

Creating an online conversation between a nation and a mini-public: a case study on Polis & the Austrian Citizens' Climate Council

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Introduction

The Austrian Citizens' Climate Council was an example of a deliberative mini public that took place from January to July of 2022. Over 80 Austrian citizens received information on climate change from a range of sources, deliberated and finally delivered a report and a series of recommendations to the Austrian Parliament in July.

This case study focuses on a particular aspect of this participatory initiative: how this climate assembly interacted with the wider Austrian society through the use of an innovative digital democracy tool called Polis. As far as we know this was the first national climate assembly to enter into a form of dialogue with the wider society via a digital platform (although it builds on smaller initiatives connecting Polis to climate assemblies at a local level in the UK.)

The case study was written by Andy Paice of the Co-Intelligence Institute (CII) who along with Martin Rausch, another CII colleague, was involved in bringing the Polis public engagement to the Austrian Citizens' Climate Council. It documents the how and why of the whole process.

In many ways the Polis public engagement did not work out as we (Andy and Martin) had anticipated. Indeed the Evaluation Report of the Austrian 'Klimarat', published in August 2022, states that interviewed members of the Climate Council "evaluated it exclusively critically. While the basic idea to involve the public was praised..."

From our perspective linking a major national citizens assembly to a digital platform such as Polis was a wonderful precedent with multiple gifts in the form of many insights that can be used to create a fuller implementation of Polis. The experience therefore represents an opportunity for learning, particularly with regard to the interaction between an in person 'mini-public' and a wider digital engagement at a societal level.

If you are interested in the Climate Council process the first two-thirds of this case study covers how it was convened and facilitated and how the Polis engagement fit into that context. If you're more interested in what was learned through connecting Polis to a mini-public at a national level you can jump straight to the [lessons learned](#) where we examine what happened through the lens of CII's [Wise Democracy Pattern Language](#).

Context as to how the Klimarat was set up

Over the past 3 years Europe has seen a number of national Citizens' Assemblies on the issue of Climate Change. Representative samples of citizens are randomly selected and invited to take part in a long form process. These consist of learning from experts, deliberating and making their final climate measure recommendations to government. The recommendations crafted by these informed 'mini publics' are then considered by the governments and receive an official response.

National Climate Assemblies have taken place in France, Scotland, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland and Germany. In 2022 Der Klimarat (the Citizens' Council on the Climate), after being delayed by the Coronavirus pandemic, finally got underway in Austria.

Whereas other climate assemblies had been initiated by the national parliament or the President (in the case of France) the Austrian Climate Council was unique in being instigated by demands from Austrian citizens through the means of the Volksbegehren, a petition that is part of Austria's democratic system. 100,000 signatures have to be collected for a governmental review.

By June 2020 400,000 signatures were collected in a KlimaVolksbegehren (Climate petition) launched by the climate activist Katharina Rogenhofer backing demands for climate measures, one of which was to let the Austrian population actively participate in climate protection measures through the participatory process of a Citizen's Climate Council.

Also previous to 2020 NEOS Party member Michael Bernhard and party colleagues were intrigued by what had happened in Ireland where laws on abortion were changed after a Citizens' Assembly – in a very Catholic country. He submitted a proposal for a Climate Assembly to the National Council which was adjourned. Later the Volksbegehren petition happened with one of its demands to increase participation in regard to climate action. That is when the Climate Council was renegotiated and managed to get a majority approval.

By March 2021 a resolution was adopted by the governing coalition parties along with the Greens and other smaller parties to create a Climate Protection Act and to accede to the demand for the Citizens' Council. Later in 2021 a consortium consisting of three organizations (ÖGUT, Pulswerk and PlanSinn) were commissioned by the parliament to run the Citizens' Council which was to begin in January 2022.

Facilitation culture and design thinking that informed how the Klimarat was set up

The design for the process used in the Austrian Citizens' Climate Council was innovative in some key ways and included elements such as Dynamic Facilitation and the use of Polis for a national digital democracy conversation. The background to understanding the origins of the Klimarat's design and facilitation culture can be found in the West of Austria in a state called Vorarlberg.

This state has had a forward thinking participatory culture since the early 2000s made possible by a state department called the Office for Future related Issues. Manfred Hellrigl, who previously headed the office, pioneered the use of citizen assemblies and then brought in methodologies such as [Wisdom Councils](#) (recently recognised in the OECD 'Catching the Deliberative Wave' report.) In 2011, he started organizing the first [Art of Hosting](#) trainings for the Vorarlberg administration and other local people.

