



**UCLouvain**



**Canberra Conversation Lecture Series**  
A CITIZENS' AGENDA FOR THE ACT?  
LESSONS FROM BELGIUM'S  
PERMANENT CITIZENS' COUNCIL

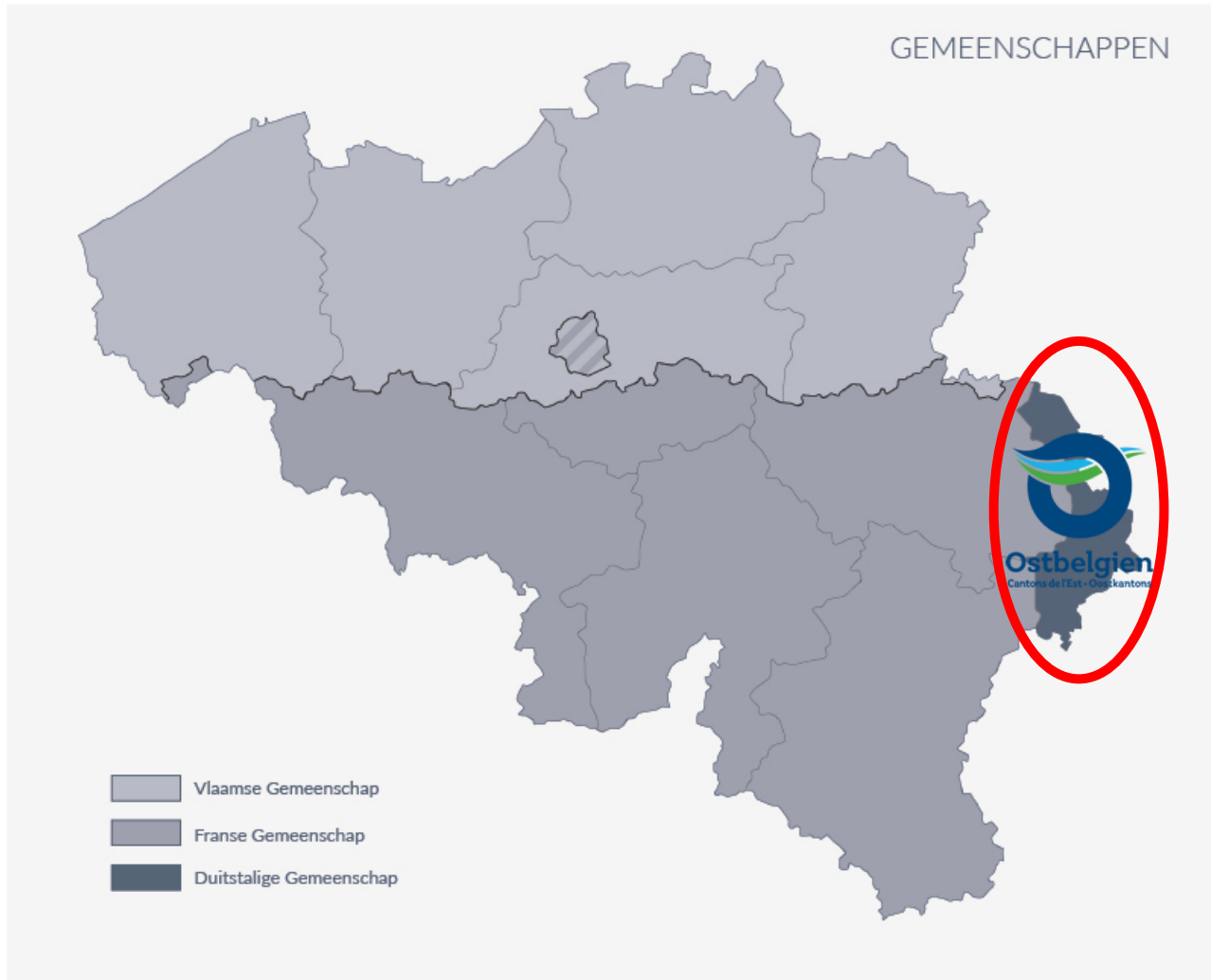
Canberra, 19 August 2019

Min Reuchamps

## Let's imagine:

- a small jurisdiction but with quite large legislative and executive powers
- that has existed for a few decades
- in a complex multi-level governance
- with a one-chamber Parliament of 25 MPs and a coalition government
- doing pretty well socio-economically but some groups much less so



