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Towards permanent deliberative democracy in Belgium

From the G1000 to the Ostbelgien Model

School of Politics and International Relations Seminar

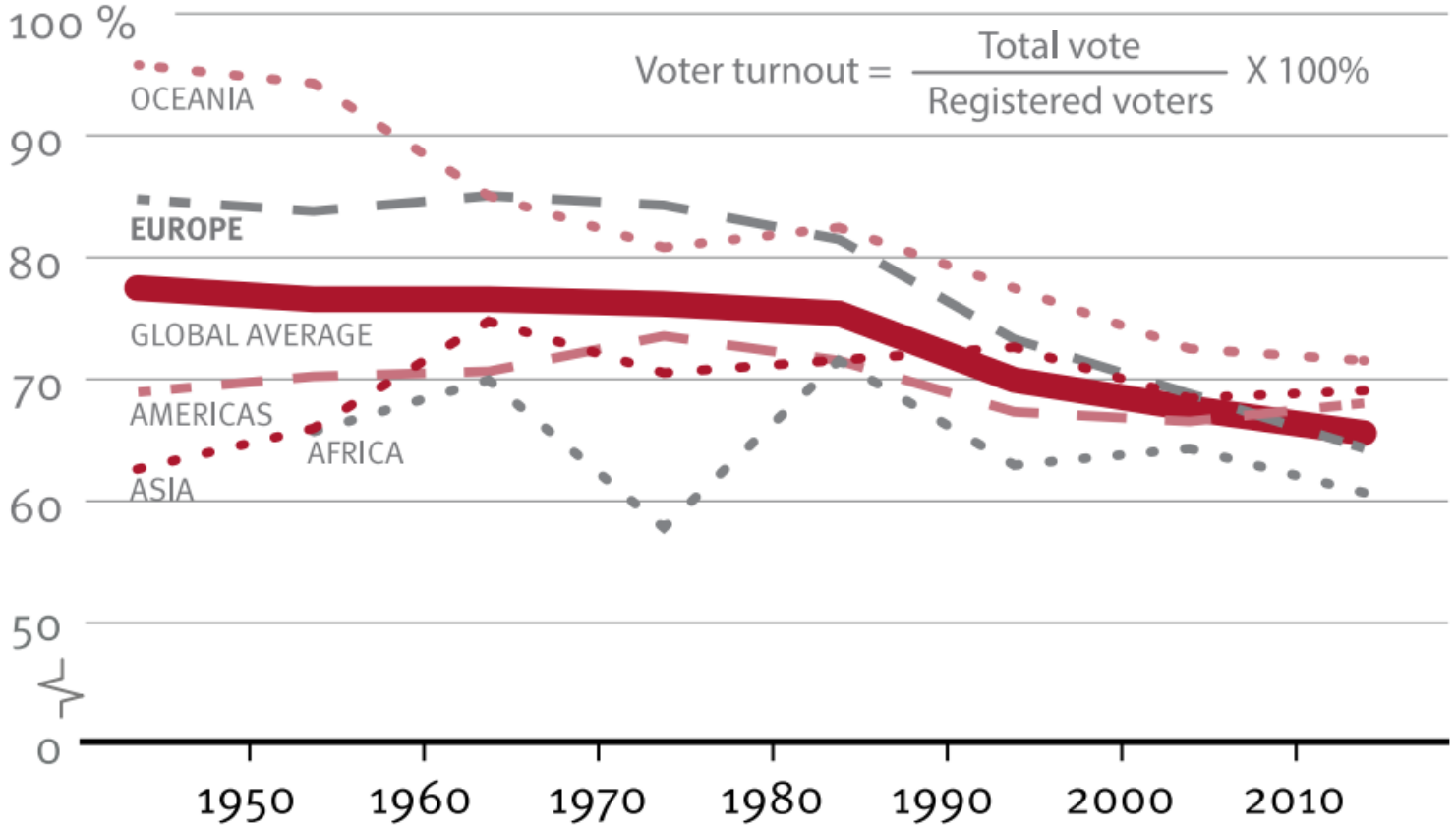
ANU, 23 May 2019

Min Reuchamps

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Institut de sciences politiques Louvain-Europe
Faculté des sciences économiques, sociales, politiques et de la communication

