public-oriented political reform agenda in times of debates over the nature of the reform (Farrell, O'Malley, & Suiter, 2013).

Citizens' Assemblies differ from most of the other discussed mini-public designs in terms of their scope (100 to 160 participants) and the duration of the citizen participation process (between 20 to 30 days) (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). As in Citizen Juries and Planning Cells, the participants are selected using a stratified random selection method from the affected population. During the months-long citizen participation process, the participants deliberate in facilitated small groups on a given topic. Before and during that process, they also receive briefing materials on the issue in question as well as information from experts and policymakers. At the end of the participation process, the participants are asked to produce recommendations on the subject in question. In the case of the *British Columbia Citizens' Assembly*, the final recommendations were even put to a binding referendum (Ryan & Smith, 2014).



### 3.2.5 G1000 initiatives

As implied by Grönlund, et al.'s (2014) definition of a mini-public, most deliberative mini-publics designs have been initiated, sponsored and/or organized by government institutions in collaboration with academic institutions and/or foundations to address issues such as constitutional and electoral reforms, controversial science and technology, and countless social issues (related to e.g., health, city-regional planning, and development; Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). Yet, in contrast to these state-organised and (financially) state-supported mini-publics, most G1000 initiatives in the past have been developed and organized by citizens' initiatives outside the formal governmental sphere. In addition, the G1000 initiatives can be regarded as one of the newest of all mini-public designs, launched in 2011. Like Citizen Assemblies, a G1000 distinguishes itself from other mini-public designs by the scope and duration of the participation process. In terms of scope, the G1000 ("Group of a Thousand"), as its name suggests, aims to recruit a large number of citizens through simple random sampling. However, rather than aiming to invite exactly one thousand people to the G1000 events, the number has symbolic value as it represents the diversity of 'the people' or the 'broad population'. In contrast to the mini-public designs presented above, the G1000 initiatives also use a targeted recruitment strategy to ensure the participation of one or more specific group(s) of the affected population. Furthermore, all G1000 initiatives, like Consensus Conferences, also contain an element of self-selection, as they allow non-randomly selected individuals to participate in the G1000 process (e.g., in the Belgian G1000, non-randomly selected individuals could participate in the G1000 process through the G-Home and the G-Off; in all Dutch G1000 initiatives, expressly invited individuals from the local population participated in the G1000 process). In terms of duration, a G1000 process can last up to half a year and is consequently the longest participation design compared to

the other mini-public designs presented. Like Citizens' Assemblies, G1000 initiatives aim to get participants to deliberate in small groups on one or more specific issues and develop a set of proposals during a large-scale deliberation event, called 'the Citizens' Summit'. These proposals are then developed into more detailed policy recommendations over several months by small working groups<sup>1</sup> that are also informed by policymakers and experts. At the end of the G1000 process, the recommendations are collected in a G1000 report by the G1000 organisation and disseminated through the organisers' website and the media (Boogaard et al., 2016; Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2012, 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> In the Dutch G1000 design, the working groups consisted of people who had participated in the Citizens' Summit and indicated that they would like to participate in the follow-up event of the G1000 process. In the Belgian G1000, participants for the follow-up event (called: Citizens' Panel) were selected through a random selection process with controls for gender, language, region and age, and an ex-post control for socio-economic background.

**Table 2.** Overview of different mini-public designs.

	Citizens' Juries	Planning- cell(s)	Consensus conferences	Deliberative polls	Citizens' assemblies	G1000 initiatives (until 2017)
Year of origin	1971	1972	1987	1988	2002	2011
Organiser	Governmental institutions/ academic institutions	Governmental institutions/ academic institutions	Governmental institutions/ academic institutions	Governmental institutions/ academic institutions	Governmental institutions/ academic institutions	G1000 organisation (citizen initiative)
Selection method	stratified random sampling or quota sampling	stratified random sampling or quota sampling	stratified random sampling + self-selection	simple random sampling	stratified random sampling	simple random sampling + targeted recruitment + self-selection
Number of participants	12 - 24	25 – 500	10 - 25	100 - 500	100 - 160	100 - 1000
Process duration	2 - 5 days	4 - 5 days	2 – 4 days	2 - 3 days	20 – 30 days	Up to 180 days (half a year)
Activities	information + deliberation	information + deliberation	information + deliberation	information + deliberation	information + deliberation + consultation	deliberation + (information + consultation)
Results	collective position report	survey opinions + collective position report	collective position report	survey opinions	detailed recommendations	detailed recommendations/p roposals
Destination of proposal	commissioning body + mass media	commissioning body + mass media	parliament + mass media	commissioning body + mass media	parliament, government + public referendum	government + mass media

Source: Table based on Fournier et al. (2011) and Escobar-Rodríguez and Elstüb (2017).

## 3.2 What are the common underlying design ideals of mini-publics?

Despite their design differences, all deliberative mini-publics have three common underlying design ideals. According to Ryan and Smith (2014), a mini-public can be defined as “an institution in which: (1) a broadly inclusive and representative sub-group of the affected population engage in (2) structured deliberation enabled by independent facilitation” (Ryan & Smith, 2014, p. 20). Moreover, they argue that (3) this “institution is organised with the aim of aligning political decision-making with the considered views of citizens” (Ryan & Smith, 2014, p. 20). This definition of a deliberative mini-public can be broken down into three aspects: participant selection mode, deliberation and decision-making process, and impact on decision-making. In the following, we will explain these three aspects of mini-publics more in-depth.

### 3.2.1 Participant selection mode in mini-publics

In terms of access to a mini-public, Goodin and Dryzek (2006) argued that mini-publics would be designed to involve “groups small enough to be genuinely deliberative, and representative enough to be genuinely democratic” (p. 220). In this aspect, mini-publics follow the deliberative-democratic conception of citizen involvement, as it is based on the idea that high-quality deliberation can only be achieved if a relatively small number of people participate (see chapter 2, section 2.4, Lafont, 2015). To this end, mini-publics usually make use of (quasi or simple) random sampling to select a broadly inclusive and representative sub-group of the affected population (Ryan & Smith, 2014). The underlying design ideal of these recruitment strategies is based on the key democratic principle, the principle of political equality. According to this principle, all people from the affected population

should be given “an equal chance to be included” in the mini-public and to influence both the process and its outcomes (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015; O’Flynn & Sood, 2014, p. 43). According to Caluwaerts and Reuchamps (2015), the use of random sampling strategies would therefore be of great importance to warrant the *inclusiveness* of a mini-public.

From deliberative theory, we can derive three arguments explaining why random sampling would be the “most appropriate method” (Fishkin, et al., 2000) to select and recruit participants for a mini-public. First, deliberative democrats prefer random sampling to self-selection methods<sup>1</sup> because they are intended to increase cognitive *diversity* among participants and thus the input legitimacy of the deliberative participation process (Bohman, 2007; Caluwaerts & Ugarriza, 2012; Fishkin, 2011). Secondly, deliberative democrats argue that random sampling methods would increase the descriptive *representativeness*, which means that the socio-demographic features presented in the affected population are also reflected in the selected group (Boogaard et al., 2016; Fishkin, 2011; Fournier, et al., 2011). Random sampling can therefore create inclusive equality between representatives (mini-public participants) and represented (fellow citizens in the overall population). Finally, deliberative democrats argue that random sampling would ensure *impartiality* by preventing corruption and domination (e.g., manipulation and backdoor negotiations between small powerful groups) during the selection process (Smith, 2009; Fishkin, 2011; Courant, 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> According to deliberative democrats, random sampling would help to avoid the problem of “informational inbreeding among likeminded citizens” (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015; Huckfeldt, 2001, p. 426; see also Ryfe, 2005).

### 3.2.2 Deliberation and decision-making in mini-publics

All mini-publics strive for a high quality of face-to-face deliberation. In deliberative theory, deliberation among a diverse set of actors is expected to lead to a variety of positive democratic outcomes (cf. Barber, 1984; Chambers, 2003; Fishkin, 2011; Gutmann & Thompson, 1998). First of all, participants are expected to be able to improve their understanding of the issue at hand through deliberation (Chambers, 2003; Gutmann & Thompson, 1998). They are also expected to become more *tolerant of opposing points of view* (Gutmann & Thompson, 1998), to develop *more considered and informed judgements*, and better political outcomes (“rationally motivated consensus”) (Chambers, 2003; Cohen, 1989, p. 33). To realize these democratic ideals, the participants in mini-publics are usually involved in facilitated deliberations (Ryan & Smith, 2014). To enable an equal discourse among the participants, “deliberation in mini-publics is always organized and structured by rules”, set by an independent organizer (the “rule-setter”) (Landwehr, 2014, p. 78). To ensure that dialogue rules are kept, deliberation in mini-publics is usually facilitated by independent intermediaries (“rule-keepers”), such as moderators, mediators, and facilitators (e.g., chairpersons) (Landwehr, 2014). According to Landwehr (2014), during deliberation, it is the task of these intermediaries to “rationalise communication” and to keep “emotions at bay” through interventions (e.g., rejection of non-argumentative contributions or reformulation of personal stories into generalizable arguments). Moreover, intermediaries also have the task of ensuring “internal inclusion” (Young, 2002) or “discursive representation” (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008) in a mini-public by giving all participants an equal opportunity to present their arguments and counter-arguments during deliberations. To warrant equality among speakers, intermediaries also have the task of undermining undesirable power asymmetries (e.g., dominate speakers) through interventions (e.g., encouraging shy participants to speak up)

(Landwehr, 2014). The principle of political equality thus not only applies to the participant selection mode but also the core of deliberation. All those affected by a collective decision should have an equal opportunity to participate in the deliberation on the content of that decision (Dryzek, 2009). The source of legitimate political outcomes, therefore, depends on the quality of deliberation (Gutman & Thompson, 2004; Escobar, 2017). Yet, as participants might not have the same (prior) knowledge about the issue at hand, mini-publics also usually include a learning element (e.g., briefing materials, question-and-answer sessions with policymakers and experts, cross-examination of witnesses). The purpose of this learning element is to equally expose participants to a wide range of information (Edwards, 2007). Moreover, to help participants to learn and reflect on a particular issue from a different perspective and to arrive at a more considered and informed judgement, mini-publics involve learning and deliberation activities (e.g., questioning witnesses, policymakers and/or experts) (Escobar-Rodríguez & Elstub, 2017). According to Warren (2009), these learning and deliberation activities would aim to capture “the innovative and progressive capacity of deliberation” (p. 10).

As regards the decision-making process, in some mini-public designs, especially those where deliberations are more result-oriented (e.g., to produce a collective report or policy recommendations<sup>1</sup>), aggregative voting procedures are also used to arrive at a final decision or to accept a number of proposals. In mini-publics that are more communication-driven (e.g., Deliberative Polls), it is also up to the intermediaries to structure the discourse by, for example, summarising participants’ results or opening and closing new and old topics (Landwehr, 2014). Moreover, while in some mini-public designs (e.g., Citizens’ Assemblies

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<sup>1</sup> This is not the case with all mini-public designs. As we will show in the next section, some mini-publics are not designed to reach a mutual agreement on a particular topic/issue in question. For example, in Deliberative Polls, the goal of the organizers is to show that participants have changed their opinion after deliberation, rather than asking them to make a decision or recommendations.

and the G1000 initiatives) decision-making is left to the participants (e.g., participants have to write recommendations), in other cases this task is largely left to the organisers or intermediaries (e.g., in Planning Cells, moderators prepare the final report) (Landwehr, 2014). Despite the differences in mini-public designs in terms of the nature of the final outcomes and the way, decisions are made, all mini-public designs have in common that they aim to warrant the transparency of proceedings and decision-making procedures and processes. To produce fair outcomes, all participants need to have a clear understanding of the conditions under which they are participating (Smith, 2009).

### 3.2.3 Impact of mini-publics on decision-making

As for the final characteristic of mini-publics, their impact, mini-public designs have been specifically designed to improve the quality of political decision-making by providing citizens with a more or less formal *role in the political decision-making process* (Ryan & Smith, 2014). In the previous section, we have indicated that this ‘role’ contains involving citizens in deliberation about issues that affect them to reach a more considered and informed consensual outcome. Consequently, to exert some influence on decision-making, mini-publics strive for *alignment of the considered views and decisions* of citizens with political decision-making (Ryan & Smith, 2014). For this purpose, the outcomes of mini-publics should be at least consequential and should be linked in one way or another to formal political decision-making (Dryzek, 2009). Dryzek (2009) explains the idea of consequentiality as follows (p. 1382):

Consequential means that deliberative processes must have an impact on collective decisions or social outcomes. This impact need not be direct – that is, deliberation need not involve the actual making of policy decisions. For example, public deliberation might have an influence on decision makers who are not participants in deliberation. This might



occur when an informal deliberative forum makes recommendations that are subsequently considered by policy makers. Nor need the outcomes in question be explicit policy decisions; they might, for example, be informal products of a network, thus entailing governance without government.

As Dryzek (2009) explains, a mini-public does not necessarily have to exercise direct control (popular control) on decision-making to produce consequential outcomes. In fact, there are very few cases (e.g., Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform in British Columbia) where mini-publics are integrated into decision-making processes and consequently formally empowered to directly influence policy decisions (Goodin and Dryzek, 2006). In most mini-public designs, there is an attempt to exert some consequential influence on decision-making by delivering a specific outcome (e.g., a collective decision, a detailed policy recommendation, an opinion poll) at the final stage of the participation event/process, which is then presented to the wider public (via the media) or to the government/parliament.

### 3.2.4 Summary

In sum, despite their design differences, we can derive from the previous section that all mini-publics have in common that they aim:

- to ensure *inclusiveness* by engaging a broadly diverse and representative sub-group of the affected population in a deliberation process;
- to ensure *a high quality of deliberation and decision-making* by providing all participants with an equal opportunity to contribute to the deliberation and decision-making;
- and to ensure at least consequentiality of the outcomes by providing participants with a greater say (*influence*) in political decision-making.

As summarised in Table 3, mini-publics use random sampling to ensure inclusiveness, not only to ensure that the mini-public population is a cognitively diverse and descriptive representation of the wider public but also to ensure the impartiality of the process. High-quality deliberation (internal inclusiveness) and more considered, tolerant, and informed consensual outcomes are sought through the use of structured deliberation, learning opportunities, transparent proceedings and decision-making procedures, and popular control. Finally, to better align participants' considered views and policy-making, mini-publics aim to create final outcomes to exert some consequential influence on decision-making.

**Table 3.** Common underlying design ideals of deliberative mini-publics.

Common desired ideal	Purposes	Common design feature
<b>Inclusiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ cognitive diversity</li> <li>/ descriptive representativeness</li> <li>/ impartiality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ use of (quasi or simple) random sampling</li> </ul>
<b>High quality of deliberation and decision-making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ considered and informed judgement</li> <li>/ internal inclusiveness</li> <li>/ consensual outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ learning opportunities</li> <li>/ structured deliberation</li> <li>/ transparent proceedings and decision-making procedures</li> <li>/ popular control</li> </ul>
<b>Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ alignment between considered views and political decisions</li> <li>/ consequential influence of citizens on collective decisions or social outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ creation of an outcome</li> </ul>



# Chapter 4



# 4 WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE FUNCTIONING OF MINI- PUBLICS?

In recent years, mini-publics have been used as experiments to test the normative claims of deliberative democrats and deliberative theory (Setälä & Herne, 2014). As we explained in chapter 2, the underlying aim of mini-publics is to improve the quality of political decision-making by giving a small, but representative and diverse group of citizens affected by a collective decision equal opportunities (right, ability and opportunity) to participate in the deliberations on the content of that decision and thus influence it (Dryzek, 2009). From this we have derived, in chapter 3, that there are three common design ideals that all mini-publics are striving for: [1] *inclusiveness*; [2] a *high quality of deliberation and decision-making*; and [3] *influence* or *impact* – the results of a mini-public must at least be consequential, which means that the decision-makers either agree to follow the recommendations or at least indicate publicly why they have or have not done so (see also Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005).

In this chapter, we focus on the extent to which mini-publics have met these three underlying design ideas in the past. For this purpose, we will present empirical evidence of the strengths and weaknesses of mini-publics concerning these three ideals. Moreover, we will focus on what we do not yet know about deliberative mini-publics and how empirical evidence of social and political science theories created new implications for assessing the external and internal functioning of mini-publics.

## 4.1 Are mini-publics inclusive?

If we look at the various mini-public designs (see chapter 3), it is noticeable that these designs differ greatly in terms of sample size. While early mini-public designs, such as Citizen Juries and Consensus Conferences, involved only a small number of participants, between 10 and 25 people, more recent designs aim to include larger cohorts of over 100 up to 1000 people (as envisaged in the G1000 initiatives). The main reason for starting to increase the sample size of mini-publics is that it was claimed that a group of 10-25 people would not be sufficiently representative of the wider population. However, when one looks at research into mini-public designs involving larger cohorts, one can notice that these designs too are often criticised for being insufficiently representative of the local population.

Empirical evidence on mini-publics showed that despite the use of random sampling methods, participants in mini-publics in many cases do not reflect the larger population in terms of socio-demographic factors. When analysing descriptive representativeness of the mini-public samples, several researchers found that some subgroups of the affected population were either underrepresented or absent in terms of age, ethnic background, occupational and educational level (cf. Boogaard et al., 2016; Flinders et al., 2016; Fournier et al., 2011; Michels & Binnema, 2016). For example, Michels and Binnema (2016) and

Boogaard et al. (2016) found that young, lower-educated, and migrants were under-represented at the Dutch G1000 initiatives. Boogaard et al. (2016) therefore concluded that the observed variations in response rates would show that G1000 initiatives would only attract the “usual suspects” or the “participation elite” (highly educated and politically active older (over 50) white men/women). Similar results have been obtained about other deliberative mini-public designs. Flinders et al. (2016) observed in their study of the Citizens’ Assembly on English Devolution that the majority of participants were white and older and that minorities were under-represented. Also, Lukensmeyer and Brigham (2002) found that young people were under-represented in the observed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meeting. Fournier et al. (2011) stated in their study on three Citizens’ Assemblies on Electoral Reform that both the youngest and the oldest age groups were under-represented in the assemblies. Moreover, they found that, overall, assembly participants were better educated than people in the local population. Similar results have been uncovered in Deliberative Polls, which have been praised lately as the “golden standard” of mini-publics, since they would come closest to fulfilling the deliberative ideal of achieving a relatively diverse microcosm of the affected population<sup>1</sup> (Mansbridge, 2010; Ryan & Smith, 2014; Setälä & Herne, 2014). Fishkin and Farrar (2005) and Farrar et al. (2010) both concluded that those who eventually participated in the Deliberative Poll were generally better educated than the drawn sample (p. 74).

Even though mini-publics often lack descriptive representativeness because they do not represent the larger population in terms of socio-demographic categories, research has also shown that participants in mini-publics are often not a good reflection of the wide cognitive diversity of perspectives in the general population (also referred to as

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted at this point that a perfect representative sample can never be achieved by pure randomness (Fournier et al., 2011, p. 64; Ryan & Smith, 2014).

‘substantive representativeness’). For example, some scholars found that the participants did not resemble the affected population in terms of political engagement and attitudes or their trust in the government (French & Laver, 2009; Fournier et al., 2011). As for the former, Fournier et al. (2011) found that overall, assembly participants were not only better educated than the population from which the sample was drawn, but also more interested in politics. Similar results have been uncovered by Fishkin and Farrar (2005) and Farrar et al. (2010), who concluded that those who eventually participated in the Deliberative Poll were generally more politically active than the drawn sample (p. 74). Finally, French and Laver (2009) found in their study on Citizens’ Juries that jurors showed a higher level of political efficacy than the overall population.

#### 4.1.1 What causes a lack of inclusiveness in mini-publics?

Evidence shows that most mini-publics lack descriptive and substantive representativeness, which confronts us with the question of what the causes of this lack of external inclusiveness are. From the literature, we can deduce two causes: the problem of a biased sampling frame and the issue of self-selection. We will briefly discuss both causes below.

##### **The problem of a biased sampling frame**

One problem that has undermined the inclusiveness of mini-publics in the past is the problem of a biased sampling frame. In random or probability sampling, a representative sample is drawn from a larger population with the help of a ‘sampling frame’. In the case of mini-publics, a sampling frame is often a list of people (as sampling units) affected by a collective decision deduced from the population of interest (e.g., neighbourhood, village, city). However, from survey literature, we know that a perfect sample frame does not exist and that all sample frames contain some errors to a certain extent. One reason why some sampling frames in mini-publics have been distorted in the past is the



problem of non-coverage (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). *Non-coverage* is a non-sampling bias that can emerge when mini-publics' organisers fail to cover all individuals from the affected population either accidentally or deliberately in the initial sample frame (Barriball & While, 1999)<sup>1</sup>. For example, in the case of Deliberative Polls, Ryan and Smith (2014) found that the problem of non-coverage arose due to the use of Random Digit Dialling (RDD). RDD is a simple random sampling method that draws a random sample of households from the cell phone directory of the affected population. Since not all cell-phone households were registered in the mobile phone directories, especially those consisting of younger people, they were not included in the sampling process for the deliberative event (see also O'Flynn & Sood, 2014; Ryan & Smith, 2014). In the case of mini-public designs using a stratified random sampling method, non-coverage can emerge when organisers do not manage to reliably categorise each individual of the affected population into sub-groups (O'Flynn & Sood, 2014). To a large extent, sampling biases, such as non-coverage, can undermine the descriptive representativeness of a mini-public and therefore its inclusiveness, as not all individuals from the affected population have the same chance of participating in the mini-public.

### **The problem of self-selection**

Although the inclusiveness of mini-publics can be negatively affected by the problem of a biased sampling frame, the main reason for a lack of inclusiveness of mini-publics seems to be related to the problem of self-selection. Even though organisers do their best to randomly invite people from the affected population, research shows that those who accept the invitation often do not form a representative group of the

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<sup>1</sup> According to Steel, Bolduc, Jeni & Burgess (2020), mini-publics, such as deliberative polls, that are based on samples from registered voters, may also be affected by the problem of social inequalities caused, for example, by voter suppression. They argue that in some cases (e.g., in the United States) a random sample drawn from an incomplete list of registered voters could exclude minorities and therefore not give everyone the same chance of being invited.

local population (formerly called ‘the usual suspects’) (Steel, et al., 2020). As participation in a mini-public is not mandatory, selected participants can decide that they do not want to participate in a mini-public (the so-called ‘non-participation’). In addition, they can also decide to drop out at any stage of the participation process (so-called ‘attrition’). However, both the problem of non-participation and attrition can jeopardize the cognitive diversity and representative quality of a mini-public, as we will briefly illustrate below.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the issue of non-participation, the response rate to invitations in mini-publics is generally rather low (between 3 and 30 %) and varies with the length of the mini-public design. As illustrated in the previous chapter (see Table 2), mini-public designs differ greatly in their duration: while some designs, such as Citizens’ Juries and Deliberative Polls, only last a few days, others can vary from a weekend to a series of weekends spread over a whole year (e.g., Citizens’ Assemblies and G1000 initiatives). Research on Deliberative Polls and Citizens Juries showed that the positive response rate<sup>2</sup> usually ranges between 20 – 30 per cent (Font & Blanco, 2007; Luskin & Fishkin, 1998; Stewart, Kendall, & Coote, 1994). In contrast, Fournier, et al. (2011) found that the positive response rate at all observed Citizens’ Assemblies was around 7 per cent. Similar low response rates have been found for the G1000 initiatives (3% for the Belgian G1000; between 5 – 15 % for the Dutch G1000 initiatives (until 2016) (Boogaard et al., 2016; Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015). When one compares the lower response rates found in Citizens’ Assemblies and the Belgian G1000 (3-15 %) with the ‘higher’ response rates found in Citizens’ Juries and Deliberative Polls

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<sup>1</sup> From survey literature, we can derive that non-participation (in survey literature called ‘non-responses’) and attrition does not always lead to a biased sample (or non-random sample). For example, if very few participants do not participate in the mini-public or drop out, their absence in the sample has little impact on the estimates. However, if the rate of non-response or attrition increases, the potential for a biased sample also increases (Massey & Tourangeau, 2013).

<sup>2</sup>The (positive) response rate is the percentage of people who have registered and participated in the mini-public event.

(20 - 30 %), it can be concluded that shorter mini-public designs tend to attract more people than longer ones (e.g., Smith, 2009; Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2013). Based on the low positive response rates, Caluwaerts and Reuchamps (2015) concluded in their study on the Belgian G1000, a six-month participation process, that the low positive response rate would show that the “commitment required for participating in a deliberative event proved to be very high” (p. 159). Fournier et al. (2011) argued that the low response rates in the citizens’ assemblies (20-30 days) studied would show that “a vast majority of people invited were not interested and/or available” (p. 32).

As far as the problem of attrition is concerned, there are only a few empirical research reports that either report on or deal with this issue in detail. Some studies have reported that the representative quality of the mini-public studied was affected by last-minute drop-outs before the first large-scale deliberation event (people who registered for the event but did not show up) (see Fishkin, 1997; Aars & Offerdal, 2000; Hansen, 2004; Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, 2015). For example, in their study on the Belgian G1000, Caluwaerts and Reuchamps (2015) reported that the large-scale deliberation event suffered from a last-minute drop-out rate of around 30 per cent. Studies of Deliberative Polls reported that last-minute drop-out rates varied between 6 and 30 per cent (see Fishkin, 1997; Aars & Offerdal, 2000; Hansen, 2004). While last-minute dropout rates generally appear to fluctuate between 6 and 30 per cent, depending on the mini-public studied, empirical studies of Citizens’ Assemblies have shown that citizens rarely drop out of the participatory process at a later stage once they decide to participate. For example, Fournier, et al. (2011) concluded that attrition in the three observed Citizens’ Assemblies was not a major problem as attendance at all follow-up meetings fluctuated between 95-99 per cent. Renwick (2017) arrived at a similar conclusion in his study of the Brexit Citizens’ Assembly when he noted that of the initial 53 people, a remarkable 51 attended the closing event.

## 4.1.2 Which factors explain participation in mini-publics?

In the previous section, we have shown that the descriptive representativeness of deliberative mini-publics has been severely undermined in the past by the problem of self-selection, as many people choose not to participate once they have been invited. Based on the different response rates in mini-publics, we concluded that longer mini-publics seem to attract fewer people than shorter ones. From a political science perspective, these observed differences in participation rates between shorter and longer mini-public designs are not that surprising. In the literature on political participation, there is ample evidence of the fact that the larger the personal investment of participation is, the less likely citizens are to take part (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2013). However, this still raises the question of why some people decide to participate while others do not? Reference in this regard is often made to Verba, et al. (1995), who provided a three-folded explanation of why people do not become politically active<sup>1</sup>. They argued that people would not participate “because they can’t (due to a lack of resources); because they don’t want to (due to a lack of engagement with politics); or because nobody asked (due to a lack of recruitment)” (p. 269)<sup>2 3</sup>. According to Verba et al. (1995), while resources would explain “*why* individuals might or might not be *able* to participate”, political engagement would explain “*why* individuals might or might not *want* to participate”. Thus, while *resources*,

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to stress at this point that there are also other models that explain non-participation or political participation. However, we have decided to use the model proposed by Verba et al. (1995) as a guideline to include all relevant factors relating to this study.

<sup>2</sup> A similar explanation can be found in the survey literature (see e.g., Massey & Tourangeau, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> With respect to the first aspect of the ‘CVM model’, Verba et al. (1995) combined the strengths and weaknesses of both the socioeconomic status model and rational choice theory to predict how class and status stratification can shape individual resources and limit individual choice about political participation (p. 287).

such as time, money and civic skills (e.g., educational level<sup>1</sup> and age<sup>2</sup>), may provide people with the *means* to participate, political engagement, such as political interest, information<sup>3</sup>, efficacy<sup>4</sup> and partisan intensity<sup>5</sup>, would give them the “desire, knowledge, and self-assurance” to engage in politics (Verba et al, 1995, p. 343; 354)<sup>6</sup>. Verba et al. (1995) therefore see *political engagement* as an internal stimulus or subjective motivation of individuals to participate in politics. Regarding the final factor in their overview – an invitation – Verba et al (1995) state that a formal request can serve as a triggering factor, especially for those who might have intended to act anyway. Based on the reasoning of Verba et al (1995), invited people may therefore fail to participate in mini-publics because of a lack of resources (such as time, money, or cognitive skills), a lack of political engagement and/or because they did not receive an invitation. So, if we turn the question around and ask why people do participate in a mini-public, we can deduce that people may participate because they have the resources (such as time, money, or cognitive skills) and/or a subjective motivation to do so and/or because they have simply been invited.

As to the question of why people decide to stop participating in a mini-public, Lowndes, Pratchett, and Stoker (2006) proposed the so-called

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<sup>1</sup> Berinsky and Lenz (2011) argued that the reason for the relationship between educational level and political participation would be clear: “education gives citizens the [cognitive<sup>1</sup> and civic<sup>1</sup>] skills and resources needed to participate in politics” (p. 358).

<sup>2</sup> Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) found that younger voters would be less inclined to vote, since they have also been less exposed to politics.

<sup>3</sup> Verba et al. (1995) argued regarding political interest and information, that people who are interested in politics (e.g., following politics, consider politics important and focus on who wins and who loses) would also be more politically active.

<sup>4</sup> Verba et al. (1995) argued that peoples’ trust in politics can encourage them to participate in politics, because it would give them the “subjective feeling that they can make a difference when they do” (p. 272).

<sup>5</sup> Verba et al. (1995) argued that the degree to which someone identifies with a party also says something about that person’s political engagement.

<sup>6</sup> Verba et al. (1995) use the term political engagement to refer to the “variety of psychological predispositions” that a person may have towards politics (p. 270). In their study, they concentrated on the following four measures of political engagement: political interest, political efficacy, political information, and partisanship.

**CLEAR** model, as a framework for understanding public participation.

In their view, political participation is most successful when people:

1. **C**an do (because they have the necessary skills and resources to participate),
2. **L**ike to (because they feel a sense of community),
3. **E**nabled to (people have networks that support them to participate),
4. **A**sksed to (people feel invited to do so), and
5. **R**esponded to (people believe that they get listened to).

The first factor, 'Can do', is in line with Verba, et al. (1995), and assumes that a person's level of engagement depends heavily on their skills and resources. In their view, the 'Can do' factor can be strengthened by capacity-building efforts to ensure that people have the same skills and resources to get involved. About the second factor 'Like to', Lowndes, et al. (2006) argue that people participate because they feel a sense of community or a sense of togetherness or commitment. As a third factor ('Enabled to'), they stress the importance of networks and groups as facilitators of participation. In their view, social networks can promote participation because they can encourage people to participate. Regarding the fourth factor 'Asked to', they argue, like Verba et al (1995), that people tend to get involved in politics because they have been asked to do so. Besides the need for mobilisation, they argue that the type of mobilisation is also important. For example, people could be mobilised through financial incentives or by creating a sense of duty. Finally, Lowndes, et al. (2006) argue that people participate because they believe they are being listened to ('Responded to' factor). In their view, the lack of the 'Responded to' factor would be the main factor deterring participation.

### 4.1.3 What are the theoretical gaps in the literature on mini-publics in terms of their external inclusiveness?

In deliberative democratic theory, the use of random sampling methods is seen as a way to eliminate political inequalities observed in other forms of (innovative) participatory practices that are usually open to all who wish to participate (e.g. participatory budgeting, community policing; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meetings) (Fung, 2007; Jacquet, 2017). However, as we illustrated in this section, the use of random sampling does not always guarantee a representative and diverse sample of participants in a deliberative mini-public. One reason for this may be the fact that random sampling does not correct for social inequalities that occur in populations and thus can lead to biased sampling frames (see section 4.1.1.; Steel, et al., 2020). Another reason is that participation in mini-publics is always affected by “the mechanism of voluntary self-selection”, as individuals can decide voluntarily whether they want to participate in the mini-public or not (Fung, 2003). So, although participants are selected and recruited at random, those who accept the invitation are not random (see also Steel, et al., 2020). Because of this ‘voluntary self-selection mechanism’, some studies found that mini-publics appear to attract people who share several common socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., highly educated, white, older men/women), which by no means constitute a representative group of participants or a diverse ‘microcosm’ of the larger population (Fishkin, 1997).

In response to the empirical evidence presented, voices have been raised to reconsider the external inclusiveness of deliberative mini-publics (see e.g., Brown, 2006; Bächtiger, et al., 2014; Steel, Fazelpour, Gillette, Crewe & Burgess, 2018; Steel, et al., 2020). For example, Steel, et al. (2020) argued that “random sampling [...] should not be treated as a definitional criterion (*pace* Smith, 2009) nor as an indicator of quality (*pace* Fishkin, 2018) of deliberative mini-publics” (p. 47). In line with

this, some scholars argued that in some cases a more inclusive participant sample in a mini-public might be achieved by oversampling minority groups (c.f. James, 2008; Derenne, 2012) or by using non-random or hybrid recruitment strategies (c.f. Brown, 2006; Steel, et al., 2020). Jacobs and Kaufmann (2021) argue that it would be worthwhile to consider and test hybrid forms of participation mechanisms (or new mini-public designs) that contain elements of both random selection and self-selection because of their potential co-production value (leaning on the co-production literature; see e.g., Pestoff, 2006; Osborne, Radnor, and Strokosch, 2016). Jacobs and Kaufmann (2021) found that when it comes to the perceived external legitimacy of political decision-making processes, citizens do not rate processes with a deliberative mini-public higher than processes with a participatory method based solely on self-selection. Also, in this context, some authors argued for a more ‘purposive design approach’ in which recruitment strategies or mixed recruitment strategies should be dependent on the goal or ‘mixed goals’ of a deliberative mini-public (Steel, Fazelpour, Gillette, Crewe & Burgess, 2018, p. 46; see also Fung, 2003).

However, the effect of mixed recruitment strategies on the external inclusiveness of mini-publics has not yet been empirically investigated. The main reason for this is that the external legitimacy of most deliberative mini-public designs has been judged in the past purely on a few normatively desired ideals. As we illustrated in the previous chapter, random selection, or more specifically the ideal of providing every one of the broader population an equal chance to participate in a deliberative mini-public, is one of these desired normative ideals of mini-publics. A



second reason for this lack of empirical evidence on mixed recruitment strategies may be a recent lack of experimental research in this field.<sup>1</sup>

## 4.2 Do mini-publics contribute to a high quality of deliberation and decision-making?

As illustrated in the previous chapter, all mini-publics contain an element of structured and/or facilitated face-to-face deliberation. The main reason for this is that the theorists of deliberative democracy believe that a high quality of deliberation can have a positive influence on both the participants and the quality of decision-making.

When looking at the empirical evidence, it appears that deliberative mini-publics exert *cognitive effects* as well as *behavioural effects* (see Zhang, 2015). As for the former, research on the quality of deliberation in mini-publics showed that participants can improve their understanding of their personal preferences (often referred to as ‘information gain’) and/or change their opinions and preferences through structured deliberation and information provision. For example, Fishkin and Farrar (2005) found in their study on Deliberative Polls (by comparing pre-and post- opinion poll results) that the opinions of citizens at the end of the deliberation process had changed significantly also due to the information which was provided to participants before the deliberation event. According to Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell (2002) and Fishkin (2011), post-deliberative preferences have become more informed and considered as well as more publicly regarded. In their study, Feldman and Price (2008) found that face-to-face deliberation increases participants’ political knowledge. In line with this, Warren and Pearse (2008) found that citizens participating in the British Columbia Citizens’

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<sup>1</sup> We should add here that we can observe an increasing number of studies in the field of political science and public administration using survey experiments. Also, in the literature on mini-publics, an increasing number of experiments have been done to study the subject of non-participation in mini-publics.

Assembly during the deliberation process became “quite experts in the technical details of electoral systems” (p. 200). Moreover, studies showed that participants’ post-preferences were more logically linked in terms of values, causal relationships and political preferences (Böker & Elstub, 2015; Fishkin, 2011). According to Luskin (1987) and Gastil and Dillard (1999), face-to-face deliberation refined participants’ policy preferences (also referred to as ‘political sophistication’), as they displayed more nuanced and integrated views and exhibited less attitudinal uncertainty after participating in deliberative mini-publics. Price, Cappella, and Nir (2002) found that participants developed higher quality reasoning and argumentation after being exposed to disagreement.

Besides the fact that deliberation has several cognitive effects on the participants, research also found that it also can have behavioural effects. For example, Fishkin, Luskin, and Jowell (2000) found, by comparing participants’ post-preferences with their voting behaviour, that participants voted following their new-found preferences in elections. In addition, empirical evidence suggests that participants became more tolerant of opposing points of view and consensus-driven during deliberation. One reason for this provided by List, Luskin, Fishkin, and McLean (2012), who found that deliberation in Deliberative Polls would have made lines of disagreement clearer, which in turn would have led to more single-peaked preferences among participants. In line with this, Fishkin (2011) noted that participation in a Deliberative Poll reduced participants’ rational ignorance. Moreover, in their research into a few Dutch G1000 initiatives, Boogaard et al. (2016) concluded that citizens participating in the Citizens’ Summit developed a sense of belonging during the deliberation process. According to Fournier, et al. (2011), after their participation in the Citizens’ Assemblies participants became more politically interested as well as more attentive to political news.

Yet, although several empirical studies have indicated that mini-publics can have positive cognitive and behavioural effects on the participants, some scholars claim that the internal working of existing and new mini-publics has so far been poorly understood (c.f., Kim, Siu, and Sood (2010); Ryan and Smith, 2014; Bächtiger et al., 2014; O’Flynn and Sood, 2014). Ryan and Smith (2014) argued that research into the exchange of preferences and opinions in mini-publics alone would have provided little insight into the “deliberative quality of interactions within mini-publics” (p. 22). In line with this, Bächtiger et al. (2014, p. 225) and O’Flynn and Sood (2014) pointed out that little is still known about the internal inclusiveness of mini-public designs; how and whether they provide participants with equal opportunities to learn, express and reflect on their preferences.<sup>1</sup> Previous research in this regard has indicated that this might not always be the case. For example, O’Flynn and Sood (2014) found that more knowledgeable participants would speak more than less knowledgeable participants. For example, Kim, et al. (2010) observed in their study on two online Deliberative Polls that many participants would hardly speak at all since they would be crowded out by other participants. In line with this, Luskin, Sood, Fishkin, and Kim (2009) found in their study on Deliberative Polls that individuals assigned to groups that were more attitudinally diverse learned more than those who were assigned to groups that were less knowledgeable and less attitudinally heterogeneous. However, while research suggests that participants’ level of education may affect their ability to contribute to dialogues, why some participants engage more

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<sup>1</sup> The question raised about internal inclusiveness is consistent with a number of deliberative democrats and pluralists who have raised several objections to Habermas’ ideal of rational discourse (cf. Sanders, 1997; Young, 2002). In their view, Habermas’ ideal of rational discourse would not pay sufficient attention to pluralism and the differences between the interlocutors. Moreover, a rational discourse would only do justice to a few privileged people, which would lead to the potential exclusion of less privileged groups. In line with this argument, a few scholars suggested a move away from purely rational discourse towards a broader concept of deliberation, which would include alternative forms of communication such as emotional discourse, rhetoric, and storytelling (see Bächtiger, Niemeyer, Neblo, Steenbergen & Steiner, 2010).

or less in the conversation is still poorly understood (see Kim, et al. (2010); Ryan and Smith, 2014; Bächtiger et al., 2014; O'Flynn and Sood, 2014).

#### 4.2.1 What are the theoretical gaps in the literature on mini-publics in terms of their internal functioning?

To this date, a lot of research has been done into the opinion and exchange of knowledge in mini-publics and the question of whether participants change their personal preferences through deliberation and/or the provision of information. Nevertheless, a gap remains in the field of mini-public research, namely the lack of a more systematic examination of the internal functioning (or malfunctioning) of deliberative mini-publics (see also Ryan and Smith, 2014 thoughts on how research on mini-publics should be taken further). More specifically the question of how the different elements in a mini-public – e.g., structure or facilitated small group dialogues, voting procedures and planned sessions (in which experts are interviewed by participants) – contribute to the internal functioning of a mini-public, and thus influence its quality of deliberation and decision-making process remains unanswered. And how does this rather objectively assessable quality of the deliberation process relate to the actual perceived quality of deliberation and decision-making by the participants?

In analysing the internal functioning of mini-publics, different approaches have been taken in the past by scholars inspired by different disciplines. As a result, there are still no unified models (theoretical or empirical) that provide a “golden standard” for assessing the quality of deliberation in mini-publics (see e.g., Bächtiger, Niemeyer, Noble, Steenbergen & Steiner, 2010; De Vries, Stanczyk, Ryan & Kim. 2011). Some scholars focused in their studies exclusively on the desirable outcomes of high-quality deliberation, while others developed frameworks that proposed a set of desirable criteria for an effective

overall deliberation process (see Rowe & Frewer, 2004). Yet, although most of these frameworks rely on normative theoretical criteria to assess the democratic value or quality of deliberation in mini-publics, there is a lack of consistency among scholars about what the basic normative requirements or quality criteria for good deliberation are. Moreover, several recent studies have criticised these approaches for their lack of focus on the explicit perceived effects of deliberation. For example, Jacobs and Kaufmann (2021) criticise earlier approaches for assessing the democratic value of mini-publics solely based on a set of normative criteria, rather than focusing on the perceived legitimacy of these participatory processes.

#### 4.2.2 Framework for analysis of the internal functioning of mini-publics

To assess the internal functioning of a mini-public more thoroughly, we, therefore, propose a two-dimensional model based on the *deliberation process* and participants' *perceptions*.

##### **Process**

In line with De Vries et al. (2010), we argue that one needs to consider both the *design* and the *implementation* of the deliberation process to assess the quality of the deliberation process within a mini-public. In the previous chapter, we highlighted four important design criteria for a high-quality discourse including (1) *structured deliberation* (e.g., dialogue rules and well-trained facilitators), (2) *learning opportunities* (e.g., briefing materials and questioning experts), (3) *transparent proceedings and decision procedures*, and (4) *popular control*. In analysing the internal functioning of mini-publics, we argue that research should focus on the extent to which deliberative mini-publics are designed to implement these four criteria.

1. **Structured deliberation** is an essential component of all mini-public designs, as the use of e.g., dialogue rules and trained facilitators can contribute to a more equal and respectful dialogue among deliberators.
2. **Learning** is one of the most important aspects of quality deliberation. Providing learning opportunities for participants throughout the participatory process can not only help them to consider and reflect on a particular issue from different perspectives and ultimately come to a more considered judgement but can also help to eliminate initial knowledge asymmetries between deliberators.
3. **Transparency** of proceedings and decision-making procedure is key to produce fair outcomes, ensuring that all participants had an equally clear understanding of the conditions under which they were participating.
4. **Popular control** is crucial when it comes to the role of participants in the deliberation process. All participants should not only have the same opportunity to participate in a mini-public, but they should also have the same opportunities to contribute to the deliberation and its agenda, as well as to influence the decision-making process.

### Perceptions

In addition to the four objectively measurable design criteria presented above, we argue that to get a more comprehensive picture of the internal functioning of mini-publics, one must also include the subjective perceptions of participants' experiences in the evaluation. We identified four desirable perceptual effects of deliberation and decision-making: perceived (1) *equality* among participants, (2) *respect*, (3) *transparency* and (4) *fairness* of proceedings and procedures.

1. **Equality** among participants is crucial to warrant the inclusiveness of the deliberation process. All participants should have equal opportunities to participate in the deliberation and in the content of that decision.
2. **Respect** towards other participants' background (e.g., particular groups), their demands and counterarguments are important to warrant that all participants feel safe and comfortable to contribute to deliberation.
3. **Transparency** of proceeding and decision-making procedures is a pre-condition for producing fair outcomes.
4. **Fairness** of proceeding and decision-making procedures is a pre-condition for producing perceived legitimate democratic outcomes in representative democracies.

While the first three perceptual effects are based on the normative ideals of good deliberation discussed in the previous chapter, the fourth effect is taken from the literature on procedural justice. According to this literature, the source of perceived just and legitimate democratic decisions is not only based on the perceived transparency or openness of decision-making processes but also on their perceived fairness (see e.g., Rawls' (1958) essay on *Justice is Fairness*). Theoretically, this literature is based on the liberal assumption that perceptions of legitimacy are grounded in "how fair citizens are treated by their government" (Jacobs & Kaufmann, 2021, p. 95; see also Tyler, 2003; Levi, Sacks, & Tyler 2009). However, as contemporary mini-publics function within liberal or representative democracies, we argue that their legitimacy also depends on the extent to which all participants experience the procedures and decision-making processes as fair and acceptable.

## 4.3 Do mini-publics lead to consequential outcomes?

Regarding the external impact of mini-publics, a distinction can be made between the political and social impact of mini-publics (Michels & Binnema, 2019). The former refers to the analysis of whether deliberative mini-publics affect actual policy-making, while the latter refers to whether these fora “encourage citizenship and enhance social capital” (Michels & Binnema, 2019, p. 750; see also Putnam, 2000; Goodin & Dryzek, 2006; Bryson, Quick, Schively Slotterback, & Crosby, 2013; Fung, 2015).