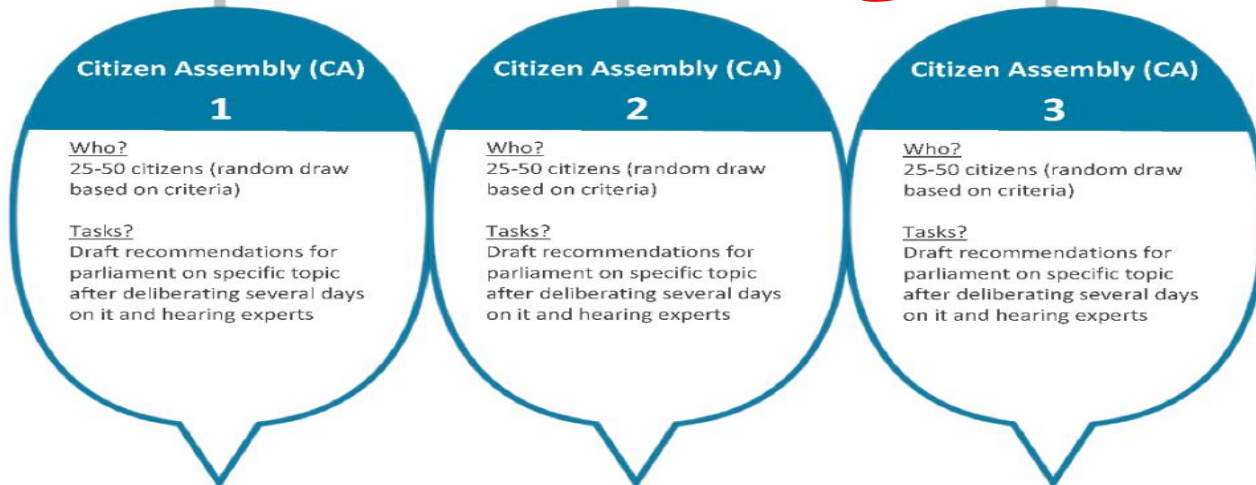
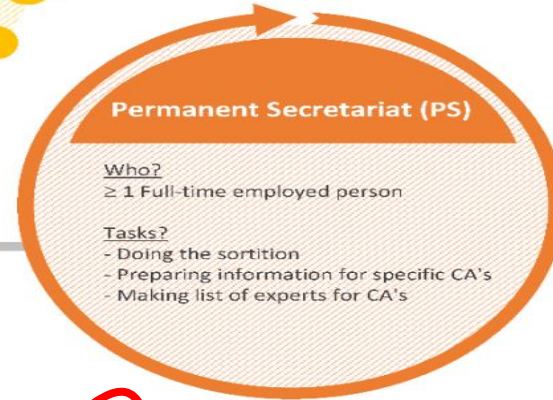
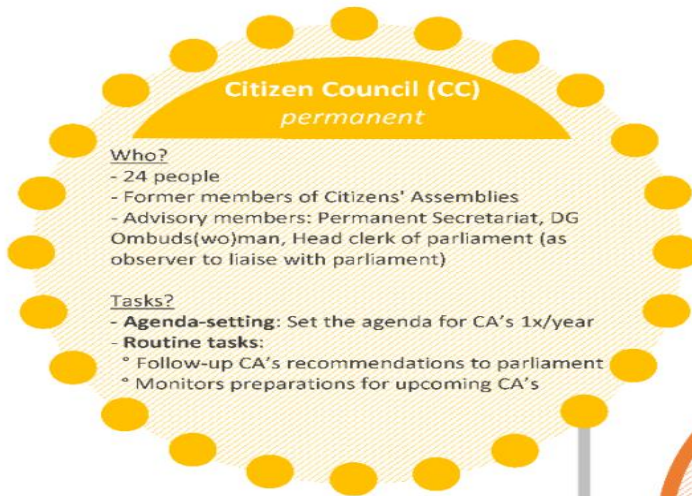




