



MINI-PUBLICS IN EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN FRANCOPHONE BELGIUM

MIN REUCHAMPS

BASED ON RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN

WITH SOPHIE DEVILLERS, CHRISTOPH NIESSEN AND JULIEN VRYDAGH

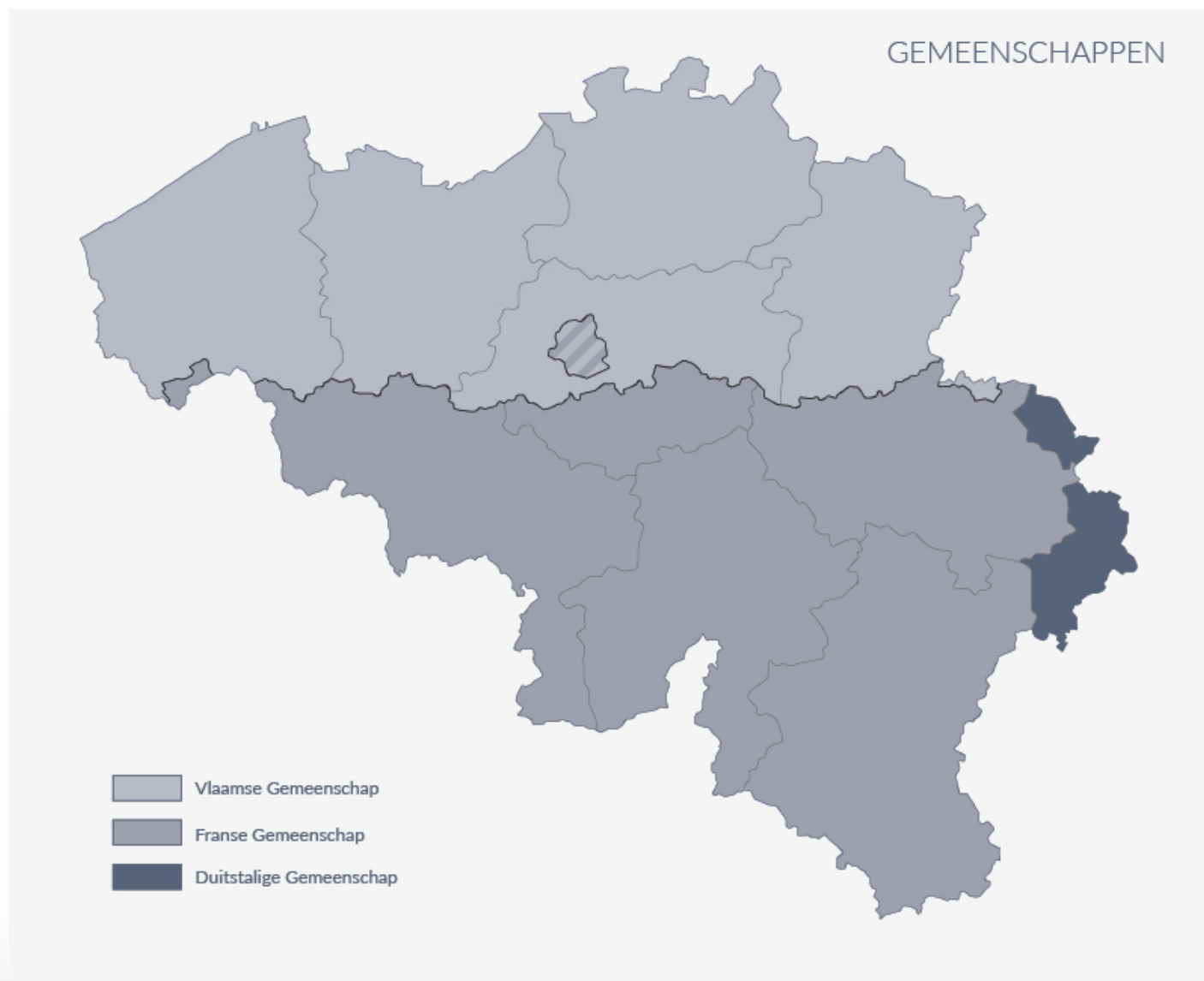


VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
BRUSSEL



UCLouvain

BACKGROUND



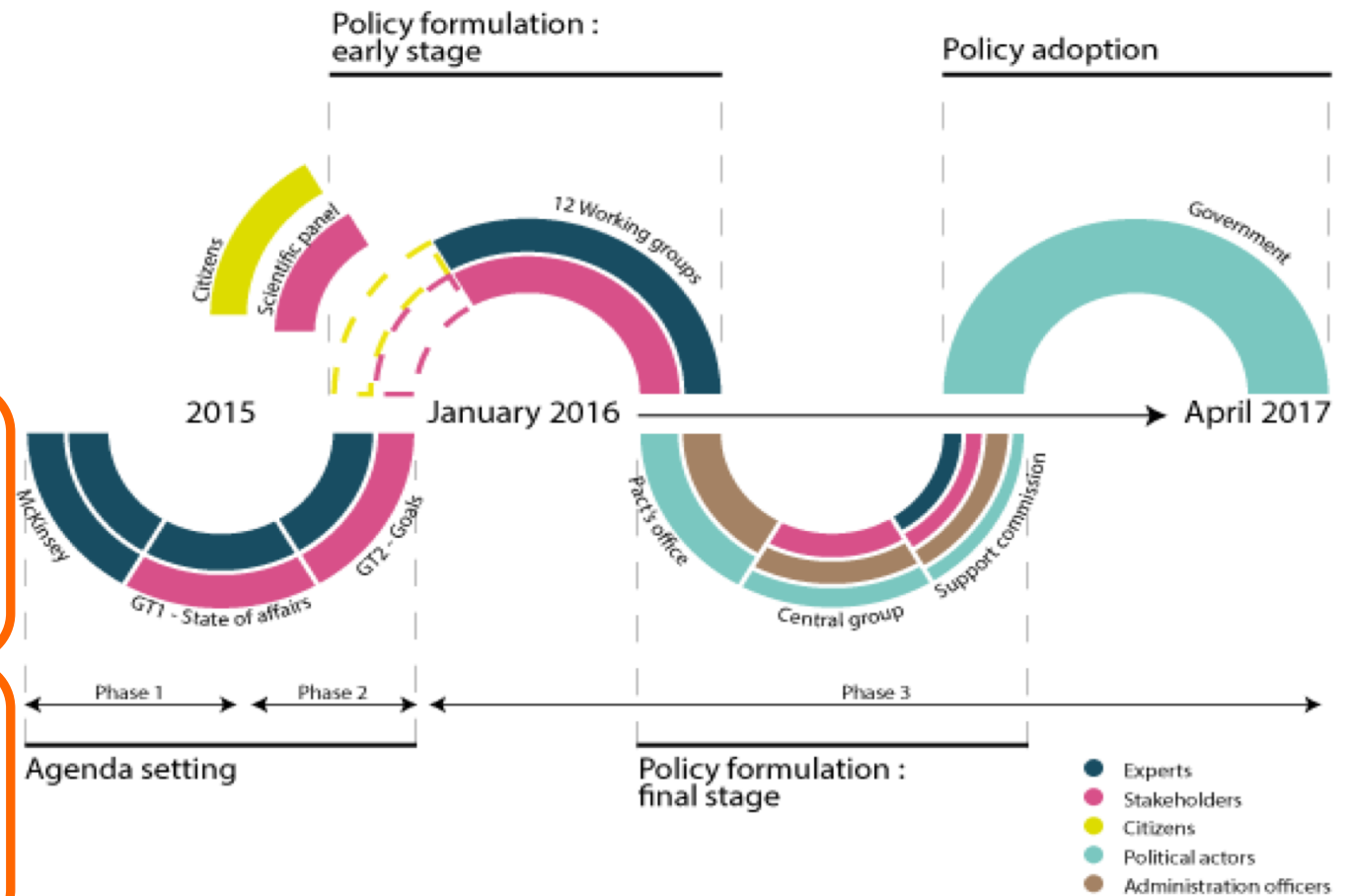
THE CASE

THE PACTE POUR UN ENSEIGNEMENT D'EXCELLENCE

- Education reform in French-speaking Belgium
- Collaborative governance with three mini-publics (+ later on: 'agoras')