As for the political impact of deliberative mini-publics, most mini-publics aim to strengthen the role of citizens in policy-making (Smith, 2009; Ryan & Smith, 2014). Empirical research has shown that in the past several mini-publics have shaped policy-making by putting pressure on governments (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015; Farrell, O’Malley, & Suiter, 2013; Goodin & Dryzek, 2006; Warren & Pearse, 2008). However, according to Goodin and Dryzek (2006), in many cases, the results of mini-publics have at best had an indirect influence on decision-makers, as many mini-publics would not enable citizens to participate in the actual decision-making process. Only in very rare cases<sup>1</sup>, argue Goodin and Dryzek (2006), have mini-publics succeeded in exerting direct influence on policy-making, e.g., by actually “making policy” (p. 225). A great number of studies, therefore, concluded that mini-publics exert limited, or in some authors’ view no, influence on political decision-making (cf. Boogaard et al., 2016; Goodin & Dryzek, 2006; Pateman, 2012; Setälä, 2014; Smith, 2009). Bächtiger et al. (2014) summarised this problem as follows: “To date, too few mini-publics have had a discernible impact on actual policy-making, frequently being

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<sup>1</sup> For example, in the case of the *British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly* as well as the *Irish Citizens’ Assembly*, the citizens’ final recommendations led to a public referendum after the end of the participation process (Farrell et al., 2013; Fournier et al., 2011; Warren & Pearse, 2008).



relegated to the role of academic toys that delight rather than political devices that ‘bite’” (pp. 225-226). Consequently, there is a gap in the literature that addresses the questions of when and why different mini-public designs ‘bite’ and how we can actually ‘make them bite’ so that they relate to existing representative institutions (thinking of potential and preconditions for institutionalization) (Bächtiger et al., 2014, p. 226). In line with this, O’Flynn and Sood (2014) and Michels and Binnema (2019) argue that there is a need for systematic comparative analyses across cases to understand better under which conditions mini-publics exert influence on the political decision-making.

Besides this gap in the literature on the political impact of mini-publics, there is also a scarcity of knowledge on the impact that a mini-public can have on society as a whole. Besides the goal of exerting some influence on policymaking, deliberative democrats also made the normative assumption that deliberative fora would both mobilise and activate the local community (Michels & Binnema, 2019). From the limited evidence on the social impact of mini-publics, we can deduce that in some cases mini-publics stimulate the public debate on specific policy issues (e.g., through their media coverage) or lead to follow-up actions in the local community, whereas in other cases their social impact seems to be rather limited (see e.g., Michels & Binnema, 2019). Moreover, regarding the consequentiality of the social effects of mini-publics, Boogaard et al. (2016) argued that one of the challenges of especially longer participation processes is to maintain the initial enthusiasm and energy of the participants over a longer period. However, according to Michels and Binnema (2019), to increase the democratic added value of mini-publics (e.g., as a possible solution to citizens’ declining satisfaction with political institutions and processes), mini-publics must also have “substantive and sustainable effects” on the local community (p. 766). As with their political impact, a systematic and long-term analysis of mini-publics is therefore needed to better understand the circumstances under which mini-publics have a

substantial and lasting impact on the participants as well as the local community.

#### 4.3.1 Which factors may explain why some mini-publics have political and social effects?

In recent literature, factors that may explain why some mini-publics exert political and social impact while others do not, have not been extensively discussed and theorized to this point. In their study on two G1000 initiatives, Michels and Binnema (2019) concluded that five factors influence the type and degree of impact a mini-public can have: “(1) the institutional design, (2) the embeddedness in the political system, (3) the policy issue, (4) the connection with the existing civil society, and (5) the interaction between actors” (p. 763).

Concerning the first factor, *institutional design*, Michels and Binnema (2019) argue that the length of a mini-public design could influence the ‘instrumental impact’ of a mini-public. In their article, they argue that the results of the G1000 initiatives studied could easily be disregarded by local politicians because the G1000 initiatives were designed as ‘one-off forums’, consisting of only one large-scale deliberation event. As a result, they argued that the longer a mini-public would last, the more pressure it would create on policy-making, and thus have more political impact. Michels and Binnema (2019) also refer to Pogrebinschi and Ryan (2018) who found that the number and spread of deliberative events is an institutional design feature on which the effectiveness of a mini-public can depend.

The second factor identified by Michels and Binnema (2019) is a mini-publics’ *embeddedness in the political system*. This refers to a growing body of literature in deliberative democracy theory that argues for the need for a so-called ‘systemic turn’ in deliberative theory. This ‘systemic turn’ is characterized by the idea that to understand the overall goal of

deliberation, scholars should go beyond the study of individual institutions and processes, such as mini-public designs, and study more of their interaction in the system as a whole (Mansbridge, et al., 2012; Owen, & Smith, 2015; Curato & Böker, 2016). For example, Mansbridge, et al. (2012) argued that it is necessary to recognise that “most democracies are complex entities in which a wide variety of institutions, associations, and sites of contestation accomplish political work – including informal networks, the media, organized advocacy groups, schools, foundations, private and non-profit institutions, legislatures, executive agencies, and the courts” (p. 1-2). Consequently, these scholars no longer consider mini-publics as “isolated spaces” (p. 765), stressing that their context plays a major role in their way of functioning (Michels & Binnema, 2019). In line with this, Michels and Binnema (2019) argued that the results of a mini-public would have more political impact (heard, accepted, and followed up by the established institutions) if it was “initiated or explicitly supported by politicians” (see also Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2016, p. 765).

Michels and Binnema’s (2019) third factor refers to the (*policy*) *issue* being dealt with in a mini-public. Several scholars have suggested in the past that the impact of a mini-public may be related to the specific nature of the topic discussed (see Curato & Böker, 2016; Michels, 2011; Pogrebinschi & Ryan, 2017). Michels and Binnema (2019) concluded in their study that the G1000 initiatives examined, as they did not have a predetermined theme but followed an open agenda, would have led to “rather abstract and unspecific proposals” that were already part of existing policies and therefore easily ignored by policymakers (p. 765). In addition, Solomon and Abelson (2012) identify four types of policy issues that are particularly suitable for public deliberation, namely those that (1) involve *conflicting values about the public good* (such as setting priorities in public health care); (2) are *highly controversial and divisive* (e.g., gene therapy or building a nuclear power facility); (3) *combine both technical and real-world knowledge* (hybrid issues, e.g., urban planning); and (4) *enjoy*

*low levels of public confidence* (e.g., public health crises, some immunization programs) (see also Raisio & Ehrström, 2017, p. 6).

According to Michels and Binnema (2019), the fourth factor that can influence the impact of a mini-public is related to its social impact and thus to its *connection with existing civil society*. Based on their study results they argued that “communities with strong existing networks will be better able to create social impact as a result of deliberation” (Michels and Binnema, 2019, p. 766). In addition, from the literature on political participation we can derive that local political participation decreases with municipal population size (see e.g., Verba, Nie, & Kim’s (1979) ‘decline-of-community’ model; Denters et al.’s (2014) ‘Lovely Lilliput’ argument, or Van Houwelingen’s (2017) more recent meta study on this matter). One frequently mentioned reason for this is that the degree of autonomy is higher in larger municipalities (more than 100.000 inhabitants) than in smaller municipalities (less than 25.000 inhabitants) (Van Houwelingen & Dekker, 2015). From this, we can deduce that the population size of a municipality can be an important system variable when it comes to the social impact of a mini-public.

As a final factor that might influence a mini-public’s impact, Michels and Binnema’s (2019) highlight the importance of the *interaction between actors* within and outside the mini-public. They argue that the extent to which the results of mini-publics has political and/or social impact depends to a large extent on two things: Firstly, the “interaction between politicians and civil servants” on one side “and active citizens on the other” (Michels and Binnema, 2019, p. 766). And secondly, the willingness of politicians and civil servants to transfer power and responsibilities to the citizens.

However, the above five factors do not tell us much about why certain mini-public outcomes are or are not seriously considered by policymakers. For this purpose, we consulted the agenda and policy-

making model, also called the ‘Streams Model’, developed by the American political scientist Kingdon in 1984.

According to Kingdon (1995), two factors make politicians respond to a particular issue: actors and processes. Actors can range from the visible and influential actors in agenda-setting, such as local politicians and the mayor, to the less visible ones who play a more prominent role in suggesting alternatives than in drawing up the agenda itself (Kingdon, 1995). In addition, Kingdon (1995) identified three processes (so-called streams) that need to come together to put an issue on the political agenda: (1) problems; (2) policy/solutions; and (3) politics. According to the Kingdon (1985), the coupling of these streams at the right moment is the key to get a topic on the decision-making agenda (so-called ‘window of opportunity’). Yet, because a change in each of these three streams is mainly independent of changes in the other streams, what comes on the agenda depends mainly on timing. If the problem is not meaningful enough or its attention fades, and/or a (policy) solution is not available, and/or the political circumstances are inappropriate (e.g., through elections), it does not appear on the decision-making agenda (Kingdon, 1995). Yet, the streams seldom come together just like that. It is the policy entrepreneurs, who are willing to invest their resources and reputation, that often influence this coupling (Kingdon, 1995).

From the Kingdon model, we can learn the following about how mini-public outcomes can come high on the political agenda. When a mini-public produces new ideas or solutions for a particular policy problem or an open issue, these ideas, and approaches flow into the three different streams. The recognition of a mini-public result in the ‘problem stream’ thus depends on the presence of indicators that show that the *ideas and approaches address a relevant recognized problem* (e.g., that it is linked to an event or that the media is paying attention to it). The recognition of the mini-public outcomes in the ‘policy stream’ largely

depends on the extent to which the proposed ideas and approaches are *recognized as a possible solution to the relevant problems* mentioned above. This will depend on the technical feasibility of the ideas and proposed plans, on whether the proposals are in line with people's values, and finally on whether the proposed plans anticipate future constraints, such as a smaller available budget, changing public opinion and new political relations through, for example, elections. Whether the results of the mini-public end up in the 'political stream' depends on the *strength of the political coalition that advocates the idea*. This is determined by the size of the coalition and its political and administrative weight, its combativeness, the degree to which the objective is formulated concretely and, finally, the support of the public opinion. In addition, *policy entrepreneurs* can choose to actively try to link the different flows through their efforts. They do this by investing their time, energy, network, reputation, or money in the promotion of mini-public outcomes. But a policy entrepreneur can slow down as much as speeding up the process. Policy entrepreneurs, therefore, have an intermedial effect. *Framing* also plays an important role in the process. Both supporters and opponents can frame the social and political debate in such a way that especially the pros or cons of the proposed ideas and proposals of the participants are presented to a mini-public. This, too, can speed up or slow down the framing process and has an intermedial effect. When the three streams are linked, a *'policy window'* or an 'opportunity' opens up and the political and administrative actors will have a serious discussion to endorse the mini-public result in policy or legislation. Nevertheless, a policy window does not remain open forever. It can also close again after a while if an agreement is not reached in time. In that case, the process starts all over again.

### 4.3.2 Framework for analysing the political and social impact of a mini-public

To assess the external impact of a mini-public, Michels and Binnema (2019) developed a conceptual framework, which “differentiates between political and social impact but also refines these two types of impact by looking at instrumental, conceptual, and strategic aspects” (p. 750; see Table 4 for an overview).

According to Michels and Binnema (2019), a mini-public exerts instrumental impact when its outcomes directly influence decision-making. Politically, this implies that the outcomes of a mini-public lead to concrete decisions or actions by decision-makers. Socially, it implies that the outcomes of a mini-public lead to concrete actions by individuals or organisations in the local community (e.g., setting up new initiatives). The conceptual impact of mini-publics manifests itself more indirectly. Following Michels and Binnema (2019), mini-publics exert conceptual political impact when their outcomes become part of a larger debate on the participation and/or the topic of citizen participation becomes part of a political debate. In the social domain, mini-publics exert conceptual social impact when these deliberative forums lead to new forms of participation processes. And finally, Michels and Binnema (2019) argue that mini-publics can also be used by some parties to exert political or social strategic impact to strengthen the power of one or more political or social actors or organisations.

**Table 4.** A conceptual framework for the analysis of the impact of mini-publics.

	<b>Instrumental impact</b>	<b>Conceptual Impact</b>	<b>Strategic impact</b>
<b>Politics</b>	Translation of recommendations into decisions or concrete actions of decision-makers	Recommendations become part of a larger debate about participation; participation is put on the political agenda	(Recommendations of) mini-publics are used to strengthen the power of one or some political actors (e.g., by legitimizing existing policy)
<b>Society</b>	Translation of recommendation into concrete actions of individuals or organizations in the community	New and other forms of participation develop	Recommendations derived from mini-publics are used to strengthen the power of one or some individuals or organizations

*Source:* Michels and Binnema (2019, p. 752)





# Chapter 5



## 5 THE DUTCH G1000 AND WHY IS IT INTERESTING TO STUDY?

Up to now, experiences with mini-publics have been mixed (see chapter 4). Because of their lack of representativeness and political impact, some scholars in the past have strongly questioned whether deliberative mini-publics contribute at all to increasing citizens' involvement in the policy-making process and to improving the quality of political decision-making by the standards of deliberative democrats (cf. Boogaard et al., 2016; Hendriks 2006, 2009). Deliberative mini-publics in particular have been criticised by some scholars in the past for allowing policymakers to ignore uncomfortable recommendations and 'cherry-pick' ideas and suggestions that best fit their political agenda (Smith, 2009, p. 93; Setälä, 2017). Despite these reservations and prominent critics, however, scholars in recent years have also advocated the development of new, more integrated, or even institutionalised mini-public designs within existing government institutions, so that citizens have a greater say in decision-making (see e.g., Fishkin, Luskin, & Jowell, 2000; Goodin, 2008; Smith, 2009; Setälä, 2017; Michels & Binnema, 2018).

In this dissertation, we explore one of these ‘newer’ politically more integrated and still underexposed mini-public designs: the Dutch G1000. In the following section, we provide a short background to the Dutch G1000 and its core design principles. In addition, we introduce the three case studies examined in this dissertation and explain what makes these three cases so interesting to study.

## 5.1 The origin of the ‘G1000’ design

The Dutch G1000 initiative originates in its Belgian G1000 predecessor, an experiment that took place on 11 November 2011 in Brussels. In contrast to most deliberative mini-publics events in the past, which had been organised by either public administrations or scientific institutions, the G1000 in Belgium was initiated and organised by a citizen initiative (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2012). The reason for organising a G1000 was the political impasse following the Belgian federal elections in 2010. The organisers wanted to give a new impetus to the political deadlock by organising a meeting with a thousand randomly selected Belgian citizens to discuss the future of their country and to demonstrate that democracy is “more than merely a matter of political parties” (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2012; “The manifesto,” n.d., para. 2).

The Belgian G1000 experiment was developed as a three-stage process: [1] Public Consultation (large-scale online consultation), [2] Citizens’ Summit (large-scale deliberation), and [3] Citizens’ Panel (in-depth deliberation) (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2012). Due to the large-scale participation of more than 6000 citizens in the first phase of the process, and a combination of both consultative (e.g., drawing up the public agenda) and deliberative participatory practices, the G1000 received a lot of attention in Belgium as a new ‘democratic innovation’ of national

and international media, politicians, and practitioners (Caluwaerts and Reuchamps 2012).<sup>1</sup>

The driving force behind the Dutch G1000 events since 2014 is the *G1000.nu* (hereafter referred to as ‘G1000 organisation’), which is located in Amersfoort. Like its Belgian predecessor, the G1000 organisation’ was established as a citizen initiative. To this day, the G1000 organisation has organised a total of 28 G1000 initiatives with the ambition to offer ordinary citizens “a place where [they can] determine what [they] consider important for [their] neighbourhood, [their] village or [their] city” (“About G1000,” n.d., para. 1). In contrast to the three-stage Belgian G1000 process, which was organised on a national level, the G1000 organisation’ organises G1000 initiatives at the local level (focusing on cities, neighbourhoods or villages) and consisted mainly of one large-scale deliberation event. To finance these local G1000 Citizens’ Summits, the G1000 organisation was initially supported by the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and later by various private financing partners.

## 5.2 The seven G1000 core principles

Since its establishment in 2014, the Dutch G1000 organisation has developed and adapted its methodology, which can be summarized into seven core principles: [1] *autonomy*, [2] *equality*, [3] *dialogue*, [4] *diversity*, [5] *communality*, [6] *transparency*, and [7] *safety* (Van Dijk, 2020).

**[1] Autonomy.** According to the motto ‘participants lead themselves’, participants should have the autonomy to decide what they want to discuss. This first principle also relates to the agenda-setting power of all large-scale deliberative events of the G1000. To ensure that citizens

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., The Belgian G1000 got nominated for the Democracy Prize of the ‘lokale Gentse feitelijke vereniging Democratie’ in 2011.

can discuss what is important to them, the agenda is determined by the participants at the start of each G1000 meeting.

**[2] Equality.** Within the G1000, all voices have the same weight, regardless of someone's role, position, or origin.

**[3] Dialogue.** To ensure that citizens enter open and equal conversations with each other and search for a 'common ground', the G1000 organisation established a number of dialogue rules:

1. Participants should listen to each other,
2. Participants should avoid debates,
3. Participants do not have to agree with each other,
4. Participants should make room for each other during conversations.

**[4] Diversity.** To better reflect what is important for people living in a local community, the G1000 organisation invites a randomly selected sample of residents living in the local community.

**[5] Community.** To not counteract (local) politics, but to "build a bridge between citizens and government", the G1000 organisation has established a fifth principle, called 'commonality' (Van Dijk, 2020, p. 4). According to this principle, the Citizens' Summit should ideally reflect the local community (the 'whole system'), being a city or a village. In practice, this means that all key stakeholders of a local community – local politicians, entrepreneurs, professionals, free-thinkers, and inhabitants – are invited to the open dialogue to ensure that the whole system is not only represented at the Citizens' Summit but also feels responsible for the outcomes of the G1000.

**[6] Transparency.** With the sixth principle, the G1000 organisation emphasises its responsibility to guarantee openness and transparency about the way ideas and outcomes are generated at G1000 events.

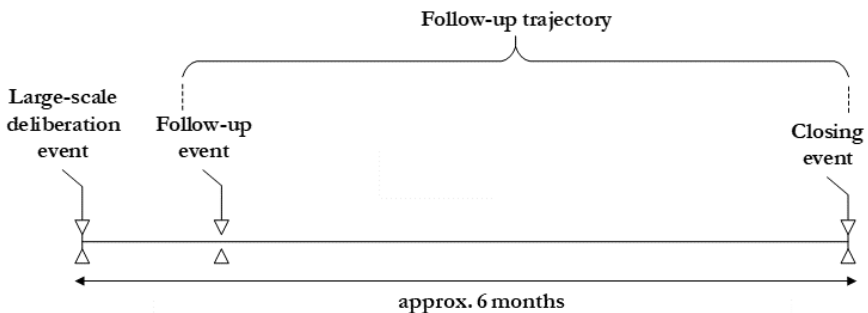
[7] **Safety.** In the final principle, the G1000 organisation further specifies its role during the entire event to ensure the safety of the participants. This implies that the G1000 organisation will carefully follow a pre-defined program during all events to ensure that there is room for safe and open conversations. Moreover, all participants are obliged to follow the six principles mentioned above.

### 5.3 Recent changes in the G1000 design

In 2016, some of the first G1000 initiatives were criticised by Boogaard et al. (2016) for not exerting any influence on local decision-making. Boogaard et al. (2016) doubted whether the ‘communality’ principle would have an impact on the consequentiality of the G1000 outcomes since the G1000 would show no observable alignment or influence on the political agenda or local governments in general.

As a response to this criticism, the G1000 organisation adapted 2017 its G1000 design in three ways. First, it made serious *changes to the institutional design* of the G1000. While previous G1000 events consisted of one large deliberative event, from 2017 onwards the G1000 processes were developed as four-stage processes: [1] *Citizens’ Summit* (first major deliberative event), [2] *Citizens’ Forum* (second major deliberative event), followed by a [3] *Citizens’ Forum phase* and a final [3]

**Figure 2.** The ‘new’ G1000 design from mid-2017 onwards.



[4] *Citizens' Council* event (see Figure 2). With this four-phase process design, the G1000 design adopted a similar form to the multi-phase design of most Citizens' Assemblies and the Belgian G1000 design (see Table 2; chapter 3), but in terms of the overall duration, it became one of the longest mini-public designs with approximately 6 months of the participation process. Secondly, the G1000 organisation tried to *embed the G1000 process and its results more into the political system* to increase the influence of the results on local decision-making. In this way, the G1000 organisation aimed for stronger cooperation with local governments and for 'strategic partnerships' with local authorities to jointly organise a G1000 and facilitate its outcomes. To ensure that the results of the G1000 have a more direct influence on decision-making, the G1000 initiatives launched in mid-2017 ended with a more 'binding' final Citizens' Decision (Dutch: *burgerbesluit*) instead of recommendations, which the mayor handed over to the local council for adoption.

The third and final change concerns the *topic of the G1000 initiative*. While in the earlier initiatives the G1000 Citizens' Summit did not have a predefined theme but followed an open agenda, in the later initiatives (from mid-2017 onwards) the topics were predefined by the local authorities.

## 5.4 Why is it interesting to study the Dutch G1000?

In this dissertation, we investigate three G1000 initiatives that took place in the Dutch province of Overijssel in the municipalities of Borne, Enschede and Steenwijkerland in 2017. We chose these three case studies as they provide us with the opportunity to

1. study the effect of using a mixed recruitment strategy and a multiphase mini-public design on the external inclusiveness of mini-publics over time;



2. investigate more systematically the internal functioning of a mini-public design in a real-time context; and
3. better understand the circumstances in which mini-publics have a substantial and lasting political and social impact.

Regarding the first point, the Dutch G1000 design is an excellent quasi-experiment to investigate the as yet unexplored effect of mixed recruitment strategies on the external inclusiveness of mini-publics (see chapter 4, section 4.1). It uses a mixed recruitment strategy by combining elements of both random selection and self-selection (see chapter 3, section 3.2.5). Furthermore, we argue that participation in multiphase mini-publics has not been sufficiently empirically studied so far and several questions about attrition in multiphase mini-publics remain unanswered (see chapter 4, section 4.1). For example, what are the factors that explain participation and attrition in mini-publics, and to what extent are they consistent with the factors we can infer from theories of political participation? Given that the G1000 organisation developed a new multiphase G1000 design in 2017, comprising a series of events over six months, we argue that the G1000 is an ideal case to study participation and the issue of attrition in multiphase mini-publics designs. We believe that by examining the factors that lead to participant drop-out (throughout the process), we can contribute to the existing literature.

Regarding the second point, the Dutch G1000 provides us with a good opportunity to explore more systematically the internal functioning of a mini-public design in a real-time context (see section 4.2.1). In this dissertation, we use a longitudinal case study approach to “explore a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and in its real-world context” (Yin, 2017, p. 18). To allow for the intensive study of multiple cases over a longer period, we decided to focus on three G1000 initiatives organised in the same year (2017) and the same province (Overijssel), close to the university where the researchers work.

Finally, we also selected the three cases to maximise variation among the cases studied, to compare and contrast the political and social impact of a mini-public in different local contexts while keeping the broader political and social context constant (same province). As discussed in the previous chapter, the context and design of a mini-public can influence both the social and political impacts of a mini-public (see section 4.3.1). We, therefore, selected three cases that differ both in the system context (type and number of inhabitants) and in the G1000 design used (see Table 5). Regarding their population size, the city of Enschede represents the only larger municipality studied, with more than 100.000 inhabitants, while the village of Borne is the smallest municipality studied, with less than 25.000 inhabitants (see also Van Houwelingen, 2017). Steenwijkerland falls into these two categories with 25.000 – 50.000 inhabitants. In terms of the G1000 design studied, we argue that the year 2017 marks a significant change in the short ‘history’ of the Dutch G1000, in terms of the G1000 design used by the G1000.nu organisation. Due to the three design changes (see the previous section), we were particularly interested in the G1000 initiatives in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, as they were the first to use the ‘new’ design. To compare and contrast the ‘old’ with the ‘new’ G1000 design, we included the G1000 initiative in Borne, which was initiated by a local citizens’ initiative in Borne and followed the ‘old’ G1000 approach (consisting of a single large-scale consultation event).

**Table 5.** Overview of G1000 initiatives between 2014 and 2017.

Location	Type	Province	# of Inhabitants	Start of the initiative	Commissioning body	Topic
Amersfoort	city	Utrecht	100,000+	2014	citizens	no predefined topic
Uden	city	Noord-Brabant	25,000 - 50,000	2014	citizens	no predefined topic
Kruisland	neighbourhood	Utrecht	less than 25,000	2014	citizens	no predefined topic
Groningen	city	Groningen	100,000+	2015	citizens	no predefined topic
Schiedam	city	Zuid-Holland	50,000 - 100,000	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Nijmegen	city	Gelderland	100,000+	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Amersfoort	city	Utrecht	100,000+	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Gemert-Bakel	municipality including several villages	North-Brabant	25,000 - 50,000	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Eindhoven	city	Noord-Brabant	100,000+	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Coevorden	city	Drenthe	25,000 - 50,000	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Friese Dorpen	several villages	Friesland	n.a.	2016	citizens	no predefined topic
Schiedam	city	Zuid-Holland	50,000 - 100,000	2017	citizens	no predefined topic
Borne	village	Overijssel	0 - 25,000	2017	citizens	no predefined topic
Enschede	city	Overijssel	100,000+	2017	local government	local framework policy
Steenwijkerland	municipality including several villages	Overijssel	25,000 - 50,000	2017	local government	local (sustainable) energy strategy

Source: <https://g1000.nu/>, accessed April 4, 2021.

## 5.5 Background to the three case studies

### 5.5.1 The G1000 initiative in Borne

In 2010, the local council of Borne initiated a participatory visioning project, so-called ‘MijnBorne2030’, for the development of a shared community vision for the future of Borne (Denters & Klok, 2015). To create a widely shared vision that is not only made ‘for’ but also ‘by’ the local community, the local council delegated the elaboration and implementation of the new vision to the ‘societal partners’<sup>1</sup> of Borne (Denters & Klok, 2015). For the implementation of the ‘MijnBorne2030’ vision, a steering committee was formed consisting of twenty social organisations and associations from Borne (“Waarom MijnBorne2030?,” 2018). One member of this steering committee is the local foundation ‘Stichting Borne Duurzaam’ (hereafter called: Borne Sustainable Foundation). In 2015, the Borne Sustainable Foundation found that community support for the ‘MijnBorne2030’ community vision had diminished. The Borne Sustainable Foundation<sup>2</sup>, therefore, decided in mid-2016 to organise a large-scale deliberation event in Borne to reanimate the MijnBorne2030 vision. For this purpose, the Borne Sustainable Foundation asked the G1000 organisation to organise a Citizens’ Summit to let the citizens of Borne formulate their agenda for 2030 and to create a framework to realise this agenda in the future.

In terms of process structure, the G1000 process in Borne consisted of three larger events. It started with Citizens’ Summit, a one-day large-scale deliberation event organized by the G1000 organisation and held

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Societal partners’, such as citizens, local civil society organisations and local corporations.

<sup>2</sup> Several local actors (volunteers, local companies, the province of Overijssel and the local municipality) have contributed to the realisation of the initiative in various ways, such as the planning, implementation and/or financial support of the initiative.

in a sports hall in Borne on 20 May 2017. A second follow-up event to the Citizens' Summit was organised on 8 June 2016 by the Sustainable Borne Foundation with the support of the G1000 organisation. During this second event, working groups were formed around the themes, which had been identified during the Citizens' Summit. During the summer, the working groups elaborated on their ideas and proposals, which they presented on 7 December 2017 during a concluding 'handover evening' in the Kulturhus in Borne. The Stichting Duurzam Borne organised this final meeting with the support of the local municipality. For this final meeting, besides working groups, all social partners of the initiative MijnBorne2030 were invited. This meeting aimed to hand over the elaboration and implementation of the results of the G1000 initiative to the municipality and to establish connections between the working groups and important partners in the local community (social partners of the MijnBorne2030 initiative).

### 5.5.2 The G1000 Firework dialogue in Enschede

The G1000 Fireworks Dialogue was initiated by the newly elected mayor in Enschede in early 2017 in response to many fireworks-related problems that occurred on New Year's Eve 2017/18 (e.g. fireworks noise nuisance problem, high repair costs for collateral damage and illegal fireworks use). However, fireworks problems did not occur for the first time in Enschede on New Year's Eve 2017/18. For years, the municipality of Enschede has repeatedly had to deal with problems related to the misuse of fireworks on New Year's Eve. Moreover, the issue of fireworks is a sensitive one, especially in Enschede, as in 2000 a fireworks warehouse exploded in the city centre area, killing 23 people. To talk about the (re)emerging problems related to fireworks on New Year's Eve and thus properly address the sensitive issue, the mayor, therefore, intended to involve as many Enschede citizens as possible in a city-wide dialogue. Through this dialogue, he wanted to generate

binding agreement(s) on the use of fireworks in Enschede to ensure a more pleasant coexistence on New Year's Eve in the future. To set up such a city-wide dialogue, but also to try out new forms of citizen participation, the mayor decided to turn to the citizens' initiative *G1000.nu*.

As for its process structure, the G1000 Fireworks Dialogue was developed by the G1000 organisation as a continuous citizen participation process consisting of a series of formal events and activities, culminating in a final Citizens' Decision, which should then ideally be legally confirmed by the city council. The G1000 organisation implemented and organised this process in cooperation with a steering group (Dutch: 'Regiegroep stadsdialoog vuurwerk') formed for this initiative, consisting of a group of officials from the municipality of Enschede. As far as formal events are concerned, the G1000 process in Enschede, like in Borne, started with a large-scale deliberative event, the Citizens' Summit, which took place on 10 June 2017 in the Twentehallen in Enschede. A second G1000 event, the Citizens' Forum, took place in the Enschede town hall on 1 July 2017. In Enschede, too, the main goal of this second meeting was to form the working groups around the themes that emerged from the Citizens' Summit. As in Borne, at the end of the Citizens' Forum event, the working groups were instructed to develop a written proposal related to their themes during the following Citizens' Forum phase. To create support for their proposals, they were also asked to involve as many inhabitants of the city of Enschede as possible in their plans and the development of their proposals during this five-month phase (1 July 2017 to 11 November 2017). In addition, the G1000 organisation organised three workshops during the Citizens' Forum phase, where the working groups could present their ideas to each other and receive feedback on their ideas from experts in the field. On 11 November 2017, a final meeting (in Dutch: 'Slotbijeenkoms') was organised in Enschede's city hall during which the working groups had to present

and defend their proposals in front of three panels of citizens, politicians and professionals during the morning session. During the afternoon session, the remaining participants made a so-called ‘Citizen Decision’ (Dutch: Burgerbesluit) that included all the proposals that were adopted during a plenary vote. At the end of the final event, the Citizens’ Decision was formally signed by all voting participants and handed over to the mayor with the request to present the Citizens’ Decision to the city council for formal adoption and implementation. At the end of the closing meeting, the participants of the G1000 could sign up for the monitoring group to further monitor the implementation of the Citizens’ Decision.

### 5.5.3 The G1000 Steenwijkerland

Steenwijkerland, located in the north-western corner of the Dutch province of Overijssel, can be considered a fairly new municipality, having been created in 2001 by the merger of the three municipalities of Steenwijk, Bredewiede and IJsselham. In recent years, Steenwijkerland has been preparing itself for a necessary energy transition, driven by the social need to switch from nearly-exhausted fossil fuels (such as coal, oil, and gas) to more sustainable energy sources, such as solar panels and windmills. However, the municipality’s large-scale efforts and plans in the past to meet its 2020 energy target<sup>1</sup> were hampered by much resistance from its residents. The main reasons for this resistance were that some of the municipality’s plans had a significant spatial impact on the living environment of its citizens (e.g., placing windmills in the vicinity of residential areas). Therefore, the municipality of Steenwijkerland decided to co-organise a three-phase G1000 participation process in 2017 to facilitate a good dialogue

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<sup>1</sup> “In 2020, the municipality will generate a volume of new energy equivalent to the household energy consumption within the municipality” (“Omgevingsvisie Steenwijkerland,” 2017, p. 16).

between all parties involved and find a more broadly supported approach to realise its energy objectives in the future.

Just like in Enschede, the citizens' participation process in Steenwijkerland included three main events, starting with a Citizens' Summit (Dutch: 'Burgertop'), followed by a Citizens' Forum (Dutch: 'Burgerforum') and Citizens' Forum phase, culminating in a final Citizens' Decision which was taken at the end of the final event, the Citizens' Council (Dutch: 'Burgerraad'). Under the motto "How can we make Steenwijkerland collectively energy-neutral in 2030?", the Citizens' Summit took place on 18 November 2017 in the Steenwijkerland theatre 'De Meenthe'. The second event of the G1000 Steenwijkerland, the Citizens' Forum, also took place in the theatre of Steenwijkerland on 7 December 2017. As with the other two initiatives, the main goal of this event was to form working groups around the themes identified during the Citizens' Summit. During the four-month Citizens' Forum phase (7 December 2017 to 21 March 2018), the working groups worked during three joint workshops and separate working group meetings towards (a) final proposal(s) related to their themes. Like in Enschede, the working groups were given the task to involve as many inhabitants of Steenwijkerland as possible in their plans and the development of their proposals during this period. The final Citizens' Council event took place on 7 April 2018. As in Enschede, during the morning session, the working groups were asked to present their final proposals to three panels consisting of citizens, politicians, and experts. After the panel discussions, a Citizens' Decision was taken, which included all proposals that had made it to the official vote. After the vote, the Citizens' Decision was signed by all voting members of the Citizens' Council and presented to the local mayor with a request to submit the Citizens' Decision to the municipal council for formal approval and implementation. Also in Steenwijkerland, the participants could leave their names in case they wanted to be further



informed about the implementation of the results of the G1000 or wanted to be involved in it.

# Chapter 6



# 6 HOW DID WE STUDY THE DUTCH G1000?

## 6.1 Mixed-methods approach

We used various research methods and techniques to collect and analyse the data from the three initiatives, including registration and attendance data from the G1000 participants, multiple online surveys and semi-structured interviews, and personal/policy documents (see Table 6 for an overview). This practice is also known as a mixed-methods strategy, “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrated the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative methods in a single or a program of inquiry” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p. 4). According to Tashakkori and Creswell (2007), the main advantage of a mixed-methods strategy is the diversity and richness of data sources and analysis techniques, as they can help to analyse and understand complex social phenomena in a more comprehensive way. Moreover, by combining different data and analysis techniques, a mixed-method strategy has the advantage of compensation for the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research, for example, is limited when it comes to understanding the underlying causal processes of people’s behaviour or the context in which people

behave. By looking beyond quantitative statistical results and by trying to understand behavioural conditions from the perspective of the actors, qualitative research can compensate for these limitations. A mixed-method approach can therefore also have a complementary effect if one wants to “use one method to elaborate, illustrate, enhance or clarify the results from another” (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015, p. 5).

**Table 6.** Data employed in this dissertation.

	<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>
<b>Personal data of participants</b>	Registration data from participants for the first large-scale deliberation event and the follow-up trajectory	Registration data from participants for the first large-scale deliberation event, the follow-up trajectory, and the final event	Registration data from participants for the first large-scale deliberation event, the follow-up trajectory, and the final event
	Check-in data from participants at 1-event	Check-in data from participants at 2-events	Check-in data from participants at 2-events
<b>Longitudinal panel data</b>	3-wave online survey data	4-wave online survey data	4-wave online survey data
<b>Semi-structured interview data</b>	11 interviewees	34 interviewees	10 interviewees
<b>Policy documents</b>	available	available	available
<b>Personal documents (observations)</b>	available	available	available

## 6.2 How did we collect the data?

### 6.2.1 G1000 data and G1000 survey data

In this dissertation, we make use of two different sources of quantitative data (see Table 6 for an overview). The first source of quantitative data consists of data (registration and attendance data) of the G1000 participants, collected by the G1000.nu and put at our disposal. We received data sets with registration details of the participants who registered for the large-scale deliberative events in Borne, Enschede and Steenwijkerland. For all three initiatives, we received datasets of participants who attended the large-scale deliberative event and the follow-up event. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, where the G1000 process also included an official third Citizens' Council event, organised by the G1000 organisation, we also received data of the participants who attended the closing event. The G1000 datasets contained the socio-economic background information of the participants. Moreover, the datasets included information about the role<sup>1</sup> participants played during the G1000 process.

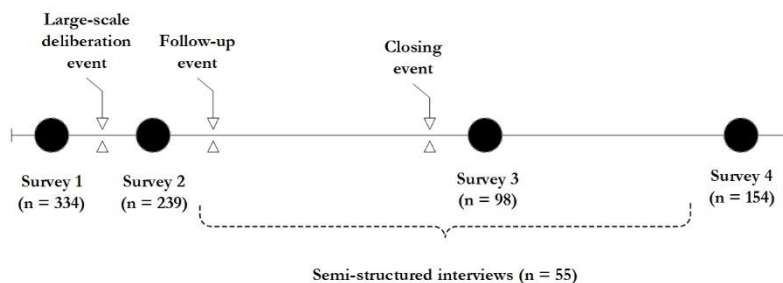
In addition to the G1000 data, we conducted a series of online surveys among the G1000 participants (see Figure 3 for an overview). In all three cases, two online surveys were conducted just before the first large-scale deliberation event (hereafter referred to as "Survey 1") and one immediately after the deliberation event ("Survey 2"). In the case of Enschede and Steenwijkerland, we conducted a third survey ("Survey 3") after the final G1000 event. Given the fact that the G1000 process in Borne followed a different setup which did not conclude with a final Citizens' Council event, a third survey was not sent out in Borne.

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<sup>1</sup> Citizen, civil servant, local politician, employer/professional, freethinker, volunteer, chairman and press/observer

A fourth and final online survey (hereafter referred to as “Survey 4”) was sent out in October 2019 to respondents in all three initiatives.

**Figure 3.** Data collection process.



Regarding the content of the survey, the original designs of the first two online surveys were developed by the *G1000 Research Team* of the G1000.nu. We used the survey data (Survey 1 and Survey 2) collected by the *G1000 Research Team* because we started following the G1000 in Borne after the large-scale deliberative event in May 2017. To ensure the comparability of the collected data, we used the same survey design developed by the *G1000 Research Team*, in Enschede and Steenwijkerland. In Survey 1, questions were asked about the degree of social and political commitment of the participants, as well as their attitude towards (local) government and their expectations of the G1000 process. Survey 2 measured the experiences of the participants during the large-scale deliberative event and their satisfaction with the course of events. Survey 3 measured the experiences of the participants during the final Citizens’ Council event and their satisfaction with the course of events. This fourth and final Survey aimed at measuring the long-term impact of the G1000 process on the level of political and civic commitment of the participants in their local communities. In addition, questions were included about the degree of satisfaction of the participants with the results of the G1000 and the way the results were implemented.

To get a response from as many G1000 participants as possible, the survey invitation for Survey 1 was included in the e-mail to all participants who had registered for the initial large-scale deliberation events in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, registrants were asked if they were willing to conduct an online survey for research purposes. Only those who accepted this formal request were redirected to the online survey and received a survey invitation for the following online surveys (Survey 2 and 3). In each survey invitation, participants were allowed to withdraw from the survey by clicking an unsubscribe button at the end of the email. In Borne, the invitations for Survey 1 and 2 were sent by the *G1000 Research Team* via the original “registration list”. In all three cases, invitations for Survey 4 were sent only to participants who had completed Survey 1.

As for the survey response rates, Survey 1 was completed by 334 participants (33%) of 1028 who registered for the initial large-scale deliberation events in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland (see Figure 4). The response rates to the first online survey varied considerably between the different G1000 initiatives. While in Borne and Enschede, Survey 1 was completed by 122 (26%) and 43 (20%) of those who registered for the initial large scale deliberation event, in Steenwijkerland Survey 1 was completed by 169 registrants (49%)<sup>1</sup>. Response levels of Survey 2 and 3<sup>2</sup> were substantially lower than Survey 1. The final survey was completed by 154 respondents (46%), which is slightly less than half the number of respondents who completed the first survey.

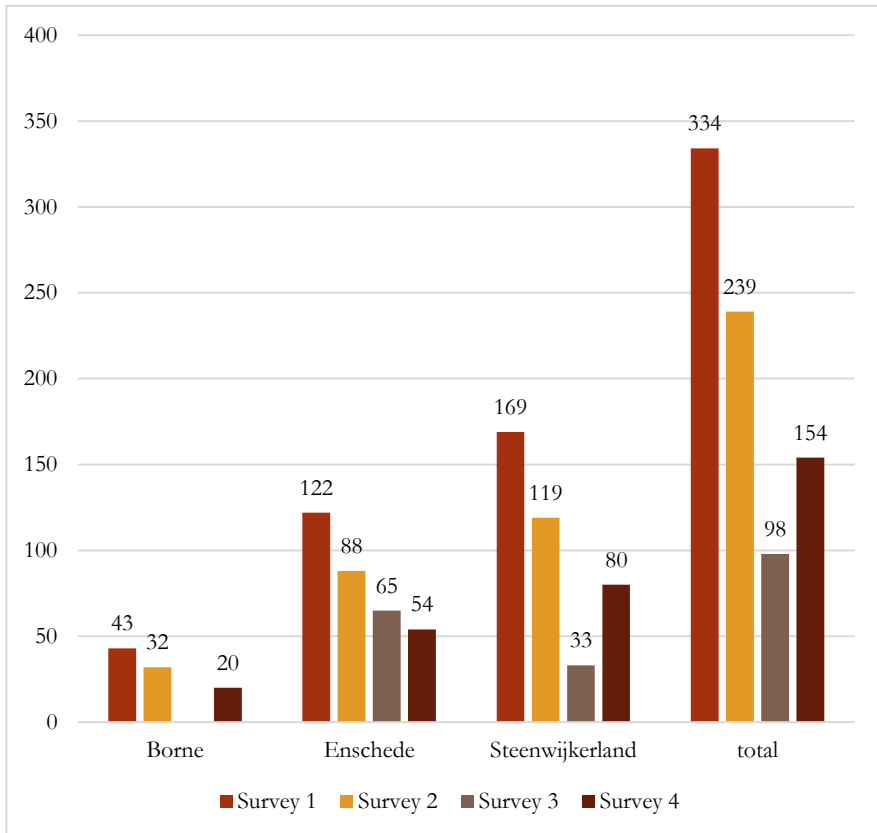
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<sup>1</sup> The initial response to the survey invitation also differed greatly between participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland. While in Steenwijkerland 85% of the participants who registered for the first deliberative event participated in the online survey, in Enschede only 41% responded to the survey request.

<sup>2</sup> Survey 3 was only sent to respondents in Enschede and Steenwijkerland.



**Figure 4.** Survey responses (in count).



## 6.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

In addition to the online surveys, we conducted a total of 55 semi-structured interviews (see Table A1 in Appendix for an overview of the interviewees). We were interested in three groups of interviewees for our research: organizers, participants, and interested parties. We interviewed eleven organisers of the G1000 in Borne, Enschede and Steenwijkerland. The category ‘organiser’ included people from the G1000 organisation and civil servants from the municipalities of Enschede and Steenwijkerland as well as citizens of the *Stichting Duurzaam Borne* who were involved in the organisation of the G1000

invitations. In addition, we conducted 35 interviews with G1000 participants about their participation in the G1000 initiatives. The category ‘participants’ included *drawn citizens*, *freethinkers*, *civil servants*, *politicians* and *professionals*. Besides organisers and participants, the G1000 initiatives were also followed by what we called ‘interested parties’, people (e.g., politicians, press, observers) who did not officially take part in the G1000 participation process. To examine how the G1000 initiatives were perceived by these interested parties, we conducted a total of nine interviews with local politicians and the press.

The interviews were conducted in the period between Survey 2 and Survey 4 (see also Figure 3 in the previous section). We determined the appropriate number of interviews per case during the data collection phase based on the knowledge saturation of the data. In each case, we defined the point of data saturation as reached when new data began to repeat what was expressed in earlier data (Saunders et al., 2018). For the G1000 in Enschede, we identified interviewees (organisers and participants) during and after formal and informal process-related G1000 events. In addition, ‘interested parties’ were identified with the help of local newspaper articles about the G1000. In Borne and Steenwijkerland, the first list of initial interviewees (including G1000 organisers, participants, and interested parties) was presented by the organisers of the G1000 initiatives. From there, further potential interviewees were identified using a snowball technique. In all three cases, a formal interview request was sent to the respondents by e-mail. In the Enschede case, this was also done in a limited number of cases by telephone. For the interviews, an interview guide for each group of interviewees was prepared, consisting of several relevant topics and questions. The interviews were recorded (with oral consent), transcribed, and then analysed.

### 6.2.3 Policy documents, newspaper articles, personal documents, and observations

To assess the social and political impact of the G1000 initiatives, we also collected policy documents, newspaper articles, and observational data throughout the three G1000 processes. As for the former, we collected relevant policy documents published by the municipalities of Borne, Enschede and Steenwijkerland throughout the years 2017–2020. Moreover, relevant newspaper articles about the three G1000 initiatives were collected from online local newspapers were collected during the same time period (2017-2020). Furthermore, some interviewees provided us with a series of G1000-related process documents during the interviews (detailed observational data, newspaper articles, G1000 participants' reports). These documents, together with some personal observations of G1000 events<sup>1</sup>, were kept in a 'research diary' to follow the activities and processes of the G1000 initiatives. This process-related information was used to describe the three G1000 initiatives in chapter 5.