- Phone call from the Minister-President of the Government and the President of the Parliament
  - a Second Chamber ('a Senate')
  - made of randomly selected citizens
  - willing to set an annual budget
  - 'Before it is too late'
  - with the help of national and international experts
- But...
  - at least one party from the opposition (out of 3)
  - before the elections of 26 May 2019

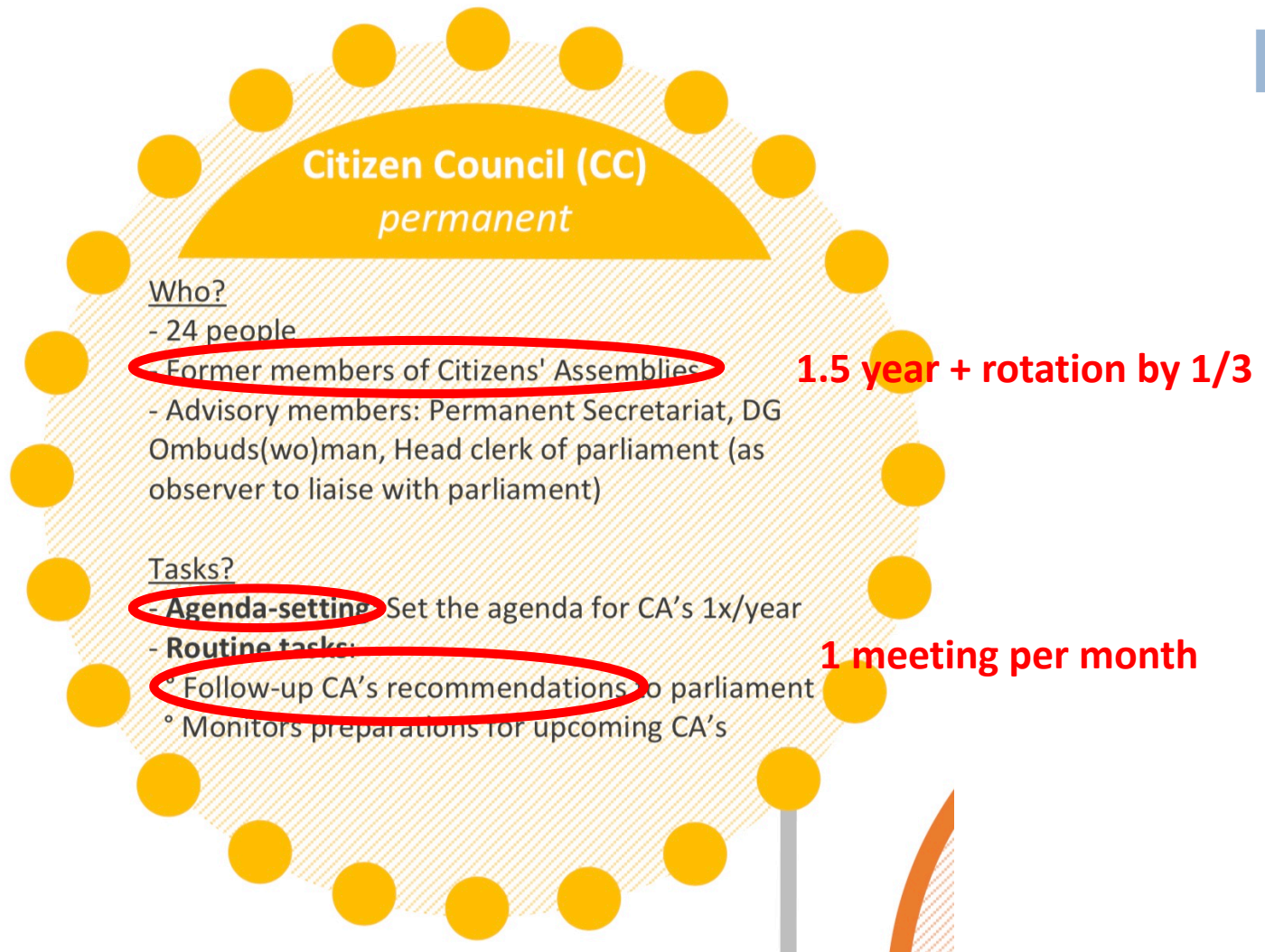


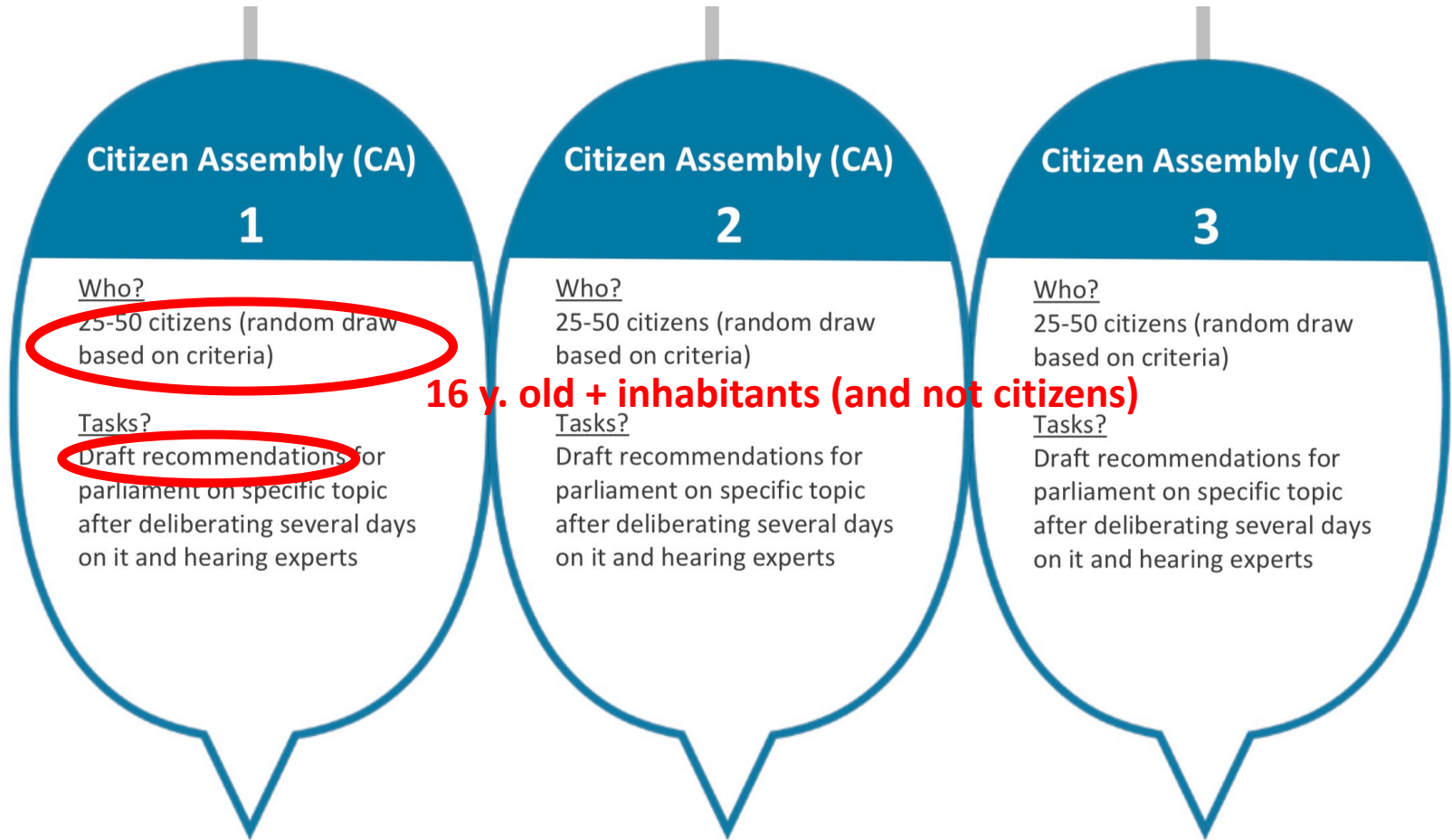
Second chamber

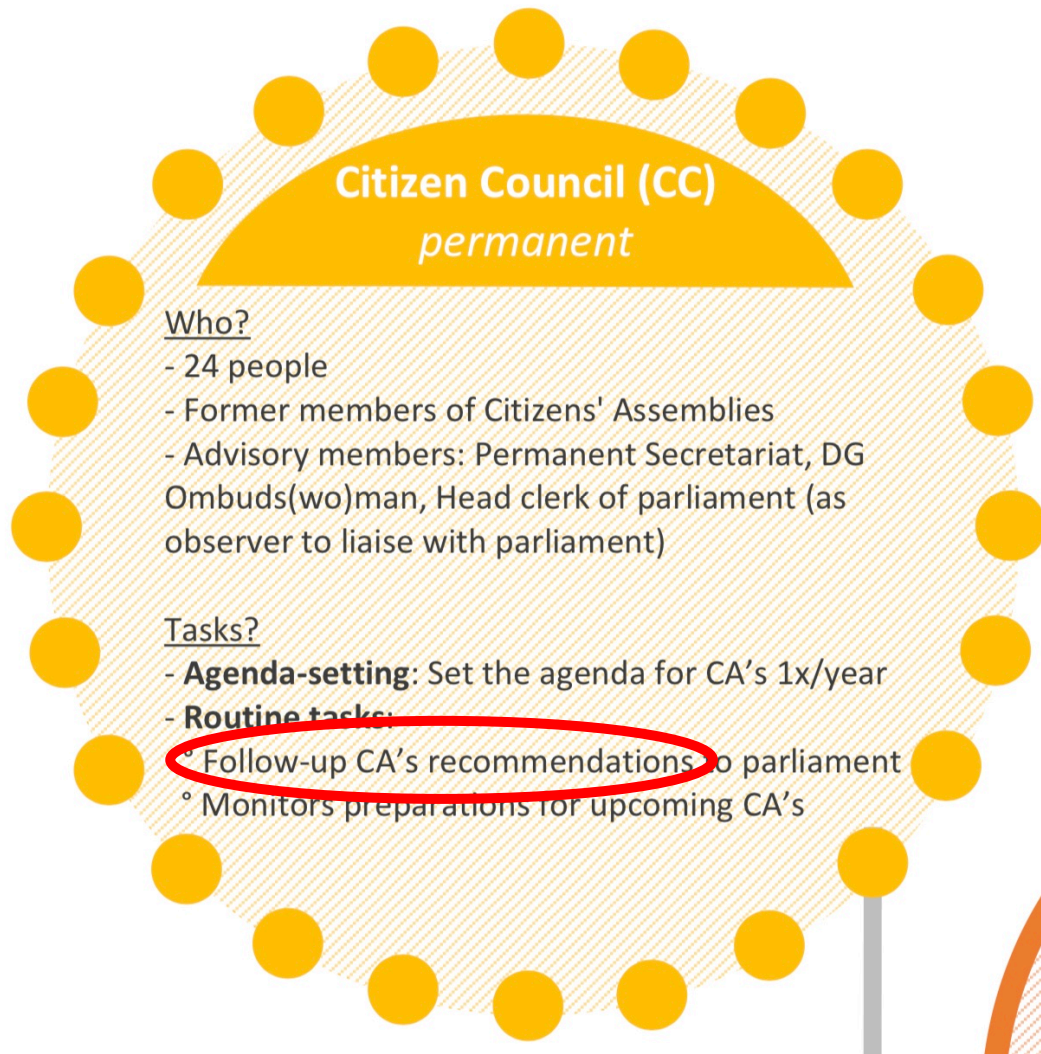


Citizen panels











- 25 February 2019: adoption of the decree
- 26 April 2019: recruitment of Permanent Secretary
- 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

## Could the ACT find here some inspiration?

- **Embedded in Parliament**
- **Permanent**
- **Voice for under-represented**
- **Win-win: citizens and elected representatives**
- **Democratic renewal and inspiration**
- **Over the long run**

**Thank you**