Over the years a community of facilitators from all over Austria has cohered around this Art of Hosting community which continues to meet and learn together along principles of fostering collective wisdom and self-organization. So when the tender for the Klimarat was announced there were several facilitators from different organizations steeped in this background and mindset who came together with the idea of forming a collaborative consortium.

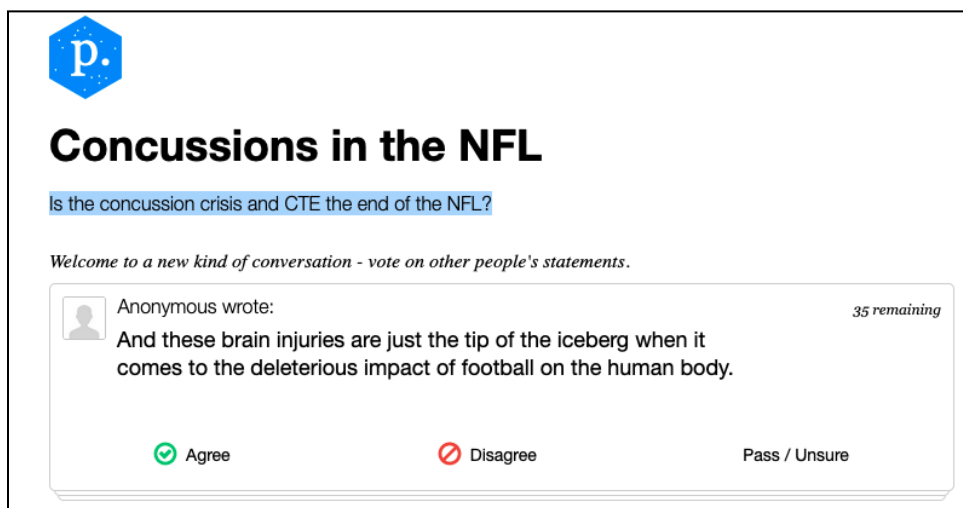
In August 2021 [Martin Rausch](#) who was also part of this community of facilitators started working on a draft version of the bid for the tender. A key element for the team was that rather doing its work in private then publicly producing its recommendations, the Klimarat should be designed in such a way that, as the citizens' developed their proposals, there would be a kind of conversational cycling back and forth process. This meant consulting and getting feedback from key stakeholders, scientists, politicians and the Austrian public at large.

The aspect of consulting the public is where Polis came as a design element proposed by Martin having been introduced to it by [Tom Atlee](#) and inspired by the use of it by [Audrey Tang](#) (digital minister of Taiwan). Martin also brought in [Andy Paice](#) to support the process (who had already used the platform several times in conjunction with deliberative assemblies in the UK) and members of [Computational Democracy](#) Polis team to help analyze results and support platform security.

What Polis is and how it works

Polis (the website is simply pol.is) is an online platform created by The Computational Democracy Project. In their words “Polis is a real-time system for gathering, analyzing and understanding what large groups of people think in their own words, enabled by advanced statistics and machine learning.”

And “In its highest ambition, Polis is a platform for enabling collective intelligence in human societies and fostering mutual understanding at scale in the tradition of nonviolent communication.”



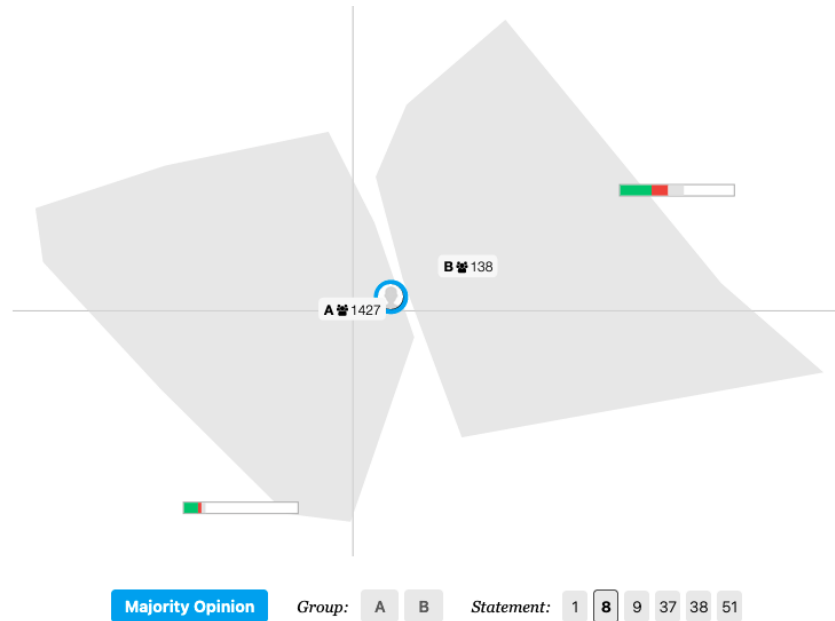
Polis enables communities or whole societies to engage in a conversation in response to a given question. Participants submit short text statements, or comments (of up to 140 characters) to respond to the question, which are then sent out

