

Berlin Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change

Berlin Citizens' Assembly on Climate – Can public participation deliver effective climate action?

If there's one thing that we can all agree on, it's the need for greater public participation – especially when it comes to protecting the climate. But how can we make participation work?

Citizens' assemblies and similar participation processes are enjoying growing popularity as a means to develop and gauge public opinion and inform decision-making. Following the success of the French [Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat](#) in 2019/2020, Germany trialled its first national [Citizens' Assembly on Climate](#) in 2021. Berlin's new state government also pledged in its [coalition agreement](#) to expand the role of citizens' assemblies as a form of public participation at the state and borough levels. Last year, the public initiative [Klimaneustart Berlin](#) collected over 30,000 signatures for a petition to Berlin's House of Representatives that called for a citizens' assembly on climate. The campaign has prompted the Senate Department for the Environment, Mobility, Consumer and Climate Protection to convene an assembly that will develop proposals for effective climate action in Berlin that will feed in to the revision of Berlin's Energy and Climate Protection Programme (BEK 2030).

Citizens' assemblies bring together a cross-section of society to advise policymakers and government bodies. Assemblies can be used to tackle controversial issues and pressing challenges of all kinds. In a large city like Berlin, for example, climate policy can affect people in different ways. Opinions differ significantly when it comes to issues such as imposing speed limits on roads and highways, establishing clean air zones or distributing the costs of energy-efficient renovations between renters and owners. Supported by professional facilitators, participation processes bring together different views from across society to distil recommendations that are likely to enjoy broad support. The Berlin Citizens' Assembly on Climate will comprise 100 participants who will be randomly selected from the register of residents. A variety of criteria will be applied (age, gender, qualifications) to ensure that the assembly is representative of Berlin's population. The assembly will convene between April and June 2022 at nine meetings, enabling citizens to discuss a range of evidence-based measures to protect the climate in the fields of mobility, building, and energy.



The IASS will use its transdisciplinary, transformative and co-creative approach to support the [NexusInstitute](#) in the development, planning and implementation of the Berlin Citizens' Assembly on Climate. The institute will also liaise with various scientists to ensure that the assembly can base its recommendations and scenarios based on current scientific understanding. These experts will support the participants by supplying background knowledge on various aspects of climate change and mitigation. The assembly's recommendations will be adopted by consensus and presented in a special report to the Senator for Mobility and Climate Bettina Jarasch and the Senate Department for the Environment, Mobility, Consumer and Climate Protection. The Senate and the House of Representatives will then discuss the recommendations and decide which of the proposed measures to adopt and implement.

Find out more about our involvement with the Citizens' Assembly on Climate [here](#).