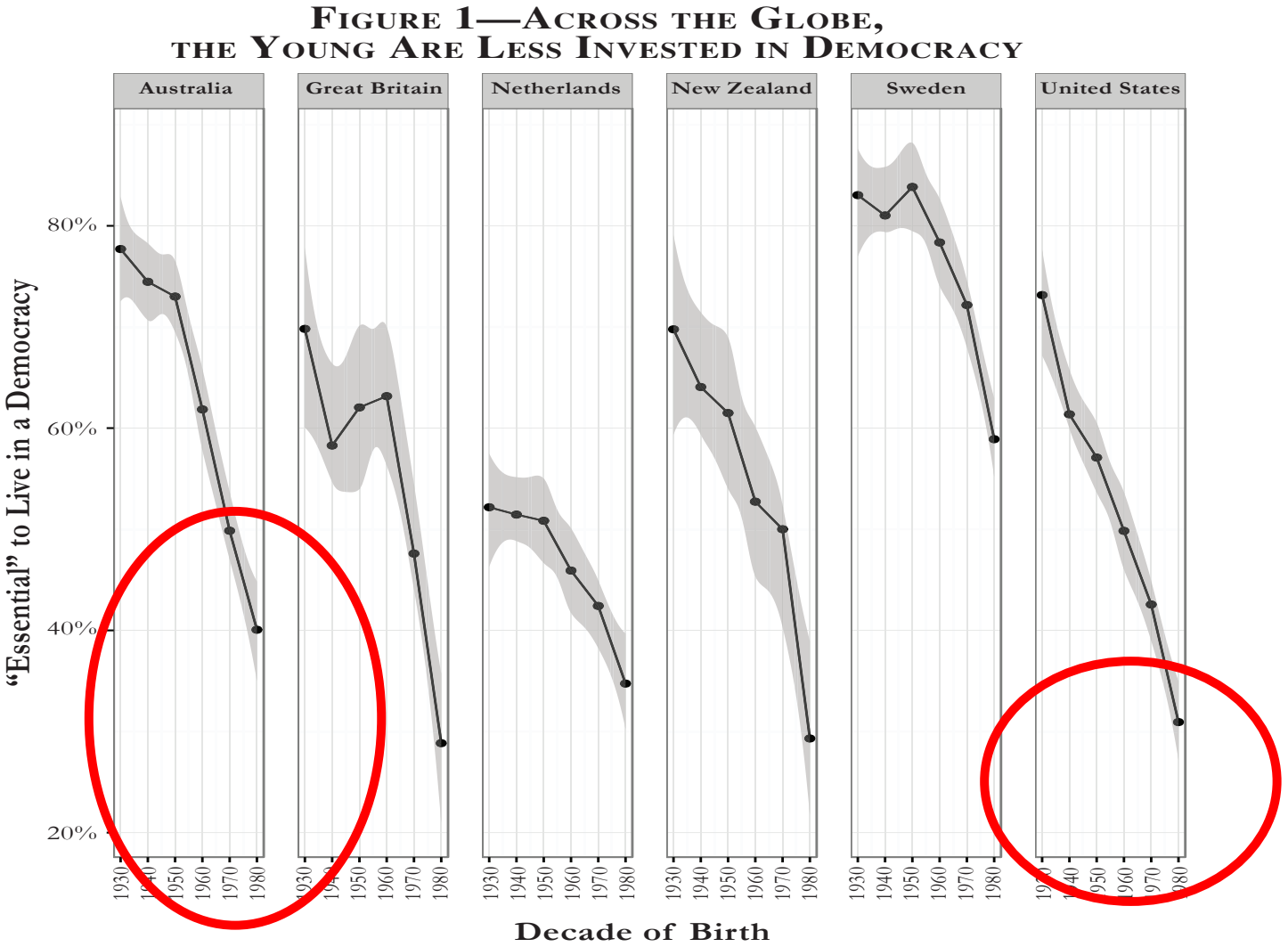
Why and, more specifically, how do – Western – democracies embrace permanent deliberative democracy?

A ‘story’ from Belgium



Source: Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout

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FIGURE 1—ACROSS THE GLOBE,
THE YOUNG ARE LESS INVESTED IN DEMOCRACY
Australia
Great Britain
Netherlands
New Zealand
Sweden
United States
"Essential" to Live in a Democracy
80%
60%
40%
20%
1930
1940
1950
1960
1970
1980
Decade of Birth

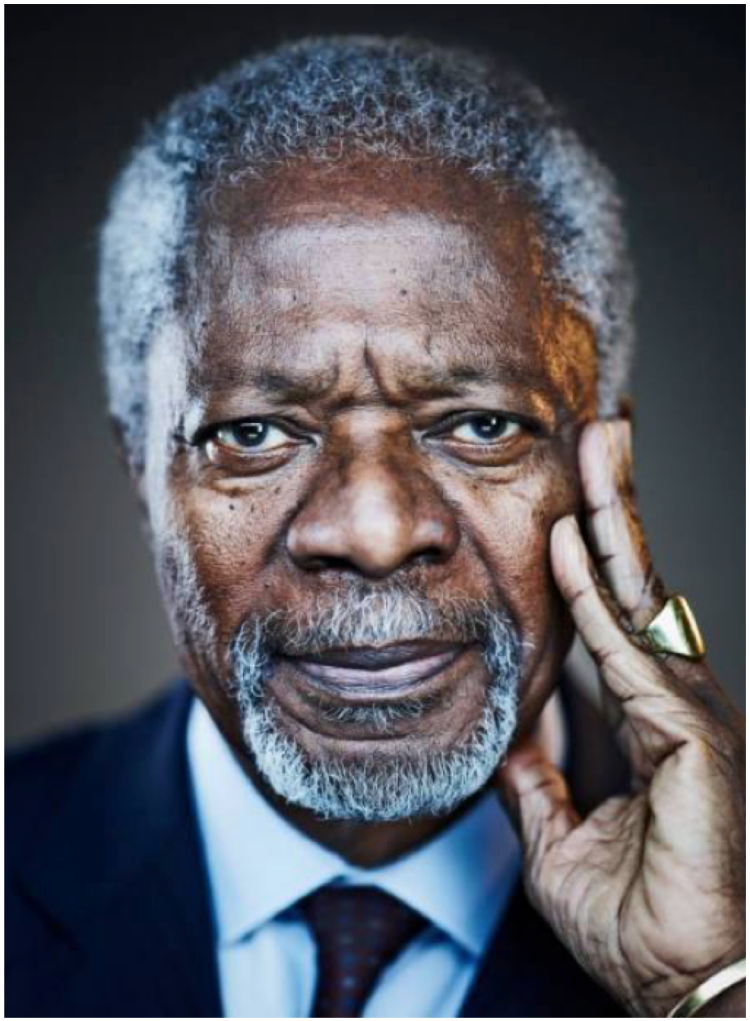
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"What's important to discuss as we consider South Australia's future & whether we should deepen our involvement in the Nuclear Fuel Cycle."


participation citoyenne
Le panel de citoyens
Quel Brabant wallon pour demain ?



