



**RESHAPING EUROPEAN ADVANCES TOWARDS GREEN LEADERSHIP
THROUGH DELIBERATIVE APPROACHES AND LEARNING**

D5.4 Citizen Deliberation Academy for Mutual Training and Learning

**WP5 – Dissemination, Outreach, Communication, Awareness-
raising and Capacity Building**

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Project Summary

REAL DEAL stimulates and enlightens a pan-European debate to reshape citizens' and stakeholders' active participation through deliberative processes around the European Green Deal (EGD). It brings together researchers and practitioners of deliberative democracy from a wide range of disciplines including environmental rights and the law of public participation, ethics and responsible innovation, gender studies and ecofeminism, psychology, geography, urban planning, and sustainability studies. It includes the EU's largest civil society networks advocating on the environment, climate, sustainable development, local democracy, and the European movement. It teams up with youth climate, social justice and women's organisations, SMEs, universities and research institutes, mobilising networks with thousands of CSOs, uniting millions of citizens and activating contacts to thousands of policymakers. In a large co-creation exercise, REAL DEAL has developed, tested, and validated innovative tools and formats to propel deliberative democracy to the next level. It has been engaged in testing its innovations at citizens assemblies for the transition in at least 13 locations at the national and EU level. The research team scrutinised pan-European formats ranging from digital deliberation through our online platform www.realdeal.eu to in-person processes such as an Assembly for a Gender-Just Green Deal and a pan-European Youth Climate Assembly. In the three years of the project (2022-25), REAL DEAL has helped to develop a new model of environmental citizenship across Europe.

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Consortium partners

Logo	Partner	Abbreviation	Country
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	EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU	EEB	Belgium
	ALLEANZA ITALIANA PER LO SVILUPPO SOSTENIBILE	ASviS	Italy
	ASSOCIATION DES AGENCES DE LA DEMOCRATIE LOCALE	AADL/ALDA	France
	CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY	CEU	Hungary
	CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK EUROPE	CAN EUROPE	Belgium
	DIALOGIK	DIA	Germany
	EUROPEAN MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL	EMI	Belgium
	GLOBAL CLIMATE FORUM	GCF	Germany
	FORENINGEN NYT EUROPA	NYT EUROPA	Denmark
	SOLIDAR	SOLIDAR	Belgium
	TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN	TUB	Germany
	TRILATERAL RESEARCH	TRI IE	Ireland
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Executive Summary

The Citizen Deliberation Academy (CDA, or Academy) is envisioned as a **sustainable institution for mutual learning and training** which supports the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the European Green Deal (EGD).

There is a need to supplement existing training institutions that seek to build capacity in areas such as deliberative democracy, citizen assemblies, and various aspects of sustainability by forming a special institution that has been designed through an analysis and assessment of the outputs of the REAL DEAL Project, confirmed through the results of a stakeholder **survey conducted under the REAL DEAL Project (Annex A)**.

The Academy aims to advance **citizen deliberation as a cornerstone of participatory governance**, creating a platform for exchange, learning, and training. It is co-created by academic and research institutions in partnership with civil society organizations (CSOs), ensuring both quality assurance and active engagement through real-world application. The CDA is intended to serve a diverse European audience, including both EU Member States and Non-Member States, while maintaining global relevance, particularly for the Global South.

The Concept Note presents a **logical structure, framework, and initial content** of the envisioned Academy, based upon the major REAL DEAL outputs, including the Handbook, Synthesis Report, Protocol/Guidance and Toolkit, and confirmed through consultations involving the Pan-European Forum and internal and external partner organizations. It is aimed at practitioners, campaigners and other actors in EGD processes as well as ordinary citizens interested in citizen engagement in policymaking. It will also attract students and scholars in the field.

It presents the **institutional and legal foundations** of the CDA, based on the commitments of several REAL DEAL partners as well as expressions of interest from organizations external to the Consortium. More than ten partners, including CSOs, academic institutions and practitioner institutions have already expressed their commitment to or interest in establishing the Academy (Annex C) and have been working on the basis of a draft **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** which outlines the structure for cooperation, including the establishment of a Steering Committee responsible for strategic oversight and fundraising.

This document also lays out the core structural elements and features of the CDA, which include:

- Foundational Resources (Digital Resource Library/Joint Repository, and Citizen Deliberation Knowledge Base),
- Interactive Resources (Live Events, and E-Learning Courses),
- Participatory Engagement and Knowledge Co-Creation (Collaborative Course Design, Collaborative Content Development, Community of Practice, Capstone Projects and Campaign Support, and Publications), and
- Academic Recognition, Leadership Development and Guidance (Academic Certification and Micro-Credentials, Young Leaders Programme, and Tutor Support/Academic Supervision).

Examples of interactive resources under the CDA are presented as well as possibilities for the future development of the CDA based on its experience, practice and evolving scope. The survey results, summarized in Annex A, demonstrate overwhelming support for the proposed structural elements and focus areas, such as live events, interactive resources, and training on actionable outcomes for policymaking. Importantly, the CDA's **modular course structure** (see Annex B) ensures progressive, inclusive, and practical learning opportunities tailored to the needs of diverse stakeholders.