## 6.3 Operationalisation of the key variables

In this study, we ask to what extent deliberative mini-publics contribute to greater citizen involvement in local decision-making? To answer this main research question, we focussed on the external inclusiveness of the G1000 processes, their quality of deliberation and decision-making, and the extent to which these G1000 initiatives exerted a social and political impact on policy-making, the participants, and the local community.

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<sup>1</sup> This information was complemented by observational reports made by students, participants and the G1000 organisation about the events that took place during the three Citizens' Summits and the subsequent G1000 events.

### 6.3.1 External Inclusiveness

To measure the external inclusiveness of the three G1000 initiatives, we investigated the socio-demographic characteristics and general attitudes and behaviour of G1000 participants over time<sup>1</sup> and compared these with the broader local populations. We used four indicators to measure the socio-demographic characteristics of the G1000 participants: (1) *age*, (2) *gender*, (3) *educational level*, and (4) *language spoken at home*. We assessed these variables using four items from the G1000 registration datasets (see Table A2; Appendix, I for an overview of the key variables). To investigate the extent to which the participants reflect the larger population, we compared the socio-economic characteristics of the G1000 participants with the local population data in Borne (2017), Enschede (2017) and Steenwijkerland (2017). Population data about *age*, *gender*, and *educational level* were provided by the Dutch Central Agency for Statistics (CBS). Population data about the fourth indicator *language spoken at home* were retrieved from the European Social Survey data Round 8 (2016)<sup>2</sup>. In addition to these socio-demographic characteristics, we also investigated participants' general attitudes and behaviour and compared these with the broader local population. We used five indicators to measure participants' general attitudes and behaviour: (1) *voting behaviour in the national election*, (2) *political activity*, (3) *involvement in a citizens' initiative*, (4) *civic activity*, and (5) *trust in local government*. We measured these variables using data collected in Survey 1 (see Table A2; Appendix, for an overview of the key variables). Because we could not find primary data for all variables for the year 2017, we used secondary data as a reference point (e.g., Van Houwelingen &

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<sup>1</sup> We measure the socio-demographic characteristics and the general attitudes and behaviour of the participants at four points of the participation process: at the moment of registration for the G1000, after the large-scale deliberative meeting, the follow-up, and the closing event.

<sup>2</sup> We used question C25: *What language or languages do you speak most often at home?*

Dekker, 2015; Van der Meer & Van der Kolk, 2016; Jansen & Denters, 2019).

As explained in the previous chapter, the inclusiveness of mini-publics can be influenced by self-selection and drop-outs. To investigate whether self-selection and drop-outs played a role in undermining the external inclusiveness of the three G1000 initiatives, we analysed to which extent non-randomly selected participants (free-thinkers, politicians, and professionals) influenced the descriptive and substantive representativeness of the three G1000 initiatives. To this end, we compared the socio-demographic characteristics and attitudes and behaviour of the non-randomly selected participants with those of randomly selected participants. We did the same for those who dropped out of the participation process compared to those who stayed. Finally, to examine why participants dropped out of the G1000 participation process, we analysed the included questions in Survey 2 and Survey 3<sup>1</sup>, asking the respondents who indicated that they were not present at the previous G1000 meeting why they did not do so.

### 6.3.2 Quality of deliberation and decision-making

In chapter 4 (see Section 4.2.2) we proposed a conceptual framework to analyse the internal functioning of mini-publics. To measure the quality of deliberation and decision-making of the three G1000 initiatives, we argued that one should focus on both the G1000 process design and the participants' perception of its design and actual implementation. Regarding the former, to ensure a high quality of deliberation and decision-making, the design of mini-publics should include (1) learning opportunities (e.g., briefing materials and questioning of expert experts), (2) structured deliberation (e.g., dialogue rules and well-trained facilitators), (3) transparent procedures and

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<sup>1</sup> S2Q14; S2Q30; S3Q17.

decision-making processes, and (4) popular control (e.g., open agenda). We, therefore, focused on the extent to which the three initiatives were designed to implement these four criteria.

Regarding participants' perceptions on the internal functioning of the G1000 initiatives, we argued that these perceptions can be measured based on four desirable perceptual effects of deliberation and decision-making: perceived (1) equality between participants, (2) respect, (3) transparency and (4) fairness of procedures and processes. We measured these four effects by looking at the following six aspects: (1) participants' general perception of the dialogues, (2) participants' perceived learning experiences, (3) perceived degree of (dis)equality and mutual respect during deliberation, (4) participants' perception of process transparency, (5) fairness, and (6) legitimacy of the overall participation process. These six aspects were measured using survey questions (see Table A5 for an overview of the survey questions, Appendix). For additional insight into underlying reasons for how participants perceived the deliberation and decision-making processes during the G1000 initiatives, we included clarifying questions in the interview guide. These questions were largely copied from the online survey questions (see Table A5, Appendix).

### 6.3.3 Political and Social Influence

In this dissertation, we measured the political and social impact as well as its three different aspects as follows (see Table A3; Appendix, for an overview of the key variables): We assessed the instrumental political impact of the G1000 according to the extent to which the G1000 process and/or its results were discussed by the city council and/or incorporated<sup>1</sup> in policy documents in the aftermath of the G1000 process. To this end, we compared and analysed policy documents over

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<sup>1</sup> With 'incorporation' we mean the extent to which the final policy documents is in line with the outcome(s) of the three G1000 initiatives.

the period 2017 – 2020 concerning the results of the G1000 (final presentations of the working groups in Borne and the Citizens' Decisions in Enschede and Steenwijkerland). We evaluated the conceptual political impact of the G1000 initiatives through interview questions with local policymakers and officials on two aspects: firstly, the extent to which the topic of citizen participation was put on the political agenda in the aftermath of the G1000 process. And secondly, to what extent the attitude and working process of the city and local government became more receptive to participation and citizens' wishes. The strategic political impact of the G1000 initiatives was also evaluated by analysing the interviews with policymakers and civil servants according to the extent to which they indicated that the G1000 and/or its results were used by other politicians or political parties to defend certain decisions or to attack the ideas of others.

The instrumental social impact of the three G1000 initiatives was assessed based on the extent to which the final results led to the creation of new citizens' initiatives by participants or other individuals/groups in the local community. We based this on information from interviewees and newspaper articles that followed the G1000 activities. The conceptual social impact of the G1000 initiatives was assessed based on the extent to which the G1000 initiatives led to new forms of participation and actions as well as a broader "participation movement" in the local communities. For this purpose, we analysed interviews transcripts and local newspaper articles based on the extent to which they reported on new participation activities that came out of the G1000 initiatives. Moreover, to measure the conceptual social impact of the G1000 process on the participants, we looked into whether participants' community and political engagement level increased after the G1000 event. We measured the potential 'change' of the participants' level of civic engagement by comparing the level of civic engagement of the participants before (Survey 1) and after (Survey 3) the G1000 process

(see Table A4; Appendix, for an overview of the key variables). Finally, the strategic social impact of the G1000 initiatives was assessed based on the extent to which G1000 participants or other individuals, groups and organisation in the local community used by social actors to support specific social actors or to oppose others. We based our assessment on information provided by interviewees and newspaper articles that followed the G1000 activities.

## 6.4 Methodological limitations of this study

### 6.4.1 Use of secondary data

In this dissertation, we use both primary and secondary data collected from participants in the three G1000 initiatives. The great advantage of using secondary data is that we gain access to data to which we would not otherwise have had access. However, the use of secondary data collected by another party also presented a few challenges in this study. First, the use of secondary data has led to a number of methodological limitations, as we were not involved in the data collection process and therefore had no control over the majority of questions or variables included in the secondary data sets. Regarding registration and checked-in data, this restricted us at a later stage of the research process to a limited number of variables to analyse the characteristics of G1000 participants (e.g., the ethnic background of the participants). About Surveys 1 and 2, these surveys were developed and conducted by the “G1000 research team” in Borne, which created a certain dependency in the development of the later survey questionnaires to ensure comparability of the data between the three cases. A second, related problem that arose from this dependency was that some variables included in the survey questionnaire for Borne were categorized differently than we would have chosen to do. Moreover, some questions were formulated vaguely. And finally, as we were not involved in the



data collection process in Borne, this caused some lack of knowledge about the sampling method used and how well the data collection process was carried out. This had an influence on calculating an accurate response rate for Survey 1 and 2 in Borne since no survey software has been used which could have provided us with more information about the distribution process of the survey and thus the data collection process (e.g., number of ineligible/eligible participants).

We took some measures to enhance the quality of the Survey questionnaires 1 and 2. First, to avoid misunderstandings by respondents, we refined the wording of some survey questions in the original survey questionnaires in Enschede and Steenwijkerland. Second, to gather more information from the respondents in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, we also added some open-ended questions and the ability to enter text for some questions to Survey 1 and Survey 2. Third, to make the three data sets comparable, we recoded the variables after the end of the data collection process and merged the different data files into one coherent final data set. Fourth, to complement a possible loss of information in the case of Borne, we used some interview questions to clarify a number of the research results. Finally, to compensate for the lack of knowledge about the data collection process in Borne, we contacted the “G1000 research team” to obtain more information.

## 6.4.2 Panel attrition and sample representativeness

As mentioned in Section 6.2.1, the survey response rates dropped by about half throughout the participation process.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, this implies that around half of the participants who participated in the first survey also completed the final survey wave. On the other hand, this conditional response rate also indicates a high panel attrition rate (or panel mortality). From previous panel studies, we know that attrition

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<sup>1</sup> Conditional response rates: Borne 54%, Enschede 46%, Steenwijkerland 46%.

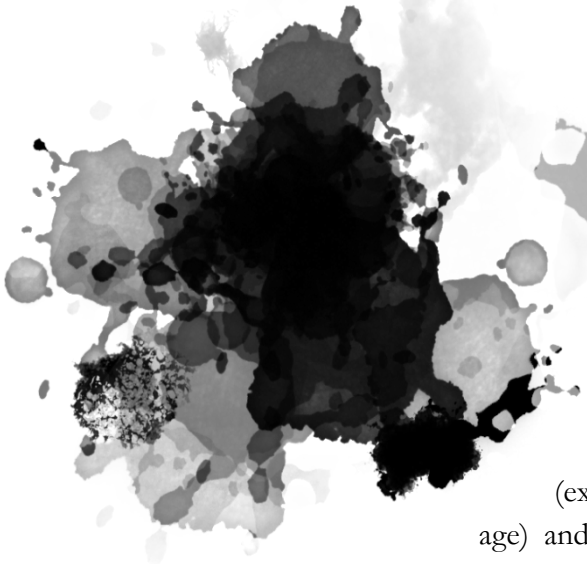
(or (permanent) drop-out of the survey participants) is one of the major sources of non-sampling error in panel surveys since even modest attrition rates can affect the representativeness of the sample (Lugtig & Research, 2014). From the literature on survey methodology, we also know that the process of attrition can vary across respondents and over time. For example, male respondents tend to drop out more often than females (Behr, Bellgardt, & Rendtel, 2005; Lepkowski & Couper, 2002). Watson and Wooden (2009) found that people with a higher socioeconomic status (higher education and incomes) drop out less than those with lower socioeconomic status (although differences were small). Moreover, studies revealed that many people participate in multiple panel studies infrequently. One reason for this is, for example, a lack of commitment (Laurie, Smith, & Scott, 1999).

To examine whether attrition rates had a significant effect on the representativeness of our survey samples, we used one-sample chi-square tests. We determined how well the survey samples represented the G1000 population (participants attending the large-scale deliberation events) in all surveys in terms of gender, educational level, age, and participants' role in the G1000 process. The results revealed that the survey samples did not differ significantly from the G1000 population in all three cases. Thus, we can conclude that attrition had no significant effect on the representativeness of the survey samples.



# Chapter 7

# 7 REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE G1000 INITIATIVES



In the selection and recruitment process of the three G1000 initiatives, a strong emphasis was placed on maximising the diversity of participants.

With the help of sortition, 10.000 citizens in Enschede and Steenwijkerland and 7.000 citizens in Borne were drawn at random from the population registers (excluding all citizens under 16 years of age) and invited to participate in the G1000 process. In all three G1000 initiatives, the purpose of using a random sampling method was twofold: firstly, the organisers wanted to ensure the inclusiveness of the participatory process by giving all citizens of the local community an equal chance to be selected and participate in the G1000 process. And secondly, the organisers used a random sampling method to select and recruit a diverse and large group of participants that represented the views and interests of the local population in the best possible way.

In addition to the randomly selected citizens, organisers also sought to achieve a “real representation of the [local] community” by bringing all stakeholders of a local community into one room (Van Dijk, 2020, p. 7, see also chapter 6). To this end, in all three initiatives, a smaller group of local stakeholders – officials, politicians, and experts/employers –

was recruited through a non-random targeted recruitment strategy (personal invitations by name).

Finally, all three G1000 initiatives also included some elements of self-selection: first, as participation in the G1000 is voluntary, only those who signed up for the G1000 could take part in the G1000. Secondly, to increase participation rates, randomly selected citizens who were unable or unwilling to attend the first large-scale deliberation events could pass on their invitations to someone else. Thirdly, organisers gave local citizens interested in the G1000 process the opportunity to participate as “free-thinkers”. And finally, in larger geographical areas (Steenwijkerland and Enschede), all invited residents were allowed to participate together with someone living in their neighbourhood.

Considering organizers’ efforts to maximize the diversity of participants using random and non-random selection methods, the question remains: To what extent were the organisers of the three Dutch G1000 initiatives successful in involving a diverse and inclusive group of citizens from the larger population in the participation processes? Were the three G1000 initiatives a good reflection of the local populations? And how was the actual representativeness of the G1000 and its importance perceived by those who participated? Which factors have affected the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives?

In this chapter, we will answer these questions by first examining whether G1000 participants reflected the local municipalities descriptively and substantively. To this end, we will compare the socio-demographic characteristics and general attitudes and behaviour of G1000 participants with those of the wider local populations in Borne, Enschede and Steenwijkerland. Moreover, to get a better idea of whether the representativeness of the G1000 process has changed throughout the G1000 process, we will also analyse the socio-demographic characteristics and general attitudes and behaviour of G1000 participants over time. Subsequently, we will assess how the

representativeness of the G1000 was perceived by its participants. Did their perception differ greatly from the representativeness we assessed? And do they think that the G1000 participants should be a good reflection of their local community? In the final sub-section of this chapter, we will first assess whether non-random sampling have contributed to or undermined the representativeness of the G1000 by comparing the socio-demographic characteristics and general attitudes and behaviour of the randomly selected G1000 participants with the non-randomly selected participants. Finally, we will assess whether self-selection undermined the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives by investigating how non-participation, no-shows and drop-outs influenced the composition of the G1000 initiatives? We also look at the question of who decided to end their participation in the G1000 initiatives and why?

## 7.1 Were the G1000 initiatives a good reflection of the local populations?

In all three G1000 initiatives, the participants were not a good reflection of the broader local population concerning age and education, and in some cases also gender. Moreover, the descriptive representativeness of the three G1000 populations decreased throughout the participation process.

In Borne and Enschede men and women were equally represented at the large-scale deliberation events at the beginning of the G1000 processes (see Table 7).<sup>1</sup> In Steenwijkerland, however, men (66 %) more

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<sup>1</sup> Chi-square test were used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the G1000 populations and the local populations in terms of gender. In Borne and Enschede, the difference proved to be insignificant ( $p_{\text{Borne}} = .64$ ,  $p_{\text{Enschede}} = .42$ ). In Steenwijkerland, the difference was significant ( $p_{\text{Steenwijkerland}} < .001$ ).

often took part in the deliberating event than women (34 %). These initial patterns did not change over time (see Table A6 in Appendix).<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the participants in all three G1000 initiatives did not reflect the total population in terms of age.<sup>2</sup> G1000 participants between 16 and 34 were under-represented at the first large-scale deliberation event, while participants over 65 were over-represented. In Enschede and Borne the pattern outlined above is maintained over time (Table A6 in Appendix).<sup>3</sup> In Steenwijkerland, however, this pattern for the last G1000 event was somewhat different, as participants aged 35 to 54 were over-represented alongside the older generation.

Participants in all three G1000 initiatives also were on average far higher educated than the general population.<sup>4</sup> In Steenwijkerland and Borne, the proportions of people with a higher level of education in 2017 were 12 and 16 per cent. By contrast, 72 and 65 per cent of the participants who participated in the deliberation event in Steenwijkerland and Borne had a higher level of education. In Enschede, the figures are less extreme, but the difference is still evident. This pattern did not change over time (Table A6 in Appendix).<sup>5</sup>

We finally examined whether ethnic minorities or citizens with foreign roots were also sufficiently present at the large-scale deliberation events of the three G1000 initiatives. According to Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and

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<sup>1</sup> Chi-square test results: *Checked-in*:  $p_{\text{Borne}} = .87$ ,  $p_{\text{Enschede}} = .15$ ,  $p_{\text{Steenwijkerland}} < .001$ ; *Follow-up*:  $p_{\text{Borne}} = .47$ ,  $p_{\text{Enschede}} = .26$ ,  $p_{\text{Steenwijkerland}} < .05$ ; *Final event*:  $p_{\text{Enschede}} = .41$ ,  $p_{\text{Steenwijkerland}} < .001$ .

<sup>2</sup> Chi-square tests were used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the G1000 populations and the local populations in terms of age categories. In all three initiatives, the differences were significant ( $p < .001$ ).

<sup>3</sup> In all three initiatives, the results of the Chi-square tests were significant in all phases of the G1000 process ( $p < .05$ ).

<sup>4</sup> Chi-square tests were used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the G1000 populations and the local populations in terms of educational background. In all three initiatives, the differences were significant ( $p < .001$ ).

<sup>5</sup> In all three initiatives, the results of the Chi-square tests were significant in all phases of the G1000 process ( $p < .05$ ).



Warner (2013), the language most spoken at home is a “good indicator of the integration of ethnic minorities” (p. 234). As Table 7 shows, the proportions of participants in the three initiatives with an ethnic or bilingual<sup>1</sup> background were comparable to the wider local populations.<sup>2</sup> Looking at the proportion of G1000 participants with an ethnic or bilingual background over time, the proportion of Dutch speakers compared to non-Dutch speakers remains a representative sample of the total population (Table A6 in Appendix).<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the participants in the three G1000 initiatives did not reflect their local communities concerning some of the analysed socio-demographic characteristics (mainly age and education level). Moreover, the figures became more skewed over time. One could argue that these observed socio-demographic differences between G1000 participants and the wider population are not necessarily problematic if the G1000 participants are comparable to the wider population in their diversity of interests and attitudes (Fournier, et al., 2011). However, in terms of general attitudes and behaviour of participants, the G1000 participants did not reflect their local communities much better either.

The G1000 participants at the deliberative events were relatively well engaged in politics: all voted in the Second Chamber (national) elections in 2017. Turnout in these three municipalities differed somewhat but was substantially lower than that (see Table 8). Also, after the

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<sup>1</sup> Participants who stated that they speak another language besides Dutch at home were considered “bilingual”. Participants who did not state that they speak Dutch at home were conceptualized as “European” or “Non-European” ethnic minorities. For the population data we have used the following two variables from the European Social Survey data Round 8 (2016): “Most spoken language at home: first mentioned” and “Most spoken language at home: second mentioned”.

<sup>2</sup> A chi-square test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the G1000 populations and the local populations in terms of immigration background. In all three initiatives, the differences were insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>3</sup> In all three initiatives, the results of the Chi-square tests were significant in all phases of the G1000 process ( $p > .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

deliberation event, this pattern remained (see Table A7 in Appendix).<sup>1</sup> G1000 participants in all three initiatives were also more left-wing and progressively oriented than the wider population (see Figure A1 in Appendix): in all three G1000 processes voters of GroenLinks and PvdA were strongly overrepresented, while the voters of CDA, PVV and VVD were underrepresented.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding G1000 participants' engagement in citizens' initiatives, differences can be observed between the cases. In Enschede participants engagement in citizens' initiatives did not differ from the local community, while in Borne and Steenwijkerland, G1000 participants were substantially more active in citizens' initiatives.<sup>3</sup> When looking at the level of engagement in citizens' initiatives over time, it can be observed that the less active G1000 participants dropped out more, while the more active ones stayed on (see Table A7 in Appendix).

Also regarding G1000 participants' level of engagement in non-electoral political activities, differences can be observed between the three studied cases. While the level of engagement of participants in non-electoral political activities was comparable to that of the wider populations in Borne and Enschede, G1000 participants in Steenwijkerland were far more active in non-electoral political activities than citizens in their local municipality (see Table 8).<sup>4</sup> When looking at

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<sup>1</sup> A chi-square test was used to determine whether there was a statistical difference between the G1000 population and the wider population in terms of participation in the elections. For all three initiatives, the tests were significant at all stages of the G1000 process ( $p < .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

<sup>2</sup> A chi-square test was used to determine if there was a difference between the G1000 population and the wider population in terms of participants' voting behaviour. In all three initiatives, the tests were significant at all stages of the G1000 process ( $p < .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

<sup>3</sup> A chi-square test was used to determine if there was a difference between the G1000 population and the wider population in terms of participants' non-political activities. In Enschede, the test result was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ). In Borne and Steenwijkerland, the test results were significant ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

<sup>4</sup> A chi-square test was used to determine if there was a difference between the G1000 population and the wider population in terms of participants' non-political activities. In Borne and Enschede, the test results were insignificant ( $p > .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ). In Steenwijkerland, the test result was significant ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

the level of engagement in non-electoral political activities over time, it can be observed that the less active G1000 participants dropped out more and the more active ones stayed on (see Table A7 in Appendix).

**Table 7.** Differences between the G1000 population and the local population in terms of socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in %.

	G1000 pop. <sup>1</sup>	Pop. Diff. <sup>2</sup>	G1000 pop.	Pop. Diff.	G1000 pop.	Pop. Diff.
<b>Gender (in %)</b>						
Male	52	+2	53	+2	66	+16
Female	48	-2	47	-2	34	-16
<b>Age (in %)</b>						
16-24	5	-6	6	-11	5	-7
25-34	3	-10	11	-6	8	-4
35-54	29	-4	38	+6	30	-2
55-64	21	+4	19	+5	24	+6
65-84	41	+18	25	+7	33	+10
85 +	1	-2	1	-1	0	-3
<b>Education (in %)</b>						
Secondary education (havo, mavo, vmbo)	18	-30	25	-6	15	-32
Senior secondary vocational education (mbo)	14	-22	16	-21	16	-25
<b>Non tertiary education</b>	32	-52	40	-28	29	-59
Higher professional education (hbo)	43	+30	39	+19	51	+40
Academic higher education (wo)	26	+23	20	+8	20	+19
<b>Tertiary education</b>	68	+52	60	+28	71	+69
<b>Language spoken at home (in %)</b>						
Dutch	89	-2	92	+1	96	+5
Dutch, bilingual	8	+2	7	+1	4	-2
European	0	-1	0	-1	0	-1
Non-European	3	+2	0	-1	0	-1

<sup>1</sup> Composition of the participants is measured at the deliberation events.

<sup>2</sup> Difference between the G1000 population and the local population in %.

A similar pattern can be found when looking at G1000 participants' civic engagement level in their local communities. The participants at the deliberation event in Steenwijkerland were much more active in civic activities in their local communities, whereas the participants in Borne and Enschede did in this respect not differ from the wider population (see Table 8)<sup>1</sup>. When looking at the level of civic activity over time it can be observed that active participants stayed on, others dropped out (see Table A7 in Appendix).

Finally, G1000 participants in G1000 initiatives showed far more trust in the local government than their fellow citizens in the wider population (see Table 8).<sup>2</sup> When looking at the level of trust over time it can be observed that the G1000 participants who showed less trust dropped out more, while the participants with more trust stayed on (see Table A7 in Appendix).

Summarizing, we can conclude that participants did not reflect their local communities very well regarding their attitudes and behaviour. The participants were generally more left-wing and progressive than the general population and had more trust in the local government. They were also more involved in citizens' initiatives and national elections than the general population, but in some cases, they reflected the general population in terms of their participation in non-electoral political activities and civic activities. However, about participants' attitudes and behaviour, figures have become more skewed over time, as the less active participants dropped out over time, while the more active ones stayed on.

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<sup>1</sup> A chi-square test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the G1000 population and the wider population in terms of participants' non-political activities. In Borne and Enschede, the tests were insignificant ( $p > .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ). In Steenwijkerland, the test was significant ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

<sup>2</sup> In all three initiatives, the results of the Chi-square tests were significant ( $p > .05$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ).

**Table 8.** Differences between the G1000 population and the local population in terms of general attitudes and behaviour of the participants.

	Borne		Enschede		Steenwijkerland	
	G1000 pop. <sup>1</sup>	Pop. Diff. <sup>2</sup>	G1000 pop.	Pop. Diff.	G1000 pop.	Pop. Diff.
<b>National election participation (in %)</b>						
Yes	100	+ 14	92	+ 14	97	+ 11
No	0	- 14	8	- 14	3	- 11
<b>Member of a citizen initiative (in %)</b>						
Yes	32	+ 26 <sup>3</sup>	13	+ 7 <sup>1</sup>	24	+ 18 <sup>71</sup>
No	68	- 26 <sup>71</sup>	87	- 7 <sup>1</sup>	76	- 18 <sup>71</sup>
<b>Political activity (in %)</b>						
Active	7	- 9 <sup>4</sup>	12	- 4 <sup>70</sup>	33	+ 17 <sup>70</sup>
Non-active	93	+ 9 <sup>70</sup>	88	+ 4 <sup>70</sup>	67	- 17 <sup>70</sup>
<b>Civic activity (in %)</b>						
Active	57	+ 12 <sup>5</sup>	40	- 5 <sup>72</sup>	68	+ 23 <sup>72</sup>
Non-active	43	- 12 <sup>72</sup>	60	+ 5 <sup>72</sup>	32	- 23 <sup>72</sup>
<b>Trust in local government (in %)</b>						
Trust	94	- 40	78	- 24	87	- 33
No-trust	6	+ 40	22	+ 24	13	+ 33

<sup>1</sup> Composition of the participants is measured at the deliberation events.

<sup>2</sup> Difference between the G1000 population and the local population in %.

<sup>3</sup> To get an indication of the engagement level of citizens in citizens initiatives 2017 in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland, we used population data (measured at local level) provided by Van der Meer and Van der Kolk (2016, p. 32) and Jansen and Denters (2019, p. 37). Based on the data provided for 2016 and 2019, we have calculated the average value for 2017. It should be noted that the average value used is only indicative, as no exact data were available for the three municipalities 2017.

<sup>4</sup> To get an indication of the level of political engagement of citizens in 2017 in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland, we used population data (measured at local level) provided by Van der Meer and Van der Kolk (2016, p. 32) and Jansen and Denters (2019, p. 37). Based on the data provided for 2016 and 2019, we have calculated the average value for 2017. It should be noted that the average value used is only indicative, as no exact data were available for the three municipalities 2017.

<sup>5</sup> To get an indication of the level of civic engagement of citizens in 2017 in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland, we used population data (measured at national level) provided by Van Houwelingen and Dekker (2017, p. 234) for the years 2016 and 2018. Van Houwelingen and Dekker (2017) used data collected by the two Dutch

## 7.2 How was the representative quality of the G1000 perceived by the G1000 participants and did they consider it important?

The results in the previous chapter have shown that the G1000 participants in the three G1000 initiatives were not a good reflection of the local population concerning most of the socio-demographic characteristics and general attitudes and behavioural traits we investigated. From a normative perspective, this lack of representativeness is problematic as the legitimacy of the G1000 processes, and their outcomes depends on them being representative. In what follows we are interested in whether this lack of representation went unnoticed by the participants, and whether the perception of the participants differed much from the actual representativeness of the G1000 initiatives.

To this end, the G1000 participants were asked to assess the representativeness of the G1000 by judging its representativeness on a scale from 1-10 (1 = absolutely no reflection; 10 = a very good reflection). As Table 9 shows, overall, participants assessed the representativeness of the G1000 participants with an average score of 5.9 after the large-scale deliberations. In this case, no differences could be found between the three studied cases.<sup>1</sup> In addition, participants' assessment of the representativeness of the G1000 did not change over time. Also after the end of the G1000 trajectory, participants rated the representativeness of the G1000 with an average score of 6.<sup>2</sup> It can therefore be concluded that the G1000 participants assessed the

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<sup>1</sup> An ANOVA test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the three cases in terms of the perceived representativeness of the G1000 participants after the deliberation event. The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>2</sup> A t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistical difference in the participants' perception of the G1000 representativeness after the deliberation (S2Q6) and at the end of the G1000 (S3Q32). The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

representativeness of the G1000 with a score of six out of ten, which means that it is sufficient, but could have been better.

When asked what could be improved at the G1000 in the future, some participants indicated that the composition of G1000 participants was not representative of the local population. While some participants were mainly dissatisfied with the low number of participants, others noted that the composition of participants in the Citizens' Summits was not representative of their local community in terms of socio-economic characteristics. For all three initiatives, some participants criticised that the younger generation was not well represented and that the average age of participants was too high. In addition, a participant from Steenwijkerland criticised that too many men were present at the Citizens' Summit. From this, we can conclude that the participants assessed the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives quite well, as their statements in this respect are very much in line with our observations, presented in the previous section.

**Table 9.** Perception of the G1000 representativeness.

	Borne	Enschede	Steenwijkerland	Overall
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
<b>Perceived representativeness after deliberation events</b> ( $n_{\text{overall}} = 111$ ) <sup>1</sup>	6.0 (1.94)	6.0 (2.25)	5.5 (2.23)	5.9 (2.19)
<b>Perceived representativeness after the end of the G1000 trajectory</b> ( $n_{\text{overall}} = 74$ ) <sup>2</sup>	5.5 (2.44)	6.1 (2.31)	4.6 (2.68)	5.6 (2.49)

<sup>1</sup> Survey 2; question: "Do you think that the G1000 was a good reflection of the local population in Enschede, Steenwijkerland or Borne?"; The answer scale ranged from 1-10 (1 = no good reflection, 10 = a very good reflection).

<sup>2</sup> Survey 4; question: "Do you think that the G1000 was a good reflection of the local population in Enschede, Steenwijkerland or Borne?"; The answer scale ranged from 1-10 (1 = no good reflection, 10 = a very good reflection).



From the results above we can conclude that the lack of descriptive representativeness of the three G1000 initiatives did not go unnoticed by the participants and that their perception did not differ much from the actual representativeness of the G1000 initiatives. The fact that participants were aware of the representativeness of the G1000 process is not that surprising as participants in all three G1000 initiatives rated the importance as fairly high with an average score of 8.8 (out of 10) before the large-scale deliberation event (see Table 10). However, opinions on this subject differed significantly in the municipalities studied.<sup>1</sup> Participants in Enschede rated the importance of representativeness higher (9.1 out of 10) than participants in Borne and Steenwijkerland (8.7 and 8.2 out of 10).

**Table 10.** Perceived importance of G1000 representativeness.

	Borne	Enschede	Steen- wijkerland	Overall
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
<b>Importance of representativeness</b> ( $n_{\text{overall}} = 146$ ) <sup>2</sup>	8.7 (0.86)	9.1 (1.39)	8.2 (1.38)	8.8 (1.34)

<sup>1</sup> An ANOVA test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the three cases in terms of the estimated importance of the representativity of the G1000. The differences were significant ( $p < .001$ ).

<sup>2</sup> Survey 1; question: "How important is it to you that the G1000 is a good reflection of the local population of Enschede, Steenwijkerland or Borne?"; The answer scale ranged from 1-10 (1 = not important at all, 10 = very important).

## 7.3 Which factors have affected the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives?

In all three G1000 initiatives, the G1000 populations were not a good reflection of their local communities (see section 7.1), which was also perceived as such by the participants (see section 7.2). In the following, we will examine the factors that may have undermined the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives.

### 7.3.1 Did non-random sampling influence the representativeness of the G1000 processes?

According to the G1000 philosophy, a ‘true representation’ of a local community is achieved when, in addition to the 60 per cent of randomly selected citizens, 10 % employers/professionals, 10 % civil servants, 10 % politicians and 10 % free thinkers are present at the large-scale deliberation event (see Van Dijk, 2020). To achieve this ideal of a whole system, organisers chose to recruit officials, politicians, and professionals/employers on the invitation. Moreover, to give not-selected citizens interested in the G1000 process an opportunity to participate, the organisers deliberately allowed self-selection by giving these people the opportunity to participate as “free thinkers”. Although this method was chosen to maximise the diversity of participants, Table 11 shows that this ideal of a “true representation” of the local community has not been achieved in any of the large-scale deliberation events. In particular, the group of local politicians and professionals/employers were not sufficiently present following the G1000 objective.

**Table 11.** The realisation of the G1000 ideal at the Citizens' Summits.

<b>Role (in %)</b>	<b>G1000 ideal</b>	<b>Borne</b> (n = 152)	<b>Enschede</b> (n = 291)	<b>Steenwijkerland</b> (n = 257)
Citizens	60	87	77	70
Free-thinkers	10	5	9	11
Officials	10	4	9	9
Politicians	10	3	2	6
Professionals/ employers	10	1	4	4
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100

*Source:* G1000 check-in data; variable: role.

A side-effect of the use of targeted recruitment and self-selection is, however, that in all three initiatives a considerable number of non-randomly selected citizens were present at the deliberation events. At the final events in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, the proportion of participants who were not randomly selected even rose to 33 per cent in Enschede and 41 per cent in Steenwijkerland. As previously discussed in chapter 4, mini-publics that use random selection methods are considered to be more inclusive than mini-publics that are open to all citizens who want to participate (e.g., participatory budgeting, community policing; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meetings). This raises the question of whether the combination of different selection methods (in this case simple random sampling and the use of self-selection and targeted recruitment methods) had an impact on the diversity among participants in the large-scale deliberation events of the three G1000 initiatives.

However, comparing the socio-demographic characteristics of the groups of randomly and non-randomly selected citizens who took part in the deliberation events with those of the total population, it can be seen (see Table 12) that the randomly selected citizens did not reflect the general population noticeably better in terms of gender, age, and

education than the group consisting only of non-randomly selected citizens. The above pattern remains (see section 7.1), even in the randomly selected samples younger people (16-34 years) were under-represented and older people (65-84 years) over-represented. Moreover, the randomly selected samples also included far more highly educated people than the actual population. In terms of gender, the random sample in Steenwijkerland was even less representative than the non-random sample.

Even when looking at the attitudes and behaviour of the randomly selected citizens (see Table 13 and Figure A2 in the appendix), the patterns outlined above remain the same: the randomly selected participants were more left-wing and progressive than the wider population and showed more trust in the local government. Moreover, the randomly selected participants were also more involved in citizens' initiatives and national elections than the general population but reflected the general population in terms of their participation in non-electoral political activities and civic activities. Consequently, we can conclude that the observed differences between G1000 participants and the general population (see section 7.1) were not a consequence of the used non-random selection methods only. Although the non-random selection method certainly did not contribute to the descriptive and substantive representativeness of the G1000 samples, we can conclude that the sample bias occurred before the start of the G1000 initiatives.

**Table 12.** Difference between the local population and the randomly (RS), non-randomly (NRS) selected participants in terms of socio-demographic characteristics in %.\*

	Borne		Enschede		Steenwijkerland				
	Pop.	Pop. Diff. (RS) <sup>1</sup>	Pop. Diff. (NRS) <sup>2</sup>	Pop.	Pop. Diff. (RS)	Pop. Diff. (NRS)			
<b>Gender (in %)</b>									
Male	50	+4	-6	51	0	+2	50	+16	+8
Female	50	-4	+6	49	0	-2	50	-16	-8
<b>Age (in %)</b>									
16-24	11	-7	-6	17	-11	-11	12	-8	-7
25-34	13	-10	-10	17	-6	-6	12	-4	-4
35-54	33	-8	-4	32	-1	+6	32	-7	-2
55-64	17	+5	+4	14	+8	+5	18	+3	+6
65-84	23	+22	+18	18	+12	+7	23	+19	+10
85 +	3	-2	-2	2	-1	-1	3	-3	-3
<b>Education (in %)</b>									
Non-tertiary education	84	-47	-52	68	-22	-28	88	-53	-59
Tertiary education	16	+47	+52	32	+22	+28	12	+53	+59
<b>Language spoken at home (in %)</b>									
Dutch	91	-3	0	91	0	+4	91	+5	+4
Dutch, bilingual	6	-3	+3	6	+2	-1	6	-2	-1
European	1	+1	-1	1	0	-1	1	-1	-1
Non-European	1	+3	-1	1	0	-1	1	-1	-1

<sup>1</sup> Difference between the local population and the group of randomly selected participants in %.

<sup>2</sup> Difference between the local population and the group of not randomly selected participants in %.

\* Composition of the randomly (RS), non-randomly (NRS) selected participants is measured at the deliberation events.

**Table 13.** Difference between the local population and the randomly (RS), non-randomly (NRS) selected participants in terms of general attitudes and behaviour in %.<sup>1</sup>

	Pop.	Pop. Diff. (RS) <sup>2</sup>	Pop. Diff. (NRS) <sup>3</sup>
<b>National election participation (in %)</b>			
Yes	82	+ 13	+ 14
No	18	- 13	- 14
<b>Political activity (in %)</b>			
Active	16 <sup>4</sup>	- 5	+ 20
Non-active	84 <sup>85</sup>	+ 5	- 20
<b>Member of a citizen initiative (in %)</b>			
Yes	6 <sup>5</sup>	+ 13	+ 14
No	94 <sup>86</sup>	- 13	- 14
<b>Civic activity (in %)</b>			
Active	45 <sup>6</sup>	- 1	+19
Non-active	55 <sup>87</sup>	+ 1	- 19
<b>Trust in local government (in %)</b>			
Trust	53	+ 26	+ 41
No-trust	47	- 26	- 41

<sup>1</sup> Composition of the randomly (RS), non-randomly (NRS) selected participants is measured at the deliberation events.

<sup>2</sup> Difference between the local population and the group of randomly selected participants in %.

<sup>3</sup> Difference between the local population and the group of not randomly selected participants in %.

<sup>4</sup> To get an indication of the level of political engagement of citizens in 2017 in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland, we used population data (measured at local level) provided by Van der Meer and Van der Kolk (2016, p. 32) and Jansen and Denters (2019, p. 37). Based on the data provided for 2016 and 2019, we have calculated the average value for 2017. It should be noted that the average value used is only indicative, as no exact data were available for the three municipalities 2017.

<sup>5</sup> To get an indication of the engagement level of citizens in citizens initiatives 2017 in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland, we used population data (measured at local level) provided by Van der Meer and Van der Kolk (2016, p. 32) and Jansen and Denters (2019, p. 37). Based on the data provided for 2016 and 2019, we have calculated the average value for 2017. It should be noted that the average value used is only indicative, as no exact data were available for the three municipalities 2017.

<sup>6</sup> To get an indication of the level of civic engagement of citizens in 2017 in Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland, we used population data (measured at national level) provided by Van Houwelingen and Dekker (2017, p. 234) for the years 2016 and 2018. Van Houwelingen and Dekker (2017) used data collected by the two Dutch organisations 'Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau' and the 'Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek'. Based on the data provided for 2016 and 2019, we have calculated the average value for 2017. It should be noted that the average value used is only indicative, as no exact data were available for the three municipalities 2017.

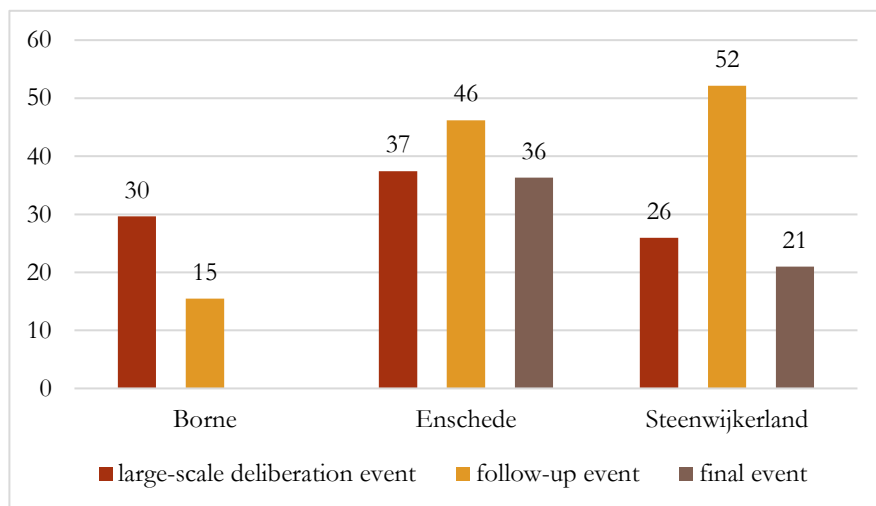
### 7.3.2 How did self-selection influence the representativeness of the G1000 processes?

We know from research on mini-publics that their representativeness can be undermined by self-selection when randomly selected participants decide not to participate in a mini-public (see chapter 4). Self-selection also undermined the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives, since only a small number of those invited attended the first large-scale deliberation event. Of the 7.000 randomly selected citizens in Borne, only 132 people chose to participate in the deliberation event, corresponding to a participation rate of 1.9 per cent. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, the participation rates of the randomly selected citizens were similarly low (2.2 per cent and 1.8 per cent respectively). Of the 10.000 randomly selected citizens, 223 people attended the first deliberation event in Enschede and 179 people in Steenwijkerland. The participation rates in all three G1000 initiatives were therefore highly influenced by the fact that the vast majority of those invited decided not to participate in the initial large-scale deliberation event (non-participation).

In addition to the problem of non-participation, the participation rates in all three initiatives were also affected by no-shows (see Figure 5 for an overview). Of those who registered for the initial deliberation event, on average 32 per cent did not show up at the initial deliberation event. While in Borne and Steenwijkerland 30 per cent and 26 per cent of registered participants respectively did not turn up for the first deliberative meeting, the percentage of no-shows in Enschede was about 37 per cent. Also at the follow-up events, no-shows led to lower participation rates. While in Enschede and Steenwijkerland about half of the registered participants did not show up for the follow-up event, the no-show rate in Borne was significantly lower, at 15 per cent. At the last G1000 event, no-show rates in Enschede and Steenwijkerland

differed a lot. While in Steenwijkerland the no-show rate was 21 per cent, in Enschede it was 36 per cent.

**Figure 5.** No-show rate (in %) throughout the three G1000 processes.



*Source:* G1000 registration data and check-in data.

In addition to no-shows, the initial number of participants also decreased significantly after the first deliberation event due to dropouts. As can be seen in Figure 6, on average only three out of 10 participants decided to participate at the follow-up event, although this number varied between the three initiatives. While in Borne, 39 per cent of the participants decided to take part in the follow-up event, this percentage was lower in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, with 27 and 26 per cent respectively.

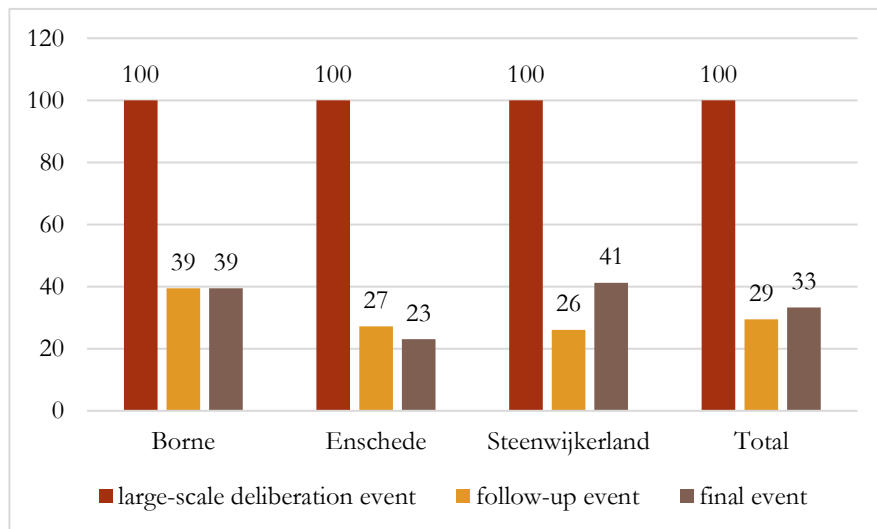
As for the closing event, on average 33 per cent of those who attended the deliberative event also participated in the final event. In Borne, about the same percentage of participants took part in the closing event (39 per cent<sup>1</sup>). In Enschede, it was a few per cent less with 23 per cent

<sup>1</sup> Source: Remmers, T. (n.d.). Burgertop Borne: korte rapportage – hoe ging het, wat kwam er uit en hoe staat het er nu voor. Retrieved 16, April, 2021, from: <https://g1000.nu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rapportage-Burgertop-Borne.pdf>.



and in Steenwijkerland it was significantly more with 41 per cent. From this, you could conclude that in the period after the closing event, participation percentages on average did not further decline because of drop-outs. However, when we compare the composition of the participants in the final events with those in the deliberative events, it appears that both the groups of randomly selected citizens as well as the groups of non-randomly selected citizens (free-thinkers) contained the majority of drop-outs (see Table 14).<sup>1</sup> In Enschede, for instance, only 2 of the 10 randomly selected citizens who took part in the deliberations were also present at the final event, which translates into a drop-out rate of 80 per cent for the group of randomly selected citizens in Enschede. The drop-out rate for citizens who were not randomly selected (free-thinkers) was even higher at 84 per cent. Steenwijkerland too shows a similar picture, albeit less extreme. While 65 per cent of the randomly

**Figure 6.** Participation in the G1000 initiatives over time (in %).



Source: G1000 check-in data.