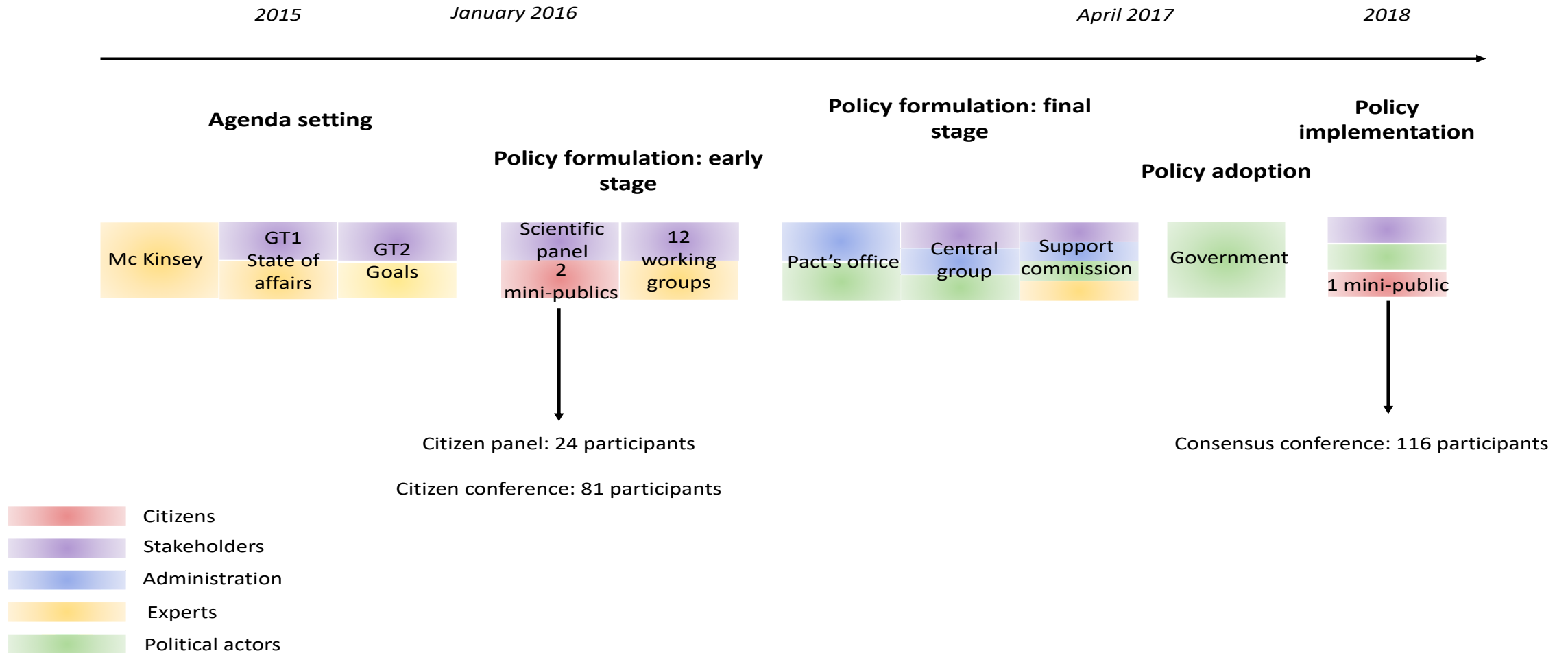
- State actors
- Non-state actors
 - Organized stakeholders
 - Dominant (neo-corporatist actors)
 - Non-dominant (less formalized actors)