The **example course structure** detailed in Annex B exemplifies the Academy's focus on progressive, practical learning. It includes three subcourses: foundational principles of participatory processes, advanced facilitation and inclusive design, and refining practices through evaluation and innovation. Each module combines theoretical knowledge with hands-on activities, ensuring participants are equipped to implement inclusive and impactful citizen deliberation initiatives.

The Academy's **policy influence** is expected to materialize through its comprehensive training offerings and strategic co-leadership by CSOs and academia. These partnerships guarantee both a high level of participation and quality control, equipping practitioners, policymakers, and citizens to engage meaningfully in deliberative processes.

By addressing the gaps in deliberative training and combining state-of-the-art research with grassroots insights, the CDA aims to make significant contributions to implementation of the SDGs, EGD and broader participatory governance practices.

1. Introduction

The Citizen Deliberation Academy (CDA, or Academy) is envisioned as a sustainable institution for mutual learning and training, emerging from the REAL DEAL Project, which supports the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the European Green Deal (EGD). In accordance with the REAL DEAL Project goals, a number of stakeholders from within and outside the Consortium have expressed their commitments to work together to establish the Academy.

CEU was the lead partner for the CDA under the REAL DEAL Project, with contributions from RIFS, GCF, TUB, EEB, SOLIDAR and Trilateral. Dialogik also played a significant role in the last stage of the task. The Pan-European Forum and other stakeholders were engaged through the online deliberative platform in the exploration of the concept and in the design of the proposed Academy. The Forum was also the basis of the Survey that was conducted on the CDA needs, scope and priorities (see Annex A). We made use of the network of country partners under Work Package 3 and the capacity-building Workshop conducted in the margins of the REAL DEAL Summit (Task 4.2.1) in order to identify and to pilot a course on participatory events (see Annex B).

The Academy was also designed taking into account the major outputs of the project, including the Handbook (D1.3), Synthesis Report (D4.1) and the Protocol/Guidance and Toolkit (D4.3). Finally, we consulted both internally within the Consortium and with external organizations and potential partners in fine-tuning the concept, defining the niche, and relating it to other ongoing initiatives.

The Academy aims to be a space for exchange, learning, and training, co-created in partnership with academic, research-oriented organizations and civil society organizations (CSOs). It is designed to serve a diverse European neighborhood, encompassing both EU member and non-member states, while maintaining global relevance, including in the Global South.

The objective of this document is to introduce the logical structure, framework and initial content ideas for the CDA in a brief, easy-to-grasp format following months of discussion and feedback aimed at defining the Academy's framework and offerings. One important element of the feedback is a Survey circulated through the REAL DEAL Pan-European Forum using the online deliberative platform, the results of which are summarized at Annex A.

The approach to the CDA Concept Note is to present a core of agreed-upon educational and capacity building activities, supplemented by other potential activities that could be undertaken as the Academy develops and expands over time on the basis of available resources, like the layers of an onion. Those REAL DEAL Consortium partners and others who are committed to jointly developing a pathway for the Academy's sustainability beyond this project acknowledge that its future success depends on the identification and availability of sufficient resources.

2. Scope and Value

There are existing training institutions that seek to build capacity in areas such as deliberative democracy, citizen assemblies, and various aspects of sustainability. Under the REAL DEAL Project, the project team led by CEU has conducted research and interviews to help define the scope and value added of the Citizen Deliberation Academy.

A focus on complex issues related to sustainability requires an approach looking at long-term aspects of citizen deliberation involving multiple avenues of participation and deliberation that often would involve combinations of formats, methods and tools.

One of the important design features of the Academy is the co-creation and partnership of academic, research-oriented partners together with civil society organizations. The civil society organizations, in addition to their strategic co-leadership role, ensure a steady flow of participants and undertake the constant checking and revision of content based on real life application of Academy content. The academic and research partners ensure high standards based on state-of-the-art research and quality control of Academy content and provide an imprimatur through the certification of course completion.

Comprehensiveness and thoroughness of content mark the Academy apart from other initiatives with more limited scope. The Academy can fill existing gaps in knowledge, curriculum and training. For example, through interviews with other networks and organizations, we have provisionally identified a need to provide specific training and certification in the field of facilitation, which appears to be underserved and underrepresented.

Community of Practice – over time the Academy will become the hub of a community of practice. One of the principles of good implementation will be the involvement and engagement of graduates and participants in the program in its revision and improvement. Alumni will be invited back to re-design and re-frame as an element of co-creation and self-design. Although the Joint Research Centre Competence Centre [on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy](#) already operates a community of practice module on their platform, the CDA is expected to meaningfully complement this initiative by offering an additional avenue for relevant engagement that would leverage the co-leadership of CSOs and academia, along with its comprehensive educational and capacity building offerings to relevant practitioners.