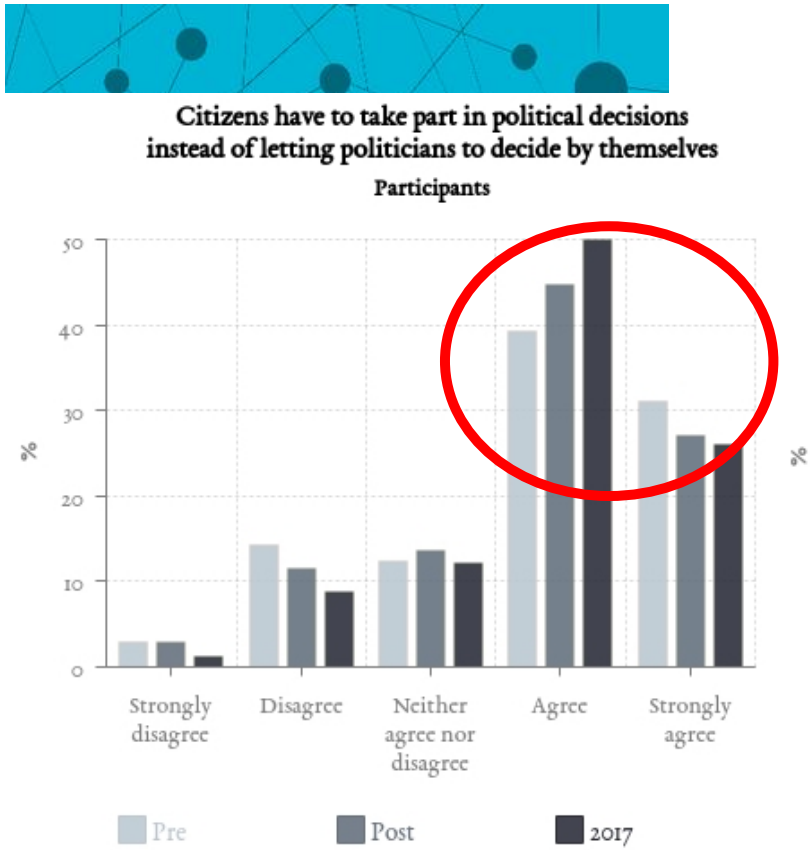
"we need to make our democracies more inclusive. This requires bold and innovative reforms to bring in the young, the poor and minorities into the political system. ***An interesting idea put forward by one of your speakers this week, Mr. Van Reybrouck, would be to reintroduce the ancient Greek practice of selecting parliaments by lot instead of election.*** In other words, parliamentarians would no longer be nominated by political parties, but chosen at random for a limited term, in the way many jury systems work. This would prevent the formation of self-serving and self-perpetuating political classes disconnected from their electorates."

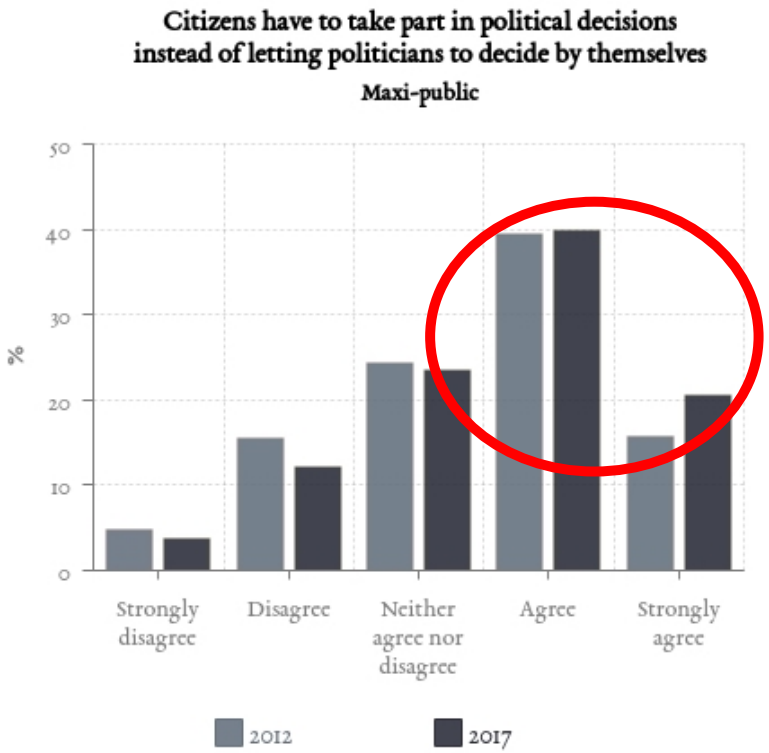
(Kofi Annan, 13 September 2017)