<sup>1</sup> Detailed data on the composition of the participants at the final event were not available for Borne as this event was not organized by G1000.nu.

selected group of citizens did not attend the closing event, this was 62 per cent among the non-randomly selected citizens. From this, we can conclude that the group of citizens (either randomly or not randomly selected) diminished throughout the G1000 trajectories in Enschede and Steenwijkerland due to drop-outs.

**Table 14.** Dropout rate per participation group at the final events in Enschede and Steenwijkerland.

	Enschede			Steenwijkerland		
	DE (in counts)	FE (in counts)	drop-out (in %)	DE (in counts)	FE (in counts)	drop-out (in %)
<b>Citizens</b>	223	45	<b>80</b>	179	63	<b>65</b>
<b>Free-thinkers</b>	25	4	<b>84</b>	29	11	<b>62</b>
<b>Officials</b>	25	10	<b>60</b>	23	15	<b>35</b>
<b>Politicians</b>	5	3	<b>40</b>	16	13	<b>19</b>
<b>Professionals /Employers</b>	13	5	<b>62</b>	10	4	<b>60</b>
<b>Total participants</b>	291	67	<b>77</b>	257	106	<b>59</b>

*Source:* G1000 check-in data.

In sum, we can conclude that the representativeness of the G1000 was heavily undermined by the problem of self-selection. Not only did many selected citizens decide not to participate, but also the number of participants in all three initiatives during the G1000 process decreased significantly due to no-shows and drop-outs. Our data showed that most attrition took place directly after the large-scale deliberation event. This moment is perhaps not that surprising, as the participants were only invited to participate in the follow-up process at the end of the large-scale deliberation meeting. Also, during the approximately 5 month-long following-up trajectory both randomly and not-randomly selected citizens dropped out of the participation process. In the following, we will take a closer look at the next section on the problem of drop-outs.

### 7.3.3 Who decided to stop participating in the G1000 initiatives and why?

As explained in chapter 4, the problem of dropouts has not been discussed in detail in the literature on mini-publics so far. Moreover, we showed in the previous section that only three out of 10 participants who participated at the initial event also decided to attend the final G1000 events. Therefore, we will now focus on the question of who stopped participating in the G1000 initiatives and why.

Looking at the socio-demographic characteristics as well as the general attitudes and behaviour of the persons who left the G1000 process (see Table 15), no clear pattern could be established for the persons who left the G1000 process. Most of the factors examined were not related to a participant's decision to leave the G1000 process.<sup>38</sup> Although voting behaviour and membership in citizens' initiatives were linked to a participant's decision to leave the G1000 process, no clear pattern could be identified.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Several chi-square tests were used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the two groups (dropped out and G1000 population) in terms of gender, age, electoral and non-electoral political participation, civic participation, and trust. All tests were insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>39</sup> Two chi-square tests were used to determine if there was a statistical difference between the two groups (dropped out and G1000 population) in terms of voting behaviour and membership of a citizens' initiative (yes/no). The difference proved to be significant ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 15.** Comparison of the participants who left the G1000 with the G1000 population.

	G1000 pop.	dropped out
<b>Gender (in %)</b>		
Male	56	43
Female	44	57
<b>Age (in %)</b>		
16-24	6	1
25-34	8	7
35-54	36	44
55-64	24	27
65-84	27	20
85 +	0	0
<b>Education (in %)</b>		
Non-tertiary education	36	34
Tertiary education	64	66
<b>National election participation (in %)</b>		
Yes	96	96
No	4	4
<b>Political activity in local municipality (in %)</b>		
Active	16	12
Non-active	84	88
<b>Member of a citizen initiative (in %)</b>		
Yes	19	7
No	81	93
<b>Civic activity in local municipality (in %)</b>		
Active	49	58
Non-active	51	52
<b>Trust in local government (in %)</b>		
Trust	17	18
No-trust	83	82

Since the decision of participants to leave the G1000 process seems to be less related to their socio-demographic characteristics and their general attitudes and behavioural traits, in the following we will focus on the question of why people have left the G1000 process. To answer this question, we have analysed the reasons why participants left the trajectory (see also Figure 7 for an overview):

1. **Lack of time:** Almost 50 per cent of the people who left the G1000 reported that the main reason was time. Some participants indicated that they were hindered from attending one or more G1000 events, e.g., due to work, family circumstances, leave, national holidays or other unforeseen obligations/circumstances. However, others indicated that they were unable to attend the G1000 events because they felt that the G1000 event was too time-consuming (too many and long working group meetings/G1000 activities). A few participants left the G1000 trajectory because other things were given higher priority or because they simply forgot to attend the follow-up meetings.
2. **Lack of process-related transparency:** Ten per cent of the participants withdrew from the G1000 trajectory because of a perceived lack of process-related transparency. Several participants stated that they were not aware of the fact that there was an opportunity to register for follow-up events at the citizens' summit. Moreover, some participants stated that they had unintentionally left the G1000 programme because they had not received any further information from the G1000 organisation about follow-up events. In addition, participants reported that they had no clear idea of when future events would take place and what was expected of them as tasks, as no clear and transparent structure of the participation process was communicated from the outset.
3. **Lack of deliberation quality:** Nine per cent of the participants indicated that they stopped participating because they had made bad experiences during the conversations at the Citizens' Summit. Some participants reported that the deliberation became too exhausting because some interlocutors were not willing to listen to each other. Others indicated that they missed equality among deliberators because either their opinion was not taken seriously, or they felt not included or heard in the table conversations. In this vein, some participants indicated that group conversations were directed by a few people and that these people imposed their opinion on the other deliberation partners instead. Moreover, whereas some people

would have liked to talk more about concrete ideas in a more professional way, others experienced the table conversations as too technical or even difficult.

4. **Health issues:** Several participants were hindered from attending one or more G1000 events because of health issues or health problems of relatives (7 per cent).
5. **Lack of trust:** Some people left the G1000 process because of a lack of trust in local authorities and/or the successful outcome of the participation process (6 per cent). While some stated that they felt that the citizens' summit was led by the municipality to achieve a predetermined outcome, others stated that they were not convinced that the G1000 would lead to a feasible result.
6. **No eligibility to participate:** Some participants left the G1000 trajectory because they moved to another municipality (6 per cent). Some participants left the G1000 route after the citizens' summit because they had participated in the citizens' summit with a role other than that of 'citizen' (e.g., civil servants, observer/press).
7. **Lack of motivation:** Five per cent of the participants left the participation process due to a lack of motivation. Some participants stated that the given topic was not interesting enough for them (or for people of their age) or that they were more interested in the deliberations than in the political decision-making process. Furthermore, a view people indicated that they have become demotivated throughout the process.
8. **Too demanding:** For some participants, the participation process became too demanding (4 per cent). Some participants stated that they left the G1000 process after the large-scale consultation event because they experienced the deliberation event as too long and strenuous. In addition, some participants left the participation process at a later stage because it became too strenuous due to the many sessions and the increasing complexity.
9. **Lack of outcomes legitimacy:** Two per cent of the participants left the G1000 process because they were not satisfied with the outcomes of the deliberation process and the way these outcomes

were selected. Some participants indicated that they left after the Citizens' Summit the G1000 trajectory because their ideas were not represented in the chosen outcomes. Moreover, while some indicated that they were dissatisfied with how the decision-making process took place, others indicated that they would rather leave the decision making to the professionals.

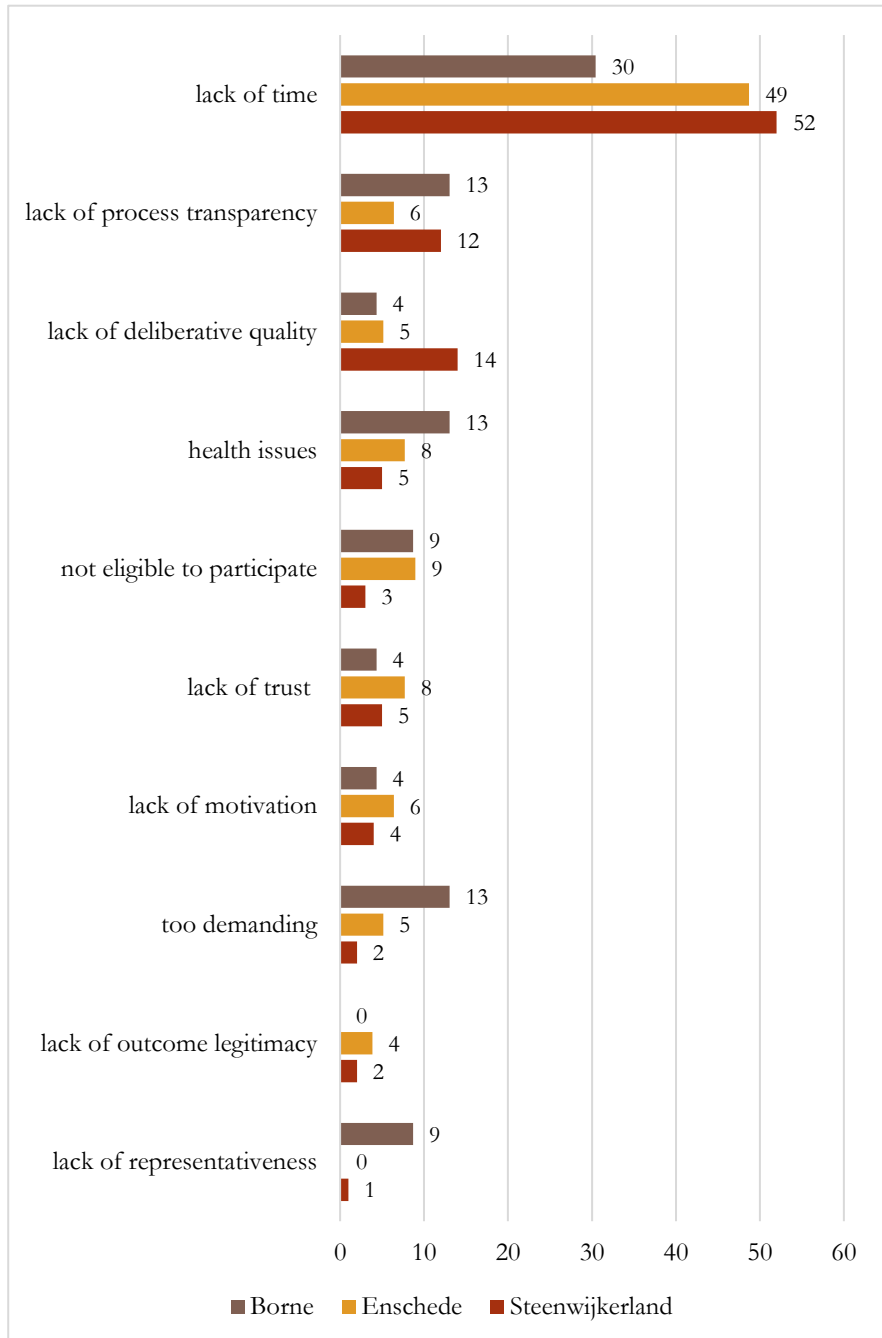
- 10. Lack of representativeness:** One per cent of the participants who left the participation process because they considered the composition of the participants at the citizens' summit to be "by no means representative of [their] municipality" (3:1, D3: S3Q17).

As shown in Figure 7<sup>1</sup>, in all three initiatives, time was the most frequently cited reason for participants to leave the G1000 process in all three G1000 initiatives. For the other reasons mentioned, differences can be observed between the three initiatives. In Borne and Steenwijkerland more people left the G1000 process because of a lack of process transparency than in Enschede. In Steenwijkerland considerably more people left the G1000 process due to a lack of deliberation quality than in the other two initiatives. In Enschede, a perceived lack of trust in the municipality and the G1000 organisation was a more frequently mentioned reason than in the other two initiatives. In Borne, a few people left after the citizens' summit because they found it too demanding and not representative enough. In contrast, in Enschede, a lack of representativeness was not mentioned as a reason for leaving the G1000 process. Whereas in Enschede and Steenwijkerland it was indicated that they had left because of a perceived lack of outcome legitimacy, this point was not mentioned in Borne.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Survey 2; questions: "Can you briefly state the reason for not participating in the G1000 Borne, Enschede, and Steenwijkerland?"; "You have indicated that you have not signed up for the follow-up trajectory. Can you explain why?" and Survey 4; question: "Why did you stop participating in the G1000?".

**Figure 7.** Reason for leaving the G1000 trajectory in Borne, Enschede, Steenwijkerland in % (n = 201).





In summary, there were several reasons why participants left the G1000 process. The main reason was a lack of time. Looking at other mini-public designs (see chapter 3, Table 2), it is noticeable that the G1000, with a total of approximately 180 days (half a year), by far exceeds the duration of other mini-public designs. Participating in the G1000 initiatives thus required a large personal investment from the participants. It is therefore not surprising that most people who left the participation process did so because they did not have the necessary resources (such as time) to participate. Apart from the fact that many people *could not* participate for such a long period of time, some were simply *unable to* do so because of health problems, other commitments at home/work or simply because the whole process became too strenuous. In addition, people left because they decided they *no longer wanted to* participate. People gave various reasons. Some simply lacked motivation, while others stated that they could no longer identify with the results or the way the results were selected. Still others found the representativeness of the G1000 and its results insufficient.

Interestingly, people also dropped out because they felt they were *not asked to* participate in the follow-up process or because they were *not responded to*. With regard to the former, some participants dropped out because they did not know that they could sign up for a follow-up trajectory after the Citizens' Summits, others dropped out because they felt they were no longer eligible to participate (e.g. moved to another city or no longer participated in the role of 'citizen'). Regarding the latter, people left because they did not feel heard during the table conversations during the Citizens' Summit or because they did not believe in the successful outcome of the participation process (due to

lack of trust in the local government<sup>1</sup> or bad experiences during the table conversations).

## 7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have shown that despite the organisers' efforts to bring together a representative group of people from their local communities, there were still substantial differences between the G1000 participants and the wider population. In all three G1000 initiatives, participants were older and far better educated than the general population. G1000 participants were also more actively involved in citizens' initiatives and national elections. Finally, G1000 participants were on average more left-wing and progressive and showed more confidence in their local authorities than the population in general.

These observed differences between the G1000 participants and the general population are not surprising. Similar results were found in studies of other mini-public designs, such as deliberative polls and citizens' assemblies (see Fishkin, 2011; Fournier, et al., 2011). Yet, the questions remain of why this has happened? Contrary to what one may have suspected, the observed differences between G1000 participants and the general population were not a consequence of the used non-random selection methods only. The bias occurred before the start of the G1000 processes. The G1000 initiatives mainly attracted those people who were already more politically engaged in their local community and who had more confidence in their local government. From the literature on political participation we know that the two factors 'trust' and 'degree of engagement' are subjective motivators for

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<sup>1</sup> Although the G1000 participants overall show more trust in local government than the citizens in the local community (see Section 7.1), lack of trust was also mentioned as a reason for leaving the G1000 process. As shown in section 7.1 (see Table 8), participants in Enschede show a lower level of trust in local government than participants in the other two initiatives. This might explain why a perceived lack of trust in the municipality and the G1000 organisation was more mentioned as a reason in Enschede than in the other two initiatives.

participation (Verba et al., 1995; see also Chapter 4, section 4.1.2). Therefore, we can conclude that the G1000 initiatives mainly attracted citizens who were able to participate because they had the necessary resources, i.e. skills (high educational level) and time (older people), and subjective motivation (high level of trust and political involvement) to do so.

Our results also show that the inclusiveness of all three G1000 initiatives was undermined by the problems of non-participation and no-shows. In addition, from the beginning to the end of the G1000 participation process, the number of participants decreased significantly due to dropouts in the three initiatives. The main reason for dropout was lack of time. About half of the people who dropped out argued that the G1000 process was too time consuming. From this we can conclude that although some participants would have wanted to participate in the whole G1000 process, participation in the G1000 initiatives (which lasted about six-months) was for some participants a too large personal investment. In addition to other reasons mentioned that prevented participants from further participation (e.g. health problems; other commitments), it is also interesting to note that several people mentioned reasons related to the quality of the deliberation and decision-making process that made them drop out (e.g., lack of quality of deliberation, process transparency, legitimacy of results). We will look at this issue in more detail in the next chapter. As for the representative quality, although the participants considered the representativeness of the G1000 process to be very important, lack of representativeness was not a reason that led many people to abandon the G1000 process. Overall, participants noted that the group of participants did not represent the total population, but for most of them, the representativeness of the G1000 initiative was sufficient. A perceived lack of representativeness caused only a small group of people to leave the participatory process.

So, did the G1000 initiatives fulfil their first underlying ideal by involving a representative group of people in the participation process? Since the legitimacy of the G1000 initiatives depends on them being representative, in several respects they have not achieved their intended goal. However, since even the randomly selected sample of people was also not more successful in this respect, it may be doubted whether a more diverse and thus inclusive microcosm of the affected population could have been achieved at all using a purely random sampling method. Since both samples suffered equally from the problem of self-selection, a more representative sample could only be achieved by making participation mandatory or by offering more incentives to participate (e.g., by increasing the sense of importance or by offering financial incentives to participate).



# Chapter 8



# 8 THE QUALITY OF DELIBERATION AND DECISION- MAKING

One design principle that underlies generally all mini-publics is equality. Deliberative democrats assert that to produce high-quality deliberation and decisions, all stakeholders should have an equal say, not only in deliberations but also in the decision-making processes. Thus, the deliberation itself should be inclusive, in that the voices of all people that are affected by the decision-making process should be recognized as equal during the deliberation (see chapter 3 and 4). The same applies to the decision-making process in the deliberative fora: all participants should have an equal voice in the decision taken (see chapter 2).

To warrant that decisions are taken fairly, decision-making processes in a mini-public must be transparent: all participants must be fully aware of the objectives of the participatory process, the course of events and the conditions under which the results must be achieved. Moreover, to reach more informed and considered outcomes, all participants should have equal access to relevant information on the content and the course of the process before, during and after the participatory process. Mini-publics therefore usually contain some kind of learning element which allows participants to better understand the subject in question so that they can make more informed decisions in the end. To be able to make

decisions that are reasonably justified to those who are bound by them, or are affected by them, the objectives, processes, and results of mini-publics should be communicated to the broader public. According to deliberative theory, the legitimacy of a mini-public outcome is therefore underpinned by the principle of justification (Young, 2002; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996, 2009; see chapter 2).

As outlined in chapter 4, little is yet known about the internal dynamics of mini-publics; how and whether they provide equal opportunities for participants to express themselves, respond and learn during the deliberation and decision-making processes. In this chapter, we examine the extent to which the organisers of the G1000 succeeded in establishing a high quality of deliberation and decision-making process.

In the first part of this chapter, we will focus on the measures the G1000 organisers took to give participants equal rights, skills, and opportunities to participate in the deliberation and decision-making processes of the three G1000 initiatives. To this end, we investigate how high quality of deliberation and decision-making was ensured by the G1000 organisers and how decisions were reached in the G1000 processes. In our analysis we focus on the extent to which the three G1000 initiatives were designed to implement the four process criteria identified in chapter 4: (1) structured deliberation, (2) learning opportunities, (3) transparent procedures and decision-making processes, and (4) popular control (see Section 4.2.2).

In the second part of this chapter, we focus on participants' perceptions of deliberation and decision-making processes. To this end, we will examine the extent to which participants experienced the deliberation and decision-making processes as (1) equal, (2) respectful, (3) transparent and (4) fair (see section 4.2.2 for more information on the analytical framework used). In the third and final part of this chapter, we will focus on the factors that influenced the participants' overall assessment of the G1000 and the legitimacy of its results.



## 8.1 How was a high quality of deliberation and decision-making ensured by the organisers?

### 8.1.1 How were the deliberation and decision-making organized during the Citizens' Summit?

All G1000 initiatives used a *World Café methodology* to facilitate the dialogues during the morning session at the large-scale deliberation events. The *World Café* is a “community engagement method” aimed at “gaining insights, sharing knowledge and finding solutions” in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere with a large number of people (Estacio & Karic, 2016, p. 731; Lagrosen, 2019, p. 1515; see also Brown, 2010). In line with the method, organizers aimed to create a hospitable environment in which participants felt safe and invited to contribute. To ensure the latter, the venue was decorated like a café with small tables with a tablecloth, flowers, snacks, paper, and pens. As for the former, at the beginning of the Citizens' Summits, the organizers proposed some basic rules to the participants. In addition to the two basic principles, that all participants are equal in a G1000 regardless of their background or role, and that participants should have the autonomy to lead themselves during a G1000, four dialogue rules were introduced (Van Dijk, 2020, p. 7, see also chapter 6):

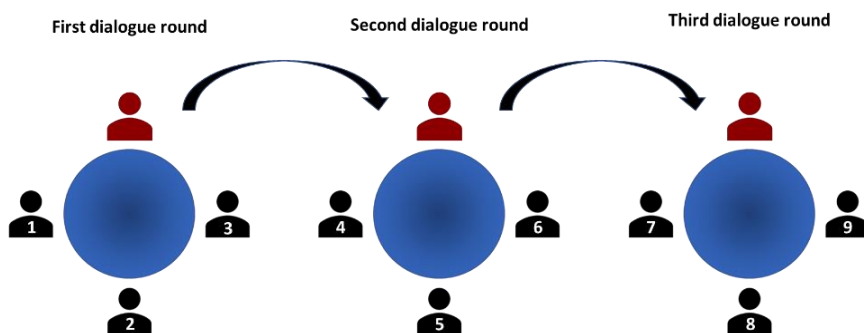
1. Participants should listen to each other,
2. Participants should avoid debates,
3. Participants do not have to agree with each other,
4. Participants should make room for each other during conversations.

The table conversations were not overseen by independent facilitators. The task to ensure that the participants adhered to these ground rules were left to the participants themselves. The Citizens' Summits were led

by a moderator, welcoming participants by introducing the G1000 concept and guiding them through the program.

The Citizens' Summits started with three rounds of small table dialogues (each with 4 participants), each lasting 20 minutes. To ensure a diverse discourse, the participants were asked to sit down at a table with people they were unfamiliar with. The starting point for each dialogue round was a question, developed by the moderator, related to the theme of the G1000 initiative.<sup>1</sup> After each round, the participants were asked to change tables and find new conversation partners. By exchanging discussion partners three times, each participant was given the opportunity to interact with a total of nine dialogue partners (see Figure 8). After each round, the table participants selected one 'table host' who

**Figure 8.** World café methodology.



<sup>1</sup> Borne: "What do you think is important for the municipality of Borne in the coming years?", "What needs to be done in Borne?", and "How can/want you contribute to this?" (in Dutch: "Wat vind jij belangrijk voor de gemeente Borne in de komende jaren?", "Wat moet er gebeuren in Borne?" en "Wat kun/wil je daaraan bijdragen?").

Enschede: "What do you think is important about fireworks?", "What needs to be done to achieve this?", and "How can/want you contribute to this?" (in Dutch: "Wat vind jij belangrijk aan vuurwerk?", "Wat moet daarvoor gebeuren?", "Wat kun/wil je daaraan bijdragen?").

Steenwijkerland: "Why is energy neutrality important to Steenwijkerland?", "What needs to be done to make Steenwijkerland energy neutral?", "How can/want you contribute to this?" (in Dutch: "Waarom is Energieneutraliteit belangrijk voor Steenwijkerland?", "Wat needs to be done to make Steenwijkerland energy neutral?", "Wat kun/wil je daaraan bijdragen?").

remained to welcome the next group, informing them briefly about what had been discussed in the previous round.

In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, participants were invited by the moderator to share the results of their table conversations with the rest of the larger group at the end of each dialogue round. To this end, all participants were asked to enter a single word into an app on their smartphones via an online link, which best summarised the conversation outcomes. After everyone had done this, a word cloud was presented on a large screen containing various words of different sizes.<sup>1</sup>

After a coffee break, the agenda for the rest of the day was set with the help of a word cloud. Through an app on their smartphone, participants could indicate with a single word their most interesting theme of the table conversations. The results were first presented in form of a word cloud, and then in a hierarchical order on the large screens. In all three initiatives, the seven words mentioned most frequently were selected by the moderator, with the consent of the participants,<sup>2</sup> as agenda items for the rest of the day. During the agenda-setting procedure, participants also had the opportunity to add words/themes to the agenda by merging similar words into a new theme. Only with the consent of all participants new words/themes were added to the agenda.<sup>3</sup>

This agenda-setting method is based on the assumption that the most frequently mentioned words are the most important themes the participants want to discuss (Van Dijk, 2020, p. 11). As illustrated in Table 16, the approved agenda items discussed in Borne ranged from

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<sup>1</sup> The size of the words that appeared on the large screens depended on how often the words were mentioned by the participants.

<sup>2</sup> The way of voting differed a bit between the G1000 initiatives. For example, in Borne participants had to raise their hand to show whether they agreed with a new word/theme, in Enschede participants had to applaud if they agreed.

<sup>3</sup> The way of voting differed a bit between the G1000 initiatives. For example, in Borne participants had to raise their hand to show whether they agreed with a new word/theme, in Enschede participants had to applaud if they agreed.

better communication, more traffic safety, enforcement, and involvement to topics related to sustainability, such as green facilities, liveability and sustainability in general. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, the agenda items were more closely related to the predefined themes: fireworks and sustainability respectively. In Enschede, the most frequently mentioned topics were more (fireworks) enforcement, information and education, and more safety. Also, the theme of firework (free) zones, as well as broader themes such as tradition and responsibility, became part of the approved agenda. In Steenwijkerland, some of the most frequently mentioned items were quite concrete, such as those related to awareness, cooperation/collective, investment/saving, and encouragement and subsidy, while others were more abstract: future and independence. In all three initiatives, the organization added a ‘wildcard’ item to the agenda to give participants who could not decide on one of the seven other topics the opportunity to define a new topic.

**Table 16.** Adopted agenda items at the Citizens’ Summits.

Borne	Enschede	Steenwijkerland
1. Communication	1. Enforcement	1. Awareness
2. Traffic safety	2. Information & Education	2. Investing
3. Green facility	3. Security	3. Future
4. Liveability	4. Organized firework & Firework zones	4. Collaboration/collectively
5. Enforcement	5. Tradition	5. Saving
6. Sustainability	6. Responsibility	6. Independence
7. Involvement	7. Fireworks-free zones	7. Encouragement and subsidy
8. <i>Wildcard</i>	8. <i>Wildcard</i>	8. <i>Wildcard</i>

During the lunch break, organisers divided the room into eight blocks corresponding to the selected themes. In each ‘block’ larger tables were set up for a maximum of 8 participants. After the lunch break, the participants were asked to choose one theme from the agenda and to

elaborate on it in small groups. As in the morning sessions, a question was given by the moderator as a starting point for the group conversations.<sup>1</sup> A table secretary assigned to each group took notes during the conversations. These notes were simultaneously presented on a TV screen next to the table, visible to all participants in the group. At the end of the first round of conversations, the moderator asked the participants to summarise their conversation in one sentence, which was then also presented on the TV screen at their table. Afterwards, participants could take a short break from their table conversations by walking around the room to review the ‘sentences’ of other groups.

For the second round of conversations, participants were asked to sit down at their tables again. Also, this second round of conversations was led by a question from the moderator.<sup>2</sup> The ideas and results of the group conversations were summarized at each table by the table secretaries in the form of a Prezi presentation. This final round of conversations ended with a vote. All participants were asked to walk around the room and look at the presentations. For voting purposes, each participant had received a Radio-frequency identification (RFID) chip with a total of 4 votes at the beginning of the event (Van Dijk, 2020). By letting their RFID chip pass the RFID reader, which was located next to the TV sets of each table, the participants were asked to vote for the four presentations they liked most. The results of this voting (top ten presentations) were presented on large screens.

Table 17 shows the results of the final vote at the Citizens’ Summit in Borne. The table shows that the top 10 of the participants’ proposals covered almost all agenda items defined at the end of the morning

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<sup>1</sup> In all three initiatives the following question was posed: “Why is this theme important to you, what brought you to this table?” (in Dutch: “*Waarom is dit thema belangrijk voor u, wat bracht u naar deze tafel?*”).

<sup>2</sup> In all three initiatives the following question was posed: “How can we make it happen, realizing what we think is important?” (in Dutch: “*Wat moet er gebeuren om te realiseren wat we belangrijk vinden?*”).

session. Two proposals related to the second agenda item ‘Traffic safety’ were highest on the list in first and second place. In addition, the issue of sustainability was addressed in the majority of the top 10 proposals. Two of the ten proposals were related to the broader topic of ‘Sustainability’ and one proposal each related to the agenda items of ‘Liveability’ and ‘Green facility’. While two proposals dealt with the agenda item of ‘Communication’, one referred to the agenda item of ‘Involvement’. A ‘Wildcard’ topic was also voted in the top 10, with a proposal for a central meeting place in Borne, which falls under the topic ‘Involvement’. However, a proposal related to the fifth agenda item ‘Enforcement’ did not make it to the top 10.

**Table 17.** The final voting result at the Citizens’ Summit in Borne.

Description	#n votes	Related agenda item
1. My Traffic Safety 2030	47	Traffic safety
2. Living in a fresh, quiet, and safe environment!	39	Traffic safety
3. Together we keep Borne liveable now and later	31	Liveability
4. Borne: Green, greener, greenest	31	Green facility
5. Our sustainable Borne; for now, and later	30	Sustainability
6. Borne Communicates	28	Communication
7. Integrated Meeting Café	27	Wildcard
8. Common meeting places	27	Involvement
9. Ecological living	26	Sustainability
10. Communication municipality and Bornse Noaberschap	25	Communication

In Enschede, two proposals relating to the agenda item ‘Organized Fireworks & Firework Zones’ were voted on in the top 10 list (see Table 18 for an overview). The proposal relating to an organized fireworks show was the highest-ranked. In addition, four of the top ten proposals related to the agenda item ‘Information & Education’. In addition, there were two proposals relating to the agenda item ‘Enforcement’ and one relating to ‘Safety’. Just as in Borne, a ‘Wildcard’ topic was voted on in

the top ten, with a proposal relating to the ‘Awareness’ topic, which falls under the ‘Information & Education’ theme. However, proposals relating to the agenda items ‘Tradition’, ‘Responsibility’ and ‘Fireworks-free zones’ were missing from the top 10.

**Table 18.** The final voting result at the Citizens’ Summit in Enschede.

Description	#n votes	Related agenda item
1. Splashing organized fireworks show	58	Organized Firework & firework zones
2. Broad positive information campaign	48	Information & Education
3. Responsible safe fireworks behaviour	46	Information & Education
4. Everything depends on enforcement	42	Enforcement
5. New Year’s Eve: a celebration for everyone	38	Organized Firework & firework zones
6. Without injuries through the turn of the year	38	Security
7. Take your time for fireworks	35	Information & Education
8. Think differently, behave differently!	35	Enforcement
9. Make aware, bang safe	33	Information & Education
10. Awareness?	32	Wildcard

Finally, in Steenwijkerland nearly all agenda items were voted in the top 10 proposals (see Table 19 for an overview). Two proposals relating to the theme ‘Collaboration/collective’ were voted in the top 10 of the ranking, one of which was placed at the top. Also, the agenda items ‘Saving’, ‘Investing’ and ‘Awareness’ were represented in the top 10 with two proposals each. Two proposals from each of the agenda items ‘Future’ and ‘Encouragement & Subsidy’ were elected to the top 10.

Only one item on the agenda, ‘Independence’, did not make it to the top 10 with a proposal and no ‘Wildcard’ proposals either.

**Table 19.** The final voting result at the Citizens’ Summit in Steenwijkerland.

Description	#n votes	Related agenda item
1. Cooperative Energetic Steenwijkerland	54	Collaboration/ collectively
2. Saving as a new resource!	51	Saving
3. Generate circular energy!	39	Future
4. The storage of renewable energy	39/38 <sup>1</sup>	Investing
5. The noncommittal beyond	38	Awareness
6. Energy broker	38	Awareness
7. Tell everyone the story: energy neutral!	36	Encouragement & subsidy
8. Energy platform	35	Collaboration/ collectively
9. Nothing exclusive, knowledge and participation!	31	Investing
10. What you save ... you don’t need to generate	31	Saving

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<sup>1</sup>Exact number of votes is missing. Considering the other numbers in the ranking, we expect this item received either 39 or 38 votes.



## 8.1.2 How was the deliberation and decision-making organized during the follow-up trajectory?

### **The follow-up event**

In all three G1000 initiatives, the follow-up trajectories started with a ‘Follow-up meeting’. At the start of the meeting, each participant received voting stickers. As a first task, the participants had to walk through the room in which all final presentations<sup>1</sup> of the Citizens’ Summit were summarized in descriptive nouns on slips of paper stuck to the project walls. The task was to put one’s stickers on the nouns that seemed most important to the participants. Afterwards, organisers removed all words without a vote. As a second task, the participants were asked to sort the remaining words into word group clusters. This process was continued until all participants were satisfied with the results. As a final step, participants were asked to decide which cluster they would like to work on, considering the ideas made at the Citizens’ Summit. Around each cluster, a so-called ‘working group’ was formed.

Table 20 gives an overview of the working groups formed during the kick-off events. In Borne seven working groups have been formed. The themes of these groups largely correspond to those identified at the Citizens’ Summit and the proposals that were also included in the top 10 of proposals. In Enschede, eight working groups were created that largely corresponded to the agenda items defined during the Citizens’ Summit. Although no proposal related to the issue of ‘Responsibility’ was voted into the top 10 at the Citizens’ Summit, one new working group was formed on this topic. In addition, two new working groups were formed on the topics of ‘Upgrading (consumer fireworks)’ and ‘App’. In Steenwijkerland, nine working groups were formed during the

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<sup>1</sup> For this assignment, the G1000 organization summarized all final presentations presented at the Citizens’ Summit in descriptive nouns, including those not voted in the top 10. For example, in Steenwijkerland, the G1000 organisation put around 600 slips of paper on the project walls (G1000.nu., 2018).

follow-up event. Unlike in the other two G1000 initiatives, the themes of the working groups had less to do with the proposals voted in the top 10 on at the Citizens' Summit. Although eight of the themes of the working groups related to agenda items and themes identified at the Citizens' Summit, one working group was formed on the new theme of 'Nutrition'. In addition, no working group was formed on the theme of 'Independence' that was established at the Citizens' Summit.

During a second session at the kick-off event, the working groups got some time to get to know each other and make working arrangements (e.g., how often they want to meet each other and where; how they want to communicate with each other). Group members had to appoint someone for maintaining contact with the other working groups and the organisers during the follow-up process. In all three initiatives, the participants were free to decide how often they wanted to meet in their working groups to work out a joint proposal for the final G1000 meeting on the topic they had chosen.

**Table 20.** The working groups formed at the kick-off events and the corresponding themes defined at the Citizens' Summit.

Borne		Enschede		Steenvijckeland	
Working groups	Related agenda item	Working groups	Related agenda item	Working groups	Related agenda item
<i>Sustainability</i>	Sustainability	<i>Enforcement</i>	Enforcement	<i>Close to home</i>	New (related to saving, investing)
<i>Railroad problems</i>	Traffic safety	<i>Schools</i>	Information & Education	<i>Awareness</i>	Awareness
<i>Naberschap (Caring for each other)</i>	Livability	<i>Firework (free) zone</i>	Fireworks-free zones	<i>New energy (2x)</i>	New (related to future, saving, investing)
<i>Borne communicates</i>	Communication	<i>Information</i>	Information & Education	<i>Nutrition</i>	New
<i>Through-traffic</i>	Traffic safety	<i>Fireworks show</i>	Organized Firework & firework zones	<i>Sustainable mobility</i>	New (related to future)
<i>Ecological residential community Borne</i>	Green facility	<i>Responsibility</i>	Responsibility	<i>Informing and Learning</i>	Awareness
<i>Creative Workshop Borne</i>	Wildcard/Involvement	<i>Upgrading</i>	New (related to Tradition)	<i>Energy cooperative</i>	Collaboration/collectively
		<i>App</i>	New (related to Information & Education)	<i>(Municipal) Policy</i>	Encouragement & subsidy

## Closing event

The closing events in the three G1000 initiatives were structured differently. While in Borne, the G1000 was concluded with a so-called ‘handover evening’ to connect the working groups and important partners in the local community, in Enschede and Steenwijkerland a Citizens’ Council event was organised by the G1000 organisation. As for the Citizens’ Council events in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, all those present at the Citizens’ Summits were invited and given the right to vote during the final event. During the morning session of the event, working groups were to present their proposals to three panels consisting of 7-10 volunteers.<sup>1</sup> The first panel was composed of citizens, the second of local politicians, and the third of employers/professionals. The panel presentations were public. Yet, after each presentation, only the panel members could ask questions (Van Dijk, 2020). The basic idea of the panel presentation was twofold: firstly, the short presentations were intended to give the audience a brief overview of the working group’s proposals, and secondly, since the working groups had to present and defend their proposals before three ‘critical’ panels, the audience should ideally get a better idea of the essence and feasibility of the proposals. During the afternoon session, a procedural meeting was held in which all participants with voting rights (members of the working groups + participants who were also present at the Citizens’ Summit) voted on all proposals of the working groups.<sup>2</sup> Based on a short introductory video clip and their impressions gathered during the morning session, participants could make a ‘voting statement’, in which they could speak in favour or against a proposal. Afterwards, each participant could vote either for or against a proposal by raising their hand. Proposals that were adopted by a majority of votes

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<sup>1</sup> To prepare of the panel presentations, the members of the panels received all the proposals of the working groups one week before the meeting of the Citizens' Council.

<sup>2</sup> As some proposals consisted of several individual points, each individual point was put to the vote.

became part of the so-called ‘Citizens’ Decision’ (Dutch: ‘Burgerbesluit’), which was signed digitally on tablets by all participants after the end of the official voting procedure.

In both events, the final meeting concluded with the question from the organizers whether the participants wanted to join the ‘monitoring group’. This group aimed to act as a discussion partner for local government and other organizations when it comes to explaining, drafting, and implementing the adopted Citizens’ Decision (Van Dijk, 2020).

### What were the final G1000 outcomes?

In Borne, a total of seven working groups presented their ideas and proposals at the ‘handover evening’ of the G1000 project (see Table 21 for an overview of the G1000 outcomes in Borne). Six working groups that had been formed during the follow-up meeting were present. The working group on ‘Railway Problems’ was not present that evening, but a new working group on ‘Administrative Renewal’ presented plans for more democratic renewal and experimentation in local decision-making.

**Table 21.** G1000 outcomes in Borne.

<b>Working group</b>	<b>Aim</b>
<i>Ecological living</i>	Wants to set up a foundation that builds a residential community of 15 residential units (for all age groups).
<i>Communication</i>	Wants to improve the communication between the municipality and the citizens (e.g., helpdesk).
<i>Creative Café</i>	Wants to create a space in the centre of Borne where people can relax, get to know each other, and be creatively supported by professional artists (volunteers).
<i>Sustainability</i>	Wants to share awareness about sustainability (e.g., via a Facebook page).
<i>Noaberschap</i>	Wants to raise attention for a more resilient society by linking residents (young and old) to local institutions.
<i>Traffic/ traffic safety</i>	Wants the municipality to review its bypass decision and choose another variant as the connecting road.
<i>Administrative Renewal</i>	Wants more democratic renewal and experimentation in local decision-making.

In Enschede, six of the initial eight working groups presented their ideas and plans at the Citizens’ Council (see Table 22 for an overview of G1000 outcomes in Enschede). The working groups on ‘App’ and ‘Fireworks show’ had disbanded during the follow-up trajectory and some working group members joined other working groups.<sup>1</sup> The dissolution of the latter working group is rather surprising since the proposal for an organised firework show received the most votes during the final vote at the Citizens’ Summit (see Table 18). As Table 22 shows, from the six presented proposals, only three proposals were accepted by the Citizens’ Council with a simple majority of votes.

**Table 22.** G1000 outcomes in Enschede.

<b>Working group</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Rejected</b>
<i>Responsibility</i>	To make the New Year safer and more fun for everyone by placing the responsibility for this on the residents themselves.		X (5/73 votes)
<i>Upgrading consumer fireworks</i>	Improving the quality of consumer fireworks (by upgrading them), which should lead to greater safety		X (11/73 votes)
<i>Firework free zones</i>	Reducing danger, damage, or nuisance from firework with the help of (voluntary) firework-free zones.	X (46/73 votes)	
<i>Information</i>	Culture change about fireworks use with the help of a city-wide campaign with the slogan: Enschede celebrates New Year’s Eve.	X (44/73 votes)	
<i>Schools</i>	Educating young people about the use of fireworks so that they can celebrate the turn of the year pleasantly and festively and in a safe way for themselves and their environment.	X (58/73 votes)	
<i>Enforcement</i>	Reducing reports of fireworks nuisance by setting up Neighbourhood Prevention Teams per district (12-15 teams in total).		X (35/73 votes)

<sup>1</sup> The working group on ‘Apps’ merged with the working group on ‘Information’. Members of the working group on ‘Firework show’ merged with the working group on ‘Firework free zones’.

In Steenwijkerland, all nine working groups formed during the kick-off meeting presented their ideas and plans during the final Citizens' Council event. The ideas of the nine working groups were not presented in the form of proposals but working groups ideas were summarized in individual decision points on which the Citizens' Council had to vote. From the 21 decision points, 13 were accepted by the Citizens' Council (see Table 23). As Table 23 shows, all the decision points submitted by 4 of the 9 working groups were accepted by the Citizens' Council. In addition, there were three working groups, whose decision points were only partly accepted by the Citizens' Council and two working groups whose decision-making points were completely rejected by the Citizens' Council.

**Table 23.** G1000 outcomes in Steenwijkerland.

<b>Working group</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Rejected</b>
<i>Awareness-raising</i>	<i>DP.1:</i> Conducting an awareness campaign.		X (30/64 votes)
<i>Informing and learning</i>	<i>DP.2:</i> Independent information provision to the inhabitants about energy savings and new techniques.	X (38/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.3:</i> Practical secondary school education on how to use energy consciously.	X (50/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.4:</i> Realising a living lab 'Energy in Steenwijkerland'.	X (49/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.5:</i> The municipality draws up a food vision.		X (10/64 votes)
<i>Nutrition</i>	<i>DP.6:</i> The municipality takes the initiative to create a platform with entrepreneurs, educational institutions and existing citizens' initiatives on sustainable food'.		X (25/64 votes)
	<i>DP.7:</i> The municipality is taking the initiative to promote cooperation between producers, retailers, and consumers of regional products.		X (27/64 votes)
	<i>DP.8:</i> The municipality is raising awareness about food and food production among the inhabitants of Steenwijkerland.		X (20/64 votes)
	<i>DP.9:</i> The municipality is working on less and cleaner traffic.	X (52/64 votes)	
<i>Sustainable mobility</i>	<i>DP.10:</i> Establishment of sun and wind generation objective for the years 2022, 2030, and 2050.		X (27/64 votes)
<i>Sun and wind</i>	<i>DP.11:</i> Establish a stimulating and transparent municipal policy for solar and wind energy.	X (49/64 votes)	



Working group	Aim	Accepted	Rejected
<i>Geothermal energy and biomass</i>	<i>DP.12:</i> The municipality takes the lead in the use of geothermal heat in construction and renovation projects.	X (56/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.13:</i> The municipality is organising a ‘round table discussion’ to produce regionally generated sustainable gas, heat or electricity, compost, and bio terrains from all biomass residual flows in Steenwijkerland.	X (51/64 votes)	
<i>Close to home</i>	<i>DP.14:</i> Implementation of a pilot Workshop Close to Home.	X (38/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.15:</i> Evaluation of the pilot project.	X (38/64 votes)	
<i>Energy cooperatives</i>	<i>DP.16:</i> The municipality supports the creation of local energy cooperatives.	X (48/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.17:</i> The municipality is investigating the feasibility of a municipal energy company concerning large-scale based forms of energy generation, adaptation to the energy infrastructure and cooperation with surrounding municipalities.		X (27/64 votes)
<i>Municipal policy</i>	<i>DP.18:</i> Houses in Steenwijkerland should be free of natural gas as much as possible by 2035.	X (53/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.19:</i> The municipality is carrying out further exploration of the possibilities, for example in the form of a pilot, of EAZ’s ultra-modern small-scale wind turbines.		X (31/64 votes)
	<i>DP.20:</i> The municipality sets up a revolving fund for promoters who contribute to the municipality’s energy-neutral objective	X (39/64 votes)	
	<i>DP.21:</i> The municipality is drawing up a policy vision ‘Making monumental buildings more sustainable’ to actively tackle this sustainability in a customized manner.	X (53/64 votes)	

### 8.1.3 Did the actual deliberation and decision-making activities meet the underlying principles of deliberative democracy?