European/regional and global characteristics – Remarkably, the CDA has the potential to contribute significantly through its offerings to deliberative practices supporting the planned green recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine after the war, as well as to the convergence efforts of EU Candidate and Eastern Partnership countries in the areas of environmental protection and sustainable development. These regions have special relevance on a global level, particularly the Global South, due to their historical position at the crossroads of ideas, for example at the end of the Cold War and the period of transition, and once again related to populism, authoritarianism and democracy. Differences are being played out within the EU context as well as in relation to the EU's external relations with other areas of the globe. It is also a front line in current global conflict with the war in Ukraine. The Academy can provide lessons learned from this region to other parts of the world.

Altogether, through its comprehensive offerings related to citizen deliberation and the strategic co-leadership of CSOs and academia – ensuring both a high level of participation and quality assurance – the CDA is expected to exert considerable policy impact in the long run.

3. Target Audience

Those persons interested in the CDA may include practitioners, campaigners and other actors in EGD processes as well as ordinary citizens interested in citizen engagement in policymaking. It will also attract students and scholars in the field. The CSO organizations within the partnership will play a major role in the identification of potential participants in the CDA activities, with the REAL DEAL Forum and network as a major foundation.

4. Institutional and Legal Foundations

The establishment and development of the CDA relies on a collaborative and adaptive process aimed at building its institutional and legal foundations to support its long-term success. Up to now, nine partners from within and outside the Consortium have formally expressed their commitment to establishing the CDA through written communication – among them prominent European CSOs and academic and research organisations. This broad coalition provides a strong foundation, fosters public legitimacy, and integrates diverse perspectives into the evolving design of the CDA. The full list of partners who have expressed interest is available in Annex C.

Additionally, consultations have been conducted with organizations and projects outside the REAL DEAL Project to broaden the initiative's scope and incorporate valuable insights. These include FIDE – Forum for Integrated Development and Environment, KNOCA – Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies, JRC – Joint Research Centre, Democratic Odyssey, ECAS – European Citizens Action Service, and the SDG Academy. Some of these organizations have expressed interest in participating in the Academy.

A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been prepared and is under discussion by interested parties. Among other provisions, the MOU outlines the establishment of a Steering Committee and clarifies that the term "legal basis" in the REAL DEAL Grant Agreement entails embedding the CDA, at a minimum, within an organization with legal personality as a standalone project with a distinct budget. Among the possible pathways to the realization of the goal of the Academy is to establish a new foundation or to link it to an existing institution with compatible mandates or purposes. The partners are engaged in exploring all reasonable options.

As a next step, the interested parties will establish the CDA Steering Committee (SC). This Committee will provide strategic oversight, maintain operational clarity, and coordinate fundraising efforts. Further details regarding the SC's aims and objectives are outlined in the MOU. Until dedicated funding is secured, members of the Committee will serve on a pro bono basis.

Once funding becomes available, the hosting organization for the CDA as a legal entity will be determined, and a formal partnership or consortium agreement will be established.

The process described above will remain flexible and open to adjustments based on feedback from partners and identification of financing to ensure it meets the evolving needs of the CDA.

5. Proposed Structural Elements and Features

The CDA design is based in part on the online deliberative platform established in the REAL DEAL Project as a virtual space for mutual exchange, learning and training.¹ Potential structural elements and features of the CDA include, but are not limited to, the following:

➤ Foundational Resources

This module of the CDA refers to materials that provide a base of generic or background knowledge for understanding and engaging with citizen deliberation. These resources are

¹ The online deliberative platform will be mothballed at the conclusion of the REAL DEAL Project and can be revived in the context of the CDA. Other forms of online deliberative platforms could also be used.

primarily static (unlike the content in the next module: Interactive Resources) and are designed to establish a theoretical and practical foundation for learners and practitioners. Other important initiatives outside the REAL DEAL Project are also taken into account such as FIDE, KNOCA, JRC, Democratic Odyssey, ECAS – European Citizens Action Service, Surfrider Foundation, and the SDG Academy. Examples of potential elements include:

Digital Resource Library

The Joint Repository being established under the sister projects REAL DEAL and PHOENIX which contains the outputs from both projects is a major resource and one of the foundations of the CDA Digital Resource Library. Among the project outputs included are:

- Research outputs including published articles, literature review
- The REAL DEAL Handbook
- Results of in-country and EU level activities under both projects
- The REAL DEAL Synthesis Report
- The REAL DEAL Protocol (Guidance and Toolkit)

The Digital Resource Library will also include links to other materials that support learning and practice from third parties.

Citizen Deliberation Knowledge Base

A centralized resource offering comprehensive information on citizen deliberation in policymaking, including definitions, key concepts, methods, and case studies. Presented in user-friendly formats, such as a Wikipedia-like platform, or a series of fact sheets or knowledge briefs.

➤ Co-Created Interactive Resources

The Interactive Resources module is designed to foster dynamic experiences and tailored learning journeys for understanding and engaging with citizen deliberation. Examples of potential elements under this module in the CDA include:

Live Events

Interactive webinars and workshops to address current issues, foster real-time discussions, and build shared knowledge.