semi-randomly to other participants to vote on by clicking agree, disagree or pass.

A conversation starts out being seeded with a small number of statements. Over time, as users engage with it (it can engage up to hundreds of thousands of participants) and as the number of statements grow it becomes a kind of survey that is co-created by the community that engages with it .

Polis uses machine learning to conduct a ‘cluster analysis’ of results to understand not just the average view, but whether there are distinct clusters of opinion. An algorithm analyzes all votes on all statements then generates an opinion ‘landscape’ where people with similar sets of responses are clustered near each other.

As people vote a visualization on the voting page gives a representation of the opinion groups and shows the statements and voting patterns that make them distinct as in the example below.



#8 Let's develop a code of safety for kids' football & be smart, not hysterical.



62% of everyone who voted on statement 8 agreed.

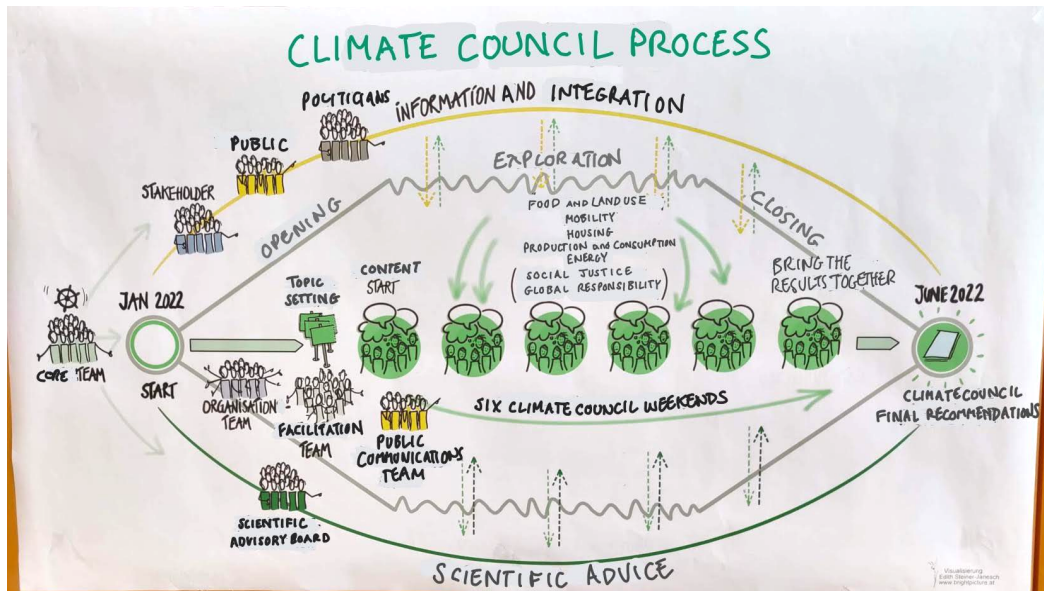
So Polis has an ability to map out differences in opinion. However its major advantage is its ability to show majority opinions and perhaps most importantly it identifies statements where there is consensus across opinion groups. An automatically generated report can show a whole list of ideas where there is agreement without anyone even talking to each other.

It also has a function to mark statements as 'metadata'. This gives an idea of who is voting in terms of demographics or key attitudes. These are reported out separately so that it's possible to see the degree to which people overall and in each opinion group match those statements.

Also as Tom Atlee states "the founders of Polis stress an important caveat: As remarkable as Polis is, it is not for making decisions. It is intended to inform live human dialogue and deliberation in search of deeper understanding of where a particular population is at - collectively - regarding the question they responded to."