In this first part of the chapter, we illustrated that the G1000 organisation took several measures to ensure a high quality of deliberation and decision-making. In the following, we will critically assess to what extent the G1000 processes met the four normative process-criteria for high-quality deliberation and decision-making: (1) structured deliberation, (2) learning opportunities, (3) transparent procedures and decision-making processes, and (4) popular control (see Section 4.2.2).

#### **Disallowing debates and non-facilitated deliberation**

Following the ideals of deliberative democrats, the G1000 organisation established a number of behavioural and dialogue rules before the small-group conversations at the Citizens' Summits to ensure an equal and respectful dialogue among deliberators. From a theoretical perspective, the G1000 organisation took two interesting design choices concerning these dialogue rules, which will discuss shortly in the following: (1) it defined consensus-building as an ultimate goal of deliberation, and (2) it decided to not facilitate deliberation by impartial facilitators or recorders.

As for the former, two of the dialogue rules aimed at facilitating an equal and respectful dialogue among the participants, while two rules (rules 2 and 3: Participants should avoid debates & Participants do not have to agree with each other) targeted the establishment of a consensus among the participants. Theoretically, the choice to encourage the search for consensual outcomes during deliberation is understandable as it is one of the most normatively desired outcomes of deliberation according to deliberative democrats. However, the choice to remove any debate or difference of opinion from the dialogues can also have a negative

influence on the quality of deliberation due to three reasons. First of all, defining ‘consensus’ as an ultimate goal of deliberation rather than a desirable by-product or outcome may distort participants’ incentives to engage in a deliberative process by exerting pressure to reach an agreement (see Mackie, 2006). Secondly, it may also invite strategic conformism (Feddersen & Pesendorfer, 1996). And thirdly, respectful dialogues about disagreements can also be valuable to broaden one’s perspective about a subject from a different point of view (see Price, Cappella, & Nir, 2002).

Regarding the second design choice, the decision to not have impartial facilitators or recorders during the Citizens’ Summit or other G1000 events, can also have negative consequences on the quality of deliberation. During the three G1000 initiatives, all formal events were hosted by a moderator, yet the participants themselves were primarily responsible for adhering to the established dialogue rules. Unmoderated deliberation may protect against the problem of partiality and manipulation by the facilitator, but it also bears the risk of creating inequalities among deliberators through undesired power asymmetries (e.g., dominating speakers). Consequently, choosing not to facilitate dialogue may have had negative consequences for the perceived equality of the deliberation process, especially in cases where participants have opposing views and arguments (as in the case of Enschede) and experience power asymmetries.

### **No provision of learning materials**

Contrary to the deliberative democratic ideal of providing learning materials to ensure equality among the deliberators, participants in the three G1000 initiatives did not receive any information material about the problem under discussion before the Citizens’ Summits or after. The main reason for not doing so was that the organisers wanted to influence the participants as little as possible before the large-scale deliberation event. In the old G1000 design, like Borne, where the

Citizens' Summit followed an open agenda, this is less of a problem, because organisers cannot know which topics are discussed during the event. However, in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, where the topic of the deliberation had been determined beforehand, the lack of content material could have harmed the equality of the participants during the table discussions at the Citizens' Summit, as the participants may have had different levels of prior knowledge of the topics or problem presented.

Furthermore, we have already indicated in the previous chapter that the politicians and experts present were not well represented during the Citizens' Summit. This may also have had a negative influence on the diversity of opinions in the dialogues and thus on the content quality of the dialogues during the Citizens' Summit. While the participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland had the opportunity to have question and answer sessions with experts, professionals, and politicians, in Borne such learning sessions were not organised, which deprived the participants of the chance to think about their ideas and plans. In addition, since the participants in all three G1000 initiatives were themselves responsible for gathering information about their working group's topic, we assume that there were different expertise present in the working groups, which may also have had a negative influence on the overall quality of the discussions and results.

### **Minimising process-related information**

Deliberative democratic theorists emphasise the importance of process-related transparency regarding the popular control over the deliberative and decision-making procedures as well as the legitimacy of the final results. Yet, surprisingly, in all three G1000 initiatives, the G1000 organisers did not provide information about the full duration of the G1000 process and the activities it included before the participatory process. The G1000 organisation deliberately chose to withhold this information from the participants until the end of the Citizens' Summit.

The reason for this was that the G1000 organisation did not want to scare off participants from participating at the Citizens' Summit who did not want to participate in the entire participation process. However, this lack of process-related information may have harmed the overall perceived transparency of the G1000 process and thus on the participants' perceived control over the process. Since the participants only received the process-related information during the participation process, we assume that many participants did not know the objectives of the participation process and thus might have felt that they had no control over the process and its course. Moreover, as we have shown in the last chapter, this lack of information led some participants to drop out of the G1000 process after the Citizens' Summit, which not only reduced the diversity and representative quality of the G1000 participants but also had negative consequences on the (perceived) legitimacy of the outcomes.

### **The use of ranking procedures as 'stopping rules'**

Related to this lack of process-related transparency, we argue that the use of ranking procedures during the Citizens' Summit can have undermined the output-related transparency of the G1000 process. Throughout the G1000 processes, the organisation used different majority voting procedures at the Citizens' Summit as well as at the final G1000 events in Enschede and Steenwijkerland (majority voting; ranking procedure). Interestingly, the voting procedures used during the Citizens' Summit did not aim to make decisions. These voting procedures were used as a 'stopping rule' to bring deliberation to an end and to share the results of the small group dialogues with the larger group openly and transparently. Although this method supports the G1000 philosophy of creating consensual outcomes rather quickly, it also carries the risk of eliminating many ideas from the very beginning of the deliberation. For instance, the agenda-setting method used assumes that the most frequently mentioned words are the most

important themes the participants want to discuss (Van Dijk, 2020, p. 11). Yet, by using a top 8 or 10 to visualise the outcomes during the agenda-setting and final voting procedure at the Citizens' Summits, unpopular ideas and plans, or plans related to a smaller minority, were not visible throughout the Citizens' Summits on the large screens.

### **Participants voted on their proposals**

Finally, the fact that participants could vote on their proposals during the final Citizens' Decisions in Enschede and Steenwijkerland may have both discouraged participants and called into question the basic principles of (deliberative) democracy, namely equality and fairness. During the final event in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, working groups' proposals were accepted or rejected one after another using a majority voting procedure, and thus a Citizens' Decision was finally taken that included all accepted proposals. Although a majority voting procedure is a "democratic procedure" to end deliberative processes, this procedure also has the danger of creating a sense of losers and winners among the participants. The reason for this is that with majority voting, only the results that please more than half of the participants are selected. Thus, ideas and proposals on which the participants have worked for several months may be rejected because the proposals of a working group did not reach the 50 per cent threshold. Besides the fact that a majority voting procedure can disappoint the 'losing' participants, there is also the problem that the final vote in Enschede and Steenwijkerland was not fair. The reason for this is that the vast majority of those voting were the participants of the working groups. In principle, this would not pose a problem if all working groups were the same size or were not allowed to vote on their proposals. However, since this was not the case, the proposals of smaller working groups with fewer members had less chance of being accepted than the proposals of larger working groups with more group members. This inequality is also reflected in the results of the G1000. In both Enschede

and Steenwijkerland, the larger working groups received the most votes. In short, the final procedure for deriving a Citizens' Decision was also not fair, as the voting power of all participants was not equal. If, for example, only non-participants had voted on the final proposals, you could have argued that all working groups had an equal chance to convince, for example, the public or a jury to vote for their proposals.

## 8.2 How was deliberation and decision-making perceived by the participants?

Despite the efforts to achieve a high quality of deliberation and decision-making in the three G1000 initiatives, we discussed in the previous section that certain design decisions of the G1000 might have harmed the quality of deliberation and decision-making in the three G1000 processes. In what follows we examine how the deliberation and decision-making processes were experienced by the participants. More specifically, we will examine the extent to which participants experienced the deliberation and decision-making processes as (1) equal, (2) respectful, (3) transparent and (4) fair. To this end, we first address the question of how deliberation was perceived by the participants in the Citizens' Summits and how different experiences can be explained. In the second part of this chapter, we focus on the decision-making processes and whether these voting procedures were perceived as fair by the participants. As the transparency of decision-making procedures is important for the legitimacy of the results of a mini-public, we also investigate whether the participants had a clear understanding of the procedures and proceedings during the entire G1000 process.

## 8.2.1 How did the participants experience the table conversations at the Citizens' Summits?

Overall, most participants had a rather positive experience of the conversations during the various table rounds at the Citizens' Summits.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of participants (85 per cent) used exclusively positive words (such as constructive, relaxing, equal, and inspiring, familiar) to describe the table dialogues. While 11 per cent of the participants used both positive as well as negative words to describe the dialogues, in all three G1000 initiatives there were also some participants (4 per cent) who qualified the nature of the dialogues during the Citizens' Summit in exclusively negative wordings, e.g. as 'difficult', 'unpleasant', 'complicated', or 'boring'.<sup>2</sup> This was especially the case in Steenwijkerland with 8 per cent of the participants.<sup>3</sup>

Most participants did not perceive any inequalities during the table conversations at the Citizens' Summit (Table 24).<sup>4</sup> With an average score of 8.8 (on a scale of 1-10), a large majority of participants in all three initiatives indicated that they felt free to speak at the table.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, most participants in the three G1000 initiatives indicated with an average score of 8.2 (on a scale of 1-10) that they felt heard by their interlocutors during the conversations. Yet, a difference can be observed between the three studied cases.<sup>6</sup> With an average score of 7.7 (on a scale of 1-10), participants in Steenwijkerland felt less heard by their interlocutors during the conversations than participants in Borne

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<sup>1</sup> Question S2Q7; see appendix, Table A5.

<sup>2</sup> n = 117.

<sup>3</sup> n = 26.

<sup>4</sup> Questions S2Q8; S2Q9; S2Q10; see appendix, Table A5.

<sup>5</sup> An ANOVA test was used to determine whether there was a statistical difference between the three cases in terms of participants' perceived freedom to speak during Citizens' Summit conversations. The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>6</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases in terms of participants' answers to the question about whether they felt heard during the discussions at the Citizens' Summit using an ANOVA test. The differences were significant ( $p = 0.03$ ).



and Enschede. In addition, most participants found the exchange of opinions with other people from their local community interesting and instructive. In the three G1000 initiatives, most participants had the impression that their interlocutors made meaningful contributions to the various table conversations (average score of 8).<sup>1</sup>

**Table 24.** Perceived level of equality during conversations at the Citizens’ Summit in the three G1000 initiatives (n = 111).

	<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Sig.<sup>1</sup></b>
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	
Felt free to speak during conversations <sup>1</sup>	8.9 (0.79)	8.9 (1.30)	8.4 (1.29)	8.8 (1.24)	
Felt heard during conversations <sup>1</sup>	8.5 (0.88)	8.4 (1.35)	7.7 (1.47)	8.2 (1.34)	*
Perceived meaningful contribution of interlocutors <sup>1</sup>	7.8 (1.16)	8.1 (1.30)	7.4 (1.34)	7.9 (1.31)	

In addition, around 63 per cent of the participants indicated that they gained new insights through the exchange of ideas and points of view with their interlocutors during the multiple dialogue rounds at the Citizens’ Summits (see Table 25).<sup>2</sup> Yet, also here a difference can be observed between the three studied cases.<sup>3</sup> As Table 25 shows, slightly more, but not significant, of the participants in Steenwijkerland, indicated that they did not gain any new insights from the exchange of

<sup>1</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases in terms of participants’ answers to the question about whether they felt that their interlocutors made meaningful contributions during the conversation at the Citizens’ Summit using an ANOVA test. The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>2</sup> Question S2Q24; see appendix, Table A5.

<sup>3</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases on terms of participants’ answers to the question about whether they gained new insights through the exchange of ideas and points of view using a chi-square test. The difference was significant ( $p = 0.02$ ).

ideas and viewpoints than participants who indicated that they did gain new insights.

**Table 25.** Perceived gain of new insights from the exchange of ideas and viewpoints in %.

	<b>Borne</b> (n = 21)	<b>Enschede</b> (n = 65)	<b>Steenwijkerland</b> (n = 29)	<b>Overall</b> (n = 115)
yes	71	69	41	63
no	29	31	59	37

For the reasons why participants experience the dialogues during the Citizens’ Summit positively, some participants in Enschede emphasized that people respectfully treated each other during the conversations. Participants in Enschede and Borne reported that they were surprised by the fact that the conversations were pleasantly nuanced and open. One explanation for this was given by participants in Enschede, who stated that they had expected conversations to be tense and more polarised between fireworks supporters and opponents. For example, two participants described their impressions of the various dialogue rounds as follows: “A well-organized event where we citizens could enter into dialogue with each other. It gave me a lot of energy to hear people’s different points of views, which increased my scope of thinking enormously” (S2Q2, comment 17, Enschede) and “Nice to talk to fellow citizens about your village, get ideas and exchange ideas” (S2Q2, comment 1, Borne).

A further reason why participants liked the table conversations at the Citizens’ Summits is that a sense of togetherness and mutual understanding has been created. In Enschede, participants stated that the table dialogues gave them the space to share their personal and often emotional stories about fireworks accidents or the firework disaster in Enschede in 2000. One participant indicated that the Citizens’ Summit helped them to turn a sensitive subject into one that can be discussed

openly. Another participant experienced this exchange of personal experiences as valuable and instructive: “Yes, everyone contributed in some way to the discussion, and we learned a lot from each other [...]. Many people at my table shared personal experiences and from whom you could get life lessons” (2017, E18, P, citizen, line 92 - 94). While some emphasized that they enjoyed meeting people with different views because it gave them new ideas and ways of thinking, others stressed that they particularly enjoyed the Citizens’ Summit because they met like-minded people. Moreover, some participants indicated that they were surprised by the fact that the exchange of ideas and views led to a ‘consensus’ or a mutual understanding with people who initially had a different opinion: “I liked to see the power of dialogue, people with conflicting interests from different societal backgrounds who made one proposal” (S2Q2, comment 63, Enschede).

Finally, participants provided the reason that the Citizens’ Summit created a sense of involvement in their local politics and/or their local community. Concerning the former, for example, one participant in Enschede described the Citizens’ Summit as “democratic, open and involving – made you feel that your voice counts” (S2Q2, comment 2, Enschede). As for the latter, another participant in Steenwijkerland described their feelings about the Citizens’ Summit as follows: “Good to see how ‘it’ - [the Citizens’ Summit] - increases the involvement [of participants] and activates citizens to think along with them and helps to take initiatives or support them” (S2Q2, comment 63, Steenwijkerland). In addition, participants indicated that they enjoyed the table conversations because they met and made contacts with new people from their local community.

Even though the majority of people rated the dialogues as positive, some participants in all three G1000 initiatives rated the dialogues negatively (e.g., as ‘difficult’; ‘uncomfortable’ or ‘complicated’). The main reason why participants experienced the dialogues in a rather

negative way is that some participants did not adhere to the given discussion rules. As can also be seen from Table 24, some participants, although a minority, indicated that they experienced inequalities during the table conversations. One participant in Enschede indicated that they felt that their ideas on the subject were not being listened to. Another participant stated that some interlocutors overemphasized their interests a bit too much during the conversations. A few participants indicated that they experienced interlocutors during one or more dialogue rounds who tried to provoke a discussion instead of entering a dialogue. For example, one participant reported that their experiences with the afternoon dialogues were negatively influenced by a “dominant and negative interlocutor” who only put forward counter-arguments to all the other participants’ suggestions in an unconstructive way (S2Q2, comment 50, Enschede). Also, in Steenwijkerland a few participants reported that they experienced the conversation negatively. While one participant indicated that conversations led to a dispute, others were troubled by the nagging or self-interested talk of free-thinkers and politicians (S2Q7\_ other, comment 6, Steenwijkerland).

Another reason why participants were not positive about the table conversations at the Citizens’ Summit was that they either considered the content of the conversations to be not interesting or instructive enough, or too difficult. Concerning the former, one participant in Steenwijkerland reported that they experienced the conversations mainly as ‘boring’. Moreover, about 37 per cent of the participants in the three G1000 initiatives indicated that they had not gained new insights from the various table conversation about the problem at hand (see Table 25). While in Enschede and Borne less than a third of the participants indicated that they had gained no new insights, in Steenwijkerland this concerned around half of all participants. In Steenwijkerland, some participants reported that they had the impression that some of their interlocutors lacked depth and expertise about the matter at hand. For example, one participant stated: “I missed

the depth, expertise and quality in ideas. There [were] too many keywords whose relevance I cannot trace” (S2Q2, comment 21, Steenwijkerland). Moreover, while for some participants in Steenwijkerland the dialogues were too superficial and lacked depth and detail, others indicated that some conversations in the “afternoon session became too difficult and unnecessary complicated” (S2Q7\_ other, comment 1, Steenwijkerland).

The findings presented above show that there were two groups of participants. The first group, which made up the vast majority of the participants in the three G1000 initiatives, did not perceive any inequalities during the dialogues at the Citizens’ Summits. This group of participants felt free to speak, felt heard as well as respected by their interlocutors. Moreover, they felt that the conversations were instructive, that their interlocutors made meaningful contributions, and that they gained new insights because of the dialogues. However, the second group of participants, although in the minority, experienced the dialogue as negative. Participants of this group either experienced inequalities during the conversations or found the dialogues either not instructive enough or too difficult. Moreover, we found some differences between the three cases studied. In Steenwijkerland participants felt less heard by their dialogue partners than participants in Borne and Enschede. Also, fewer participants than in the other two initiatives reported that they had gained new insights during the dialogues. These differences might be a consequence of the fact that slightly more participants in Steenwijkerland experienced the dialogues negatively than in the other two initiatives, for instance, because they experienced more inequalities (e.g., dominant discussion partners) during the dialogues or found the content of the discussions not interesting or instructive enough, or too difficult.

## 8.2.2 Why do participants' have different perceptions of the dialogues during the Citizens' Summit?

According to the ideals of deliberative democratic theory, all participants in deliberative mini-publics, regardless of their role or background, should have an equal voice during the dialogues and treat each other respectfully (see chapter 4). However, our findings in the previous section have shown that a small group of participants experienced inequalities during the dialogues at the Citizens' Summits, while others did not. Studies suggest that differences in participants' experiences of face-to-face dialogues can be attributed to their backgrounds (see chapter 4). In the following, we will therefore investigate whether participants experienced the dialogues differently in terms of their role, socio-demographic characteristics and their general attitudes and behaviours.

Regarding the first factor, the role of the participants, the G1000 initiatives did not only include a group of citizens, but also employers/professionals, civil servants, and politicians (see Section 7.3.1, chapter 7). During the table dialogues, all participants had visible name cards in a certain colour that reflected the 'role' of a participant during the Citizens' Summit. Moreover, at the beginning of the Citizens' Summit, the moderator introduced the different roles in the room by asking the participants with a specific role to raise their hand. Since the roles of the participants during the Citizens' Summit were thus not anonymous, we are interested in whether the participants perceived the attitudes of non-citizens differently depending on their roles. As shown in Figure 9<sup>1</sup>, most participants indicated that they perceived the attitude of politicians and civil servants to be equal at 70 and 65 per cent respectively. However, while the attitude of experts was predominantly perceived as knowledgeable (60 per cent of participants) by the

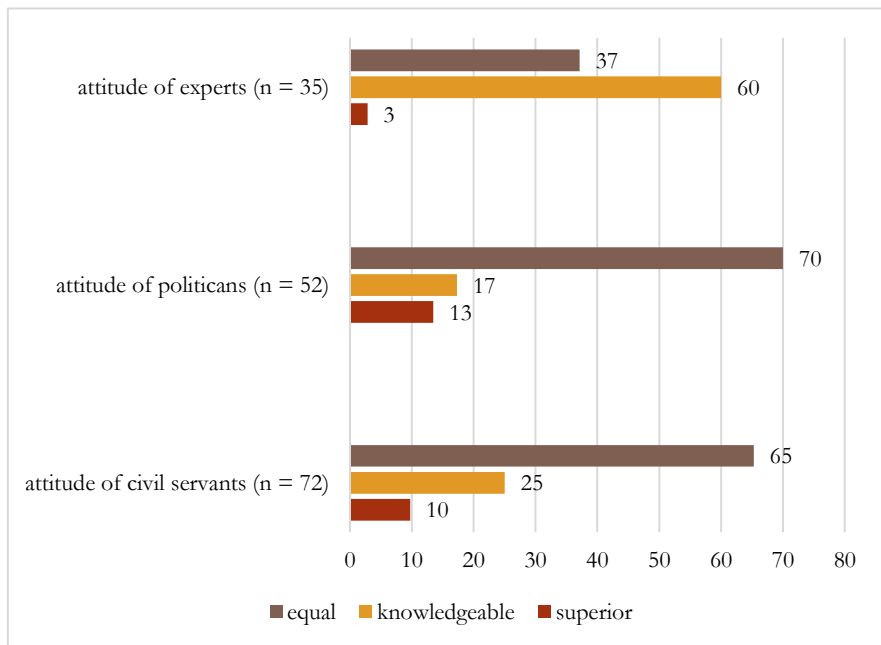
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<sup>1</sup> Questions S2Q15, S2Q16, S2Q17; see appendix, Table A5.

participants, the attitude of politicians and civil servants was perceived as superior by a small number of participants (13 and 10 per cent respectively). This was significantly less the case for experts (3 per cent). This finding shows that at least some participants did not feel equal during the dialogues at the Citizens' Summit, as they perceived some dialogue partners who participated with a different role (mainly civil servants and politicians) as superior. Overall, however, participants' perception of the dialogues was not related to their role in the participation process.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the second factor, participants' backgrounds, we used an analysis of variance to test whether differences in participants' perceptions of the dialogues could be explained by their socio-

**Figure 9.** Participants' perception of the attitudes of experts, politicians, and civil servants during dialogue in %.



<sup>1</sup> We tested whether participants with different roles differed in their responses to the questions in Table 23 by using an ANOVA test. The difference was not significant ( $p > .05$ ).

demographic characteristics (gender, age, education level, language spoken at home) and general attitudes and behaviours (political and civic engagement, and political trust). However, the results of the analysis of variance showed that differences in participants' perceptions of the dialogues<sup>1</sup> cannot be related to their role, socio-demographic characteristics or general attitudes and behaviours.<sup>2</sup> From this, we can conclude that the participants' different perceptions (or the extent to which they experienced inequalities during the conversations) cannot be explained by either their role or their background.

**Table 26.** Differences in participants' perceptions of dialogue during the Citizens' Summit by the reason for participation in Enschede (n = 73) and Steenwijkerland (n = 104).

	Enschede			Steenwijkerland		
	Personal interest	Interested in the dialogues	Sig <sup>1</sup> .	Personal interest	Interested in the dialogues	Sig.
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)		mean (SD)	mean (SD)	
Felt free to speak during conversations <sup>1</sup>	8.4 (2.44)	9.2 (0.82)		8.9 (1.19)	8.9 (1.25)	
Felt heard during conversations <sup>1</sup>	<b>7.4 (2.07)</b>	<b>8.6 (1.05)</b>	*	8.3 (1.44)	8.0 (1.40)	
Perceived meaningful contribution of interlocutors <sup>1</sup>	<b>7.1 (1.17)</b>	<b>8.3 (0.99)</b>	**	7.7 (1.39)	7.9 (1.37)	

In addition to the role and background characteristics of the participants, we also investigated whether the participants' perception

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<sup>1</sup> We conducted a stepwise ANOVA with backwards selection for each of the questions presented in Table 26: felt free to speak, felt heard, and perceived meaningful contribution of interlocutors.

<sup>2</sup> We used a stepwise ANOVA with backwards selection. The results showed that none of the variables tested had an explanatory power.



of the dialogues could be explained by a special interest of the participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland.<sup>5</sup> In both cases, we differentiated between two groups: participants who participated at the Citizens' Summit because they had a [1] particular (personal) interest or participants who participated because they were [2] interested in the dialogues. As Table 26 shows, in Steenwijkerland, no difference in participants' perception of the dialogues can be found between the two groups. In Enschede, however, we found two statistically significant differences between the two groups. Participants who participated in the G1000 with a personal interest in mind felt less heard during conversations than participants who participated because they were interested in the dialogues. The same pattern was found concerning participants' perception of their interlocutors. Participants who participated in the G1000 with a personal interest in mind felt less that their interlocutors made meaningful contributions than participants who participated because they were interested in the dialogues.

**Table 27.** Differences in participants' perceptions of dialogue during the Citizens' Summit in Enschede by their attitude towards firework (n = 73).

	Fireworks proponents	Fireworks opponents	Neutral	Sg. <sup>1</sup>
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	
Felt free to speak during conversations <sup>2</sup>	9.0 (1.41)	8.3 (2.66)	9.2 (0.76)	
Felt heard during conversations <sup>3</sup>	7.5 (1.00)	8.1 (2.56)	8.6 (1.02)	
Perceived meaningful contribution of interlocutors <sup>4</sup>	<b>6.8 (1.26)</b>	<b>8.0 (1.79)</b>	<b>8.3 (0.97)</b>	<b>*</b>

<sup>1</sup> Significant at  $p < 0.05$  (\*).

<sup>2</sup> [1] I did not feel free at all – [10] I felt completely free

<sup>3</sup> [1] I did not feel heard at all – [10] I felt very much heard

<sup>4</sup> [1] no meaningful contribution to the dialogue – [10] a very meaningful contribution to the dialogue

<sup>5</sup> Survey 1; Question: *Why did you register for the G1000 Enschede/Steenwijkerland?* Since the topic of the Citizens' Summit in Borne was not determined in advance, this information is missing for the participants in Borne.

In addition, as Table 27 shows, this difference in perceptions can be explained by participants' attitude towards fireworks. Fireworks proponents felt less than their interlocutors made meaningful contributions than firework opponents and those participants who had no pronounced opinion about it.

In sum, our findings show that participants' different perceptions of the dialogues during the Citizens' Summit cannot be explained by their role or their background. Participants' perception of the dialogue depended more on participants' personal experiences with pleasant or unpleasant interlocutors (section 8.2.1). As illustrated earlier, some participants had negative experiences during the Citizens' Summit as dialogue rules were not kept by all the interlocutors. Moreover, participants experienced the dialogues differently because they had different expectations regarding the purpose of the conversations. While some participants expected to learn more about the complexity of the problem at hand during the Citizens' Summit ('dialogue seekers'), others saw it as their task to come up with concrete ideas and approaches to solve the problem ('problem solvers'). *Dialogue seekers* focused more on exchanging ideas and views to learn from each other and gain a better understanding of the complexity of the problem. *Problem solvers*, on the other hand, focus more on finding like-minded people who supported their ideas and views or a common solution to the problem. The encounter between *Dialogue seekers* and *Problem solvers* may have caused negative experiences during the dialogues. This explains, for example, why some participants in Steenwijkerland found the dialogues too detailed, while others simply missed the depth and were looking for more concrete solutions. Furthermore, as in the case of Enschede, the encounter of problem solvers with two strongly different opinions may also have led to negative experiences during the dialogues. In addition, the stated aim of the Citizens' Summit was to find a solution to the recurring problems related to the misuse of fireworks on New Year's Eve. The ultimate goal

of the G1000 was therefore to achieve a change in the status quo. Consequently, it is not particularly surprising that those in favour of fireworks, especially those who did not want to change the status quo, felt less heard by their interlocutors, and also had less appreciation for possible solutions.

### 8.2.3 How were the decision-making procedures perceived during the G1000 process?

As shown in section 8.1.2, a final vote took place at the end of the Citizens' Summits to determine the best presentations/ideas. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland the processes also ended with a so-called Citizens' Decision. Previously we had argued that both decision-making processes were not, strictly speaking, fair. The final voting procedure at the Citizens' Summit prevented less popular ideas and plans, or ideas from minorities groups, from being equally visible in the participation process (see section 8.1.3). In the voting procedure for the final Citizens' Decision, smaller working groups had less chance of getting their proposals accepted than larger ones as working groups were allowed to vote on their proposals. In the following, we are interested in how the participants perceived these decision-making procedures and what their reasons were.

Regarding the final decision-making procedure at the Citizens' Summit<sup>1</sup>, the participants' opinions on the procedure varied widely between the three G1000 initiatives: in Borne participants gave an average score of 8.3 (on a scale of 1-10), participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland were not as positive (see Table 28).<sup>2</sup> In Enschede, participants qualified the final decision-making procedures during the Citizens' Summit with

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<sup>2</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases in terms of the participants' answers to the question of what they thought of the way the final decisions were chosen at the Citizens' Summit, using an ANOVA test. The difference was significant ( $p < .001$ ).

an average of 6 (out of 10) and in Steenwijkerland with 5.8 (on a scale of 1-10).

As for the Citizens' Decision at the final event in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, participants were more satisfied with the procedure used (see Table 28). In Enschede, participants rated the way how these final Citizens' Decision came about with a score of 7.8 (on a scale of 1-10). Also, in Steenwijkerland, participants rated the final decision-making procedure with an average of 7.2 (on a scale of 1-10).

**Table 28.** Participants' perception of the decision-making procedure used at the Citizens' Summits (n = 111) and the final event (n = 77) in the three G1000 initiatives.

	Borne	Enschede	Steenwijkerland	Overall	Sg. <sup>1</sup>
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	
Decision-making procedure used at the Citizens Summit <sup>2</sup>	8.3 (1.42)	6.0 (2.55)	5.8 (2.23)	6.4 (2.51)	***
Decision-making procedure used at the final event <sup>3</sup>	N/A	7.8 (1.85)	7.2 (1.85)	7.7 (1.86)	

The main reason why participants were positive about the decision-making procedure used at the Citizens' Summit and the final event in Enschede and Steenwijkerland is that they perceived it as democratic. For example, one participant in Enschede highlighted that they liked the way how so many different views and opinions were reduced to a

<sup>1</sup> Significant at  $p < 0.001$  (\*\*\*).

<sup>2</sup> Survey 2; Question: *At the end of the day, the participants chose ten proposals. What do you think about the way these ten proposals were selected?*; Answers: [1] the way the results are selected does not appeal to me at all – [10] this way of selection appeals to me very much

<sup>3</sup> Survey4; Question: *What do you think of the way the final Citizens' Decision was made?*; Answers: [1] the way the results are selected does not appeal to me at all – [10] this way of selection appeals to me very much

limited number of core themes during the Citizens' Summit. Furthermore, some participants indicated that since the Citizens' Decision was made democratically, one must and could also accept the results.

Yet, in all three initiatives, several participants perceived the decision-making procedure used at the Citizens' Summit as well as at the final event negatively. From their responses we could identify four main reasons: The first reason why participants were unsatisfied with the decision-making procedure used at the Citizens' Summit is that they felt that the final voting procedure was unfair due to a perceived lack of time. Some participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that they did not have enough time in the afternoon session to prepare their presentations/proposals. Furthermore, participants in all three initiatives indicated that they did not have enough time to walk around the room and read all the proposals. Due to this perceived lack of time, some participants indicated that the final vote was rushed and thus the results were unfair. In addition, some participants stated that they did not have a good overview of the ideas of other groups before the final vote. As a result, some presentations that were placed less centrally in the room were overlooked, and the presentations with the most memorable content and eye-catching layout received the most attention. A participant in Enschede stated that the result might have been different if they had had more time to read the proposals of other groups. Moreover, some participants indicated that they would have liked to have had a virtual online vote after the Citizens' Summit so that they would have had enough time to read all the proposals more carefully. As for the Citizens' Decision, some participants also indicated that there was a lack of time to prepare the final proposals. In line with this argument, a participant in Enschede reported that the G1000 process should have taken longer to allow participants more time to work on their final proposals without rushing.

A second reason why some participants were dissatisfied with the decision-making procedure at the Citizens' Summit was that they thought it was manipulated. A few participants in Enschede reported that they had the impression that the voting procedure had been manipulated, as the results were steered by the organisers towards a specific outcome. In addition, a few participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland reported that the selected outcomes did not match the ideas and proposals that were presented and chosen by the participants. Regarding the decision taken by citizens at the closing events in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, participants reported that they found the 'voting statements' to be negatively steering. One reason for this was that only a limited number of 'voting statements' were allowed before the final vote. According to a participant in Enschede, this did not allow the working groups to react to the 'voting statements' or to clarify misunderstandings.

A third reason why some participants were dissatisfied with the decision-making procedure at the Citizens' Summit was the procedure itself. Some participants indicated that they had achieved unsatisfactory results due to the decision-making procedure used. For some participants in Steenwijkerland, the decision procedure used led to outcomes that were not concrete and detailed enough. For example, one participant indicated that "the results were poor: only a few words and statements" (S3Q35; comment 18, Steenwijkerland). Moreover, one participant in Steenwijkerland reported that the final voting procedure led to "superficial, tendentious and populist" results (S2Q2, comment 28, Steenwijkerland). The reason given by some participants was that participants had to reduce their ideas and proposals to one or a few keywords and short explanations multiple times during the Citizens' Summit. In their view, participants were not able to fully articulate their points/ideas in this way. In addition, some participants indicated that they were unsatisfied with the outcomes because they would lack quality and feasibility. One participant expressed their dissatisfaction with the

outcomes as follows: “I missed the depth, expertise and quality in ideas. They are now too many keywords of which I cannot trace their relevance” (S2Q2, comment 21, Steenwijkerland). Some participants indicated that this lack of quality and feasibility was caused by the poor quality of their interlocutors’ contributions (see section 8.2.1), while others argued that it was caused by insufficient access to information and expertise on the issue discussed at the Citizens’ Summit. As for the latter, participants indicated that they missed statistical data on the problem and/or expert presentations to introduce the problem under discussion. One participant stated that more expert knowledge would have made both the question and the problem more concrete: “I missed statistical data. There has now been much talk of fireworks causing a nuisance, but how much? And is it mainly caused by legal fireworks, or by illegal fireworks (which makes the question and therefore the field in which solutions must/can be sought quite different)?” (S2Q26, comment 29, Enschede).

The final reason why participants were dissatisfied with the decision-making procedure at the closing events in Enschede and Steenwijkerland is that they did not consider the final results (Citizens’ Decision) to be a representative reflection of the opinions of the local population. According to these participants, one reason that caused a perceived lack of representativeness was the low number of attendants at the final event. Moreover, some participants mentioned that the composition of the final group of people who were entitled to vote did not represent their local community in terms of socio-demographic characteristics. Finally, some participants also indicated that since not everyone from the local community was allowed to participate in the closing event, there would not be enough support among the local population for the proposals.

In sum, the results in this section clearly show that the decision-making procedures used during the G1000 process were perceived less

positively by participants than the dialogues during the Citizens' Summits. We found some differences between the three cases studied. While in Borne, participants were rather satisfied with the way decisions were ranked and presented at the end of the Citizens' Summits, many participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland were not. We identified three reasons why this was the case: (1) a perceived lack of fairness due to time constraints, (2) the impression that the voting process was manipulated, and (3) dissatisfaction with the final voting process as it was perceived to be too superficial.

The reasons why the participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland were dissatisfied with the decision-making procedures used are very interesting. As indicated in section 8.1.3, the ranking procedures used in the Citizens' Summits carry two risks. The first risk is that many ideas (especially those of the minority) were not visible during the Citizens' Summit. And the second, related risk is that a ranking procedure creates winners and losers. Especially the latter may explain the different perceptions of the final voting procedure at the Citizens' Summit in the three cases studied: While in Borne the Citizens' Summit did not have a particular theme, in Enschede and Steenwijkerland the G1000 Citizens' Summit was presented as a means to solve a particular problem on which the participants had different, but also competing, opinions and solution approaches (e.g., supporters and opponents of fireworks). Moreover, the fact that participants thought that the final ranking procedure at the Citizens' Summit would determine the 'winning' approaches of the G1000 is concerning. This suggests that at least some participants lacked procedural transparency. Consequently, in the following, we want to investigate whether the participants had a clear insight into the conditions under which they participated in the G1000 processes.



## 8.2.4 Did participants understand the conditions under which they participated?

To assess the transparency of the G1000 processes, we focus on two aspects of transparency: firstly, the extent to which the G1000 processes and their objectives were clear to the participants (process-related transparency), and secondly, the extent to which the participants had a clear picture of the G1000 results and the associated conditions (output transparency).

Regarding the process clarity of the three G1000 processes, not all participants in all three G1000 initiatives had a clear picture of what was expected of them during the G1000 process (see Table 29 for an overview).<sup>1</sup> On a scale of 1 to 10, the participants to all three G1000 initiatives rated the clarity of the process before the Citizens' Summit with an average score of 6.6.<sup>2</sup> While some participants indicated that they were very clear from the beginning about what was expected of them during the G1000 process, others indicated that they were completely unaware of that. Yet, on the question of whether it was clear to the participants what was expected of them at the Citizens' Summits, participants in the three G1000 initiatives rated this question with an average score of 7.7.<sup>3</sup> Overall, this indicated that for most participants it was clear what was expected from them at the Citizens' Summits. While in Steenwijkerland, participants' clarity about the process stayed more or less consistent after the Citizens' Summit until the final event, in Enschede differences in participants' clarity about the process can be observed especially in following-up trajectory (average score of 6.6 out

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<sup>1</sup> Questions S1Q4/S2Q28/Q35, Q45\_1, Q51\_1; see appendix, Table A5.

<sup>2</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases in terms of the answers of the participants to the question whether they had a clear idea of what was expected of them during the G1000 trajectory, using an ANOVA test. The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>3</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases in terms of the answers of the participants to the question whether they had a clear idea of what was expected of them at the Civic Summits, using an ANOVA test. The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

of 10). Yet, participants' level of clarity about their role in the process slightly increased after workshops (average score of 6.8) until the final event (average score of 7.8).

**Table 29.** Perceived process clarity over time.

	<b>Before the Citizens' Summit</b> (n = 146)	<b>During Citizens' Summit</b> (n = 101)	<b>During the kick- off</b> (n = 67)	<b>During workshops</b> (n = 39)	<b>Final event</b> (n = 35)
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
Borne	6.7 (1.47)	7.6 (2.19)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enschede	6.9 (2.09)	7.9 (1.77)	6.6 (2.09)	6.8 (1.64)	7.8 (1.10)
Steenwijkerland	6.1 (1.97)	7.3 (1.56)	7.1 (1.59)	7.5 (0.53)	7.2 (1.48)
Overall	6.6 (1.94)	7.7 (1.80)	6.8 (1.90)	7.0 (1.50)	7.7 (1.16)

As regards the transparency of the outcomes of the three G1000 processes, participants in the G1000 initiatives did not have a predominantly clear picture of the final G1000 outcomes throughout the G1000 processes (see Table 30 for an overview).<sup>1</sup> Before and after the start of the Citizens' Summit, participants in the G1000 initiatives rated the clarity of the outcomes with an average score of 6.4 and 6.8 respectively (on a scale of 1 - 10). This means that during the Citizens' Summits it became somewhat clearer to the participants in the three initiatives what would be done with the final G1000 results. Nevertheless, this clarity about the outcomes diminished after the final meeting of the three G1000 initiatives. With an average score of 5.2 (scale 1 to 10), many participants indicated that it was very unclear to them what would happen with the results of the G1000 after the closing event.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Questions S1Q5/S2Q29/S3Q28; see appendix, Table A5.

<sup>2</sup> We tested the difference between the three cases based on the answers given by the participants one year after the closing event to the question to what extent it is clear to the

**Table 30.** Perceived outcome clarity over time.

	Before the Citizens' Summit (n = 146)	During Citizens' Summit (n = 101)	After Citizens' Summit (n = 75)
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
Borne	6.4 (1.45)	6.7 (1.83)	4.6 (2.50)
Enschede	6.4 (2.64)	6.7 (2.47)	5.5 (2.51)
Steenwijkerland	6.3 (2.02)	7.0 (1.95)	4.8 (2.28)
Overall	6.4 (2.32)	6.8 (2.23)	5.2 (2.45)

The problem of a perceived lack of process-related transparency, especially at the beginning of the follow-up process, was also highlighted by several participants in Enschede and Steenwijkerland. After the Citizens' Summit, several participants indicated that many aspects relating to their participation in the follow-up process were not clear. First, some participants complained that they did not know that they had signed up for a participatory process at the Citizens' Summit that would take several months. Moreover, according to one participant in Steenwijkerland, it was not clear to most participants how (time) intensive the participation would be. In addition, a few participants from Enschede and Steenwijkerland indicated that for many participants it was not clear what was expected of them and their working groups in the follow-up process. For example, participants in Enschede indicated that the entire G1000 project and the first assignment was unclear. Another participant in Enschede stressed that expectations about the terms and conditions of the participation process and the results were not clear from the start of the follow-up process and that they changed regularly throughout the process. A

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participants what is being done with the results of the G1000, based on an ANOVA test. The difference was insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

participant in Steenwijkerland explained that from the start there was a lack of information about the process. The organisers should have managed the expectations of the participants better, not only in terms of the expected commitment of the participants but also in terms of the results expected from them (2019, S2, P, citizen, p. 9). According to a participant in Steenwijkerland, the conditions of the results were only discussed with the working groups during the workshops, which made them clearer.

In summary, we can conclude that the fact that the organisers chose not to provide process-related information from the beginning did not go unnoticed by the participants. Especially at the beginning of the process, participants did not have a clear picture of what was expected of them during the G1000 process. Given these findings, it is therefore not so surprising that several participants left the participation process because of an alleged lack of process transparency (see 7.3.3). Furthermore, our results show that several participants did not have a predominantly clear picture of the final G1000 results during the G1000 process. From this, we can conclude that not all participants did not have a clear understanding of the conditions under which they participated during the G1000 process. From a normative perspective, however, this lack of transparency can have serious consequences in terms of perceived process and outcome legitimacy. In the next section, we will look in more detail at how the participants formed their overall assessment of the G1000 and the legitimacy of its results.

### 8.3 What factors influenced the participants' overall assessment of the G1000 and its results?

G1000 participants were generally quite positive about the G1000 after the Citizens' Summit (see Table 31). With an average rating of 8.0 (out of 10), the majority of participants indicated that they would recommend their friends and family to participate in a G1000 after the Citizens' Summit. This positive attitude towards the G1000 process did not change after the participation process ended, as still, most participants (63%) indicated that they would participate in a G1000 process again. This overall positive assessment of the G1000 initiatives is somewhat surprising, considering that participants were generally less positive about the transparency of the process and outcomes, as well as the representative quality of the final results. Furthermore, Table 31 shows that participants in the three G1000 initiatives were also less positive about the legitimacy of the final results, with an average of 5.7 (out of 10). In what follows, we are interested in how participants' overall assessment of the G1000 and its outcomes is arrived at and what factors influence this assessment. In addition, we will examine the factors on which participants base their assessment of the legitimacy of the G1000's final results.

To identify the key determinants of participants' assessments of the G1000, we examined the variables that are important in explaining an individual's assessment of the G1000. For this purpose, we normalize all independent variables to mean = 0 and SD = 1 and run a stepwise regression with backward selection, so that the non-explaining variables are removed, and the coefficients can be compared: which variable is most important in explaining dependent variable 'evaluation of G1000'. We selected the variables perceived G1000 *representativeness*, *dialogues*, *decision-making procedure*, *process clarity* and *outcome clarity*. The remaining variables and their coefficients are presented in Table 32.

**Table 31.** Participants' perceptions of the G1000 and its legitimacy.

	<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>	<b>Overall</b>
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
Evaluation of G1000 <sup>1</sup>	8.4 (1.06)	7.9 (1.86)	8.0 (1.35)	8.0 (1.63)
Legitimacy of the G1000 outcomes <sup>2</sup>	6.0 (2.35)	6.0 (2.24)	5.1 (2.36)	5.7 (2.30)

As Table 32 shows, the most important variable was the decision-making procedure followed by dialogue, outcome clarity, and representativeness respectively. The variable process clarity was not statistically significant. These results show that the evaluation of the G1000 by the participants depends most on how they experienced the final decision-making procedure at the Citizens' Summit. Those who indicated that they did not like the final decision-making procedure of the working group presentations at the end of the Citizens' Summit, also gave a generally lower score in their assessment of the G1000.

The second most important determining factor in explaining the participants' G1000 evaluation is their perception of the dialogue. Those who experienced the dialogues at the G1000 negatively (for example, did not feel heard or felt free to speak) also indicated that they would not recommend participation in a G1000 to friends, and vice versa. The third factor explaining the individual assessment of the G1000 is the outcome clarity. Those who indicated that it was not clear to them what would happen with the results of the G1000, also indicated that they would not recommend participation in a G1000 to friends, and vice versa. The final determining factor explaining the

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<sup>1</sup> Survey 2; Question: *Would you recommend participation in the G1000?*; [1] I would certainly not recommend it – [10] would certainly recommend it

<sup>2</sup> Survey 4; Question: *To what extent do you think that the decisions of the G1000 are a good reflection of the wishes of the residents of your municipality?*; [1] It was by no means a good reflection – [10] It was a very good reflection

evaluation of the G1000 by individuals was their perceived assessment of the representativeness of the G1000. Those who indicated that they did not believe that the G1000 participants would be a representative group of the local population also indicated that they would not recommend participation in a G1000 to friends, and vice versa. The variable about a lack of clarity about the G1000 process did not achieve statistical significance and therefore did not have a negative influence on a participants' assessment of the G1000.