Co-Created E-learning Courses

Flexible, independent learning options on various topics related to citizen deliberation in policymaking. Courses are developed by the Academy or collaboratively designed with user input. Based on the capacity building activities under the REAL DEAL project, a preliminary structure for a set of modular courses aimed at capacity building in participatory events is set forth at Annex B.

➤ Participatory Engagement and Knowledge Co-Creation

This module focuses on empowering users to contribute actively to the Academy's resources, ensuring that its content is enriched by diverse perspectives and meets the community's needs. Potential features or elements include:

Collaborative Course Design

A participatory approach to course creation, enabling users to suggest topics and actively contribute to the design and development of educational offerings tailored to their needs.

Collaborative Content Development

A platform for users to co-create and enrich shared resources, such as contributing to a Wikipedia-like knowledge base with definitions, case studies, and best practices to support citizen deliberation.

Community of Practice

Opportunities to join and engage in a supportive network of peers to share experiences, collaborate, and learn from one another. Alumni will be engaged in the longer term to revise and improve the CDA program.

Capstone Projects and Campaign Support

Academy participants may bring their own ongoing projects and activities into the CDA as capstone projects in which they will receive the support of the Community of Practice and the students and faculty.

Publications

The Academy will work in collaboration with the academic host to produce publications and other outputs on the basis of its experience and knowledge formation.

➤ **Academic Recognition, Leadership Development and Guidance**

This module offers opportunities for users to gain formal recognition for their learning achievements, develop leadership skills, and receive tailored support to enhance their expertise and practice. Planned features and elements include:

Academic Certification and Micro-Credentials

Opportunities to earn certifications or micro-credentials for completed courses, providing academic recognition to demonstrate users' expertise and achievements.

Young Leaders Programme

A structured program with courses and assignments for early career practitioners. Successful completion earns participants a specialized certificate, recognizing their leadership potential in the field of citizen deliberation.

Tutor Support/Academic Supervision

Access to a tutor or moderator to guide and assist participants throughout their learning journey, ensuring a more personalized and effective learning experience.

6. Illustrative Examples

This section provides an illustrative list of potential topics for interactive resources. These examples, introduced under four groupings, are not exhaustive but aim to demonstrate the types of offerings that could be developed within the Academy. An example of a set of modular courses aimed at capacity building in participatory events is set forth at Annex B.

❖ Designing and Implementing Deliberation Processes

General Guidance on Citizen Deliberation Processes

An introductory course or webinar on planning and implementing deliberation processes, such as citizen assemblies, juries, and participatory budgeting, providing a comprehensive overview for beginners.

Advanced Facilitation Techniques for Deliberation

Explore both theoretical frameworks and practical skills for facilitation, with a focus on creating safe and inclusive spaces for participants. Experience in the REAL DEAL Project and guidance materials on Feminist Moderation are particularly relevant.

Ensuring Representativeness in Deliberation

A detailed course on methods and strategies to ensure geographical, demographic, and other forms of diversity in deliberation processes, providing deeper insights into best practices.

❖ Background Knowledge for Effective Deliberation

Building an Evidence Base for Deliberation

Learn how to use research, case studies, and data to equip participants and enhance deliberative processes.

Introduction to Environmental Citizenship and Related Policies in the European Union

Explore the concept of environmental citizenship and its relevance for citizen deliberation in policymaking, particularly within the EU context.

Good Practices and Lessons Learned

A curated collection of especially insightful cases from successful and challenging deliberation processes, highlighting strategies, common pitfalls, and lessons for improvement.

❖ Making Deliberation Impactful

Making Deliberation Outcomes Actionable for Policymakers

Learn strategies for formulating deliberative outcomes in clear, meaningful, and practical ways so policymakers can effectively use them to guide decision-making and drive change.

Media Relations for Deliberation Processes

Practical guidance on engaging with the media to communicate deliberative processes, outcomes, and their value to broader audiences, ensuring greater awareness and impact.

❖ Technical and Analytical Aspects of Deliberation

Use of Digital Platforms for Deliberation

Explore tools and methods for conducting deliberative processes online or in hybrid formats, ensuring broad accessibility and effective participation.

Monitoring and Evaluating Deliberative Processes

Develop strategies and tools to assess the effectiveness and outcomes of individual deliberative activities and processes, using metrics and data to improve future initiatives.

7. Potential Future of the CDA

The CDA, as conceptualized through discussions and feedback rounds within the REAL DEAL Project, represents an evolving initiative aimed at advancing citizen deliberation as a cornerstone of participatory governance. A set of core activities has been designed on the basis of the project outcomes, but as the field of citizen engagement and deliberation is highly dynamic, the model has a built-in element of evolution and expansion as experience is gained and capacities increase.

This capacity for continuous evolution enables the CDA to integrate a broader focus, expanding its scope and addressing stakeholder needs with flexibility. Building on this foundation, the CDA has the potential to develop into a broader initiative that not only enhances deliberative practices but also addresses other key aspects of active citizen engagement, which would further strengthen the CDA's contribution to the implementation of the SDGs and EGD.