It is in this spirit of its potential to provide excellent information of where Austrian society is at collectively that it was chosen to inform the Climate Council with regards to climate protection measures, where there might be both disagreement and consensus on a whole variety of statements created by the council itself and Austrian citizens.

Process of the Klimarat - Overview of the process and weekends



This figure depicted by a graphic designer and translated into English shows the main aspects and roles of the whole process.

The main body of the Climate Council process were the six weekends in which Citizens listened to different speakers and had facilitated discussions, deliberations and recommendation forming in small groups and plenaries. These weekends alternated between the two cities of Vienna and Salzburg.

The Weekends

Weekend 1 (15/16th January '22) in Vienna:

The 84 citizens (originally intended to be 100 - some could not attend due to Covid vaccination restrictions) were welcomed into the process, got to know each other and started working together. A politician, scientist and economist presented the basics of climate change in Austria and the world. The citizens developed an “impact manifesto” in which the goals of the Climate Council were set out:

- We want to make practical, effective and socially just proposals to politicians.
- We want to generate attention.
- We want to bring about a change in awareness and generate publicity
- We want to increase the willingness of politicians to take rapid, effective climate protection measures.”

Five fields of action

The complex topic of climate protection was divided into five “aktionsfelder” - fields of action: Energy, Production and Consumption, Food and Land Use, Mobility, Housing. These topics would form the basis of the council’s work and final recommendations.

Weekend 2 (26/27th February ‘22) in Salzburg

Citizens continued to receive presentations from different experts.

Ten working groups were set up for the remaining duration of the council -2 for each of the five fields of action. It was ensured that each working group consisted of a diverse mix of citizens and the groups were supported by a team of professional facilitators. Cross-cutting issues such as social justice, education or global responsibility were dealt with both in the fields of action and in separate groups.

Weekend 3 (26-27 March ‘22) in Vienna

The citizens received presentations from scientists on four fields of action: Energy, mobility, production/consumption and housing. The citizens spent most of the weekend in their 10 working groups and scientists were available to them for questions and feedback. The citizens presented some of their early stage proposals for action and the scientists gave their feedback.

Weekend 4 (23-24th April ‘22) in Salzburg

Dialogue with stakeholders (representing, business, trade unions, agriculture, youth orgs, people with disabilities etc).

Dialogue with state and federal politicians from all of the parliamentary parties.

Formulating recommendations with support from the scientist advisory group

Preparing statements to enter into the Polis digital platform to collect feedback from the wider Austrian public.

Weekend 5 (14-15th May) in Vienna

Intensive work on the recommendations.

Working groups of the five topics considered the results of the five corresponding Polis conversations.

Taking into account feedback from Scientific Advisory Board

Weekend 6 (11-12th June) in Salzburg

Finalizing the recommendations, raising any concerns, objections and adopting the recommendations. Open Space to discuss next steps.

Delivering report to the Parliament (4th July) Vienna

The different input roles

Scientists

One of the main groups that were chosen to give input to the Climate Council were scientists in the form of a Scientific Advisory Board. Its role was to inform and support the citizen council members in their deliberations and fulfill the 'experts on tap not on top' function. They refrained from suggesting concrete policies and measures so that citizens could develop their own recommendations as freely as possible. The advisory board was put together by climate researcher Prof. Georg Kaser and environmental economist Prof. Birgit Bednar-Friedl.

The advisory board consisted of 15 scientists from a variety of disciplines and academic and non-academic backgrounds. Different scientists were assigned to the working groups according to their specialisms and were available to answer questions throughout the process. Their level of involvement depended on their personal approach, availability and the facilitators' discretion to involve them as they were needed.

For each of the five fields of action, the scientists suggested four to five leverage points, i.e. important starting points. All of the working groups developed recommendations based on these leverage points.

By the 5th weekend the Climate Council had developed their recommendations to a level that meant they could be given to the Scientific Advisory Board. The "Long night of Science" took place on Saturday 14th May when the scientists gave the council members the feedback on their recommendations according to the following criteria:

- Effectiveness: Potential for greenhouse gas reduction
- Feasibility (social impact and justice factors, economic feasibility, institutional and legal feasibility, natural feasibility)
- Implementability: from when does the measure take effect
- Impact period: until when does the measure take effect.