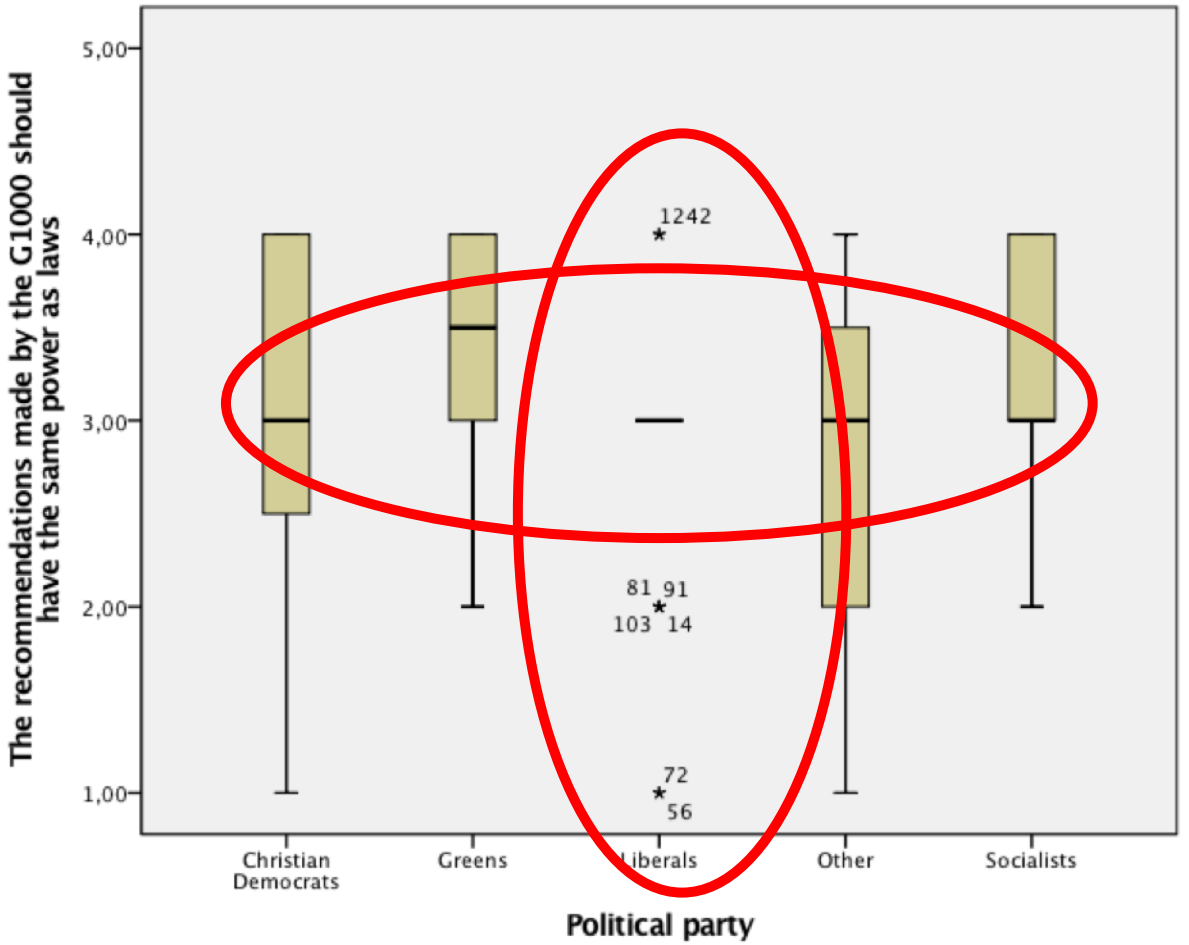
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G1000



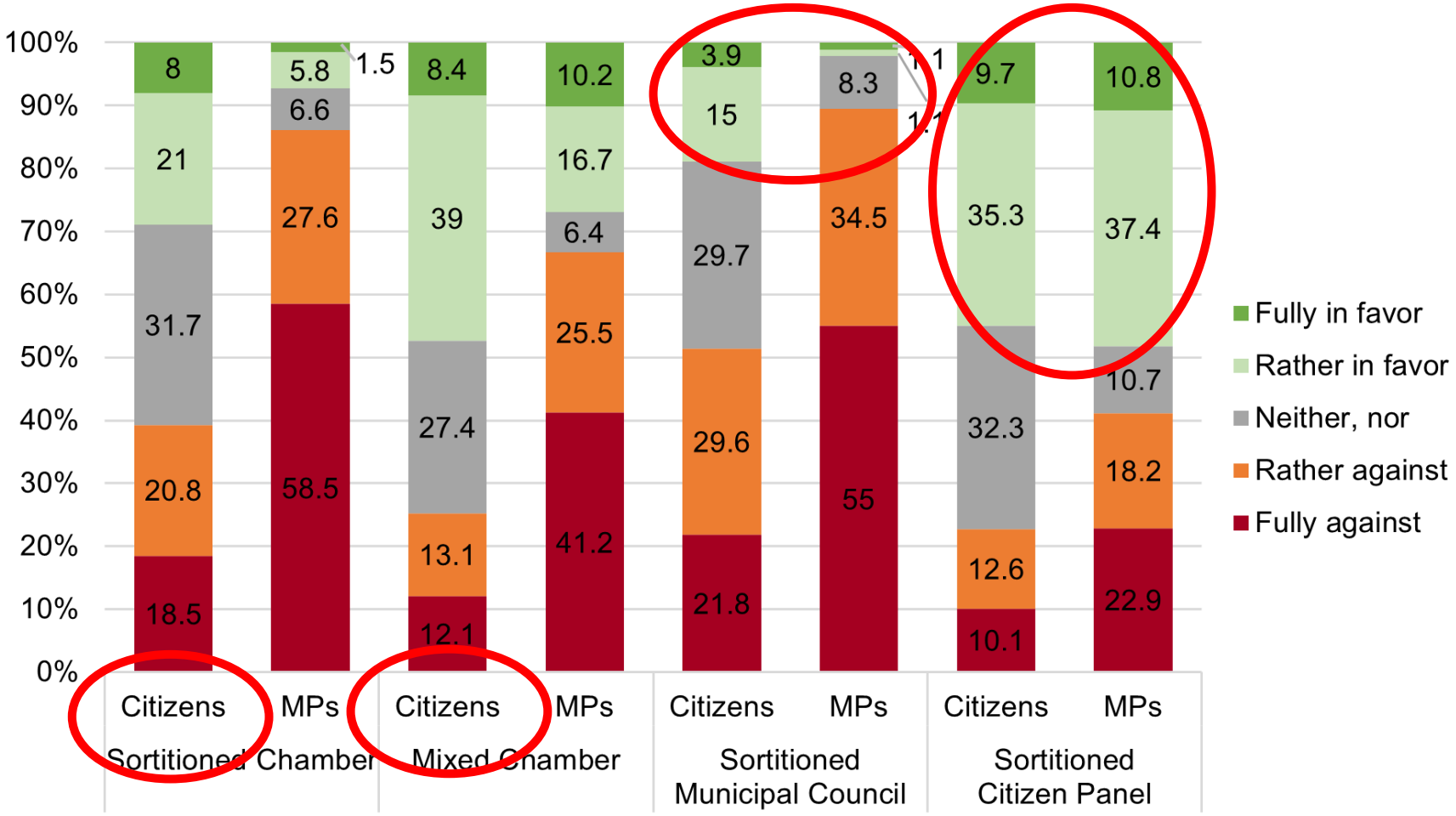

Citizens have to take part in political decisions instead of letting politicians to decide by themselves
Participants
%
50
40
30
20
10
0
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
Pre
Post
2017