Such an evolution could transform the CDA into a comprehensive platform leveraging its existing infrastructure to accommodate a wider array of tools, methodologies, and focus areas. Potential expanded functionalities include:

- **Enhanced Digital Resource Library:** Providing a curated collection of case studies, tools, and best practices to support stakeholders in advancing citizen engagement strategies and initiatives.
- **Expanded Training Modules:** Offering educational programmes on not only deliberative practices but also broader citizen engagement approaches, such as co-creation, campaigning, initiating and participating in citizen science endeavours.
- **Tailored Support for Stakeholders:** Delivering guidance and resources to local governments, civil society organisations, and practitioners to help them effectively design and implement citizen engagement initiatives.
- **Inclusive Engagement Strategies:** Strengthening efforts to involve traditionally underrepresented groups in democratic processes, including youth, women, and marginalised communities.

Additionally, based on survey results and pilot activities, the CDA may evolve in various ways. For example, multiple language platforms are possible under the online deliberation platform system used in the REAL DEAL Project. Platform users will be able to initiate new series of live events or e-learning courses tailored to their specific needs (as exemplified above).

The future development pathways will be discussed and decided upon by the CDA Steering Committee, based on Survey results and pilot activities, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness to emerging needs and stakeholder feedback.

8. Identification of Necessary Resources

The following types of resources are required for the successful launch of the CDA. The partners are currently exploring options for the identification of sources of funding and the provision of resources.

- Financial oversight, personnel costs for a fundraising coordinator
- Institutional backing, including HR, for administration, admissions and vetting
- The revived online deliberative platform or another moderated interactive website
- Learning platform (Moodle, Canvas etc)
- Content development – research capacity
- CSO supervision – recruitment efforts/content initiatives/content revision
- Academic supervision - review/quality control/certification
- Comms and publishing, networking and outreach
- Alumni relations, special programs

The draft Memorandum of Understanding outlines the roles and responsibilities of partners concerning fundraising efforts.

Annexes

Annex A

Survey Results

Context

The respondents of the preliminary survey, “Defining Priorities for a Citizen Deliberation Academy (CDA),” included participants of the Pan-European Forum and other stakeholders.

They were requested to rate the importance of potential structural elements, features, and topics (see Chapters 5 and 6) within the scope of the CDA on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 = Not Important and 6 = Very Important.

General Assessment

A total of 26 responses were received, and the results indicate a general strong support for the proposed structural elements, functions, and topics: none of the surveyed CDA elements or topics received a cumulated score below 4 on the 1-6 scale, considering all responses.

At the same time, some considerable differences can be observed in the perceived importance of the proposed elements and topics, which are detailed below following a brief methodology overview.

Methodology

The average score was used as the primary metric to analyze the responses, as the majority of the responses per proposed structural elements and topics had a standard deviation below 1. This suggests that respondents' opinions were relatively consistent, with minor deviations.

For those elements with a higher standard deviation, this is specifically highlighted in the analysis, supplemented with additional metrics, such as the percentage of responses rating the element 4 or higher (corresponding to a "moderately important" qualitative assessment).

Evaluation of Responses

Prioritisation of Potential Elements and Features of the CDA

The **Foundational Resources** and **CDA-Created Interactive Resources** modules received noticeably higher scores than other proposed modules. The following CDA elements achieved exceptionally high average scores (5 points or above):

- Live Events
- Citizen Deliberation Knowledge Base
- Digital Resource Library
- Community of Practice (a part of the Participatory Engagement and Knowledge Co-creation element group).

These results are shown in Figure 1 next page.