- Non-organized stakeholders (professionals, individual actors)
- Lay citizens



THE CASE

THE PACTE POUR UN ENSEIGNEMENT D'EXCELLENCE



METHODOLOGY

- Surveys of stakeholders (82) and participants (105) after mini-publics
- In-depth interviews of stakeholders (11)
- Observation of mini-publics

QUESTION 1

WORKING WITH PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT HATS (ALSO STAKEHOLDERS)

	Citizen Panel	Citizen Conference	Consensus Conference
# participants	24	81	116
Selection	Random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection
Category	Citizens	Teachers, students, parents	1/3 citizens, 2/3 teachers
Agenda	Diffuse	Diffuse	Precise
Topic	Open: Priorities for the schools?	Semi-open: <i>Redoublement</i>	Closed: Scenarios for the curriculum
Media attention	Low	Low	High

QUESTION 1

WORKING WITH PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT HATS (ALSO STAKEHOLDERS)

Participants' perceptions

Legitimacy depends on the mini-public

1. Composition of the mini-public: lay citizens or non-organized stakeholders
2. Openness of the agenda
3. Media attention → Question 2

→ Design matters

Hypothesis

- Different perceptions among non-organized stakeholders and lay citizens

→ Status matters

QUESTION 1

WORKING WITH PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT HATS (ALSO STAKEHOLDERS)

- Non-organized stakeholders → participating in mini-publics with a design that increases the stakes of participation → more critical views
- Lay citizens → participating in mini-publics with a design that lowers the stakes of participation → more positive views

QUESTION 1

WORKING WITH PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT HATS (ALSO STAKEHOLDERS)

	Citizen Panel	Citizen Conference	Consensus Conference
# participants	24	81	116
Selection	Random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection
Category	Citizens	Teachers, students, parents	1/3 citizens, 2/3 teachers
Agenda	Diffuse	Diffuse	Precise
Topic	Open: Priorities for the schools?	Semi-open: <i>Redoublement</i>	Closed: Scenarios for the curriculum
Media attention	Low	Low	High

PERCEPTION

QUESTION 2

DEALING WITH POLARIZATION, BOTH IN THE ROOM AND OUTSIDE

	Citizen Panel	Citizen Conference	Consensus Conference
# participants	24	81	116
Selection	Random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection
Category	Citizens	Teachers, students, parents	1/3 citizens, 2/3 teachers
Agenda	Diffuse	Diffuse	Precise
Topic	Open: Priorities for the schools?	Semi-open: <i>Redoublement</i>	Closed: Scenarios for the curriculum
Media attention	Low	Low	High

QUESTION 2

DEALING WITH POLARIZATION, BOTH IN THE ROOM AND OUTSIDE

- Story 1: the 'coup d'état' prepared in the train
- Story 2: registering family members
- High stakes participants with high stakes mini-publics = pretty explosive cocktail