Citizens have to take part in political decisions instead of letting politicians to decide by themselves
Maxi-public
%
50
40
30
20
10
0
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
2012
2017


The recommendations made by the G1000 should have the same power as laws
5,00
4,00
3,00
2,00
1,00
1242
81
91
103
14
72
56
Christian Democrats
Greens
Liberals
Other
Socialists
Political party

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- Political parties' manifestos
  - increasing place for citizen participation
  - so-called 'citizen lists'
  - sortition becomes a political goal
- Support for the process, less for the content
  - all elected representatives know about the G100
  - almost no one know about the recommendations
- As long as it is advisory (i.e. non-binding)
- Each parliament in Belgium has set a 'citizen panel'
- Going further?


100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
8
21
31.7
20.8
18.5
5.8
1.5
6.6
27.6
58.5
8.4
39
27.4
13.1
12.1
10.2
16.7
6.4
25.5
41.2
3.9
15
29.7
29.6
21.8
1.1
8.3
34.5
55
9.7
35.3
32.3
12.6
10.1
10.8
37.4
10.7
18.2
22.9
Citizens
MPs
Sortitioned Chamber
Citizens
MPs
Mixed Chamber
Citizens
MPs
Sortitioned Municipal Council
Citizens
MPs
Sortitioned Citizen Panel
Fully in favor
Rather in favor
Neither, nor
Rather against
Fully against

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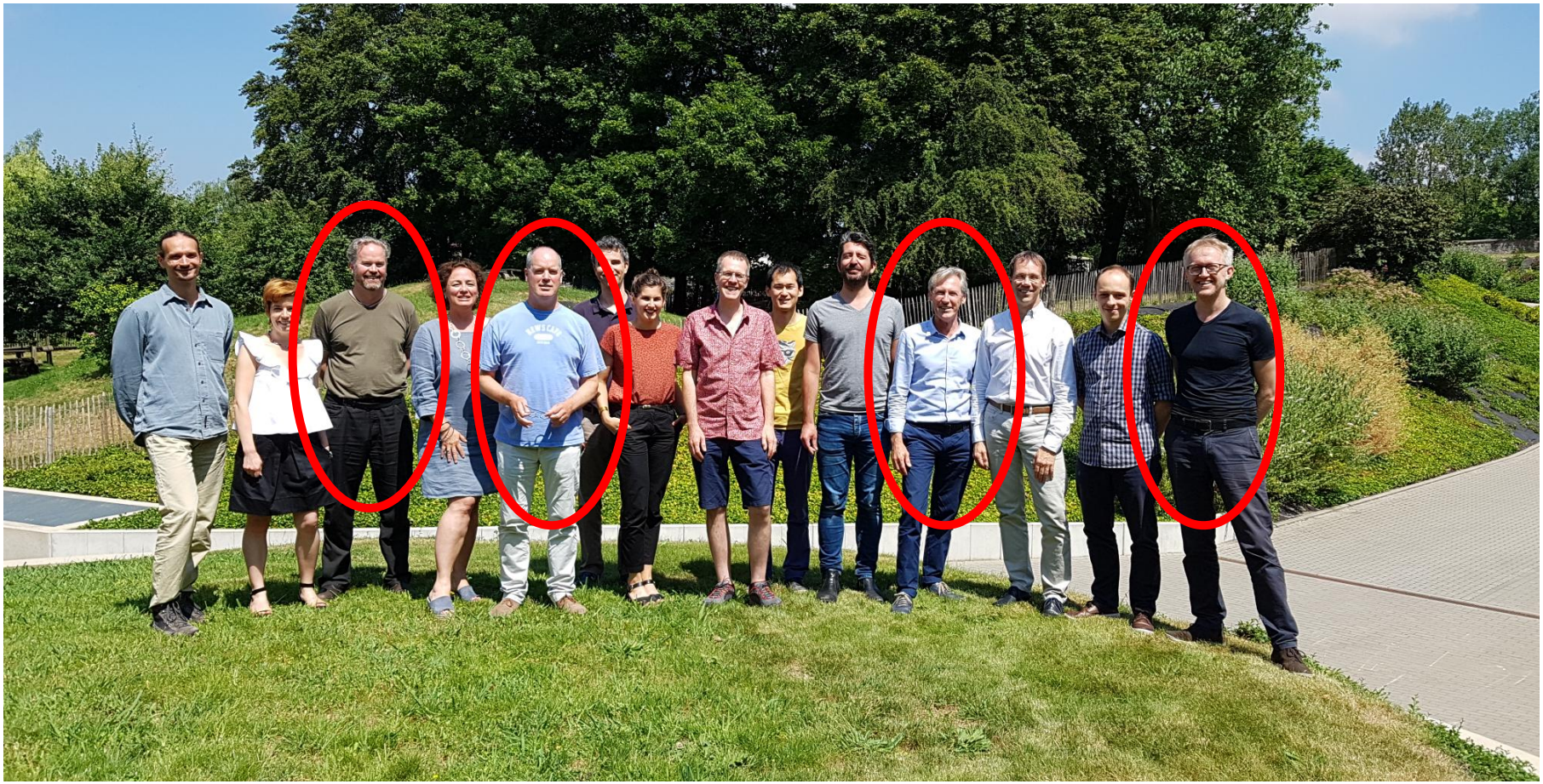
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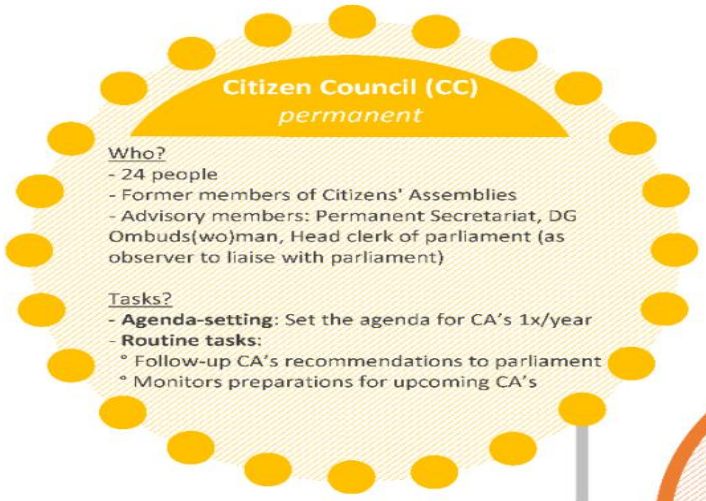
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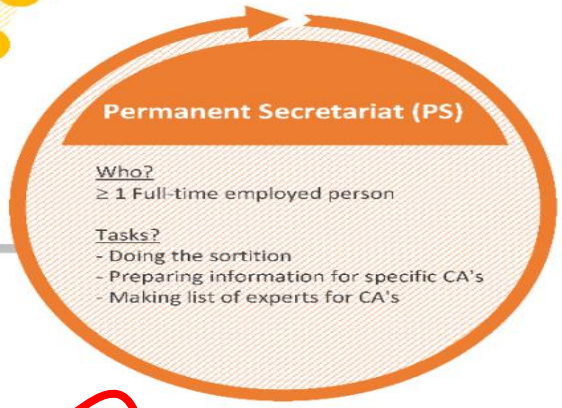
- Phone call from the Minister-President of the Government and the President of the Parliament
  - a Second Chamber (‘a Senate’)
  - made of randomly selected citizens
  - willing to set an annual budget
  - ‘Before it is too late’
  - with the help of the G1000 and international experts
- But…
  - at least one party from the opposition (out of 3)
  - before the elections of 26 May 2019
  - taking into account the local elections of 14 October 2018