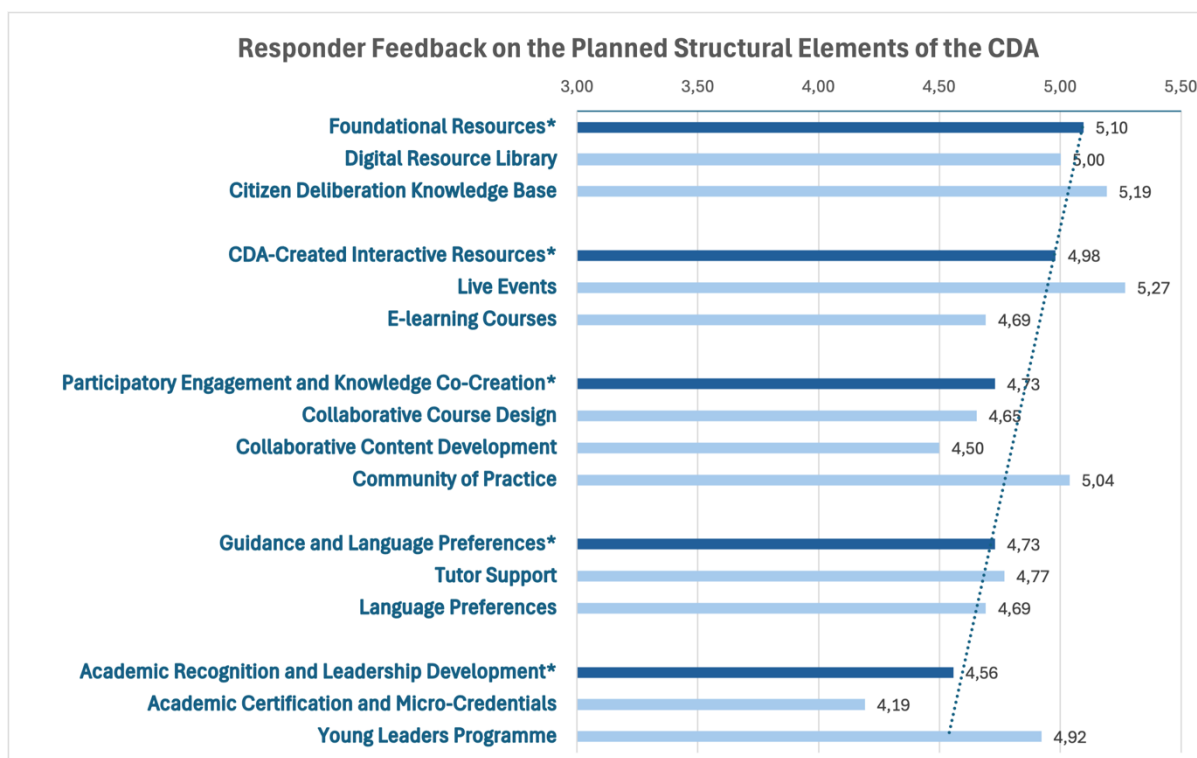


Figure 1 Responder Feedback on the Planned Structural Elements of the CDA

Note: Proposed modules of the CDA are marked with an asterisk in the figure. Other entries in the figure represent the various proposed elements of the CDA within their respective modules.

The **Young Leaders Programme** also received a near 5 average score but had a high standard deviation. Nevertheless, more than 80% of respondents rated this element as at least moderately important, indicating its potential long-term relevance.

Collaborative Content Development and **Academic Certification and Microcredits** received the lowest average scores (below 4.5). Particularly for the latter, however, the standard deviation was high (1.3), indicating significant divergence in respondents' opinions. At the same time, over 60% of respondents still rated this element as at least "moderately important," suggesting its long-term feasibility.

Prioritisation of Topics for the CDA's Interactive Resources

Feedback on the proposed topics shows overwhelming support. Respondents rated all proposed topics in the scope of the survey as at least "important," with a standard deviation between 0,5 and 1 in each case, indicating relatively consistent opinions.

The highest average score (5.67) was achieved by the proposed topic **Making Deliberation Outcomes Actionable for Policymakers**, which also had the lowest standard deviation, showing the highest level of consensus among respondents.

Similarly high scores were given to the following proposed topics (see Figure 2 for the details, next page):

- General Guidance on Citizen Deliberation Processes
- Introduction to Environmental Citizenship and Related Policies in the EU

Other noteworthy topics include:

- Advanced Facilitation Techniques for Deliberation
- Good Practices and Lessons Learned
- Monitoring and Evaluating Deliberative Processes

These insights were incorporated into the planned course modules (see Annex B).