**Table 32.** Determinants of participants' assessments of the G1000.

Effect	Estimates	SE	t	p
<i>(Intercept)</i>	7.9824	0.1181	67.613	< 0.001***
representativeness	0.3296	0.1284	2.567	0.012 *
dialogue	0.4121	0.1302	3.164	0.002 **
decision-making procedure	0.4838	0.1366	3.541	0.001 ***
outcome clarity	0.3359	0.1396	2.405	0.018 *

To identify the key determinants of participants' assessments of the legitimacy of the final G1000 outcomes, we examined the variables that are important in explaining an individual's assessment of the legitimacy of the final G1000 outcomes. Also, in this case, we selected the variables perceived G1000 *representativeness*, *dialogues*, *decision-making procedure*, *process clarity* and *outcome clarity* and ran a stepwise linear regression with backward selection to omit the variables that are not statistically significant. The results show that the participant's perception of the legitimacy of the final G1000 outcomes depends only on how they perceived the representativeness of the G1000 process.<sup>1</sup> Those who indicated that they did not think that the G1000 process was a good

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<sup>1</sup> Variable: Representativeness; Estimates: 1; SE: ~0; p = 0 \*\*\*

representation of the overall local population, also gave a generally lower score in their assessment of the legitimacy of the final G1000 outcomes. All other tested variables were not statistically significant.



## 8.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we examined to what extent the organisers of the G1000 succeeded in creating an equal discourse and decision-making process in the three G1000 processes. To this end, we examined how deliberation and decision-making were ensured by the G1000 organisers and how decisions were made during the G1000 processes. In the second part of this chapter, we focused on the participants' perceptions about deliberation and decision-making processes during the G1000 initiatives.

Overall, we can conclude that the quality of the dialogues during the Citizens' Summits was perceived as quite high by most participants. Most participants perceived the small-scale dialogues positively and did not perceive any inequalities during the dialogues at the Citizens' Summits. For these participants, the dialogues were constructive, and participants felt equal to their interlocutors. In their eyes, the participants treated each other with respect because they valued each other's contributions in finding common ground. However, a small group of participants (approximately 4 per cent of the participants) found the dialogues difficult and perceived them as negative. This group felt less free to speak and be heard during the dialogues than participants who experienced the dialogues positively. They were also less likely to feel that their interlocutors made meaningful contributions during the dialogues.

Participants' perceptions of the dialogues cannot be explained by their socio-demographic characteristics or general attitudes and behaviours of the participants. Furthermore, participants did not perceive the dialogues differently based on their role in the G1000 process. We found two factors that explain the differences in participants' perceptions in the dialogues: (1) non-observance of dialogue rules and (2) different dialogue expectations.

As for the former, participants perceived the dialogues negatively when the given dialogue rules were not followed by all interlocutors. At the Citizens' Summits, the small group dialogues were not moderated or recorded by impartial moderators. Although most participants were able to follow the given dialogue rules, in a few cases undesirable power asymmetries between speakers occurred (e.g., dominant speakers). As for the latter, participants experienced the table dialogues differently due to their different expectations of the purpose of the conversations. While the *dialogue seekers* expected to learn more about the complexity of the problem at hand during the Citizens' Summits, the *problem-solvers* saw it as their task to develop concrete ideas and approaches to solving the problem. While the dialogue seekers focused more on sharing ideas and views to learn from each other and gain a better understanding of the complexity of the problem, the problem-solvers focused more on finding like-minded people who supported their ideas and views or a common solution to the problem. Our findings suggest that the clash between dialogue seekers and problem solvers may have led to negative experiences during the dialogues, as some participants in Steenwijkerland found the dialogues too detailed, while others simply missed the depth and looked for more concrete solutions. Furthermore, the encounter of problem solvers with two strongly different attitudes towards fireworks may also have led to negative experiences during the dialogues.

As for the decision-making procedures, all three G1000 processes used several voting procedures during the Citizens' Summit to share the findings or results of the small group deliberations with the rest of the large group. Although these procedures were intended to increase the transparency of the large group deliberations, participants perceived these 'voting procedures' more as 'decision-making procedures'. Our findings show that the decision-making procedures used during the Citizens' Summit were perceived less positively by participants than the dialogues, due to a perceived lack of transparency about the process and

how decisions were made. Some participants perceived the final voting process at the Citizens' Summits as unfair and superficial. Furthermore, some participants believed that the final results were manipulated by the organisers, as they felt that the procedures were negatively steered. One reason that explains this lack of transparency is that the voting procedures at the Citizens' Summit only ever showed the results that were voted on the most. This may favour the formation of a consensus but also leads to less popular proposals or proposals put forward by the minority not being shared with the larger group and thus remaining invisible. Moreover, even after the Citizens' Summits, participants in all three G1000 initiatives indicated that the G1000 process and its outcomes remained unclear to them. From this, we concluded that not all participants had a clear understanding of the conditions under which they were participating, as they perceived a lack of process- and outcome-related transparency.

Yet, our findings show that the perceived lack of process clarity did not influence the participants' overall assessment of the G1000. The participants' overall assessment of the G1000 processes was mainly influenced by the perceived fairness of the decision-making procedure used. Moreover, the perceived quality of the dialogues, the perceived clarity of the G1000 results and the perceived representativeness of the G1000 also played a role in the overall assessment of the G1000. These findings indicate that the procedural fairness of the voting or ranking procedures, or voting procedures as such, used in a mini-public should not be underestimated. It largely influences how participants experience a deliberative event/process, and thus also their overall assessment of the deliberative event. Regarding the participants' assessment of the legitimacy of the final G1000 results, our findings show that the participants base their assessment only on the perceived representativeness of the G1000 process. The transparency of the G1000 process and its outcomes, as well as the perceived quality of the dialogues, did not play a role in their assessment of the perceived

legitimacy of the final G1000 outcomes. From this, we can conclude that especially in the case of explorative and decision-oriented mini-public designs (such as the G1000de in Enschede and Steenwijkerland that ends with a 'binding' Citizens' Decision) the descriptive representative quality of the mini-publics is important.

So, did the G1000 initiatives fulfil their second underlying ideal by establishing a high quality of deliberation and decision-making process? As for the deliberative quality, we can conclude that the G1000 organisers succeeded in organising a largely perceived equal discourse that not only led to several consensus-driven outcomes but also created a mutual understanding between the participants. The fact that the participants did not experience the dialogues differently because of their different backgrounds is also positive. This means that we could not establish a pattern that participants with certain background characteristics experienced more or less inequalities during the dialogues. Incidental power and knowledge asymmetries and inequalities between the participants could therefore in some cases be addressed procedurally, for example by using impartial facilitators and information materials. However, as participants experience dialogues differently because of their different expectations regarding the purpose of the dialogues, we argue that some conflicts in dialogues are inevitable, especially when, as in the case of the G1000, they aim at finding common ground or consensus.

In terms of the quality of decision-making, this chapter's findings have clearly shown that a lack of representativeness had a negative impact on the perceived legitimacy of the final results. A lack of (perceived) representativeness should therefore not be underestimated. Furthermore, the results showed that besides the normative goal of establishing a high quality of deliberation, the quality of the decision-making procedures applied is also important, if not more important. The (perceived) fairness of decision-making procedures can be

improved by more transparent information about the process structure and the way decisions are made. In the G1000 cases, more transparency about the process, its outcomes and how decisions were made before the start of the participation process would certainly have improved the overall quality of decision-making.

# Chapter 9



# 9 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE G1000 INITIATIVES

Many mini-public designs have been criticised by scholars in the past for having a limited, but not real, influence on political decision-making (cf. Boogaard et al., 2016; Goodin & Dryzek, 2006; Pateman, 2012; Setälä, 2014; Smith, 2009). Yet, to this date, little is still known about the reasons why some mini-publics have political and/or social impact while others do not (Bächtiger et al., 2014). This chapter aims to learn more about the political and social impact of a mini-public. For this, we use the conceptual framework developed by Michels and Binnema (2019) (p. 750; see chapter 4, section 4.3.2). We examine the effects of the three G1000 initiatives on (1) the local political system (political impact), and (2) the wider local community and the participants (social impact). Moreover, to systematically analyse and compare the instrumental, conceptual, and social strategic aspects of the political and social impact of the three G1000 initiatives, we examine three central questions for each G1000:

- To what extent have the outcomes of the G1000 initiatives directly influenced political decision-making and/or civil society (*instrumental impact*)?
- To what extent has the G1000 process influenced the attitudes and work processes within the local municipality and/or led to a greater civic engagement of citizens in the long term, which manifests itself in new citizens' initiatives or actions in the local community (*conceptual impact*)?
- To what extent have the outcomes of G1000 been used by political actors, individuals, or organisations to defend or oppose certain interests (*strategic impact*)?

## 9.1 Did the G1000 initiatives have a political impact?

To assess and compare the political impact of the G1000 initiatives, we first assess the extent to which the G1000 outcomes directly influenced local government agendas, debates, and decision-making. Secondly, we examine the extent to which the G1000 process and its outcomes have influenced the attitudes of civil servants and politicians, as well as the work processes in local government administration. In the final subsection, we focus on the extent to which the results of the G1000 have been used strategically by political actors or parties to enhance their political power or to legitimize existing policies. This section ends with a summary and comparison of the findings.

### 9.1.1 Did the G1000 initiatives have a political instrumental impact?

#### **Borne**

In Borne, the political instrumental impact of the G1000 process and its outcomes was moderate. Some of the actions requested by the



G1000 working groups during the handover evening were indirectly addressed by the local government and/or local municipality after the handover evening in 2017 (see Table A8 for an overview, Appendix). For example, in line with the wish of the working group on *Communication* to improve communication between citizens and the municipality and other local service providers, the municipality renewed its website in January 2019. In redesigning the website, the municipality consulted the members of the *Communications Working Group* (“Welkom op de nieuwe website,” 2020; “Meedoen in Mijn Borne,” 2019). In addition, in 2018, the municipality of Borne published a *Housing Vision* (Dutch: “Woonvisie Borne 2018 - 2029”) for the period 2018 to 2029. In this vision, they respond indirectly to the wish of the *Ecological Housing* working group to set up a housing vision that offers room for new forms of housing and housing initiatives. For example, it is stated that the municipality wants to “designate locations [also in the countryside] where there is room for new or other forms of housing” (including inheritance transformations, nursing homes and other innovative forms of housing to support “noaberschap”) (“Gemeente Borne Grondgebied/Ontwikkeling,” 2018, p. 17; p. 19). In addition, all the topics raised by participants from the G1000 have also been indirectly addressed in the *Council Agreement* and/or *Coalition Agreement* for the period 2018-2022. In the council agreement, the added value of larger citizen participation processes, such as G1000 and *MijnBorne 2020*, is acknowledged by stating that the municipality wants to support and stimulate new local initiatives through funding in the next council period. Yet, at this point, it should be noted that most of the G1000 working groups dealt with issues that were not new in the municipality of Borne and that had been on the political and social agenda for some time (see also: Jonathan & Meyer, 2017). Examples are the wish to raise awareness about sustainability, the stressed need for more active citizenship or administrative renewal, or the call of a small number of G1000 participants from the local centre of Zenderen to the

municipality to review its bypass decision and to choose another variant as a connecting road between the village centres of Borne and Zenderen. Moreover, some of these issues were also part of the local future vision 2030. Given the long history of some of these issues, it is not clear how much direct political influence the G1000, and its outcomes had on the development of the *Council Agreement* and/or *Coalition Agreement* for the period 2018-2022.

### **Enschede**

In Enschede, the G1000 process had a strong instrumental political effect on government agendas, debates, and decision-making, as immediately after the end of the G1000 process in December 2017, the city council adopted several measures laid down in the Citizens' Decision, which had to be implemented before the turn of the year 2017. Since all accepted proposals called for support and at least some actions by the municipality/local government (see Table A8 for an overview, Appendix), the city administration, in cooperation with a group of G1000 participants (hereafter referred to as the monitoring group), implemented the main points of the accepted proposals within two years after the Citizens' Decision. This Citizens' Decision was implemented as a citywide fireworks campaign called *Enschede celebrates New Year's Eve* within two years after the Citizens' Decision. It included the establishment of ten fireworks-free zones in the city of Enschede (e.g., at the local hospital, animal shelter, petting zoos, local parks, sports hall), as well as the implementation of the idea of voluntary fireworks-free zones.<sup>1</sup> The proposal for a city-wide fireworks campaign 'Enschede

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<sup>1</sup> People can draw attention to their own voluntary fireworks-free zones with a poster that they can put up behind their window. Posters were made available between 18 and 23 December as a page in the local newspaper: Huis aan Huis Enschede. For people who did not receive the local newspaper 'Huis aan Huis', they could also pick up a copy from various places in the city, including the libraries and the city office. In addition, in the period around the turn of the year, attention is drawn via various channels to so-called 'desired fireworks zones' (e.g., shopping centres and places where many people and/or animals come) to make the public aware that the use of fireworks in these public spaces is not preferable ("Met aandacht voor elkaar," n.d.).

celebrates New Year' by the Information Working Group was also implemented in the period 2017-2020 ("Campagne Enschede viert oud en nieuw' officieel van start," 2019). During the city-wide campaign, different communication channels were used (e.g., via a large canvas on the town hall, posters, billboards, social media, and a newly developed municipality website) to draw attention to a quieter and safer New Year's Eve throughout the city. Also, the proposals of the working group on schools ("Informatie voor scholen," n.d.) were integrated into the city-wide campaign. To inform children and young people about fireworks, 2,500 firework safety kits were distributed at various primary schools in Enschede to inform children in schools. In addition, the HALT foundation provides information at schools about the social and safe use of fireworks. Finally, schools were provided with a standard letter that they could circulate to all parents to inform them about the safe use of fireworks.

### **Steenwijkerland**

In Steenwijkerland, the G1000 process had the strongest political instrumental impact on government agendas, debates, and decision-making. On 6 June 2018, the local council organised a "political market" (Dutch: Politieke Markt) in which it was possible to comment on the Citizens' Decision to be submitted to the council on 19 June. The members of two working groups, whose decision points were rejected at the closing event of the G1000, did so to reiterate their proposals. Moreover, one G1000 participant took the opportunity to plead for the inclusion of all decision points in the Citizens' Decision and thus in the new Sustainable Steenwijkerland programme, because he felt that the end of the G1000 process did not run satisfactorily (e.g., lack of clarity on the final decision-making procedure, influencing voting statements). This request was confirmed by a council decision on 19 June 2018 by amending the original council proposal to not only consider the

Citizens' Decision for the new Sustainable Steenwijkerland programme but all proposals presented at the final event.

All decision points submitted to the Citizens' Council requested at least some action or support from the municipality (see Table A8 for an overview, Appendix). In the aftermath of this council decision, the municipality/local government answered these requests by incorporating the G1000 ideas and proposals into the coalition agreement 2018-2022, the programme budget for 2019-2022 and the annual report 2019. In 2019 a new municipality's solar energy policy was formulated, following the Citizens' Decision, to increase the number of solar panels on land (Tax, 2019). In addition, since the G1000, the municipality has taken both a connecting and a facilitating role regarding the G1000 outcomes. As for the former, via its website, the municipality promotes local sustainability initiatives, including new citizens' initiatives resulting from the G1000 process, and information on the subject of sustainability in Steenwijkerland (e.g., IK BEGIN, Duurzaam-Belt-Schutsloot). As far as its facilitator role is concerned, the municipality attempts to provide substantive, financial, and administrative support to the working groups (e.g., appointed supporting civil officials). In addition, the municipality launched a sustainability fund for low-income house owners to insulate and generate renewable energy.

### 9.1.2 Did the G1000 initiatives have a political conceptual impact?

#### **Borne**

In Borne, the G1000 process has a limited political conceptual impact on the attitudes of civil servants and politicians, as well as on the work processes in local government administration. Most of the interviewed politicians and civil servants stated that they were already familiar with larger-scale citizen participation processes before the G1000 process.

The main reason for this is that the municipality of Borne already had some experience in 2010 with a large-scale citizen participation experiment called MijnBorne2030, which was intended to develop a shared community vision. This vision, developed by and for the community, was confirmed by the local council at the time. Since that experiment, participants state, local politicians and civil servants in Borne are used to working with citizens. According to a local politician, after the experiment, members of the local council realized that citizens can provide useful and feasible political input (2017, B3, NP, politician). Other participants too stated that since the development of the community vision, the local government in Borne sees itself more as a horizontal, participatory government that has a governance function, aiming to collaborate more with citizens and other social partners than to govern alone. According to a local politician, this also would explain why the municipality has responded so positively to the request of the G1000 organizers to support the implementation of the G1000 results when needed (2017, B3, NP, politician). Nevertheless, the participants also stressed that they saw the role of the local government during the G1000 process more as merely facilitating (by offering help with recruitment, promotion of the event or applying for grants). As one participant explained, the local government in Borne only participated in the G1000 process if citizens requested it, otherwise, it did not (2017, B6, NP, civil servant). According to the participants, the main reason for the reluctant role of the local government in the G1000 process was that the G1000 was organised as a bottom-up initiative by citizens for citizens. Most participants stressed that the local government should not interfere too much in this bottom-up citizen participation.

### **Enschede**

In Enschede, the G1000 process only had a moderate impact on the attitudes of some officials and politicians and on the working processes of local government. Some participants stressed that, especially before

the Citizens' Summit, some members of the city council were very critical of the G1000 process and therefore decided not to attend the G1000 Citizens' Summit. The main reason for this initial critical attitude of some politicians was the idea that the G1000 would lead to what they saw as an unrepresentative Citizens' Decision. In their view, the responsibility for making political decisions should lay with the democratically elected local government and not with a small number of unelected and unrepresentative citizens. For example, according to one local politician, the G1000 method may be a good way to gather knowledge and opinions from the local community or to decide on a local issue, but it is an unsuitable method for making political decisions that affect the broader public interest (2017, E2, NP, local politicians). When asked whether the participants think that larger participation processes, such as the G1000, will be organised more often by the local government in Enschede in the future, most civil servants and local politicians highlighted that they saw the G1000 mainly as a unique, but interesting, experiments. While some civil servants and local politicians considered experimenting with these methods as something exciting that they wanted and needed to do more often in the future, others expressed their concern about the possible negative effects these democratic experiments could have on local government (e.g., different expectations of organisers and participants; loss of citizens' trust in local politics) (2017, E5, NP, local politicians). Despite the initial mixed feelings of some politicians about the Citizens' Decision and the larger-scale citizen participation experiments as such, the City Council approved the content of the Citizens' Decision by 33 votes to 4 in December 2017. Moreover, after the 2018 municipal elections, the newly elected city council announced in a so-called 'Enschede Accord' for the period 2018-2022<sup>1</sup> that it wants to "slowly expand" new

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<sup>1</sup> In the Enschede Accord, the municipal council makes several promises to the citizens on how it will involve citizens more in the local decision-making process. Not only does the city council promise that citizens will be able to participate in discussing political issues (through street

opportunities for citizen participation because it wants to solve social problems together with all social partners in the next four years (“Enschede Akkoord,” n.d., p. 2).

### **Steenwijkerland**

In Steenwijkerland, the political conceptual impact of the G1000 on the attitudes of some officials and politicians and the working processes of local government was the strongest among the three G1000 initiatives studied. Like in Enschede in the run-up to the G1000 process the idea of a Citizens’ Decision has led to some discussion among local politicians about the legitimacy of such a decision. Many participants indicated that the local council initially found the idea of a Citizens’ Decision frightening but finally decided to support it. Interestingly, a politician pointed out that after their participation at the Citizens’ Summit, some of the most critical politicians would have done most to advocate the recognition of the Citizens’ Decision by the local council (2019, S6, NP, politician). As for its continuing conceptual impact on the local government, a civil servant pointed out that the G1000 process led to more reflection on citizen participation within the administration in general and the creation of new forms of cooperation and communication (e.g., structural newsletter, information point about local energy cooperation initiatives) between local government and local citizens’ initiatives (2019, S9, NP, civil servant). In addition, another civil servant stated that for civil servants involved in the G1000 process, it was a training in ‘citizens’ participation’ under working hours (2019, S7, P, civil servant). Moreover, this participant explained that the G1000 process has also helped the municipality to raise awareness of the issue of sustainability and its complexity within and outside the organization.

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dialogues, open days at the city hall, city-wide surveys and personal meetings between citizens and councillors), but it also promises to draw up a political agenda with the most important issues raised by the inhabitants and to discuss these issues together with the local community.

### 9.1.3 Did the G1000 initiatives have a political strategic impact?

#### **Borne**

In Borne, we found only limited evidence that the G1000 process and its outcomes were used by political actors or parties to enhance their political power or to legitimize existing policies. In the run-up to the local elections in 2018, only a few local parties<sup>1</sup> used the G1000 process and its outcomes strategically to promote their party programmes in the run-up to local elections. While most local parties did not refer to the G1000 process and/or its outcomes, these parties promised in their party programs that they would take the G1000 process and its results seriously and advocated more democratic experiments with citizen participation. Moreover, some participants stated that the timing of the G1000 process, which ended just before the next local elections, was conveniently chosen to influence the agenda of the newly elected council. This assumption was confirmed by some participants who were involved in the organisation, who explained that they hoped that the results of the G1000 would be taken up by the local parties in their election programmes and thus have a more direct influence on politics (2017, B1, P, citizen).

#### **Enschede**

In Enschede, the strategic political impact of the G1000 was stronger than in Borne. Also in Enschede, we found evidence that some local parties referred to the G1000 process and its outcomes in their party programmes in the run-up to the municipal elections.<sup>2</sup> While some of these local parties took up the main themes of the Citizens' Summit in their party programmes and advocated more democratic experiments

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<sup>1</sup> See the SP, GroenLinks and PvdA election programs for the period 2018-2022.

<sup>2</sup> See the DPE; GroenLinks, D66, Christen Unie, and SP election programs for the period 2018-2022.



with citizen participation, others made explicit promises in their party programmes to take the G1000 process and its outcomes seriously. Furthermore, the G1000 process was used in the 'Enschede Accord', announced by the newly elected city council, as a positive example of a participation project that allows citizens to have direct influence. Interestingly in this case is that three of the five signing parties did not mention the G1000 process in their election programmes. One of these parties even voted against the adoption of the Citizens' Decision. Moreover, in contrast to Borne, the G1000 process was not only used by the parties in their programmes as a positive example of 'good governance'. For example, one party referred to the G1000 process in its party programme as a negative example of a 'prestige' participation project to promote more cooperation between the municipal government and district and village councils.

Furthermore, it became clear in many of the interviews conducted with local politicians that the use of the term 'Citizens' Decision' had a certain political-strategic effect by exerting a certain pressure on the local government. According to some participants, the G1000 process and its final Citizens' Decision ensured that annually recurring issues related to fireworks received political and social attention over a longer period and were placed on the political and social agenda. This would have been difficult in earlier years due to the short period in which the issue of fireworks and related problems attracted media and political attention. Furthermore, some local politicians believed that the G1000 process had been initiated by the mayor as a strategic tool to legitimize his policy ideas and actions regarding the use of fireworks. For example, a local politician claimed that they and other politicians felt that the G1000 process and the Citizens' Decision were part of a 'political game' by the mayor (2017, E4, NP, politician, p. 8, z. 300), aimed at achieving both the mayor's personal and party-political goals concerning fireworks and democratic experimentation. Whether intentional or not, some politicians also implied that deciding whether to approve or reject

a Citizens' Decision in the run-up to the next election was not an innocuous matter. While some local politicians felt pressured by the fact that they did not want to disappoint the G1000 participants, some politicians stated that they would only support the Citizens' Decision if it corresponded to the interests of their voters and the political position of their party (2017, E2, NP, politician).

### **Steenwijkerland**

Also in Steenwijkerland, we found that the strategic political impact of the G1000 was rather strong. Like in the other two G1000 initiatives, we found evidence in Steenwijkerland that some local parties referred to the G1000 process and/or its results in their local party election programs.<sup>1</sup> While some parties used the G1000 process as a good example to increase citizen participation, others promised to implement the results of the G1000. In addition, several participants stated that the local government organized the G1000 process strategically to gain more public support for their local policies to meet their long-term energy-neutral goals. Participants indicated that the G1000 was a last resort of the local government to bring the subject of wind turbines and solar panels up for discussion again (2019, S6, NP, politician). In addition, participants indicated that they deliberately chose to organize the final G1000 event after the local elections to influence the agenda of the newly elected council for a longer period. One participant explained this as follows: “We have done this deliberately because then we can go four years ahead [with the decision of the citizens] and [the newly elected local council] cannot say ‘yes, but that was a decision of the old council’.” (2019, S9, NP, civil servant, p. 7, line 51). However, participants also indicated that organizing the Citizens' Decision after the local elections had the disadvantage that they had to wait for a longer period (about half a year) for the approval of the Citizens' Decision by

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<sup>1</sup> See the BuitenGewoon Leefbaar, Christelijke Partij Burgerbelangen, D66, and GroenLinks election programs for the period 2018-2022.

the newly elected local council (2019, S1, P, civil servant; 2019, S9, NP, civil servant). During this period, some civil servants stated that they could not start implementing the Citizens' Decision on a large scale, which also meant that they lost the involvement of many participants (2019, S1, P, civil servant).

#### 9.1.4 Political impact: summary of the findings

Our results show that in all three municipalities the G1000 results had an instrumental political influence on local government, albeit to varying degrees (see Table 33 for an overview). In Borne, the influence on the municipal council was the least pronounced. Although the G1000 process and the issues discussed during the G1000 process were recognised by the newly elected municipal council and addressed in the new council agreement, the plans and proposals of the G1000 working groups were not put on the political agenda of the municipal council and discussed. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, on the other hand, the influence of the G1000 on the municipal council was much more visible and direct. In both municipalities, the Citizens' Decision was presented to the municipal council and put on the political agenda. Moreover, in both cases, the municipal council decided to take note of the Citizens' Decision and to put the citizens' proposals into action. In Steenwijkerland, the municipality even overrode the Citizens' Decision and decided to consider all decision points as a starting point and orientation for the development of a new programme 'Sustainable Steenwijkerland'. While in Enschede and Steenwijkerland the municipal proposals were published at the end of the G1000 process with concrete measures to implement the plans and proposals of the citizens, the local government in Borne indirectly responded to some of the wishes and ideas of the G1000 working groups by including the mentioned G1000 issues in new and existing policy documents.

In terms of the conceptual impact of the three G1000 initiatives, our findings show that the conceptual impact of the G1000 initiatives on local politicians and local government administration was very different in the three G1000 initiatives (see Table 33 for an overview). In Borne, civil servants and local politicians viewed the G1000 process as part of a broader participatory culture that was already in place before the G1000 process. As a result, the G1000 process did not have a major conceptual impact on local government or local government work processes. Although the municipality offered its support to the working groups and invited some working groups to further consultation meetings after the G1000 process (e.g., via the municipality's website), no new long-term partnerships were established with G1000 participants in which they could further directly influence or shape municipal policy. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, on the other hand, the conceptual influence of the G1000 process on local government was more visible. Although in both initiatives many local politicians were critical of the democratic experiment of a citizens' decision, in both municipalities the citizens' decision stimulated new forms of citizen participation (long-term working groups or partnerships of citizens and civil servants) and put the issue of citizen participation on the political agenda. Through these new partnerships, the G1000 participants had more direct influence and control over the implementation of the G1000 results than the participants in Borne.

In all three G1000 initiatives, we could find some evidence that the G1000 process and/or its outcomes were strategically used by some political actors to either promote their political agenda during local council elections or getting greater public support for existing policies (see Table 33 for an overview). The strategic political impact in Enschede and Steenwijkerland was found to be greater than in Borne as the G1000 process was strategically organised by the municipality/the local mayor to get greater support for their policies from the local population. Moreover, in Enschede as well as in

Steenwijkerland, the Citizens' Decision, and the fact that it was submitted by the local mayor to the council for approval resulted in local politicians being put under pressure to take immediate action and make a political decision. Also, as in all three municipalities, the G1000 initiatives were organised shortly before the local council elections, we also found evidence that in all three municipalities local parties used the G1000 process and/or its outcomes to win votes.

**Table 33.** The political impact of the G1000 initiatives.

Instrumental impact		
Borne	Enschede	Steenwijkerland
Some G1000 outcomes were (in)directly addressed by policymakers. The G1000 process and its outcomes only limited influence political agendas or debates.	The Citizens' Decision was approved by the local council. The accepted proposals of the Citizens' Decision were implemented as a yearly returning citywide fireworks campaign.	The local council accepted all G1000 proposals and recorded them in the new Sustainable Steenwijkerland programme. Moreover, the G1000 ideas and proposals are directly addressed in several policy documents.
Moderate	Strong	Very strong

Conceptual impact		
Borne	Enschede	Steenwijkerland
The G1000 was part of a broader participatory culture in Borne.	The G1000 was mainly seen as an interesting experiment. The newly elected council announced in the <i>Enschede Akkoord</i> to expand forms of civic participation.	The G1000 created new forms of cooperation and communication between the municipality and the citizens.
Limited	Moderate	Strong

Strategic impact		
Borne	Enschede	Steenwijkerland
G1000 process and its outcomes were addressed by a few parties in their election programmes to promote their political agenda. The G1000 process was deliberately planned before the local elections to have more political impact.	Some political parties felt pressured to adopt the Citizens' Decision and/or to react to the G1000 results in their party programmes. The mayor used the G1000 process to create more attention and support for his policy ideas.	The G1000 process and its results were referred to by some parties in their election programmes to promote their political agendas. Local governments used the G1000 process to create more attention and support for their local policies to achieve their long-term energy-neutral goals.
Moderate	Strong	Strong

## 9.2 Did the G1000 initiatives have a social impact?

In the second part of this chapter, we examine to what extent the G1000 process and its outcomes had a social impact on the G1000 participants and/or the local community. To investigate and compare the social instrumental impact of the G1000 initiatives, we first assess the extent to which the G1000 process and its outcomes have called for concrete actions among G1000 participants or fellow citizens and organizations in the local community. Secondly, to investigate the social conceptual impact of the G1000 processes, we look at the extent to which the G1000 process and its results have stimulated a “participation movement” (Michels & Binnema, 2019, p. 752) that has led to greater involvement of G1000 participants and other local citizens in the local community. Finally, we focus on the extent to which the G1000 process and its outcomes have been used strategically by individual actors, the G1000 working groups or organizations to strengthen their power or to influence others (social strategical impact). This chapter ends with a summary and comparison of the findings.

### 9.2.1 Did the G1000 initiatives have a social instrumental impact?

#### **Borne**

In Borne, the G1000 process had a limited social instrumental impact on the local community, as it only led to a few concrete actions and activities of G1000 participants in the local community. Of the seven working groups that presented their ideas at the ‘handover evening’, two succeeded in fully realising their ideas and plans. The working group *Creative Café* created a so-called ‘Creative Café Borne’ (CCB) in the period following the G1000 process, which is organised weekly by a few

volunteers at two different locations in Borne (Plekkenpol, 2018). Members of the *Sustainability Working Group* have also remained active in Borne after the G1000. At the end of the G1000 project, the working group joined the local Borne Sustainable Foundation.<sup>1</sup> Since then, the working group has organised some activities (including making and selling sustainable products at local markets in Borne) aimed at raising awareness of sustainability in the local community as an independent working group (“Meedoen in Mijn Borne,” 2019). As for the other working groups, only a few participants remained committed to realising their ideas. While the *Ecological Living Borne* working group is still looking for ways to realise their ideas, activities of the other three working groups (Noaberschap Verkeer/verkeersveiligheid, and Bestuurlijke vernieuwing) either stopped immediately after the G1000 process<sup>2</sup> or cannot be traced back to the G1000 process<sup>3</sup> (“Meedoen in Mijn Borne,” 2019).

### Enschede

Overall, the social instrumental impact of the G1000 process on participants and the local community was moderate. While the G1000 process and its results had quite an impact on the local community, the impact on the participants was limited. As for the impact on the local community, the G1000 process led to an annual city-wide campaign on the use of fireworks, involving several local organizations (e.g., municipality, marketing agencies, schools, HALT office, local newspapers) and members of the local community. Moreover, in May

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<sup>1</sup> The still active working group members meet regularly (once or twice a month) and exchange ideas about sustainable living via a group treasure (“Meedoen in Mijn Borne,” 2019).

<sup>2</sup> The Noaberschap working group decided to stop mid-2019.

<sup>3</sup> In the aftermath of the G1000, the issue of the connection route remains controversial. Also, in the period after the G1000, a so-called *Working Group Traffic and Safety Zenderen* was set up which, in addition to the connecting road, also focuses on making traffic in the village centre of Zenderen safer by carrying out several activities (“Wandelpad Azelerbeek,” n.d.; “Stroodijk festively reopened,” 2020). However, it is not entirely clear whether this group and its members belong to the working group which formed in the G1000 or whether it formed independently in response to the ongoing debate in the village centre on the disputed connection road.



2019<sup>1</sup>, a study showed that the G1000 results also had a noticeable impact on the local population. About 48% of the residents were aware of the city-wide campaign through different communication channels (e.g., advertisements in the local newspaper, window posters or billboards) and that a large majority of the population of Enschede (76%) supported the campaign. Also, in terms of content, 64 per cent of the local population reported that they knew that several fireworks-free zones had been created after the G1000 process. However, the fact that citizens can voluntarily establish fireworks-free zones themselves was less known among the local population (33%). In addition, some residents with primary school children indicated that the use of fireworks was discussed and that safety kits were distributed at schools. According to the residents surveyed, the greatest contribution of the campaign is that it spreads awareness about the correct and safe use of fireworks (see EnschedePanel,” 2019).

Regarding the social instrumental impact on the G1000 participants, contrary to the other two G1000 initiatives, the participants could sign up for a ‘monitoring group’ after the last G1000 event. The idea of the monitoring group was to oversee and support the proper implementation of the Citizens’ Decision. Over the period 2017 – 2019, the number of members of the monitoring group noticeably decreased from the initial thirty people who signed up for it to eight members (personal communication, 2020). The members of the monitoring group themselves did not actively participate in the activities resulting from the city-wide campaign. Instead, they mainly took on a monitoring, advisory and evaluative role in the implementation of the Citizens’ Decision. Moreover, in 2019, the remaining monitoring group members decided that after the evaluation and finalisation of the manual, their monitoring task had been completed (personal

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<sup>1</sup> This research was conducted among 1.195 inhabitants in Enschede by the government-related research bureau Kennispunt Twente in May 2019 (see reference: “EnschedePanel,” 2019).

communication, 2020). Mid-2019, they consequently fully transferred the further annual implementation of the Citizens' Decision to the local government (Staal, 2019). At the request of the civil servants involved, three members agreed to meet annually with the municipality to "stay on top of things" (personal communication, 2020).

### **Steenwijkerland**

In Steenwijkerland the G1000 had a very strong social instrumental effect on both the G1000 participants and the local community. The G1000 process not only led to the creation of new local initiatives initiated by the G1000 participants but also to the building of new collaborations within the local community (e.g., between citizens and the municipality or between different social organisations). Although, as in the other G1000 initiatives, the majority of participants stopped participating in G1000-related activities, those who continued managed to create new local initiatives that attracted other citizens from their community to become active. Several working groups launched citizens' initiatives to realise their ideas in the aftermath of the G1000 process. For example, although their ideas were rejected by the Citizens' Council, the *Awareness Working Group* launched the citizens' initiative 'IK BEGIN' (Engl. 'I START') and a website and Facebook group (514 followers (2021)) ("IK BEGIN!," n.d.). Through their website, the working group wants to "inform, raise awareness, motivate and help people on their way to a sustainable society" ("Welkom op de site van IK BEGIN!," n.d.). They do this not only by providing information on all kinds of topics related to energy-saving and sustainability and related national initiatives but also by promoting the local projects of other G1000 working groups aimed at making Steenwijkerland more energy neutral or sustainable. In addition, members of the *Information and Learning Working Group* have set up the 'Sustainable Steenwijkerland Foundation'. They released their idea of setting up an 'Energy shop', where residents can obtain accessible information about energy-saving

measures or making their homes' energy efficient. Regarding the subject of energy cooperation, two corporations have been set up by G1000 participants: “coöperatie duurzaam Belt-Schutsloot” and “Energiecoöperatie Steenwijk”. With more than 90 members, the cooperation “coöperatie duurzaam Belt-Schutsloot” aims to preserve and promote the quality of life in and around the village of Belt-Schutsloot (“Ontstaan van de coöperatie,” 2020). The energy cooperation “Energiecoöperatie Steenwijk”, on the other hand, focuses on the inner city of Steenwijkerland. The energy cooperative organizes various projects to jointly generate sustainable energy (e.g. using a solar collective or energy tax rebate) (“Wat doet de Energiecoöperatie Steenwijk?,” n.d.). Moreover, the idea of the *Dichtbij Huis working group* to advise citizens at home on their energy consumption in a so-called ‘kitchen table discussion’ has also been taken up in 2020. In collaboration with residents, including working group members of the Dichtbij Huis, the municipality and housing corporations, the “energy coaches” project was started in 2020 to visit people at home to advise on their energy consumption (“Energiecoaches,” n.d.).

## 9.2.2 Did the G1000 initiatives have a social conceptual impact?

### **Borne**

In Borne, the G1000 process had a moderate social conceptual impact on the participants and local community as it fed into a series of smaller and larger citizen participation events and activities resulting from the participatory vision project *MijnBorne2030*. Many participants stressed that since the participation process *MijnBorne2030* in 2011, a ‘participatory culture’ has emerged in Borne, with many socially engaged citizens and other civil society organizations (2017, B5, NP, civil servant). Because of this already existing participatory culture, in which the lines of communication are short and social actors easily come into

contact with each other, a few participants doubted whether the G1000 would have any visible social conceptual impact at all (2017, B8, NP, press/observer). Unlike the participatory vision project *MyBorne2030*, the G1000 process, therefore, attracted less attention from the broader local public, and therefore probably did not stimulate a second larger ‘participatory movement’.

In addition, we found that the conceptual impact of the G1000 process on the participants was limited. In 2019, G1000 participants indicated that since their participation in the G1000 in 2017 they do not feel more involved with their neighbourhood, nor have they made more contact with other residents (see Table A9, Appendix). Moreover, neither G1000 participants’ activeness in their local neighbourhood<sup>1</sup> nor their sense of responsibility for the quality of life in their local neighbourhood did increase in the period following the G1000 process.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, G1000 participants indicated that they neither feel more nor less involved in their municipality since participating in the G1000 process (see Table A9, Appendix). In addition, participants’ political activeness in their municipality did not increase in the aftermath of the G1000 process.<sup>3</sup> And G1000 participants indicated that their trust in local politics has not increased since they participated in the G1000 process (see Table A9, Appendix).

## Enschede

Although the G1000 had a visible instrumental impact on society, the conceptual social impact of the G1000 process and its outcomes on the local community in Enschede was very limited. Besides the fact that a monitoring group was formed, no new local initiatives emerged in the

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<sup>1</sup> McNemar test on the question “Have you been active in or for your neighbourhood in the past year?” (S1Q10; before G1000) and (S3Q7; after G1000), with  $p = 1$ .

<sup>2</sup> T-test on the participants’ scores on the question “To what extent do you feel responsible for the quality of life in your neighbourhood?” (S1Q11; before G1000) and (S3Q9; after G1000), with  $p = 0.8507$ .

<sup>3</sup> The numbers have remained the same.

aftermath of the G1000 that could be linked to either the G1000 process or the G1000 results.

Regarding the conceptual impact of the G1000 process on the G1000 participants, the G1000 initiative in Enschede failed to maintain the engagement of the vast majority of participants during and after the G1000 process. The vast majority of G1000 participants decided to stop participating in G1000 related activities during or immediately after the official end of the G1000 process. In addition to the fact that the G1000 process in Enschede failed to sustain the engagement of the vast majority of G1000 participants, the G1000 process also had no positive influence on the engagement levels and attitudes of participants towards the local government in the long run. In 2019, G1000 participants indicated that since their participation in G1000 they neither feel more involved with their neighbourhood nor have they made more contact with other residents (see Table A9, Appendix). Moreover, we found that participation in the G1000 process had a negative effect on participants' activeness in their neighbourhood and their sense of responsibility for the quality of life in their local community.<sup>1</sup> In addition, we found that the decreased level of activeness of the G1000 participants in their neighbourhood can be explained by participants' diminished sense of responsibility for the quality of life in their local community.<sup>2</sup> In addition, G1000 participants in Enschede indicated that they do not feel more or less involved with their local municipality since their participation in the G1000 process in 2017 (see Table A9, Appendix). Also politically, participants did not become more active in their municipality following their participation in the G1000 process<sup>3</sup>. In

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<sup>1</sup> McNemar test on the question "Have you been active in or for your neighbourhood in the past year?" (S1Q10; before G1000) and (S3Q7; after G1000), which was significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

<sup>2</sup> Binary logistic regression with question "Have you been active in or for your neighbourhood in the past year?" (S1Q10 & S3Q7) as dependent variable and question "To what extent do you feel responsible for the quality of life in your neighbourhood?" (S1Q11 & S3Q9)' as independent variable, which was significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

<sup>3</sup> McNemar test on the question "Are you politically active in your municipality?" (S1Q15; before G1000) and (S3Q13; after G1000), with  $p = 1$ .

addition, G1000 participants indicated that they have not gained more trust in local politics since they participated in the G1000 (see Table A9, Appendix).

### **Steenwijkerland**

In Steenwijkerland we found that the conceptual impact of the G1000 process on the local community was much greater than with the other two G1000 initiatives. The G1000 process has led to several new local initiatives around the themes of sustainability and energy neutrality. We could even say that the G1000 process has led to a ‘participative movement in Steenwijkerland’ since it has contributed to the creation of awareness and attention in the local community about these themes and the launch of several new local initiatives.

However, regarding the conceptual impact of the G1000 process on the G1000 participants, the G1000 process did not have a significant impact on the participants’ long-term commitment to their local community. We found that only a few G1000 participants participated in local citizens’ initiatives or worked as volunteers after the G1000 process. Moreover, overall, like in Borne, participants did not indicate that they feel more engaged in their local community since their participation in the G1000 (see Table A9, Appendix). Participants also did not indicate that they have made more contact with other residents since they participated in the G1000 process (see Table A9, Appendix). Besides, G1000 participants’ activity in their local neighbourhood<sup>1</sup> and their sense of responsibility for the quality of the life in their local neighbourhood<sup>2</sup> did not change following their participation in the G1000 process. Likewise, following their participation in the G1000 process, the participants have not become more politically active in their

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<sup>1</sup> McNemar test on the question “Have you been active in or for your neighbourhood in the past year?” (S1Q10; before G1000) and (S3Q7; after G1000), with  $p = 1$ .

<sup>2</sup> T-test on the participants’ scores on the question “To what extent do you feel responsible for the quality of life in your neighbourhood?” (S1Q11, before G1000) and (S3Q9, after G1000), with  $p = 0.4155$ .

municipality.<sup>1</sup> In addition, also in Steenwijkerland, participants indicated that they have not gained more trust in local politics since they participated in the G1000 process (see Table A9, Appendix).

### 9.2.3 Did the G1000 initiatives have a social strategic impact?

#### **Borne**

Overall, we found little evidence that individuals or organizations used the results of the G1000 to support or oppose actors. One exception in this regard, however, was the *traffic working group* that was set up after the Citizens' Summit and in which a few citizens from the second village centre of Zenderen were involved. Already at the handover evening, the working group's presentation was criticized by the political actors present because they felt that there was no room within the G1000 for people to express their political position (personal observation, research journal, 2017, December). Also before the handover evening, the working group had already been noticed because a participant of this working group tried to put pressure on the local parties in Borne using a letter that was signed in the name of the whole G1000 working group (Spoor, 2017). In a letter of reply, the Village Council of Zenderen argued that the author of the letter only expressed his personal preference and did not speak on behalf of the local community. Moreover, the village council concluded that one of the risks of the G1000 is that it could be used as a platform by individuals to express their personal preferences (Welberg, Wolbers & Semmekrot, 2017).

#### **Enschede**

Also in Enschede, we found that the social strategic impact of the G1000 was rather limited. We did find some evidence that some G1000 participants wanted to steer or influence the G1000 process, or its

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<sup>1</sup> McNemar test on the question "Have you been active in or for your neighbourhood in the past year?" S1Q10 (before G1000) and S3Q7 (after G1000), with  $p = 0.6171$ .

implementation, strategically to serve their personal interests. For instance, one member of the monitoring group tried to use the local media to put pressure on the implementation of the Citizens' Decision to enforce a firework ban after all (Staal, 2018). However, this action did not have much influence on the implementation of the Citizens' Decision.

### **Steenwijkerland**

In Steenwijkerland, the social strategic impact of the G1000 was rather limited. In 2019, the G1000 working group on 'wind and solar energy' announced via the local media that they were not glad about the new policy for solar fields (Van der Broek, 2019). In 2020, the same working group submitted recommendations to a municipal council discussion to influence policy development and the selection of areas for solar fields and parks (Jansen, Kuper, Hornstra, Dragt, & Morsink, 2020). Apart from these events, however, we could not find any examples where individuals or organizations, or G1000 participants, used the G1000 to strategically influence other individuals or organizations/institutions.