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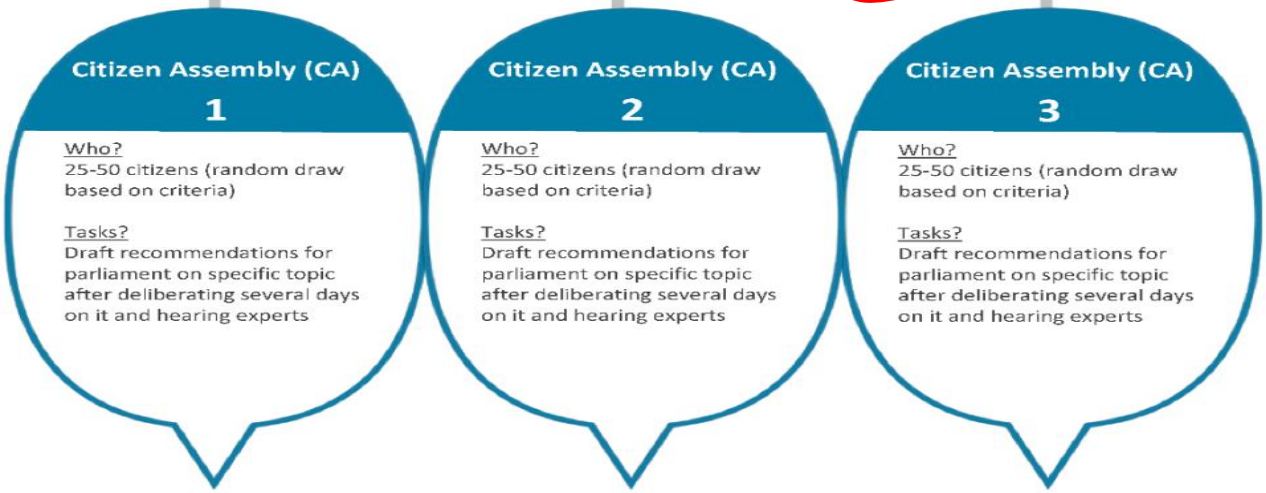