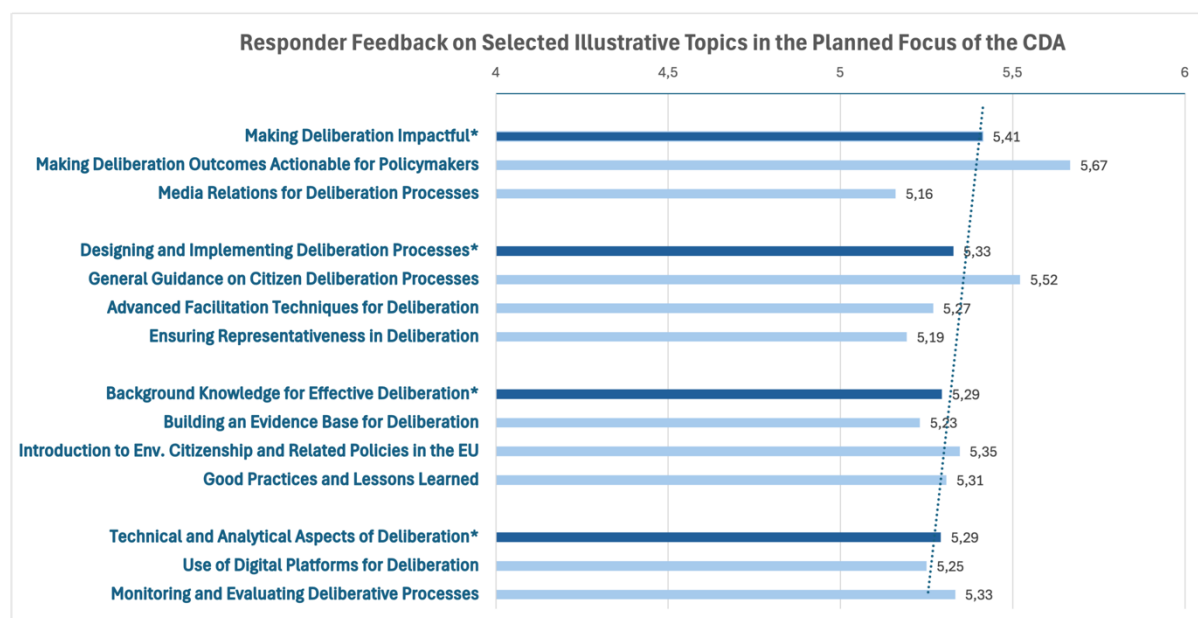


Figure 2 Responder Feedback on Selected Illustrative Topics in the Planned Focus of the CDA

Note: Proposed topic groupings of the CDA are marked with an asterisk in the figure. Other entries in the figure represent the various potential specialised topics in the initial scope of the CDA within their respective groupings.

Other Feedback

Key points from other (unstructured) comments include:

Language accessibility: Respondents emphasized the need for Academy materials to be available in widely used European languages, such as French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

Practical and actionable content: Many highlighted the importance of practical, real-world content, such as case studies and tools to support citizen participation (e.g., stakeholder mapping).

Moving beyond the “experimental phase”: Several respondents noted that citizen participation initiatives often restart from scratch, which can be discouraging for participants. They emphasized the need for continuity and knowledge sharing to build on existing experience and outcomes.

Other important aspects: Suggestions included integrating older generations and traditional knowledge, incorporating gender equality into the Academy’s content, and addressing the specific needs and contexts of Eastern European countries.

Respondent Characterisation

A significant proportion of respondents indicated Belgium as their organization's location, representing approximately 50% of the total respondents. This is partly due to Belgium's role as a hub for many CSOs, particularly given its proximity to EU institutions. Additional responses came from France, Germany, Italy, Romania, the Netherlands, Hungary, Portugal, Luxembourg, and Finland, providing broad geographical coverage. One respondent noted that their organization operates globally, with headquarters in the US and support from a German non-profit organization.

Most respondents belong to CSOs, accounting for 42.31% of the total. Around 15.38% of respondents were affiliated with academic or research institutions, while 26.92% completed the survey as unaffiliated individuals. The remaining respondents were from central authorities (7.69%), local authorities (3.85%), and other categories (3.85%), reflecting the diverse stakeholder base engaged by the Citizen Deliberation Academy.

Conclusion

Proposed priorities for Phase 1 implementation regarding the structural elements of the CDA at the level of modules:

- Foundational Resources
- CDA-created interactive resources
- Participatory Engagement and Knowledge Co-creation

Under these, key focus should be given to **Live Events**, **Citizen Deliberation Knowledge Base**, and **Community of Practice**, alongside the central element **Digital Resource Library**. Additionally, the **Young Leaders Programme** should be included in the initial planning phase due to its relatively high evaluation, even if its full implementation may not occur immediately.

Proposed priorities for phase 1 implementation regarding potential topics in the focus of the CDA:

- Making Deliberation Outcomes Actionable for Policymakers
- General Guidance on Citizen Deliberation Processes
- Introduction to Environmental Citizenship and Related Policies in the EU
- (Subject to available resources): Advanced Facilitation Techniques, Good Practices and Lessons Learned, Monitoring and Evaluating Deliberative Processes.

Other Feedback (Highlights):

Respondents provided several valuable insights into the areas of potential improvement or focus for the CDA. Key highlights include **integrating gender-sensitive content**, **addressing sub-regional contexts** and **enhanced civil society engagement**.

Annex B

Example Course Outlines for Capacity Building on Participatory Events

The course structure is designed to guide practitioners through a progressive learning journey, starting with the foundational principles, advancing to essential facilitation and design skills, and culminating in advanced evaluation and innovation techniques.

Sub-course 1: Building the Foundations of Participatory Excellence

This sub-course provides the critical groundwork for practitioners to understand the principles, planning, and methodologies of participatory processes. Modules 1, 2, and 3 focus on introducing deliberative democracy, conducting thorough needs assessments, and mastering various engagement levels. Participants will learn how to design participatory events that are inclusive, transparent, and goal-oriented, setting the stage for successful implementation. This foundational knowledge ensures that participants can approach participatory processes with clarity and purpose.

Sub-course 2: Mastering Facilitation and Inclusive Design

The second sub-course dives into the art of facilitation and the critical importance of designing events that are accessible and inclusive. Modules 4 and 5 emphasize communication techniques, conflict management, and fostering safe, respectful environments for participation. Gender-responsive communication and accessibility practices are core to this sub-course, ensuring that practitioners can address diverse participant needs effectively. By the end of this sub-course, participants will have honed their facilitation skills and developed a strong competency in designing inclusive participatory events.