QUESTION 2

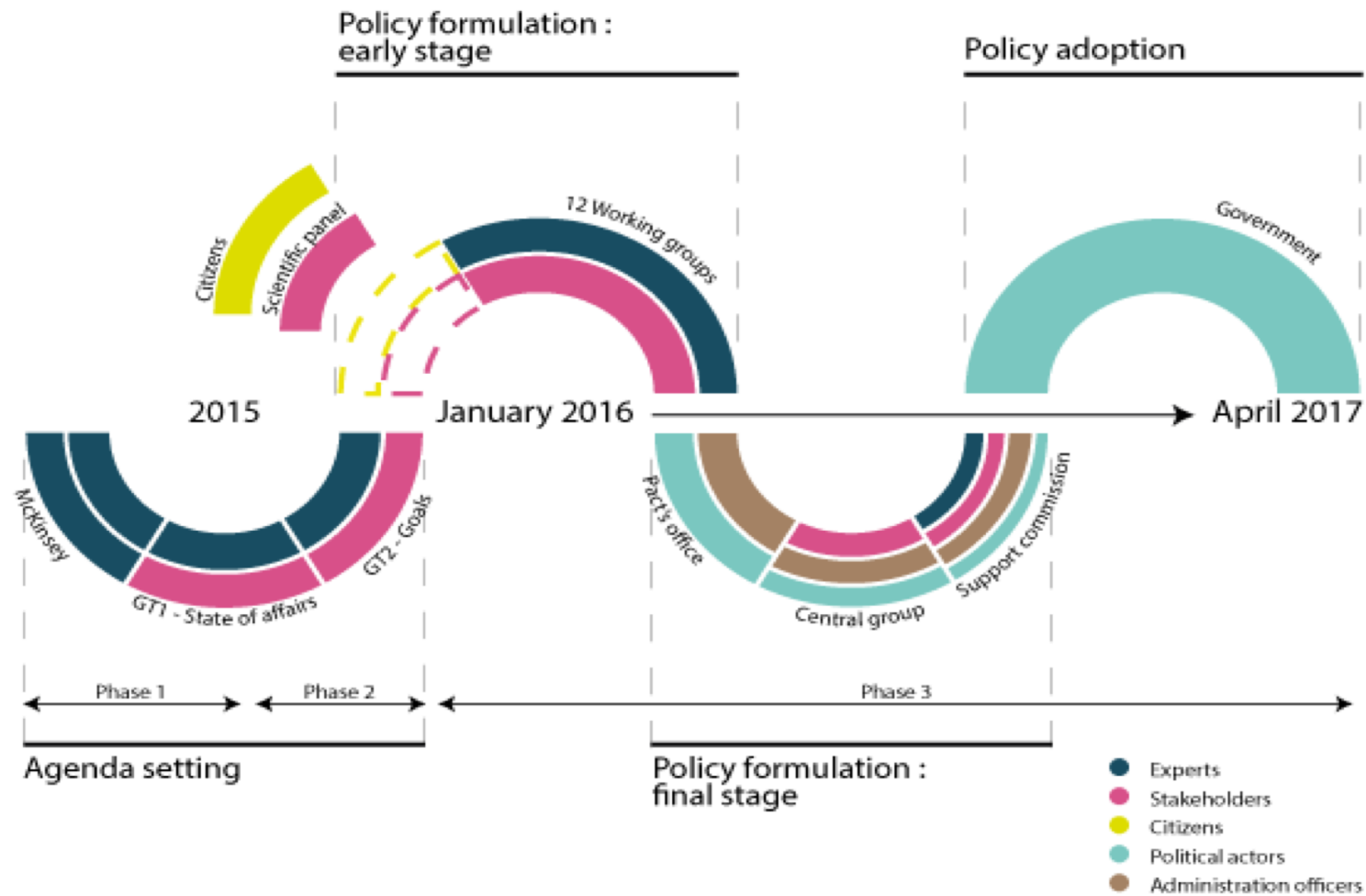
DEALING WITH POLARIZATION, BOTH IN THE ROOM AND OUTSIDE

	Citizen Panel	Citizen Conference	Consensus Conference
# participants	24	81	116
Selection	Random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection	Open call followed by stratified random selection
Category	Citizens	Teachers, students, parents	1/3 citizens, 2/3 teachers
Agenda	Diffuse	Diffuse	Precise
Topic	Open: Priorities for the schools?	Semi-open: <i>Redoublement</i>	Closed: Scenarios for the curriculum
Media attention	Low	Low	High

POLARIZATION

QUESTION 3

INTEGRATING THE RESULTS IN POLICY-MAKING



QUESTION 3

INTEGRATING THE RESULTS IN POLICY-MAKING

Organized stakeholders' perceptions (and politicians?)

1. Lack of awareness and understanding of mini-publics
 1. Deficient communication
 2. No formal link
 3. Timing
 4. Not involved before and during
2. Mini-publics as top-down process
 1. Lack of legitimacy because no expertise and no representativeness

SUGGESTIONS

- Think of interaction of different sites of deliberation throughout the policy-making process
- Involve stakeholders in mini-publics (observer, resource person) and elaboration of participatory plan
- Invite mini-publics' representatives at the negotiation table