Stakeholders

The Citizens' Climate council also received input from a cross section of stakeholders from Austrian society to ensure that different perspectives were taken into account. On weekend 4 stakeholders gave presentations and held dialogues with the members of the council. Some of the organizations represented are as follows:

- Chamber of Labor
- Poverty Conference
- Federal Youth Council
- Global responsibility
- Federation of Austrian Industry

- Climate People's Petition
- Austrian Chamber of Agriculture
- Ecobureau
- Austrian Federation of Trade Unions
- Environmental umbrella organization
- Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

Politicians

During weekend 4 the Climate Council also had the opportunity to hear from and enter into dialogue with political representatives. Two members of each party represented in parliament were present. Discussions with the politicians took place in a question and answer format.

Public

The interaction between the Climate Council and the Austrian Public worked in both directions. A public relations team was commissioned to disseminate news and updates from the Climate Council via social media channels and a YouTube channel, information events and workshops.

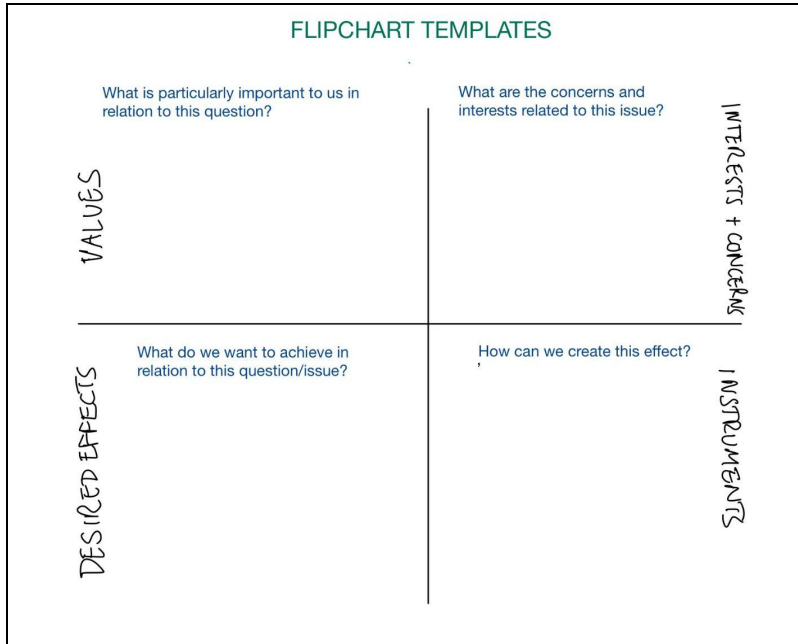
The public also was given a role in giving feedback to the Climate Council via the public digital engagement using the Polis platform which this case study will discuss in detail.

How the recommendations were put together

With each speaker/ expert inputting into the Climate Council there were a series of 5 pre-prepared questions relating to what they had heard on the topic.

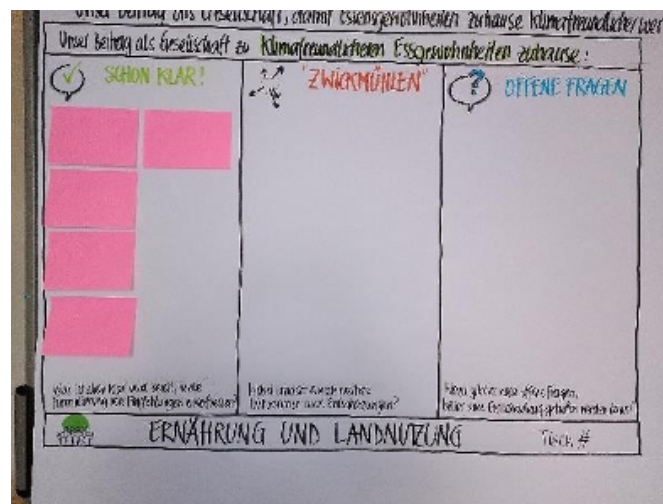
For example a question in the Food and Land Use topic was: *How can we as a society contribute to making eating habits more climate friendly?*

The building blocks of their recommendations were created in response to those questions and by collecting and sorting responses in open discussions where comments were classified under categories of values, interests & concerns, desired effects, instruments according to the following template:



This is how the "raw material" was developed. All comments including contradictory ones made a kind of map for each of the questions. The next step was to prioritize the points the groups felt were most important. Then the beginnings of recommendations were formulated and rated as to whether they were:

- a) Of course! This can be incorporated into the wording of the recommendations as it is.
- b) Dilemma topics: We're divided here, some members had a high resistance or we see a conflict of interest. (These became the basis for further discussion as the council progressed)
- c) Open questions: We need to know more about this. (Questions were then formulated for a discussion with the scientists.)