Sub-course 3: Refining Practices and Expanding Innovation

The final sub-course equips participants with tools to evaluate participatory events critically and adopt innovative methods for future practices. Modules 6 and 7 focus on the evaluation of participatory processes, collecting meaningful feedback, and incorporating lessons learned into subsequent planning. This sub-course also explores advanced techniques, such as digital engagement and participatory budgeting, enabling practitioners to stay at the forefront of participatory innovation. Participants will leave with the skills to refine their approach continuously and adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities. This modular setup ensures that learners build their expertise in a logical and comprehensive manner, progressing from foundational knowledge to advanced practice with a clear connection between learning outcomes.

Sub-course 1: Building the Foundations of Participatory Excellence

Module 1: Foundations of Participatory Processes

- **Objective:** Understand the principles and importance of participatory events in democratic processes.
- **Topics:**
 - Introduction to deliberative democracy and participatory processes.
 - The role of citizen engagement in policymaking.
 - Principles of inclusivity, fairness, and transparency.

- **Activities:**
 - Case studies of successful participatory events.
 - Group discussion: "Why is inclusivity critical in participatory events?"

Module 2: Needs Assessment and Planning

- **Objective:** Equip practitioners with the tools to assess needs and design participatory events effectively.
- **Topics:**
 - Conducting needs assessments for stakeholders.
 - Setting clear objectives and identifying the scope of events.
 - Ensuring diversity and inclusion in participant recruitment.
- **Activities:**
 - Create a mock needs assessment for a community project.
 - Role-play: Designing a recruitment plan for marginalized groups.

Module 3: Methods and Levels of Engagement

- **Objective:** Differentiate and apply various engagement methods based on event objectives.
- **Topics:**
 - Levels of engagement: dialogue, consulting, involving, collaborating, empowering, and direct decision-making.
 - Matching engagement methods to event objectives (policy formulation, program development, etc.).
 - Introduction to participatory formats: focus groups, co-design sessions, citizen assemblies.
- **Activities:**
 - Workshop: Designing engagement strategies for a hypothetical community issue.
 - Interactive quiz: Identifying the right level of engagement for different scenarios.

Sub-course 2: Mastering Facilitation and Inclusive Design

Module 4: Communication and Facilitation Skills

- **Objective:** Develop effective communication and facilitation techniques.
- **Topics:**
 - Principles of Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication (NVC).
 - Empathetic listening and conflict management.
 - Setting ground rules and managing group dynamics.

- **Activities:**
 - Practice empathetic listening through role-playing exercises.
 - Group simulation: Handling conflict during a participatory event.

Module 5: Designing Inclusive and Accessible Events

- **Objective:** Create events that are accessible and inclusive for all participants.
- **Topics:**
 - Addressing accessibility barriers.
 - Gender-responsive communication and feminist moderation techniques.
 - Cultural sensitivity in participatory processes.
- **Activities:**
 - Develop an inclusivity checklist for an upcoming event.
 - Scenario analysis: Identifying and addressing barriers to participation.

Sub-course 3: Refining Practices and Expanding Innovation

Module 6: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- **Objective:** Equip practitioners with tools to evaluate and refine participatory events.
- **Topics:**
 - Setting evaluation criteria (inclusion, fairness, competence, etc.).
 - Methods for participant feedback collection (surveys, interviews, self-evaluation).
 - Incorporating lessons learned into future planning.
- **Activities:**
 - Analyze evaluation data from a mock event.
 - Group exercise: Creating an improvement plan based on evaluation outcomes.

Module 7: Advanced Topics in Participatory Practices

- **Objective:** Explore advanced methods for enhancing participatory events.
- **Topics:**
 - Use of digital platforms for online participation.
 - Integrating participatory budgeting and citizen juries.
 - Strategies for engaging disenfranchised groups.
- **Activities:**
 - Hands-on workshop: Using digital tools for citizen engagement.
 - Develop a strategy to engage underrepresented groups in a specific context.

Capstone Project

- **Objective:** Apply the skills learned to design and plan a comprehensive participatory event.
- **Tasks:**
 - Design a participatory event for a real-world scenario.
 - Create a detailed event plan, including objectives, methods, facilitation techniques, and evaluation criteria.
 - Present the plan to peers for feedback and refinement.

Annex C

List of Organizations That Have Expressed Commitment to or Interest in the Academy

The following partners have expressed commitment to the Academy:

1. Central European University (CEU) – committed to co-hosting the Academy on the research side pending identification of available resources.
2. Technical University of Berlin (TUB) – contributing the online deliberative platform among other assets.
3. European University Institute (EUI)
4. Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF)
5. European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
6. Research Institute for Sustainability (RIFS)
7. European Movement International (EMI)
8. Alleanza Italiana per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile (AvSIS)
9. Foreningen Nyt Europa (NYT)

Additionally, the following potential partners have expressed interest in the proposal:

1. Trilateral Research
2. University of Coimbra
3. Forum for Integrated Development and Environment (FIDE)
4. Sustainable Development Goals Watch (SDG Watch)
5. Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies (KNOCA)
6. European Climate Foundation (ECF)
7. Danish Board of Technology (DBT)