#### 9.2.4 Social impact: summary of the findings

The results show that in all three initiatives, only a few G1000 participants remained engaged in G1000-related activities after the G1000 process (see Table 34 for an overview). Nevertheless, the G1000 processes led to concrete actions and new local initiatives in the communities, although their actual instrumental impact on the three communities studied was quite different. In Borne, the social instrumental impact of the G1000 process on the local community was rather limited, as few concrete actions and new local initiatives could be linked to the G1000 process. In some cases, the G1000 participants who remained active continued their activities in existing local initiatives, resulting in few new initiatives being launched. In Steenwijkerland, on the other hand, the G1000 process led to many new sustainability and



energy neutrality activities initiated either by G1000 citizens or fellow citizens in the post-G1000 period. While in Steenwijkerland and Borne the remaining G1000 participants were in some cases still involved in the implementation of the new local initiatives themselves, this was not the case for the remaining G1000 participants in Enschede. In Enschede, the Citizens' Decision was implemented by the local municipality with the help of several social organizations in the form of a city-wide campaign, which resulted in some visible activities in the city around New Year's Eve. However, although the instrumental impact of the city-wide campaign on the local population was large in this way, the G1000 participants in Enschede did not themselves participate in these activities resulting from the city-wide campaign. In Enschede, the members of the monitoring group mainly took monitoring, advisory and evaluating role in the implementation of the G1000 outcomes.

Concerning the social conceptual impact on the local community, our results show that it was very different in the three G1000 initiatives. In Borne, the G1000 process became part of a larger already existing 'participatory culture' and therefore had only a moderate conceptual impact on the local community with the establishment of a small number of new local initiatives. Moreover, while in Steenwijkerland the G1000 process led to a 'participatory movement' as it resulted in many new local initiatives on sustainability and energy neutrality, in Enschede it did not lead to any new local initiatives in the community, except for the monitoring group that dissolved itself after a certain time.

Moreover, the results also show that the G1000 has not had a measurable positive conceptual impact on the G1000 participants in the long term (see Table 34 for an overview). The participants have not become more active in their neighbourhood or municipality in the period after the G1000. While in Steenwijkerland and Borne, participants' activism in their neighbourhood remained the same in the time following the G1000 process, in Enschede, G1000 participants

even became less active due to a decreased sense of responsibility for the quality of life in their local community. Politically, too, the G1000 participants in all three initiatives did not become more active in the municipality in the time following the G1000 process. These results correspond with G1000 participants' perception of the influence of the G1000 process on their civic or political activism in their local community. In general, the G1000 participants indicated that their involvement in their neighbourhood and municipality has not increased since they participated in the G1000 process, nor that they have made more contact with other residents. Finally, G1000 participants also indicated that their trust in local politics has not increased since they participated in the G1000 process.

Finally, in all three initiatives, we could not find much evidence that the results of the G1000 have been used by individual actors or organizations to support or oppose others (see Table 34 for an overview). In all three G1000 initiatives, individual G1000 participants have tried during or after the G1000 process to influence the implementation of the G1000 outcomes or certain political decisions. However, as these were only single incidents, we concluded that the social strategic impact of the G1000 process was limited if not existing in the three initiatives.

**Table 34.** Social impact of the G1000 initiatives.

<b>Instrumental impact</b>		
<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>
Only some G1000 participants remained active in the aftermath of the G1000 process. The creation of new local initiatives was limited. Some G1000 participants joined existing local initiatives.	Only a small group of G1000 participants remained active in the monitoring group. The city-wide campaign was recognized and appreciated by the local population for highlighting the problem of fireworks nuisance.	Many G1000 participants have stopped participating in G1000 related activities, but many follow-up actions have been set up by individual G1000 participants who have also involved other local citizens.
<b>Limited</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Very strong</b>

<b>Conceptual impact</b>		
<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>
The G1000 process has triggered a few new local initiatives. Civic engagement levels of G1000 participants neither decrease nor increase after they participate in the G1000 process.	No new local initiatives have emerged because of the G1000 process, apart from the monitoring group. Civic engagement levels of G1000 participants decreased after they participated in the G1000 process.	The G1000 process started a participative movement in the local community. Civic engagement levels of G1000 participants neither decrease nor increase after they participate in the G1000 process.
<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Strong</b>

<b>Strategic impact</b>		
<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>
Individual G1000 participants used the G1000 process to increase their power to influence the political agenda.	Individual G1000 participants used the G1000 process to increase their power to influence the political agenda.	Individual G1000 participants used the G1000 process to increase their power to influence the political agenda.
<b>Limited</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Limited</b>

## 9.3 Factors influencing the political and social impact of mini-publics

The findings presented above (summarised in Tables 33 and 34) show that the type and extent of the impact of G1000 initiatives on political decision-making, the community, and the participants varied widely across the studied cases. These findings raise the question of how these differences can be explained? Using theoretical insights discussed in Chapter 4 (see section 4.3.1), we will in the following elaborate on the factors that might have caused these differences and thus offer some suggestion as to the possible factors that might influence the political and social impact of mini-publics.

First, our results show that the G1000 processes and their outcomes had a more direct (instrumental) influence on local government in Enschede and Steenwijkerland than in Borne because the G1000 processes were more embedded in the existing political system. One reason that contributed to this ‘better’ embedding of the G1000 processes in Enschede and Steenwijkerland is that both G1000 processes were initiated and supported by the local government. As a result of this top-down approach, local government actors in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, as organizers of the G1000 process, felt more responsible for the successful running of the G1000 process and the implementation of its outcomes than in Borne. Some civil servants and policymakers in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, therefore, felt more like ‘owners’ of the G1000 process, while in Borne they saw their role in the G1000 process more like that of a mediating and supporting social partner. Our findings, therefore, provide some evidence for Michels and Binnema’s (2019) argument that mini-publics outcomes can generate more ‘real’ policy impact when initiated or explicitly supported by the local government.

However, a greater sense of ownership of the G1000 process alone does not fully explain why the G1000 initiatives in Enschede and Steenwijkerland exerted more real influence on policy-making. The main reason for this is related to a second important factor, namely the extent to which a mini-public and its outcomes were endorsed by influential political actors and coalitions. According to Kingdon model (see section 4.3.1), the reason why some policy issues are high on the political agenda and others are not depending on the extent to which a window of opportunity (interplay between key political actors and processes) is opened by the help of one or more political entrepreneurs. The extent to which a political entrepreneur creates a window of opportunity depends not only on whether the person has sufficient resources (e.g., time, energy, network, reputation, or money to promote a mini-public) but also on whether the person sees an opportunity to invest their resources to strategically influence specific policy outcomes. Our results show that in Enschede and Steenwijkerland both instrumental and strategic political influence was greater than in Borne. In both G1000 initiatives, a few individual actors (e.g., the mayor, officials in the local administration, the G1000 organization) played a key role in creating a window of opportunity for the G1000 processes and the implementation of their outcomes. They did this by either using their prestige or political power to put pressure on local decision-making (e.g., the local council) or by investing time to support the G1000 participants and the implementation of the G1000 results. Furthermore, in all three G1000 initiatives, we observed that these key actors had different motives to strategically support the G1000 process and its outcomes. While some actors used the G1000 process to create more public support and/or attention for a particular societal and policy problem, a few local politicians used the G1000 process and its outcomes strategically to promote their political agenda (e.g., to gain votes in the upcoming elections). Consequently, we argue that in addition to embedding a mini-public in the political system, the

presence of some key political entrepreneurs is essential to enable a mini-public to exert direct, or instrumental, influence on policy-making.

In addition to the importance of key policy entrepreneurs, our findings indicate that the extent to which the subject under discussion in a mini-public is recognized by policymakers as a feasible solution to a relevant policy or societal problem also influences a mini-public's instrumental impact on policy-making. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, the G1000 process led to a citizens' decision, which was subsequently confirmed by the municipal council. From our findings we could derive three main reasons why the local council did so: first, several influential policy actors defined the subject discussed at the Citizens' Summit as a relevant policy or societal problem. Secondly, the plans and proposals in Enschede and Steenwijkerland presented concrete solutions that were largely in line with the values and policy agendas of most of the political actors and parties. And thirdly, since all proposed ideas and approaches had to fulfil a set of predefined conditions, they were recognized by political actors as technically and financially feasible<sup>1</sup> and consequently as possible and implementable solutions to the problem under discussion. In contrast, in Borne, some of the final plans and proposals addressed issues that already were considered in existing policy documents. Moreover, as the final proposals in Borne did not have to comply with given predefined conditions, most final plans and proposals were less elaborated than those in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, and consequently lacked concretely formulated solutional approaches and actions. From this, we can derive that the extent to which a mini-public's outcome has a direct impact on policy-making also depends on the nature of its outcomes, the extent to which

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<sup>1</sup> In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, the final G1000 proposals had to meet three conditions: The proposals had to be legally permissible, enforceable, and should not undermine the applicable powers of the municipal council.

they discuss a relevant problem and formulate a feasible solution approach to it.

A fourth factor that influenced both the political and social impact of the G1000 initiatives was framing. A key difference in the framing of the G1000 initiatives was that the G1000 process in Borne was framed as a bottom-up approach, whereas in Enschede and Steenwijkerland it was seen more as a top-down approach. As we have already indicated, the top-down approach in Enschede and Steenwijkerland led to a greater sense of responsibility among civil servants and policymakers, which contributed to the actual consistency of the G1000 results and thus to their instrumental policy impact. However, the downside of this top-down approach was that the majority of G1000 participants did not feel ownership of the G1000 process. In both Enschede and Steenwijkerland, officials complained that most participants lacked the willingness to actively participate in the implementation of the citizens' decisions. In Enschede, the members of the monitoring group disbanded the group after some time, as they considered their task done. One reason for this low level of activism in the follow-up phase of the G1000 process is due to the framing of the final results in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, the citizens' decision. Both citizens' decisions read like a dictate to the government, which includes a request to the local government to implement the citizens' decision. Consequently, in both cases, the full responsibility for implementing the final G1000 results was deposited by the local government. It is therefore not surprising that most participants did not see the implementation of the Citizen' Decision as to their responsibility. Moreover, in Enschede, the participation of citizens in the implementation of the G1000 results was referred to as 'monitoring'. The term 'monitoring' already implies a rather passive attitude if not untrusting way of looking at politics. This is perhaps the reason why, as soon as participants saw that the citizens' decision was implemented in the form of an annual fireworks campaign, they considered their task of monitoring the proper implementation of

the G1000 results as done. Consequently, our findings suggest that framing can play an important role in how actors involved in a mini-public (citizens and local government actors) perceive their role in the participation process and whether they continue to feel personally committed and responsible for the implementation of the outcomes after it has concluded.

The last factor refers to the extent to which a mini-public and its outcomes are embedded in a solid existing network structure and consequently relates to the existing civil society. Studies on political participation have shown that in larger municipalities, municipal network structures are weaker than in smaller municipalities<sup>1</sup> (see Van Houwelingen & Dekker, 2015; Van der Meer & Van der Kolk, 2016; see also section 4.3.1). In line with this, Michels and Binnema (2019) suggested in their study that mini-publics that take place in communities with solid existing community networks are better able to generate social impact than mini-publics that take place in communities with loose or weak community networks. Indeed, our findings support their thesis that community size matters when it comes to the social conceptual impact that G1000 initiatives exerted. Even though in all three G1000 initiatives the vast majority of participants stopped all G1000-related activities, we found that the G1000 initiatives organized in the smaller municipalities, Borne and Steenwijkerland (with less than 50.000 inhabitants), generated more conceptual social impact than the G1000 initiative in Enschede (with more than 150.000 inhabitants). While in Steenwijkerland and Borne the G1000 participants created at least some new local citizens' initiatives or networked with already existing initiatives, in Enschede no new local citizens' initiatives emerged from the G1000 process. We know from studies on political participation that citizens' initiatives are an expression of active

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<sup>1</sup> According to Van Houwelingen and Dekker (2015), municipalities with more than 100.000 inhabitants show a lower level of civic activism than municipalities with a population between 50.000 and 100.000 inhabitants (Van Houwelingen and Dekker, 2015, p. 228).



citizenship, where citizens create initiatives that lead to activities and physical facilities intending to improve their living environment and thus increasing or maintaining their quality of life. Our results showed that even before the G1000, G1000 participants in Enschede showed less activism in their local neighbourhood and community than participants in Borne and Steenwijkerland, as they were less concerned about the quality of life in their neighbourhood. Moreover, the level of activism of participants in Enschede decreased in the post-G1000 period, as they started to care even less about the quality of life in their neighbourhood. The reason for the decreased level of activism in Enschede may be related to the fact that participants in Enschede were very disappointed about the final citizens' decision, as only three of the six proposals were accepted. This disappointment also played a role in Steenwijkerland but was resolved when the municipal council decided to support all the citizens' proposals. Our results thus provide some evidence that the network structure in municipalities influences the social impact of G1000 initiatives. Furthermore, the results suggest that sustaining civic engagement after a mini-public event is overall rather difficult in the long run. However, it seems to be more difficult to maintain civic engagement in larger communities than in smaller ones. From this, it can be deduced that the extent to which a mini-public succeeds in connecting with the local community and creating new local initiatives depends on the solid existing network structure and the extent to which citizens are actively involved in their local community before and after the participation process.

## 9.4 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to investigate the political and social impact of the G1000 initiatives. Moreover, we aimed to shed light on possible factors influencing the political and social impact of a mini-public on (local) governments, decision-making and on society.

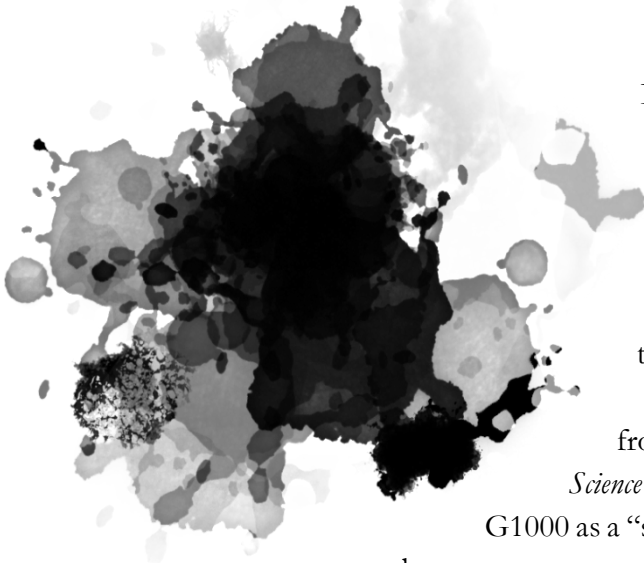
Overall, the findings presented show that the extent of the political and social impact of G1000 initiatives in the cases studied varied widely depending on five factors: [1] their embeddedness in the political system, [2] the involvement of some key policy entrepreneurs, [3] the political recognition of the outcomes as possible solutions to a relevant societal/policy problem, [4] the way the participation process was framed, and [5] the level of connection which was established with the existing civil society.

Regarding the question of whether the G1000 initiatives fulfilled their third and final underlying ideal of exerting both political and social influence, we can conclude that the G1000 initiatives in Enschede and Steenwijkerland certainly exerted more political influence on local decision-making processes than the G1000 process in Borne, due to their better embeddedness in the political system. However, the results also showed that this greater embeddedness of the participation process can also come at the cost of its social impact, as participants in Enschede felt less ownership of the process. Consequently, we conclude that creating a shared sense of ownership of the process and the implementation of its outcomes between political and social actors is the next challenge facing the G1000. One way forward in this regard could be framing. By framing the participation process as a co-creation process, more social influence could be exerted in the future.



# Chapter 10

# 10 CONCLUSION



In this dissertation, we have focused on one particular mini-public design, the Dutch G1000. At the time of writing this chapter, the organization G1000.nu received the *Brouwer Vertrouwensprijs 2021* (Eng. Brouwer Trust Prize 2021) from the *Royal Dutch Association for Science* (KHMW) for developing the

G1000 as a “successful instrument for restoring trust between government and citizens and among citizens” (G1000.nu, 2021). With 26 organized G1000 initiatives in various local authorities in the Netherlands, the G1000 certainly has the potential to pave the way towards a new form of democracy. As a member of the mini-public family, the G1000 can be seen as a *democratic innovation* that aims to “go beyond the familiar institutionalized forms of citizens’ participation such as competitive elections and consultation mechanisms” (Smith, 2009, p. 2, 1). The G1000 philosophy aims at making decisions that are broadly supported by the entire local community, thus enabling a new application of co-creation in the policy. Moreover, through random selection and structured deliberation, the G1000 philosophy aims to create a safe environment where a diverse group of equal citizens from the local community can autonomously decide what they consider important for their neighbourhood, village, or city.

Apart from the high ambitions of the *G1000.nu* organization itself and the high expectations of deliberative democrats and politicians for these

democratic experiments in general, we have shown that knowledge about mini-publics is still in its infancy (see chapter 4). This dissertation aimed to learn more about the functioning of a mini-public and its potential effects on citizens involvement in decision-making by answering the following main research question: *To what extent can deliberative mini-publics contribute to greater citizen involvement in local decision-making?* To answer this question, we investigated and compared in this dissertation three G1000 initiatives in more detail.

In the three empirical chapters in the dissertation, we focussed on three aspects of the G1000 initiative, its representative quality (see chapter 7), its quality of deliberation and decision-making (see chapter 8), and its political and social impact (see chapter 9). In terms of the structure of this final chapter, we first discuss step by step the answers to the research questions that were addressed in the three empirical chapters. For this purpose, we will present our main findings and elaborate on the main conclusions we can draw from them. In the second part of this chapter, we discuss the implications of the main findings presented in this dissertation for researchers and practitioners. We conclude this dissertation with a brief reflection in which we also address the main research question.

## 10.1 Main findings and scientific contribution

### 10.1.1 Representative quality of the G1000 initiatives

In chapter 7, we focused on the representative quality of the G1000 initiatives to answer the first research question:

*To what extent were the G1000 populations a good reflection of the wider local population in Borne, Enschede, Steenwijkerland?*

Our results showed that in all three G1000 initiatives, the G1000 populations were not a good reflection of the broader local populations.

We found significant differences between G1000 participants and the wider population in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics, general attitudes, and behavioural characteristics. The G1000 participants were on average older and much more educated than the general local population. Moreover, the participants of the G1000 were more active in citizens' initiatives and national elections, showed more trust in their local authorities, and were on average more left-wing and progressive than the general local population.

The fact that the G1000 populations were not a good reflection of the broader local populations is not surprising. Similar results were found in the past by other studies on deliberative mini-publics (see Fishkin, 2011; Fournier, et al., 2011; Boogaard et al., 2016). Yet, our study revealed some interesting insights on the reasons behind the biased G1000 samples. Contrary to what one may have expected, the observed differences between the G1000 populations and the broader populations were not just a consequence of the non-random selection methods used. Interestingly, the sample bias occurred mainly before the start of the G1000 process. Thus, the representativeness of the G1000 population was mainly influenced by what Fung (2003) called "the mechanism of voluntary self-selection". Thus, although a large number of citizens from the local population were randomly selected and recruited to participate in the G1000 processes, we found that those who accepted the invitation were neither random nor more representative than the non-randomly selected sample. Both the population of randomly selected participants and the population of non-randomly selected participants showed the patterns described above and were consequently not a good reflection of the larger local population.

This conclusion holds one interesting theoretical implication regarding the external inclusiveness of deliberative mini-publics: the use of purely random sampling methods does not guarantee a statistically

representative and thus diverse sample of mini-publics participants. The main reason for this is that participation in mini-publics is always influenced by self-selection as individuals voluntarily decide whether to participate in mini-publics (Fung, 2003). Thus, although participants are selected and recruited at random, those who accept the invitation are not random (see also Steel, et al., 2020). Mini-publics, especially larger ones, appear to attract people who share some common socio-demographic characteristics. The G1000 mainly attracted what Boogaard et al. (2016) call the “usual suspects” or the “participation elite” (highly educated and politically active older (over 50) white men/women), thus by no means a representative group of participants or a diverse “microcosm” of the larger local populations (Fishkin, 1997).

Yet, our results also showed that the quality of representativeness, or a perceived lack thereof, should not be underestimated in deliberative mini-publics. In the three studies of the G1000 initiatives, the participants judged the legitimacy of the G1000 outcomes purely based on their perception of the representativeness of the G1000 participants. This consequently leaves us with the question of how a better quality of representativeness and thus inclusiveness can be achieved in deliberative mini-publics. In recent years, some scholars suggested that in some cases a more inclusive participant sample in a mini-public can be achieved by stratifying or oversampling minority groups (cf. James, 2008; Derenne, 2012; Steel, et al., 2020) or by using non-random or hybrid recruitment strategies (cf. Brown, 2006; Steel, et al., 2020). Yet, as our findings indicated, the use of hybrid recruitment strategies (in the three Dutch cases: use of random sample selection + self-selection) did not contribute to a more diverse or representative sample either. This finding is perhaps not so surprising, as adding some self-selected participants to an already unrepresentative sample of randomly selected participants certainly does not contribute to the overall representativeness of a mini-public. The use of stratification or



oversampling, on the other hand, might be a better approach to improve the representative quality of a mini-public sample, e.g., through a procedure where the population concerned is divided into subgroups (e.g., based on demographic characteristics) before the sampling process, and within each of these (weighted) subgroups, the participants are randomly selected. However, the question remains whether stratified random sampling would help to prevent the problem of non-participation, no-shows and (last-minute) dropouts. Further research (e.g., experimental research) in this direction is therefore needed to systematically investigate the use of different selection methods (such as stratified random sampling, oversampling minorities) in different mini-public designs and to compare their effects on the representative quality of the participants' samples.

Regarding other factors that undermined the representativeness of the three G1000 initiatives, we found that the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives was seriously undermined by the problem of non-participation and (last minutes) drop-out during the process. Not only was the initial response rate of randomly selected citizens to the G1000 invitations lower than in other mini-public designs (1.8% - 2.2%), but also the number of randomly selected and non-randomly selected citizens in all three initiatives decreased significantly due to no-shows and drop-outs during the G1000 process. Participants' decisions to leave the G1000 process, however, were not related to their socio-demographic characteristics, general attitudes, or behavioural characteristics. The main reason for the high rate of drop-outs during the G1000 process was a perceived lack of time. A consequence of these high dropout rates was, however, that the more active participants stayed, while others dropped out.

Our results imply that although some participants might have wanted to participate in the entire G1000 process, most of those who dropped out did so because they did not have enough time to participate. It is

therefore not surprising that the G1000 initiatives especially attracted a certain group of citizens (highly educated and politically active older (over 50) white men/women) who possessed the necessary resources to participate in a six-month participation process. However, from our results we cannot determine the reason why invited citizens did not participate in the first place and whether a lack of time was the main reason here as well. Therefore, more research is needed to better understand the problems of non-participation in mini-publics throughout the whole process.

### 10.1.2 Quality of deliberation and decision-making in the G1000 initiatives

In the second empirical chapter of this dissertation (chapter 8), we focused on the quality of deliberation and decision-making in the three G1000 initiatives to answer the second research question:

*To what extent was a high quality of deliberation and decision-making achieved in the three G1000 initiatives?*

Our findings showed that the G1000 methodology used at the Citizens' Summits fulfils its promise: it is a suitable method from the perspective of eliciting several consensus-driven outcomes and the creation of what the G1000.nu organisation calls a 'common ground' and mutual understanding between the participants. However, our findings also indicated that inequalities between participants occurred and that a few participants were dissatisfied with the dialogue during Citizens' Summits as they had different expectations of the purpose of the conversations. While some participants expected to learn more about the complexity of the problem at hand during the Citizens' Summits ('dialogue seekers'), others saw it as their task to come up with concrete ideas and approaches to solve the problem ('problem solvers').

In addition, we found that participants rated the quality of decision-making lower than the quality of the dialogues at the Citizens' Summit. We concluded that not all participants had a clear understanding of the conditions under which they were participating during the G1000 process due to a perceived lack of transparency about the G1000 process and the used decision-making procedures. Yet, a perceived process-related clarity did not influence participants' overall assessment of the G1000. Their evaluation was mainly influenced by the procedural fairness of the decision-making procedures used, but also by the perceived quality of the dialogues, the perceived clarity about the final G1000 outcomes and the perceived representative quality of the G1000. Regarding the perceived legitimacy of the results, we found that participants based their judgement solely on the perceived representative quality of the G1000 participants.

One important implication of this finding is that the representative quality in decision-oriented mini-public designs is crucial. In all empirical chapters of this dissertation, the problem of a perceived lack of representativeness became apparent. While in chapter 7 we found that participants rated the overall representativeness of the G1000 as sufficient, in chapters 8 and 9 we discovered that the perceived representativeness of the G1000 populations plays a crucial role in the evaluation of the large-scale deliberative event and, more importantly, the legitimacy of its outcomes. Yet, mini-publics do not all pursue the same goals (see Fung, 2003; and Steel, et al. 2020). While some mini-publics are more educational or advisory, others aim to solve one or more specific problem(s) (see Fung, 2003). As we have seen in the case of the G1000, in some cases a mini-public design can also have multiple objectives. For example, the G1000 aims to find common ground by exploring a range of perspectives and proposals during a large-scale deliberation event. At this stage, the G1000 is less decision-oriented and more focused on finding a 'common ground' (consensus) or several solutional approaches through dialogue. This is also why the G1000

organisation focused its recruitment strategy more on increasing the diversity of the group of participants (cross-sectional concept of representativeness<sup>1</sup>) at the expense of the statistical representativeness of the G1000 sample (using self-selection and targeted recruitment strategies). Still, after the large-scale deliberations, the participants were asked to elaborate a series of perspectives and proposals, and in the cases of Enschede and Steenwijkerland, to come to a Citizens' Decision. In the subsequent phase, the G1000 design, therefore, became more decision-oriented. In decision-oriented mini-public designs, where the main goal is to arrive at a set of 'binding' political proposals rather than a recommendation, our results have shown that a high quality of representativeness is important to ensure the legitimacy of the results among participants and addressees (i.e., political actors). Given this result, we argue that more research is needed on the perceived representative quality of different mini-public designs that aim to achieve different goals. Steel, et al. (2020) recently proposed a more 'purposeful design' approach, whereby recruitment strategies should depend on the purpose or 'mixed purposes' of deliberative mini-publics (p. 46). However, this more purposeful design approach requires further (experimental) research to investigate which recruitment strategies best fit the specific mini-public or mixed objectives, as well as the expectations of participating or non-participating citizens/societal actors.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Steel, et al (2020), "statistical representativeness - wherein the distribution of relevant characteristics in the sample resembles that in the general population" - can be distinguished from "cross-sectional representativeness, wherein all relevant characteristics present in the population are also found in the sample but not necessarily in the same proportions" (p. 46).

### 10.1.3 Quality of deliberation and decision-making in the G1000 initiatives

In the third empirical chapter of this dissertation (chapter 9), we investigated the political and social impact of the G1000 initiatives to answer our third and final research question:

*To what extent had the Dutch G1000 initiatives an impact on political decision-making, the local community, and on the participants themselves?*

Our findings indicate that the embedding of the G1000 in the political system had a positive influence on its actual impact on policymaking. In the G1000 initiatives where the processes were co-organised by the local municipalities, policymakers felt more responsible for the G1000 process and the implementation of its results because they felt ownership of the process. However, our results also showed that the better political embedding of the G1000 came at the expense of its social impact: The more the G1000 processes were integrated into the political system, the less the participants (or citizens) felt ownership of the G1000 process and its results. A visible consequence of this perceived lack of ownership was that only a few local initiatives were created by the G1000 participants and that many participants in all three G1000 initiatives ended their G1000-related activities in the aftermath of the G1000 process. From this, we concluded that organisers did not succeed to establish a shared sense of ownership. As for the G1000's impact on the participants, our data reveal that the G1000 process did not have a measurable positive impact on participants' civil society and political activism in the long run. In one of the investigated cases, the G1000 process had even a negative impact on participants' activism in their neighbourhood as their sense of responsibility for the life of their neighbourhood decreased in the period after the G1000 process.

A final implication of this research has to do with the embedding of mini-publics in the political system. In recent years, there has been a

growth in literature on deliberative democracy theory that argues for a more ‘integrative approach’ when it comes to designing new forms of mini-publics. By a more integrative approach, these scholars mean that new deliberative mini-publics should be designed to create ‘interactive places’ where both government actors and citizens can interact. Moreover, in more recent days, some scholars have even proposed the institutionalization of deliberative mini-publics within existing public institutions (Fishkin et al., 2000; Goodin, 2008; Smith, 2009; Michels & Binnema, 2018). Our findings showed that embedding mini-publics in the political system does indeed contribute to their actual impact on decision-making. Nevertheless, our findings also showed that creating ‘interactive places’ where social actors can shape co-decision making proves difficult. The problem here is who owns the process? In grass-root, mini-publics or bottom-up mini-publics, such as the ‘old’ G1000 design in Borne, the ownership of the process and its outcomes lies with ‘the people’. Yet, these grassroots approaches often do not have a ‘real’ or direct impact on local decision making, as previous studies have shown, and our findings confirmed (see Boogaard et al., 2016). The main reason for this is that local politicians do not feel ownership for the mini-public and its outcomes, and therefore do not feel responsible (or less responsible) to help implement the results. In contrast, in more integrated mini-publics or top-down mini-publics, the question of who owns the process becomes more difficult to answer. In the cases we studied, the local municipality owned the process. However, as our findings showed, this was at the expense of the social impact and the degree of involvement of most participants. Whereas Michels and Binnema stated in 2018 that “connecting [the outcomes of mini-publics] with the political sphere [is] still the most difficult [challenge] to meet” (p. 10), we argue, based on our findings, that in addition, creating co-ownership in mini-publics also seems to be a difficult challenge to meet. A possible approach to creating more mini-publics with co-ownership can be found in the concept of ‘framing’. As our results showed, the

three G1000 initiatives were all framed as either bottom-up or top-down processes. But by framing the participation process more as a co-creative effort, a greater sense of ownership for the implementation of the results by all participants (both political and municipal actors) may be created. Yet, more research is needed to investigate the interactions within ‘interactive’ mini-public designs and the factors that contribute to or hamper co-decision-making.

## 10.2 Practical recommendations and reflection

### 10.2.1 Recommendations for practitioners and policymakers

From our research, we can derive several recommendations that may contribute to the representative quality, the quality of dialogue and decision-making, and the political and social impact of the G1000. Regarding the representative quality of the G1000, we suggest the **use of a stratified random selection method to increase the overall diversity among the participants of the G1000 population**. The main advantage of a stratified random selection method over a simple random selection method is that organisers know how many citizens from each subgroup have signed up before the participation process begins and whether they should, for instance, conduct another round of random selection for a particular subgroup or pursue a targeted recruitment strategy to attract more citizens from a particular subgroup (e.g., young people, less educated, minority groups). To increase the initial participation rate and limit attrition during the participation process, **financial compensation can be provided to citizens for their participation in the G1000 process**. Financial compensation can function as an additional incentive for invited participants to take part in a G1000. Moreover, given that participants have asked to be involved in a co-decision process, it would only be fair to compensate them for their efforts and the time they have invested in the participation process.

Paying them for their efforts may also have a positive impact on participants' feeling that they are valued and taken seriously as equal partners in the co-decision process.

Regarding the quality of deliberation and decision-making, the results of this study have shown that not all participants had a clear understanding of the conditions under which they participated in the G1000 process. Therefore, we argue that the organizers should create **more transparency and clarity about the participation process, the decision-making procedures used, the G1000 objectives, and the role of the participants.** Our results show that participants perceived a lack of process-related and outcomes-related transparency. Concerning the former, we argue that organizers should be more transparent about the composition of the participation process from the beginning to give more clarity to the invited participants on what is expected of them. To increase the transparency of the participation process, it would help to give participants a roadmap of the process from the beginning, including the planned activities (date, time, and location). Here the organizers could also inform the participants, for example, that not all participants are expected to participate in all activities. Another advantage of a more transparent and clear participatory process is that people who were not able to attend a G1000 event/activity due to illness or other reasons can easily find their way back into the G1000 process. As for the latter, our findings have shown that participants also perceived a lack of outcome-related clarity. According to Pateman (2012), a participation process has more chance to attract people if they consider that there is a clear connection between their participation and the outcomes. In line with Pateman (2012), we argue that more transparency and clarity about the outcome of the G1000 should be given to the participants (citizens as well as policymakers). This also includes defining preconditions of the final Citizens' Decision before the start of the participation process and transparently communicating these preconditions throughout the



whole participation process. Finally, besides being more transparent about the process and its intended outcomes, we argue that organizers should also create more clarity about the different roles that participants have during the G1000 process. Our results indicate that especially policymakers were uncertain about their role in the G1000 process and what was expected from them. As a result of this unclarity, only a few policymakers participated in the G1000 process. In line with Rob (2016), we, therefore, argue that more openness about who participates and why would certainly contribute to the transparency of the overall participation process. In the case of policymakers, more time could be invested ahead of the participation process to make policymakers more familiar with the participation instrument as well as its intended goals.

In addition, our findings have shown that some inequalities and knowledge asymmetries have emerged during the small table conversations at the Citizens' Summit. Especially in mini-public designs that focus on a polarizing topic or a technical issue, we, therefore, propose to **consider impartial facilitators to oversee the large-scale dialogues during the Citizens' Summit to avoid inequalities among participants in terms of their contributions to the dialogue.** Moreover, in participation processes that focus on a more technical issue, organizers are advised to **consider using briefing materials before the Citizens' Summit to prevent knowledge asymmetries between participants.**

To increase the political and social impact of the G1000, we strongly recommend **avoiding one-sided framing.** As our results showed, the three G1000 initiatives were all framed as either bottom-up or top-down participation processes. A disadvantage of this one-sided framing, however, is that it led to certain expectations among participants regarding ownership of the process. In Enschede and Steenwijkerland, for example, the responsibility for the implementation of the final Citizens' Decision was shifted to the organizing municipalities because

of the ‘top-down framing’ of the participation process and the formulation of the final Citizens’ Decision that read more as a diktat to the policymakers. To increase the sense of ownership of the results among the participants, and thus create a co-ownership of the G1000 process and its outcomes among all involved (social and political) participants, the G1000 organization could consider **using terminology that encourages co-creation efforts**. For instance, the Citizens’ Decision could state that the local government will implement the results of the G1000 in cooperation with members of the local community instead of being solely responsible for their implementation.

Finally, we argue that the G1000 organisation should try to **involve the local population more in the participatory process to increase the legitimacy of the results**. Our results show that in more decision-oriented mini-public designs like the G1000, the importance of a lack of representativeness of the population should not be underestimated. In the case of the G1000, participants in all three G1000 initiatives based their assessment of the legitimacy of the final G1000 results solely on the perceived representativeness of the G1000 population. Besides developing other recruitment strategies, the organisers of a G1000 could also consider combining the G1000 process with a local referendum or a large-scale consultation (e.g., an (online) survey, as in the case of Enschede) to gain more legitimacy for the final mini-public results. Furthermore, a stronger involvement of the local population in the events of a mini-public can also contribute to the accountability of the G1000 process and its results. To this end, organisers could consider communicating more about the G1000 processes and outcomes to the wider public via different communication channels (e.g., (social-)media, municipality website).

## 10.2.2 Deliberative mini-publics: a pathway towards a participatory democracy?

When we started this research on the G1000 initiatives almost five years ago, not many people knew about the G1000 initiatives. Even in academic literature, the concept was only discussed by a small group of scholars. Nowadays, however, the subject of deliberative mini-publics is increasingly a 'hot topic'. In the last decade, there has been an increase in the use of deliberative mini-publics by public institutions, not only at the local and regional level, but also at the national level (Paulis, Pilet, Panel, Vittori, & Close, 2020). According to a study by Paulis, et al. (2020), there have been 105 deliberative mini-publics in Europe between 2000 and 2020 alone. Also, when it comes to the development of these deliberative democratic practices, the number of practitioners is increasing worldwide (see e.g., the international Democracy R&D network).

The reasons for this growing interest in these deliberative mini-publics are mainly twofold. For some, these innovative democratic practices are a means to an end to address the lack of legitimacy of which contemporary democratic institutions are often accused. While others see in these practices merely a way to "increase and deepen citizens' [involvement] in political decision-making processes" (see e.g., Smith, 2009, p. 1). Thus, while the first group sees these practices to solve political internal problems in our contemporary representative system (e.g., a response to the perceived democratic deficit; rising polarization), others see these new practices as valuable complements that pave the way to a more inclusive form of participatory democracy.

As for the question of whether deliberative mini-publics can help to restore the loss of legitimacy that contemporary democratic institutions are thought to suffer, our findings, unfortunately, indicate that the answer is 'not yet'. The main reason for this is that most deliberative mini-public designs to date, including the G1000 initiatives, lack

outcome legitimacy due to a lack of representative quality. This lack of outcome legitimacy was also perceived by the G1000 participants. In this sense, we agree with Jacobs & Kaufmann (2021), who concluded that deliberative mini-publics are probably not the right instruments to repair the loss of outcome legitimacy in today's democratic institutions.

Although future researchers or practitioners may one day find a way to make these deliberative mini-publics more representative - and hopefully our recommendations in the previous section provide ways towards that aim - deliberative mini-publics are not merely a remedy for the loss of legitimacy of democratic institutions. These democratic practices definitely can do more for our contemporary democratic societies than that. Indeed, deliberative mini-publics nurture something that is desperately needed in times of increasing polarisation and mistrust: the power of 'dialogue'. In this dissertation, as in other studies before us, we have found that deliberative mini-publics are a powerful tool for letting 'the people' speak. Rather than dividing people further, these tools can help to bring people together, broaden their horizons about the views of others, and thus learn about a topic from different points of view. At a time when people are increasingly stuck in 'echo chambers' or 'epistemic bubbles', this power of dialogue can provide a solution to the growing polarizing tensions in contemporary Western societies.

Regarding the question of whether deliberative mini-publics are a way to increase citizen involvement in political decision-making processes, our results clearly showed that they are, although perhaps not in the way that direct or participatory democrats have imagined it. Our results showed that G1000 initiatives can contribute to greater citizen involvement in local decision-making processes, albeit to varying degrees. While in some cases a deliberative mini-public can trigger a participatory movement that can lead to the emergence of a participatory culture in a local community, in other cases it can solve a

particular problem situation or revitalise existing paths for citizen participation. The main driver for these different degrees of social and political impact is the extent to which a mini-public is embedded in the existing representative democratic system and the local community.

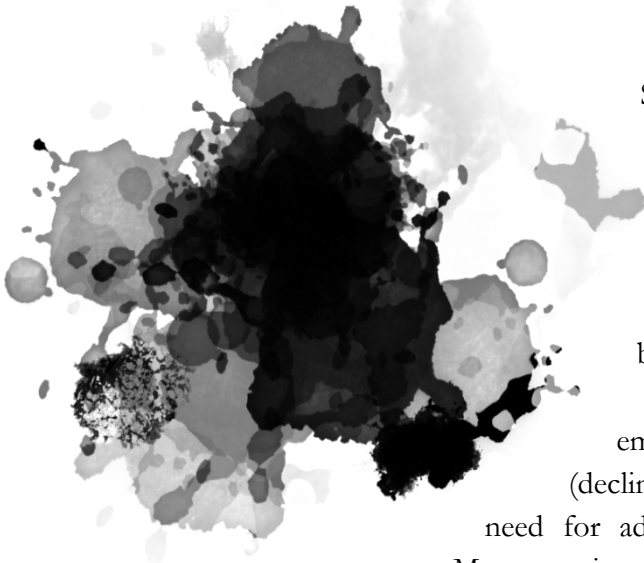
Yet our study also showed that the use of deliberative mini-publics is a complex undertaking that should not be underestimated by the organising parties. After all, the use of mini-publics can also lead to less involvement of citizens in politics (as happened in the example of Enschede). It is also clear that participation in long-term deliberative mini-publics, like the G1000 initiatives in Enschede and Steenwijkerland, can be very intensive and time-consuming for all participants involved (both organisers and citizens). For the successful functioning of deliberative mini-publics, our study, therefore, suggests five important conditions that need to be met:

- / high representative quality;
- / good practical guidance and content knowledge provision;
- / a high degree of process and outcome transparency,
- / fair and transparent decision-making procedures, and
- / good embeddedness of a mini-public's process and its outcomes in the political system and the local community.

A mini-public that fulfils these conditions is most likely to achieve its substantive goal of coming up with several proposals to the issue at hand that find fertile ground in local politics and the local community, as well as to achieve its long-term goal of increasing citizen involvement in local political decision-making.

# Summary / Samenvatting

# SUMMARY



Solving complex societal problems demands wide societal support for policies to be legitimate.

The societal support can be delivered by political parties, but given the strong divide between parties about many topics, and given the dwindling societal embedding of those parties (declining party memberships), there is a

need for additional ways to retain societal

support. Moreover, in response to the growing awareness

that many of these societal problems (e.g., climate change mitigation; the Dutch nitrogen crisis) cannot be solved by the state on its own, calls for a more inclusive participatory society and more democratic renewal are becoming louder from various groups in society (see e.g., Tweede Kamer, 2020; “*Betrokken bij Klimaat*,” 2021). In doing so, the importance of involving the interests and wishes of citizens in political decision-making is increasingly highlighted. At the same time, the last decade has seen a growing interest worldwide in deliberative mini-publics, such as citizens’ juries, consensus conferences, deliberative polls, and the Belgian and Dutch G1000 initiatives. Some see in these innovative practices a way to increase citizens’ involvement in political decision-making and thereby make contemporary representative democratic institutions more inclusive of citizens’ wishes and interests. But despite the growing interest in these deliberative practices, knowledge about the functioning of different mini-publics, in general, is still in its infancy. Therefore, this dissertation aims to learn more about the functioning of

deliberative mini-publics by examining the following central research question:

*To what extent can deliberative mini-publics contribute to the greater involvement of citizens in local decision making?*

To answer this research question, we focus in this dissertation on a certain ‘new’ type of deliberative mini-public that has become quite popular in the Netherlands in recent years: the Dutch G1000 initiatives. To gain a better understanding of how the G1000 functions, we used a longitudinal case study design and a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative data. By following three G1000 initiatives in the Dutch province of Overijssel over three years (period 2017 - 2020), we systematically analyse and compare the effects of the G1000 initiatives on citizen participation in local government.

This dissertation is structured in ten chapters. After the introductory chapter, in **chapters 2 and 3** we give a historical overview of the normative conceptions of democracy that underlie the common design ideals of deliberative mini-public designs. In these chapters, we show that despite their differences in design, there are three common underlying normative design ideals that all these different mini-public designs, including the G1000 initiatives, pursue: (1) inclusiveness, (2) high quality of deliberation and decision-making, and (3) influence on policy-making. In **chapter 4** we present a systematic literature review on the functioning of existing mini-publics. Here we formulate some theoretical ideas and expectations about how deliberative mini-publics function. In **chapter 5** we give a short overview of the G1000 method and the background of the case studies. Before we start with the actual analysis part of this research, we explain how we studied the functioning of mini-publics and how we collected and operationalised the data we used for this study in **chapter 6**.



**Chapters 7, 8 and 9** contain the analysis of this research. In **chapter 7**, we focus on the inclusiveness of the three G1000 initiatives by examining the question of whether the G1000 population was a good reflection of the local population. Our results show that unfortunately, this was not the case for all three G1000 initiatives. We found that the main reason for this lack of representativeness was that a large proportion of the invited participants did not want to participate in the G1000 initiatives. Furthermore, the three G1000 initiatives, like other mini-public designs, seem to attract a certain type of citizen: highly educated and politically active older (over 50 years old) men/women. Considering that both the population of randomly selected participants and the population of non-randomly selected participants were not a good reflection of the local populations, we concluded that the use of purely random sampling methods does not guarantee statistical representativeness and thus diversity in deliberative mini-publics. Furthermore, the results in this chapter have shown that the representativeness of the G1000 initiatives was severely undermined by the problem of (last-minute) drop-outs. The main reason for this was a lack of time.

In **chapter 8**, we focus on the deliberative quality of the G1000 processes by examining the extent to which the organisers of the G1000 initiatives have succeeded in creating a high quality of deliberation and decision-making in the participatory process. Our results show that the G1000 methodology is an appropriate method for achieving consensus-based outcomes and creating common ground and mutual understanding among participants. However, our results also revealed inequalities among participants as they perceived the conversations in different ways. While some participants, the “dialogue seekers”, expected to learn more about the complexity of the problem at hand during the Citizens’ Summits, others, the “problem solvers”, saw it as their task to develop concrete ideas and approaches to solve the problem. In terms of the quality of decision-making, we found that the

lack of representative quality found above in result-oriented mini-publics designs should not be underestimated, as participants based their judgement of the legitimacy of the G1000 outcomes solely on the perceived representative quality of the G1000 participants.