Drafts and final recommendations were worded according to the following schema:
 “Because we feel ____ is important [values] , we want _____ [desired effects] to happen
 by _____ [idea based on instrument] and taking into account [consideration based on
 interests and concerns - predicament, value, important interest, further idea].”

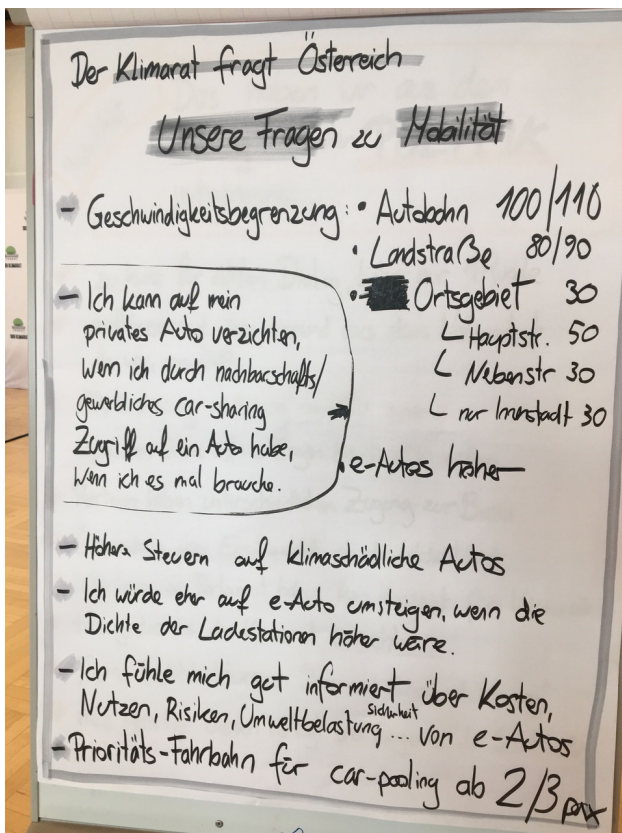
“The Climate Council Asks Austria” -How Polis was used

Weekend 4 in more detail

The process for developing recommendations meant that by the time the Climate Council reached weekend 4 a large amount of preparation had taken place in formulating potential recommendations.

In that weekend, once the dialogues with stakeholders and politicians had taken place, the third dialogue on the program was the one with the general public.

The facilitation team was briefed on the evening of Sat 23rd April as to how best to support the citizens’ Working Groups drafting their statements for entry into the Polis platform. The team were told that Polis would require a series of approximately 20 concise statements from each of the topic working groups to be fed into the 5 corresponding Polis



conversations as ‘seed statements’. The publicity for the forthcoming public engagement was “Der Klimarat fragt dich - The Climate council asks for advice”.

The precise nature of what the public would be doing was giving feedback on the Climate Council’s draft recommendation statements by voting on the statements and creating new ideas for others to vote on.

So on the Sunday the working groups were encouraged to come up with ideas they wanted to test, to see what feedback they would receive in terms of voting patterns. They submitted ideas for which they already had some clarity as well as more controversial ideas.

Photo of one Working Group's flipchart-drafting statements to enter into Polis.

The resulting statements from the 5 working groups then underwent light touch editing to make sure they would make suitable statements for the Polis conversations.

How the five conversations were publicized and distributed

Five different conversations were thus seeded with statements and published on the Climate council website under the title "Der Klimarat fragt Österreich-The climate council asks Austria"



**DER KLIMARAT
FRAGT DICH
UM RAT.**

Mach' jetzt mit!

∨

THE CLIMATE COUNCIL ASKS FOR ADVICE.

Join now!



**DIE WICHTIGSTEN
FRAGEN IN 10
TAGEN.**

Was müssen wir heute tun, um morgen in einer klimagesunden Zukunft zu leben? Damit haben wir uns an vier Wochenenden intensiv beschäftigt. Wir, das sind die Bürger:innen des Klimarats. Und wir fragen dich jetzt um Rat.