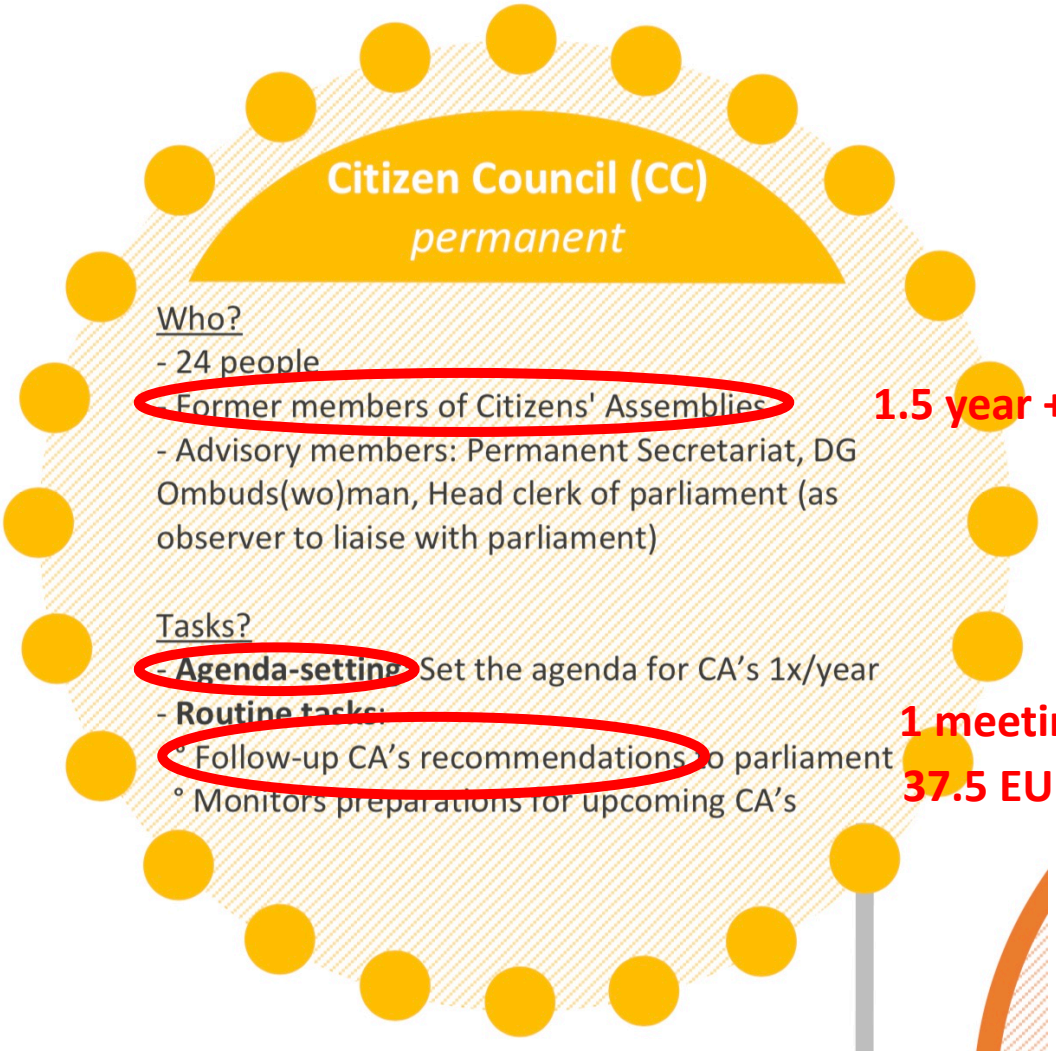
Second chamber





Mini-publics



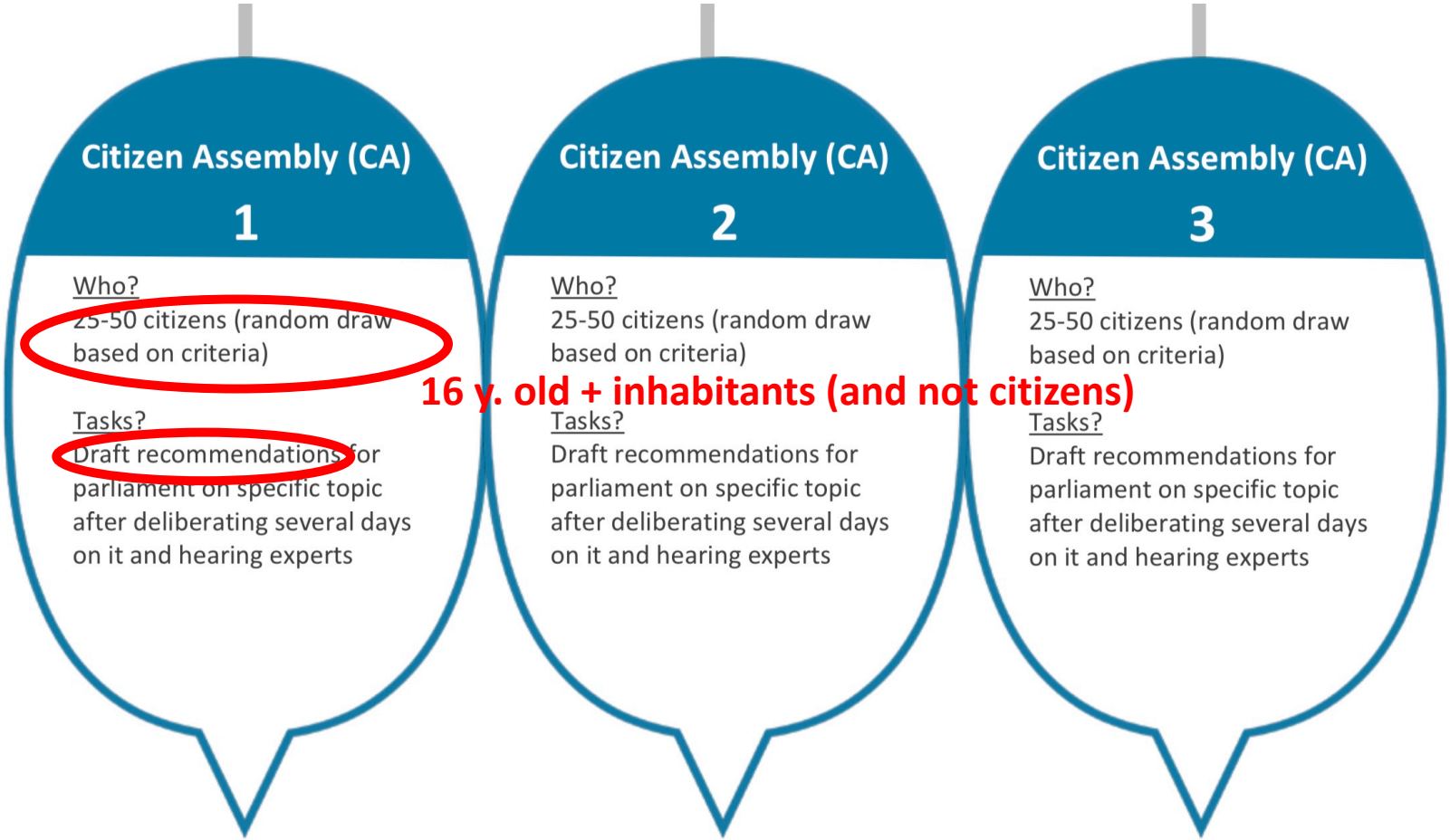


1.5 year + rotation by 1/3

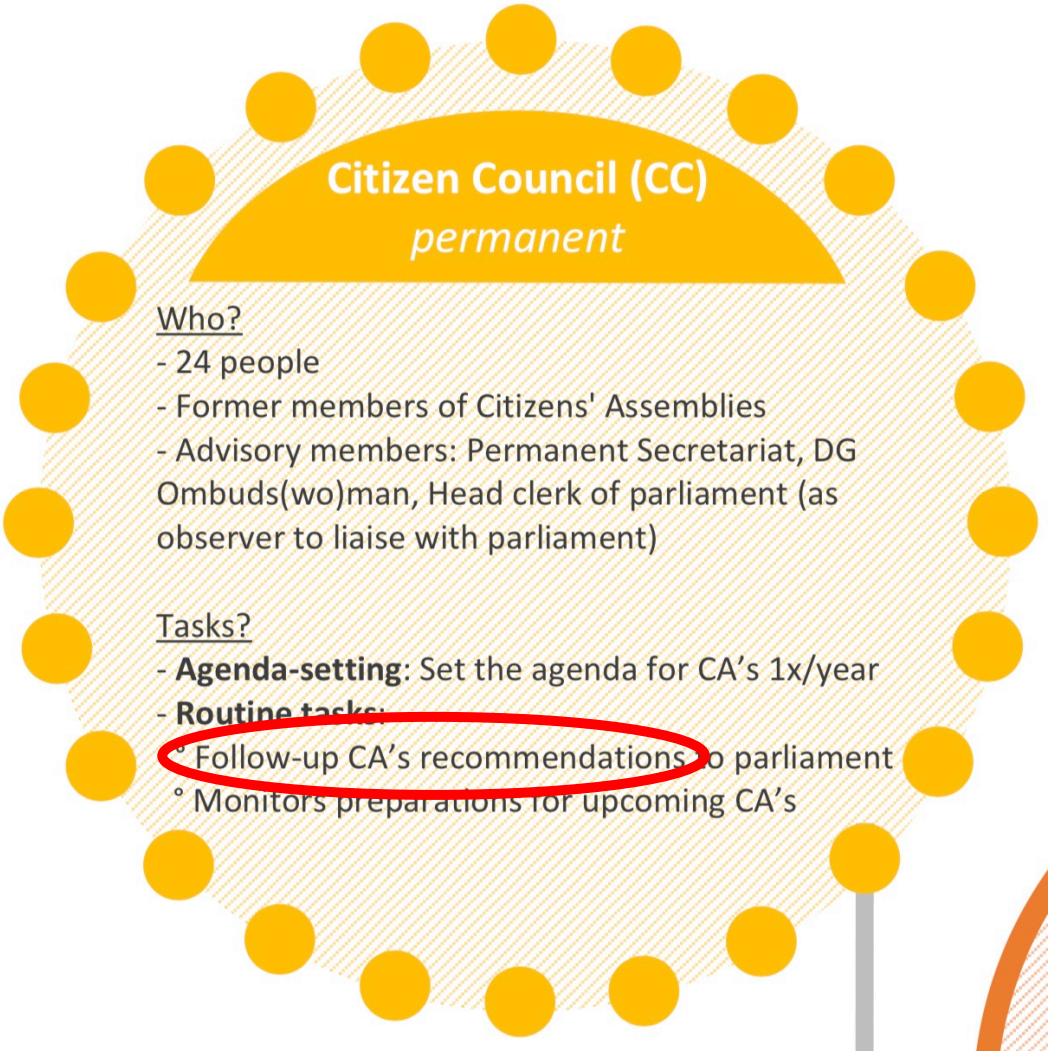
1 meeting per month

37.5 EUR per meeting

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16 y. old + inhabitants (and not citizens)


Citizen Council (CC)
permanent
Who?
- 24 people
- Former members of Citizens' Assemblies
- Advisory members: Permanent Secretariat, DG Ombuds(wo)man, Head clerk of parliament (as observer to liaise with parliament)
Tasks?
- Agenda-setting: Set the agenda for CA's 1x/year
- Routine tasks:
° Follow-up CA's recommendations to parliament
° Monitors preparations for upcoming CA's


Permanent Secretariat (PS)
Who?
≥ 1 Full-time employed person
Tasks?
Independent body
- Doing the sortition
- Preparing information for specific CA's
- Making list of experts for CA's

How to fix democracy

Citizen deliberation is the gateway to a better politics

People bridge differences or develop a respectful understanding of them, says Matthew Taylor of the RSA



ausgewogene geografische Herkunft sowie eine ausgewogene sozio-ökonomische Durchmischung. Aufgrund der Spezifizität eines Themas kann er im Hinblick auf die Zusammenstellung eines möglichst repräsentativen Querschnitts der betroffenen Bevölkerung zusätzliche Kriterien festlegen.

Für die Erfüllung der Aufgaben im Zusammenhang mit der Auswahl der Bürger ist der ständige Sekretär ermächtigt, eine Liste von Personen, die im Bevölkerungsregister eingetragen sind, bei den Gemeinden des deutschen

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- 25 February 2019: adoption of the decree
- 26 April 2019: recruitment of Permanent Secretariat
- 26 May 2019: general elections
- 16 September 2019: first meeting of the Citizen Council
- 2 years later: evaluation
- In one's lifetime: 67% chances of being randomly selected

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Three res **onclusion:**

- **RQ1:** ***ies adopt inno***
- **RQ2** ***iberative dem***
- **RQ3:** ***effects of perman*** ***nocracy?***

Constitution-making
&
Deliberative democracy

COST Action
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Thank you