Finally, **chapter 9** concludes the empirical sections of this dissertation by examining the last normative objective of mini-publics, their impact. To this end, we investigate to what extent the G1000 initiatives had a political and social impact on local governments, participants, and the local community. Our findings show that the embedding of the G1000 in the political system had a positive influence on its actual impact on policy-making. In the G1000 initiatives where the G1000 processes were co-organised by the local municipalities, policymakers felt more responsible for the G1000 process and the implementation of its results because they felt ownership of the process. However, our results also showed that the more embedded the G1000 was, the less social impact it had: the more the G1000 processes were integrated into the political system, the less the participants (or citizens) felt ownership of the G1000 process and its results. From this, we concluded that creating a shared sense of ownership of the process and the implementation of its outcomes between political and social actors is the next challenge facing the G1000. Regarding the impact of the G1000 on the participants, our data show that the G1000 process has not had a measurable positive impact on the long-term civil society and political activism of the participants. However, regarding the impact of the G1000 on the local community, in one case the G1000 triggered a long-term participatory movement.

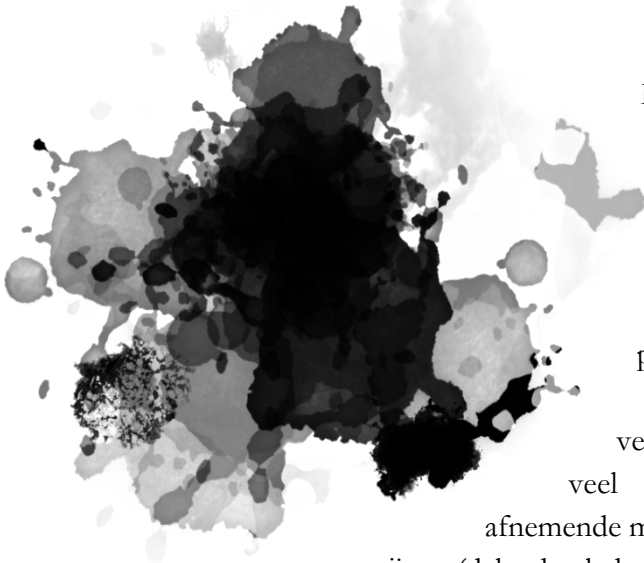
In sum, the main findings presented in the case studies provided some interesting insights about the study on mini-publics. We found that deliberative mini-publics are a powerful tool for letting the people speak. These instruments can help to bring people together, broaden their horizons about the views of others, and thus learn about a topic

from different points of view. Moreover, if embedded enough in the political system, our findings also indicated that mini-publics can be a powerful tool to also let the people co-decide and consequently help to increase citizen involvement in political decision-making processes in local communities. Yet our study also showed that the use of deliberative mini-publics is a complex undertaking that should not be underestimated by the organising parties. After all, the use of mini-publics can also lead to less involvement of citizens in politics (as happened in the example of Enschede). It is also clear that participation in long-term deliberative mini-publics can be very intensive and time-consuming for all participants involved (both organisers and citizens). For the successful functioning of deliberative mini-publics, our study, therefore, suggests five important conditions that need to be met:

- / high representative quality;
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# SAMENVATTING



Het oplossen van complexe maatschappelijke problemen vraagt om breed maatschappelijk draagvlak wil beleid legitiem zijn. Die maatschappelijke steun kan door politieke partijen worden geleverd, maar gezien de grote verdeeldheid tussen partijen over veel onderwerpen, en gezien de afnemende maatschappelijke inbedding van die partijen (dalende ledenaantallen), is er behoefte aan aanvullende manieren om maatschappelijk draagvlak te behouden. In reactie op het groeiende besef dat veel van deze maatschappelijke problemen (bijvoorbeeld het tegengaan van klimaatverandering; de stikstofcrisis) niet door de staat alleen kunnen worden opgelost, klinkt bovendien vanuit verschillende groepen in de samenleving de roep om een meer inclusieve participatiesamenleving en meer democratische vernieuwing steeds luider (zie bijv. Tweede Kamer, 2020; “Betrokken bij Klimaat,” 2021). Daarbij wordt steeds meer gewezen op het belang van het betrekken van de belangen en wensen van burgers bij de politieke besluitvorming. Tegelijkertijd is er het afgelopen decennium wereldwijd een groeiende belangstelling ontstaan voor deliberatieve mini-publieken, zoals burgerjury’s, consensusconferenties, deliberatieve peilingen en de Belgische en Nederlandse G1000-initiatieven. Sommigen zien in deze innovatieve praktijken een manier om de betrokkenheid van burgers bij de politieke besluitvorming te vergroten en zo de hedendaagse representatieve democratische instellingen meer

rekening te laten houden met de wensen en belangen van burgers. Maar ondanks de groeiende belangstelling voor deze deliberatieve praktijken, staat de kennis over het functioneren van verschillende mini-publieken in het algemeen nog in de kinderschoenen. Het doel van dit proefschrift is dan ook om meer te weten te komen over het functioneren van deliberatieve mini-publieken door de volgende centrale onderzoeksvraag te behandelen:

*In welke mate kunnen deliberatieve mini-publieken bijdragen tot een grotere betrokkenheid van burgers bij de lokale besluitvorming?*

Om deze onderzoeksvraag te beantwoorden richten we ons in dit proefschrift op een specifiek ‘nieuw’ type van deliberatieve mini-publieken dat de laatste jaren vrij populair is geworden in Nederland: de Nederlandse G1000 initiatieven. We hebben gebruik gemaakt van een longitudinaal casusonderzoek en een gemengde methode benadering die kwalitatieve en kwantitatieve data combineert, om een beter inzicht te krijgen in hoe de G1000 functioneert. We analyseren en vergelijken systematisch de effecten van de G1000 initiatieven op burgerparticipatie in de lokale overheid door drie G1000 initiatieven in de Nederlandse provincie Overijssel te volgen over een periode van drie jaar (periode 2017 - 2020).

Deze dissertatie is gestructureerd in tien hoofdstukken. Na het inleidende hoofdstuk, geven we in **hoofdstukken 2 en 3** een historisch overzicht van de normatieve opvattingen van democratie waaraan de gemeenschappelijke ontwerp idealen van deliberatieve mini-publiek ontwerpen ten grondslag liggen. In deze hoofdstukken tonen we aan dat al deze verschillende mini-publiek ontwerpen, ondanks hun verschillen in ontwerp, drie gemeenschappelijke onderliggende normatieve ontwerp idealen nastreven: (1) inclusiviteit, (2) hoge kwaliteit van beraadslaging en besluitvorming, en (3) invloed op de beleidsvorming. In **hoofdstuk 4** presenteren we een systematisch literatuuroverzicht over de manier waarop bestaande mini-publieken

functioneren. Hier formuleren we enkele theoretische ideeën en verwachtingen over het functioneren van deliberatieve mini-publieken. In **hoofdstuk 5** geven we een kort overzicht van de G1000 methode en de achtergrond van de casussen. Vooraleer we beginnen met het eigenlijke analyse-gedeelte van dit onderzoek, leggen we in **hoofdstuk 6** uit hoe we het functioneren van mini-publieken hebben bestudeerd en hoe we de data die we voor deze studie hebben gebruikt, hebben verzameld en geoperationaliseerd.

De **hoofdstukken 7, 8 en 9** bevatten de analyse van dit onderzoek. In **hoofdstuk 7** richten we ons op de inclusiviteit van de drie G1000 initiatieven door te onderzoeken of de G1000 populatie een goede afspiegeling was van de lokale bevolking. Onze resultaten tonen aan dat dit helaas voor geen van de drie de G1000 initiatieven het geval was. Wij stelden vast dat het niet willen deelnemen aan de G1000 initiatieven van een groot deel van de uitgenodigde deelnemers de voornaamste reden was voor dit gebrek aan representativiteit. Verder lijken de drie G1000 initiatieven, net als andere mini-publiek ontwerpen, een bepaald type burgers aan te trekken: hoogopgeleide en politiek actieve oudere (boven de 50 jaar) mannen/vrouwen. Aangezien zowel de populatie van willekeurig geselecteerde deelnemers, als de populatie van niet-willekeurig geselecteerde deelnemers geen goede afspiegeling was van de lokale bevolking, concludeerden we dat het gebruik van volstrekt willekeurige steekproefmethoden geen statistische representativiteit en dus diversiteit garandeert in deliberatieve mini-publieken. Bovendien tonen de resultaten in dit hoofdstuk aan dat de representativiteit van de G1000 initiatieven ernstig ondermijnd werd door het probleem van (last-minute) drop-outs. De voornaamste reden hiervoor was het gebrek aan tijd.

In **hoofdstuk 8** focussen we op de deliberatieve kwaliteit van de G1000 processen door te onderzoeken in welke mate de organisatoren van de G1000 initiatieven erin geslaagd zijn om een hoge kwaliteit van

deliberatie en besluitvorming in het participatieve proces tot stand te brengen. Onze resultaten tonen aan dat de G1000 methodologie een geschikte methode is om tot consensusgerichte oplossingen te komen en een gemeenschappelijke basis en wederzijds begrip tussen de deelnemers te creëren. Maar onze resultaten brachten ook ongelijkheden tussen de deelnemers aan het licht, aangezien zij de gesprekken op verschillende manieren ervoeren. Terwijl sommige deelnemers, de “dialogzoekers”, verwachtten tijdens de burgertoppen meer te weten te komen over de complexiteit van het probleem in kwestie, zagen andere deelnemers, de “probleemoplossers”, het als hun taak concrete ideeën en benaderingen te ontwikkelen om het probleem op te lossen. Wat de kwaliteit van de besluitvorming betreft, stelden we vast dat het gebrek aan representatieve kwaliteit dat hierboven werd vastgesteld in resultaatgerichte mini-publieken niet mag worden onderschat, aangezien deelnemers hun oordeel over de legitimiteit van de G1000 uitkomsten enkel baseerden op de waargenomen representatieve kwaliteit van de G1000 deelnemers.

Tenslotte sluit **hoofdstuk 9** de empirische secties van dit proefschrift af met een onderzoek naar de laatste normatieve doelstelling van mini-publieken: hun invloed. Hiertoe onderzoeken we in welke mate de G1000 initiatieven een politieke en sociale invloed hadden op lokale overheden, de deelnemers, en de lokale gemeenschap. Onze bevindingen tonen aan dat de inbedding van de G1000 in het politieke systeem een positieve invloed had op de daadwerkelijke impact ervan op de beleidsvorming. In de G1000 initiatieven waar de G1000 processen mede georganiseerd werden door de lokale gemeenten, voelden de beleidsmakers zich meer verantwoordelijk voor het G1000 proces en voor de implementatie van de resultaten ervan omdat ze zich eigenaar voelden van het proces. Onze resultaten toonden echter ook aan dat hoe meer de G1000 ingebed was in het politieke systeem, hoe minder de deelnemers (of burgers) zich eigenaar voelden van het G1000 proces en zijn resultaten. Hieruit concludeerden we dat het creëren van

een gedeeld gevoel van eigenaarschap tussen politieke en sociale actoren over het proces en de implementatie van de resultaten ervan, de volgende uitdaging is voor de G1000. Wat de invloed van de G1000 op de deelnemers betreft, tonen onze gegevens aan dat het G1000 proces geen meetbare positieve invloed heeft gehad op de maatschappelijke betrokkenheid en het politiek activisme van de deelnemers op lange termijn. Wat echter de invloed van de G1000 op de lokale gemeenschap betreft, heeft de G1000 in één geval een langdurige participatieve beweging op gang gebracht.

Samenvattend kunnen we stellen dat de belangrijkste bevindingen van de casestudies interessante inzichten hebben opgeleverd over het onderzoek naar mini-publieken. We ontdekten dat deliberatieve mini-publieken een krachtig instrument zijn om de mensen aan het woord te laten. Deze instrumenten kunnen helpen om mensen samen te brengen, hun horizon te verbreden over de standpunten van anderen, en zo vanuit verschillende gezichtspunten over een onderwerp te leren. Bovendien bleek uit onze bevindingen dat mini-publieken, mits voldoende ingebed in het politieke systeem, een krachtig instrument kunnen zijn om de mensen ook te laten meebeslissen en zo de betrokkenheid van de burgers bij de politieke besluitvormingsprocessen in lokale gemeenschappen te helpen vergroten. Toch bleek uit onze studie ook dat het gebruik van deliberatieve mini-publieken een complexe onderneming is die niet mag worden onderschat door de organiserende partijen. Het gebruik van mini-publieken kan immers ook leiden tot minder betrokkenheid van burgers bij de politiek (zoals in het voorbeeld van Enschede gebeurde). Het is ook evident dat deelname aan langdurige deliberatieve mini-publieken voor alle betrokken deelnemers (zowel organisatoren als burgers) zeer intensief en tijdrovend kan zijn. Voor het succesvol functioneren van deliberatieve mini-publieken stelt onze studie daarom vijf belangrijke voorwaarden waaraan moet worden voldaan:



- / hoge representatieve kwaliteit;
- / goede praktische begeleiding en inhoudelijke kennisvoorziening
- / hoge mate van transparantie over het proces en de uitkomsten,
- / eerlijke en transparante besluitvormingsprocedures, en
- / goede inbedding van een mini-publiek proces en zijn uitkomsten in het politieke systeem en in de lokale gemeenschap.

Een mini-publiek dat aan deze voorwaarden voldoet, zal hoogstwaarschijnlijk zijn inhoudelijke doel bereiken, namelijk het doen van verschillende voorstellen voor het probleem in kwestie die een vruchtbare bodem vinden in de lokale politiek en in de lokale gemeenschap. Ook zal het zijn langetermijndoel bereiken, namelijk het vergroten van de betrokkenheid van de burgers bij de lokale politieke besluitvorming.

# Curriculum Vitae

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Franziska Eckardt was born on April 26, 1993 in Tübingen, Germany. Immediately after graduating from the Bildungszentrum Nord in Reutlingen in 2012, she started as a Bachelor student in the European Public Administration (European Studies) program at the University of Twente, in the Netherlands. During her time as a bachelor student, Franziska participated in the multidisciplinary BA Honours program (Design Track). In her bachelor's thesis, she explored the relationship between European citizens' support for the European Union and their economic circumstances. Franziska completed her bachelor's degree after two and a half years, graduating Cum Laude and with Honours. In addition, she completed a pre-master's degree in International Business Administration.

In 2015, Franziska started as a Master student in International Business Administration at the University of Twente. During her master's studies, she specialized in Entrepreneurship and Regional Innovation and Development. Also, during her time as an MSc student, Franziska participated in the Research Masters Honours program. In addition to her studies, she worked as a research assistant for dr. Jos van den Broek and Prof. Dir. Paul Benneworth on projects related to regional innovation and development. She also worked as a German tutor at 'Het Stedelijk Lyceum' in Enschede, teaching both individuals and

larger classes. Using a narrative analysis technique, Franziska investigated the multidimensional role of science parks in the 21st century in attracting knowledge migrants in her master's thesis, for which she received the award for the best thesis in Business Administration at the University of Twente. She published her thesis in the journal *Regional Studies, Regional Science* in 2017. In 2016, Franziska completed her master's degree with *Cum Laude* and with Honour. In addition, she participated in the Twente Graduate School Award Competition of the University of Twente and received a bridging grant to pursue a PhD trajectory.

Franziska started her PhD in September 2016 at the BMS Faculty of the University of Twente. Her PhD is a research collaboration between the Department of Public Administration and the Center of Higher Education and Policy Studies. In addition to her PhD, Franziska has assisted Prof. Marcel Boogers with a project examining local parties and their collaboration with higher levels of government. Furthermore, Franziska was involved in several modules of the Bachelor program Management, Science & Technology at the University of Twente during her PhD. In 2016, she became a member of the board of the PhD Network of the University of Twente (P-NUT). Between 2017-2018, Franziska represented the interests and voices of her PhD colleagues in the role of "PhD Network Representative" at the University of Twente and regular meetings of the National PhD Network (PNN). In 2019, Franziska joined the board of the PhD Council of the Netherlands Institute of Governance (NIG). In 2020, Franziska became a member of the G1000 Agriculture Oversight Committee.

# PUBLICATIONS

## Peer-reviewed publications

- Van den Broek, J., Eckardt, F., & Benneworth, P. (2019). The transformative role of universities in regional innovation systems: Lessons from university engagement in cross-border regions. In Handbook of universities and regional development. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Valler, D., Phelps, N., Miao, J. T., Benneworth, P., & Eckardt, F. (2019). Science Spaces as 'Ethnoscapes': Identity, Perception and the Production of Locality. *Urban Science*, 3(1), 17.
- Eckardt, F., & Benneworth, P. (2018). The G1000 Firework dialogue as a social learning system: A community of practice approach. *Social Sciences*, 7(8), 129.
- Eckardt, F., Velderman, W. J., & Benneworth, P. (2018). 13. Knowledge, urban policymaking and citizen participation: a democratic challenge. *Knowledge, Policymaking and Learning for European Cities and Regions*, 181.
- Van den Broek, J., & Eckardt, F. (2018). Universities and regional economic development in cross-border regions. In *Universities and Regional Economic Development* (pp. 159-176). Routledge.
- Eckardt, F. (2017). The multidimensional role of science parks in attracting international knowledge migrants. *Regional studies, regional science*, 4(1), 218-226.

## Submitted papers

- Treib, O., Schmid, F. & Eckardt, F. (under review). The virus of polarization: Online debates about Covid-19 in Germany. *Political Research Exchange*.

## Non-peer reviewed and/or non-academic publications

- Boogers, M., & Eckardt, F. (2020). *Wethouders van lokale partijen in de regio, de provincie, Den Haag en Brussel*. Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties. Published in Van Ostaaijen, J. (2021). *Lokale partijen in de praktijk. Een overzicht van kennis over het functioneren van lokale partijen in Nederland*. Democratie in actie.

- Van den Broek, J., Eckardt, F., & Benneworth, P. (2017). The transformative role of universities in regional innovations systems: lessons from university engagement in cross-border regions. *CHEPS Working Paper Series*, 2017(05).
- Benneworth, P. S., Eckardt, F., & Velderman, W. J. (2017). Burgerkennis als hulpbron voor stedelijke ontwikkeling. *Geografie*, 2017(3), 38-41.
- Benneworth, P. S., & Eckardt, F. (2017). *Kennispark Twente as Global Science Scape*. (GSS working paper; No. 5). Oxford, UK: Global Science Spaces (GSS).
- Hengstenberg, Y., Eckardt, F., & Benneworth, P. S. (2017). *Reflections from a living smart campus*. *Rooilijn*, 50(1), 44-49.
- Benneworth, P. S., Eckardt, F., & Bucholski, M. (2017). *The case for learning through research*. *University world news*, (00450), -. 450].

## **Workshops / Invited talks**

- Eckardt, F. (2020). "*Burgerparticipatie in de praktijk, wat leren we daarvan?*". Keynote speech at a D66 event on citizen participation, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, Enschede, The Netherlands.
- Eckardt, F. & Vlind, M. (2018). "*G1000University 2018: De G1000 als 'learning community'*". Workshop provided at the Risk & Resilience Festival, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2018, University of Twente, The Netherlands.
- Eckardt, F. (2018). "*G1000 Onderzoek*". Presentation provided about the current G1000 research, 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2018, Utrecht University, The Netherlands.
- Eckardt, F. & Vlind, M. (2018). "*G1000University 2018: De G1000 als 'learning community'*". Workshop provided by the G1000University 2018, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018, Amersfoort, The Netherlands.
- Eckardt, F. & Oude Luttikhuis, N. (Speaker) (2018). "*G1000University 2018: G1000Enschede*". Workshop provided by the G1000University 2018, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018, Amersfoort, The Netherlands.
- Eckardt, F. & Boogers, M. (2017). "*Het Burgerbesluit: Wat moet (kan) de raad met een Burgerbesluit?*". Workshop provided by the G1000University 2017, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017, Amersfoort, The Netherlands.

## Conference paper presentations

- Eckardt, F. & Benneworth, P. (2018). "*G1000 Firework Dialogue as a Social Learning System: A Community of Practice Approach*". A paper presented to Reconciling urban and regional strengths of the past with developments in the future, a session of the European Urban Research Association (EURA) conference, 21st -23rd June, 2018, Tilburg, The Netherlands.
- Eckardt, F. & Benneworth, P. (2018). "*Unlocking the potential of citizen knowledge: bringing the citizen as an expert back to urban democracy*". A paper presented to Political Geography, a session of the Association of American Geographers Conference, 10<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> April, New Orleans, United States.
- Eckardt, F. (2017). "*Building a magnetism for international knowledge migrants through a science park – The case of Kennispark Twente*". Master thesis presented to the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, NUS/ARI Conference, 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2017, Singapore.
- Eckardt, F., Velderman, W. J., & Benneworth, P. S. (2016). "*Accounting for smart citizen knowledge in controversial regional decision-making processes?*". A paper presented to Smart city-regions, a session of the Regional Studies Association (RSA) Conference on Smart City-Regional Governance, 6th – 7th October 2016, Dresden, Germany.
- Eckardt, F., Benneworth, P.S. (2016). "*Building a magnetism for international knowledge migrants through a science park – The case of Kennispark Twente*". Master thesis presented to Global Science Scapes Triple Helix Association Annual Conference, 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016, Heidelberg, Germany.
- Eckardt, F. & Benneworth, P. S. (2016). "*High technology fantasies in the Delta? Constructing a national strategic science site in the Dutch post-industrial periphery*". Paper presented to a session of the Association of American Geographers Conference, 29<sup>th</sup> March – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2016, San Francisco, United States.
- Eckardt, F. & Benneworth, P. S. (2016). "*Talking about Kennispark: understanding expat campus stories to explore global science spaces' symbolic attractiveness for highly skilled migrants*". Paper presented to Learning in place-making in regional innovation, Conference of the Social Dynamics of Innovation Working Group, 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> March 2016, Oosterwijk, the Netherlands.

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# Appendix



# APPENDIX

**Table A1.** Overview interviewees.

Interviewees Borne	Stakeholder group	Participated at the Citizens' Summit (yes/no)	In-text reference
	organizer	Yes	2017, B1, P, citizen
	organizer	Yes	2017, B2, P, freethinker
	politician	Nee	2017, B3, NP, politician
	citizen	Yes	2017, B4, P, citizen
	civil servant	Nee	2017, B5, NP, civil servant
	citizen	Yes	2017, B6, P, citizen
	organizer	Yes	2017, B7, P, organizer
	press/observer	Nee	2017, B8, NP, press/observer
	citizen	Yes	2017, B9, P, citizens
	organizer	Yes	2017, B10, P, organizer
	civil servant	Nee	2017, B11, NP, civil servant

Interviewees Steenwijkerland	Stakeholder group	Participated at the Citizens' Summit (yes/no)	Reference
	civil servant	Yes	2019, S1, P, civil servant
	citizen	Yes	2019, S2, P, citizen
	citizen	No	2019, S3, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2019, S4, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2019, S5, P, citizen
	politician	No	2019, S6, NP, politician
	civil servant	Yes	2019, S7, P, civil servant
	citizen	Yes	2019, S8, P, citizen
	civil servant	No	2019, S9, NP, civil servant
	civil servant	No	2019, S10, NP, civil servant

Interviewees Enschede	Stakeholder group	Participated at the Citizens' Summit (yes/no)	In-text reference
	politician	No	2017, E1, NP, politician
	politician	No	2017, E2, NP, politician
	politician	Yes	2017, E3, P, politician
	politician	No	2017, E4, NP, politician
	politician	No	2017, E5, NP, politician
	politician	No	2017, E6, NP, politician
	politician	No	2017, E7, NP, politician
	organizer	Yes	2017, E8, P, civil servant
	citizen	Yes	2017, E9, P, citizen
	organizer	Yes	2017, E10, P, organizer (volunteer)
	citizen	Yes	2017, E11, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E12, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E13, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E14, P, citizen
	organizer	Yes	2017, E15, P, organizer
	citizen	Yes	2017, E16, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E17, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E18, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E19, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E20, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E21, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E22, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E23, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E24, P, citizen
	organizer	Yes	2017, E25, P, organizer (volunteer)
	organizer	Yes	2017, E26, P, organizer (volunteer)
	citizen	Yes	2017, E27, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E28, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E29, P, citizen
	politician	Yes	2017, E30, P, politician

	citizen	Yes	2017, E31, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E32, P, citizen
	citizen	Yes	2017, E33, P, citizen
	press/observer	No	2017, E34, NP, press/observer

**Table A2.** Operationalization: representative quality

Variable	Data source; variable name; description/survey question	Rationale
<i>Socio-demographic characteristics</i>		
<b>Age</b>	registration data; age; age of the participant recoded in six age categories: [1] 18 – 24; [2] 25 – 34; [3] 35 – 54; [4] 55 – 64; [5] 65 – 84; [6] 85 +.	Age is a typical socio-demographic variable used both to describe the realised sample population and to determine possible sampling errors (GESIS, 2021).
<b>Gender</b>	registration data; gender; gender of the participant in two categories: [1] male; [2] female	Gender is a typical socio-demographic variable used both to describe the realised sample population and to determine possible sampling errors (GESIS, 2021).
<b>Level of education</b>	registration data; educational_level; the highest level of education recoded in non-tertiary and tertiary educational levels [1] Non-tertiary education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary education (VWO/LBO/VBO/ VMBO/ MBO1/HAVO, MAVO, ULO/MULO)</li> <li>• Senior secondary vocational education (MBO 2,3,4)</li> </ul> [2] Tertiary education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher professional education (HBO)</li> </ul> Academic higher education (WO)	Education is a typical socio-demographic variable used both to describe the realised sample population and to determine possible sampling errors (GESIS, 2021).
<b>Language spoken at home</b>	Registration data; language_home; Language spoken at home recoded in 4 categories: [1] Dutch; [2] Dutch, bilingual; [3] European; [4] Non-European.	The language most spoken at home is a “good indicator of the integration of ethnic minorities” (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik & Warner, 2013, p. 234) and can therefore be used as a socio-demographic variable to measure migration background (GESIS, 2021).

<i>Attitude and behaviour</i>		
<b>Voting behaviour</b>	Survey 1; S1Q16; Q: <i>'In March 2017 there were elections to the Lower House of Parliament. Did you vote?' [1] Yes; [2] No</i> Survey 1; S1Q17; Q: <i>'Which party did you vote for in the 2017 Lower House elections?'. [1] 50PLUS; [2] CDA, [3] ChristenUnie; [4] D66; [5] Forum voor Democratie; [6] GroenLinks; [7] PvdA; [8] PvdD; [9] PVV; [10] SP; [11] VVD; [12] SGP</i>	Voting is one of the three types that measure local political participation (Jansen & Denters, 2018). Furthermore, the extent to which someone identifies with a political party indicates that person's political involvement as well as orientation.
<b>Political activity</b>	Survey 1, S1Q15; political activity recoded in two categories: [1] <i>Active (member of a political party; the City Council; the College of B&amp;W; the Executive Committee; other); [2] Not active</i>	Political activity is one of the three types that measure local political participation (Jansen & Denters, 2018).
<b>Involvement in a citizens' initiative</b>	Survey 1; S1Q14; Q: <i>I have been involved in a citizens' initiative for the past year? [1] Yes; [2] No</i>	Involvement in a citizens' initiative is one of the three types that measure local political participation (Jansen & Denters, 2018).
<b>Civic activity</b>	Survey 1; S1Q18; Q: <i>I have been present at [1] Active (neighbourhood evenings/public participation evenings; meetings of residents' committees; citizens' panels; town council meetings; neighbourhood events; other); [2] No (none of these)</i>	Membership or participation in voluntary activities/group associations is a commonly used indicator to measure a person's civic engagement.
<b>Trust in local government</b>	Survey 1; S1Q22; Theorem: <i>Local councillors are not interested in the opinions of people like me.</i> ([1] Agree;[2] Not agree). We recoded the two categories as follows: agree was recoded into 'no trust'; not agree was recoded into 'trust'.	Involvement can also be expressed in the attitudes and opinions of citizens; for example, in their trust in the local government (Jansen & Denters, 2018).

**Table A3.** Measuring the political and social impact of mini-publics.

	<b>Instrumental impact</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Conceptual Impact</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Strategic impact</b>	<b>Data source</b>
<b>Politics</b>	The degree to which the G1000 process and/or its results are discussed by the city council or are included in policy documents.	Analysis of policy documents.	The extent to which citizen participation is placed on the political agenda because of the experience with the G1000 process. The extent to which the attitude and working process of the local council and the local administration become more receptive to participation and the wishes of citizens.	Analysis of interviews with policymakers and civil servants.	The degree to which the G1000 process and/or is outcomes are used to defend certain decisions or to attack the ideas of other politicians.	Analysis of interviews with policymakers and civil servants.
<b>Society</b>	The degree to which the G1000 outcomes provoke reactions in the form of actions by G1000 participants and/or individuals, groups, or organizations in the local community	Analysis of interviews and newspaper articles.	The degree to which new forms of participation and actions emerged from the G1000 process, as well as a broader “participation movement”.	Analysis of interviews and newspaper articles. Measuring changes in participants’ civic engagement levels over time (see Table A4).	Degree a mini-public’s outcomes are used by social actors to support specific social actors or to oppose others.	Analysis of interviews and newspaper articles.

**Table A4.** Operationalization of civic engagement.

Variable	Data source; variable name; description/survey question	Rationale
<b>Level of community engagement</b>	<p>Survey 1 &amp; 4; S1Q10; &amp; S3Q7; Q: <i>Have you been active in or for your neighbourhood for the last past few years?</i> recoded in two categories: active and non-active</p> <p>Survey 1 &amp; 4; S1Q11 &amp; S3Q9; Q: <i>To what extent do you feel responsible for your neighbourhood in the past year?</i> [1] absolutely not responsible – [10] absolutely responsible</p> <p>Survey 2 &amp; 4; S2Q18 &amp; S3Q34; S: <i>Since the G1000 I feel more involved with my neighbourhood.</i> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree</p> <p>Survey 2 &amp; 4; S2Q20 &amp; S3Q35; S: <i>Since the G1000 I have much more contact with other residents.</i> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree</p> <p>Survey 2 &amp; 4; S2Q21 &amp; S3Q36; S: <i>Since the G1000 I feel more involved with my municipality</i> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree</p>	<p>Indicates whether respondents' degree of engagement with their local community or neighbourhood has changed since they participated in the G1000 initiative.</p>
<b>Level of political engagement</b>	<p>Survey 1 &amp; 4; S1Q15 &amp; S3Q13; Q: <i>Are you politically active in your municipality?</i> recoded in two categories: active and non-active</p> <p>Survey 1 &amp; 4; S2Q22 &amp; S3Q37; S: <i>Since the G1000 I have more trust in the local government</i> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree</p>	<p>Indicates whether respondents' degree of political engagement has changed since they participated in the G1000 initiative.</p>

**Table A5.** Operationalization: quality of deliberation and decision-making.

Variable	Data source; variable name; description/survey question	Rationale
The overall perception of the dialogues	<p>Survey 2, S2Q7; Q: <i>What did you think of the group discussion at your table?</i></p> <p>[1] Constructive; [2] Relax; [3] Trusted; [4] Uneventful; [5] Difficult; [6] Critical; [7] Inspiring; [8] Boring; [9] Equal; [10] Complicated; [11] Other</p> <p>Survey 2, S2Q2; Q: <i>How did you experience the G1000 Borne, Enschede, Steenwijkerland?</i></p> <p>Survey 2; S2Q26; Q: <i>What could be improved about the G1000?</i></p> <p>Interview guide; Q5: <i>How have you experienced the conversations at the tables?</i></p>	Indicates how the respondents assessed the overall quality of the deliberation at the Citizens' Summit and indicates why they did so.
Perceived learning aspect	<p>Survey 2; S2Q24; Q: <i>Have you gained new insights through the exchange of ideas and points of view?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> </ul> <p>Interview guide; Q6: <i>Did these table discussions give you new insights into the subject?</i></p>	Indicates whether respondents gained new insights through the dialogues.
Perceived degree of (in)equality and mutual respect during dialogues	<p>Survey 2; S2Q8; Q: <i>To what extent did you feel free at your table to say what you wanted?</i></p> <p>[1] I did not feel free at all – [10] I felt completely free</p> <p>Interview guide; Q5c/5i: <i>Were there situations during the table discussions that made you feel uncomfortable? /If so, what were the reasons?</i></p>	Indicates whether respondents had the opportunity to present their arguments and ask questions during deliberations.
	<p>Survey 2; S2Q9; Q: <i>To what extent did you felt heard at your table by your interlocutors?</i></p> <p>[1] I did not feel heard at all – [10] I felt very much heard</p> <p>Interview guide; Q5a: <i>Did you feel that your opinion was being listened to?</i></p>	Indicates whether respondents felt heard during the deliberations and/or whether the discussions were dominated by one or more participants.
	<p>Survey 2; S2Q10; Q: <i>What did you think of the role of your interlocutors; to what extent did your interlocutors make a meaningful contribution to the dialogue?</i></p> <p>[1] no contribution to the dialogue at all – [10] a very constructive contribution to the dialogue</p> <p>Survey 2; S2Q15, S2Q16, S2Q17; Q: <i>How have you perceived the attitude of [civil servants; politicians, experts]?</i> [1] Equal; [2] Knowledgeable; [3] Superior</p>	<p>Indicates respondents' attitude towards their interlocutors during dialogues.</p> <p>Indicates whether respondents perceived differences between interlocutors based on status.</p>



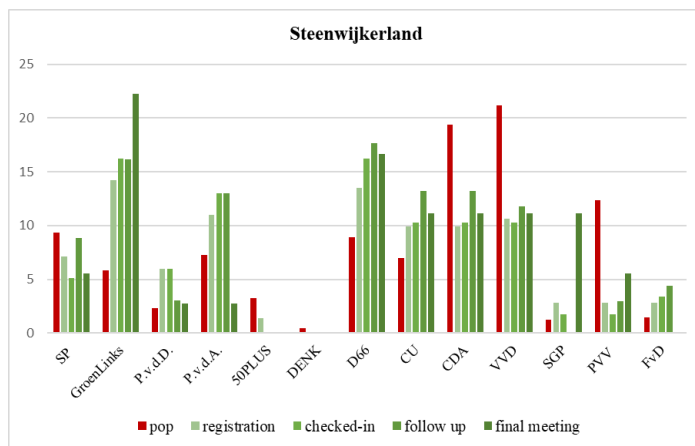
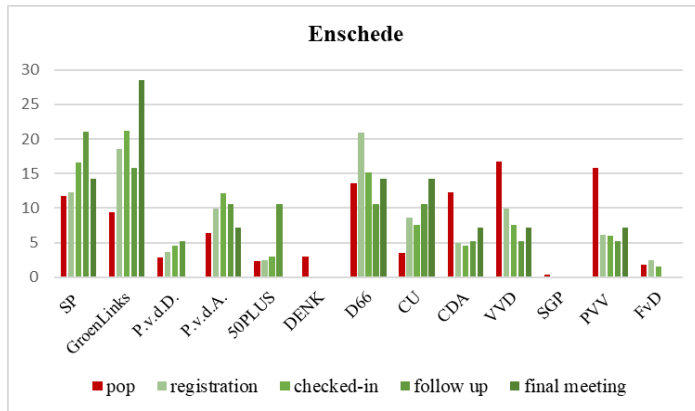
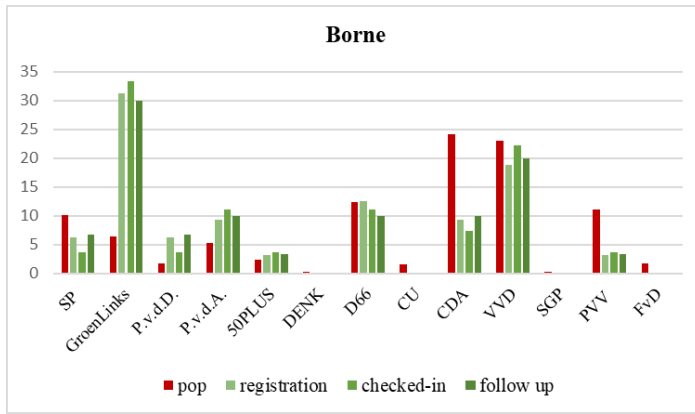
<p><b>Perceived transparency</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome-clarity</b>  Survey 1, 2 &amp; 4; S1Q5/S2Q29/S3Q28; Q: <i>To what extent is it clear to you what is being done with the results of the G1000?</i>  [1] Not at all clear – [10] Completely clear</p> <p><b>Process-clarity</b>  Survey 1, 2 &amp; 3; S1Q4/S2Q28/Q35, Q45_1, Q51_1; Q: <i>To what extent was it clear to you what was expected of you during the G1000?</i>  [1] Not at all clear – [10] Completely clear</p>	<p>Indicates whether respondents have a clear understanding of the conditions under which they participate.</p>
<p><b>Perceived fairness</b></p>	<p>Survey 2; S2Q11; Q: <i>At the end of the day, the participants chose ten proposals. What do you think of how these ten proposals were selected?</i>  Interview guide; Q8: <i>What do you personally think of the G1000 approach?</i></p>	<p>Indicates whether respondents had an equal chance to influence the output of the deliberation</p>
<p><b>Perceived legitimacy of the G1000 outcomes</b></p>	<p>Survey 4; S3Q33; Q: <i>To what extent do you think that the decisions of the G1000 are a good reflection of the wishes of the residents of your municipality?</i>  Interview guide; Q8: <i>What do you personally think of the G1000 approach?</i></p>	<p>Indicates whether respondents believe that the G1000 outcomes reflect the voices and perspectives of the broader population</p>

**Table A6.** Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants and the population.

	Borne				Enschede				Steenwijkerland						
	Reg.	D.E. <sup>1</sup>	F.U.	F.E.	Pop.	Reg.	D.E.	F.U.	F.E.	Pop.	Reg.	D.E.	F.U.	F.E.	Pop.
<b>Gender (in %)</b>															
Male	49	52	55	n.d.	50	54	53	57	55	51	64	66	64	67	50
Female	51	48	45	n.d.	50	46	47	43	45	49	36	34	36	33	50
<b>Age (in %).</b>															
16-24	4	5	3	n.d.	11	10	6	6	6	17	5	5	3	3	12
25-34	6	3	5	n.d.	13	10	11	13	9	17	8	8	5	2	12
35-54	28	29	28	n.d.	33	35	38	38	35	32	30	30	33	41	32
55-64	21	21	25	n.d.	17	20	19	13	20	14	24	24	23	26	18
65-84	40	41	38	n.d.	23	24	25	28	28	18	33	33	35	27	23
85 +	1	1	2	n.d.	3	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
<b>Education (in %)</b>															
Secondary education	25	18	28	n.d.	48	26	25	22	19	31	15	14	16	12	47
Senior secondary vocational education	13	14	15	n.d.	36	19	16	22	16	37	16	15	14	17	41
<i>Non tertiary education</i>	38	32	43	n.d.	84	45	40	44	34	68	31	29	30	29	88
Higher professional education	40	43	36	n.d.	13	37	39	41	42	20	41	51	54	53	11
Academic higher education	22	26	21	n.d.	3	18	20	15	24	12	20	20	16	17	1
<i>Tertiary education</i>	62	68	57	n.d.	16	55	60	56	66	32	69	71	70	71	12
<b>Language spoken at home (in %)</b>															
Dutch	89	88	89	n.d.	91	91	92	93	93	91	95	96	93	97	91
Dutch, bilingual	8	8	11	n.d.	6	8	7	7	5	6	4	4	7	3	6
European	0	0	0	n.d.	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Non-European	3	3	0	n.d.	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1

<sup>1</sup> Deliberation event (D.E.).

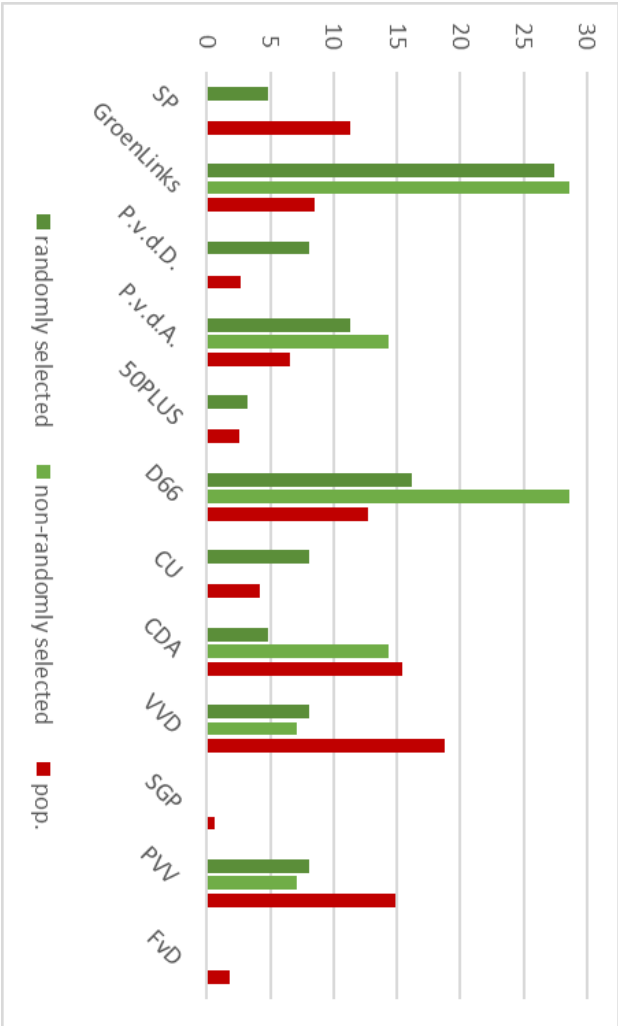
**Figure A1.** Voting behaviour of G1000 participants over time (in counts).



**Table A7.** Political and Civic engagement level of the participants over time compared to the population (in %).

	<b>G1000 population</b>				<b>Population</b>
	Reg.	D.E.	F.U.	F.E.	
<b>National election participation</b>					
Yes	96	95	99	98	<b>78–86</b>
No	5	5	1	2	<b>22–14</b>
<b>Political activity</b>					
Active	15	16	19	22	<b>19–13</b>
Non-active	84	84	81	78	<b>81–87</b>
<b>Member of a citizen initiative</b>					
Yes	16	19	26	27	<b>3–8</b>
No	84	81	74	73	<b>97–92</b>
<b>Civic activity</b>					
Active	55	50	54	69	<b>46–43</b>
Non-active	45	50	46	31	<b>54–57</b>
<b>Trust in local government</b>					
Trust	78	83	89	88	<b>53</b>
No-trust	22	17	11	12	<b>47</b>

**Figure A2.** Voting behaviour of Socio-demographic characteristics of randomly (RS), non-randomly (NRS) selected participants at the deliberation events, and the general population.



**Table A8.** Proposed initiators for the implementation of the G1000 outcomes.

Borne		Enschede		Steenwijkerland	
<i>working group</i>	<i>initiator implementation</i>	<i>working group</i>	<i>initiator implementation</i>	<i>working group</i>	<i>initiator implementation</i>
<i>Ecological living</i>	local government, housing corporations, other community partners	<i>Responsibility (rejected)</i>	citizens and local government	<i>Awareness-raising (rejected)</i>	citizens and local government
<i>Communication</i>	citizens and local government	<i>Upgrading consumer fireworks (rejected)</i>	national government	<i>Informing and learning</i>	citizens, local government, schools
<i>Creative Café</i>	mainly citizens	<i>Firework free zones</i>	local government	<i>Nutrition (rejected)</i>	local government
<i>Sustainability</i>	mainly citizens	<i>Information</i>	citizens and local government	<i>Sustainable mobility</i>	local government and local entrepreneurs
<i>Noaberschap</i>	mainly citizens	<i>Schools</i>	citizens, schools, police,	<i>Sun and wind (partially rejected)</i>	local government
<i>Traffic/ traffic safety</i>	local government	<i>Enforcement (rejected)</i>	citizens, police, local government	<i>Geothermal energy and biomass</i>	local government
<i>Administrative renewal</i>	citizens and local government			<i>Close to home</i>	citizens and local government
				<i>Energy cooperatives (partially rejected)</i>	local government
				<i>Municipal policy (partially rejected)</i>	local government

**Table A9.** Social conceptual impact on the participants in the three G1000.

	<b>Borne</b>	<b>Enschede</b>	<b>Steenwijkerland</b>	<b>Overall</b>
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
Since the G1000 I feel more involved with my neighbourhood. <sup>1</sup>	2.5 (1.10)	2.5 (0.97)**	3 (0.34)	2.7** (0.97)
Since the G1000 I have much more contact with other local residents. <sup>2</sup>	2.3 (0.83)**	2.3 (0.95)**	2.7 (1.02)	2.4** (0.95)
Since the G1000 I feel more involved with my municipality. <sup>3</sup>	2.8 (1.05)	2.7 (0.92)	3.1 (1.01)	2.9 (0.97)
Since the G1000 I have more trust in the local government <sup>4</sup>	2.2** (0.80)	2.2** (0.96)	2.4* (0.93)	2.3** (0.91)

\*significantly different from 3 (neutral) at  $p < 0.05$ .

\*\*significantly different from 3 (neutral) at  $p < 0.01$ .

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<sup>1</sup> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree

<sup>2</sup> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree

<sup>3</sup> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree

<sup>4</sup> [1] absolutely disagree – [5] absolutely agree