JETZT MITMACHEN!

Bewerte die ersten Ideen! Du kannst auch eigene Empfehlungen einbringen. Sie stehen dann ebenfalls zur Abstimmung. Du kannst bei einem oder allen Themen mitmachen. Klicke hier auf die Links:

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS IN 10 DAYS. What do we have to do today in order to live in a climate-friendly future tomorrow? We worked intensively on this over four weekends. We are the citizens of the Climate Council. And now we're asking you for advice.

JOIN NOW!

Rate the first ideas! You can also bring in your own recommendations which can also be voted on. You can participate in one or all topics.

The links to the five conversations are still available here:

- [Energy](#)
- [Production and Consumption](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Mobility](#)
- [Food and Land](#)

Example of the wording on the description for each topic

“We, the citizens of the Climate Council, want to hear your opinions and ideas on FOOD AND LAND USE in order to achieve a climate-friendly future.

In coordination with the science team, we have developed levers in the fields of action: reduction of animal products, reducing food waste, increasing carbon sinks, improving production, providing renewable energy

The ideas coming from the Climate Council are marked with "Climate Council:". If “Climate Council” is not stated it means the recommendations come from other participants in the survey.

Final phase: More than 1000 opinions and ideas were submitted in total. Thursday May 5th to Sunday May 8th (12 noon) is the final phase. Vote on the many ideas -and take breaks!

Do you also want to participate in other topics? (Links to) Housing, production and consumption, energy, mobility”

There was also a Frequently Asked Questions on the Klimarat website to explain what Polis is and how it would be used for the Climate Council's purposes.

The 5 Polis conversations were launched nationally on Wednesday 27th April just after the 4th weekend of the climate council.

From the outset there was a large influx of comments and votes on the five conversations. One of the main reasons for this was the fact that Kronen Zeitung, Austria's largest daily tabloid newspaper had the Polis national climate conversations as the [front page headline story on 27th April](#). The tabloid had latched on to the publicity team's press release which included a selection of the seed statements created by the Climate Council.



The headline was “Vote on Climate Protection - Austrians can join the conversation for the next 10 days”

The public affairs agency involved in communicating the work of the Climate Council to the rest of society was also successful in spreading the word to other newspapers and the networks of small town Mayors. Katherina Rogenhofer (the originator of the petition that had instigated the Climate Council) shared news of the conversation throughout her network. On Sunday 1st May a young member of the Citizens’ Council featured on a weekly show on the national radio station Ö3 where the Polis conversations were also publicized.



The conversations were also publicized on the Klimarat social media channels. (See example of Tweet to the left.)

Publicity reached the conservative newspapers and mayoral networks as well as the progressive and more environmentally minded public following the Climate Council's progress. This meant good conditions were met for Polis to do its work - identifying and mapping differences as well as finding agreement across opposing groups (that would otherwise be obscured.)

Polis conversations configuration and moderation

Given that the Polis conversations were open on a national scale, some reflection between Martin, Andy and Darshana of the Polis organizing team went into how best to manage the conversations. It was decided that the conversations would be open to receive both votes and new statements for 9 days and then the 3 remaining days were for voting on statements only. This ensured that the latest submitted statements received a sufficient number of votes.

Polis can either be strictly moderated or left open so that submitted statements enter immediately into the conversations. A light touch moderation policy was initially chosen whereby statements would directly enter the conversation and then anything that was a duplicated idea, completely off topic, hateful or slanderous would be removed. However the public relations team felt too many duplicated ideas were entering the conversations so a stricter moderation policy was implemented.

Polis also enables the collection of metadata which could be demographic information such as age, gender, geographical location of participants. However it was decided that there would be a limited use of metadata for the five Polis conversations with no demographic data collected.

The Results of the Five Polis conversations

Upon launching this public digital engagement on Wednesday 27th April there were very high levels of participation on the 5 conversations (which coincided with the front page newspaper article). After this participation plateaued and was less pronounced throughout the remaining 11 days.

The scale of the conversations were as follows:

Approximately 5,000-6,000 people participated by voting and/or entering comments. Over 11,000 sessions were logged (meaning many participated in several of the 5 conversations.)
6,267 users were shown in google analytics, approximately 3500 of whom were in Vienna.

Over the 5 conversations
5761 statements were submitted
833,000 votes were registered on those statements

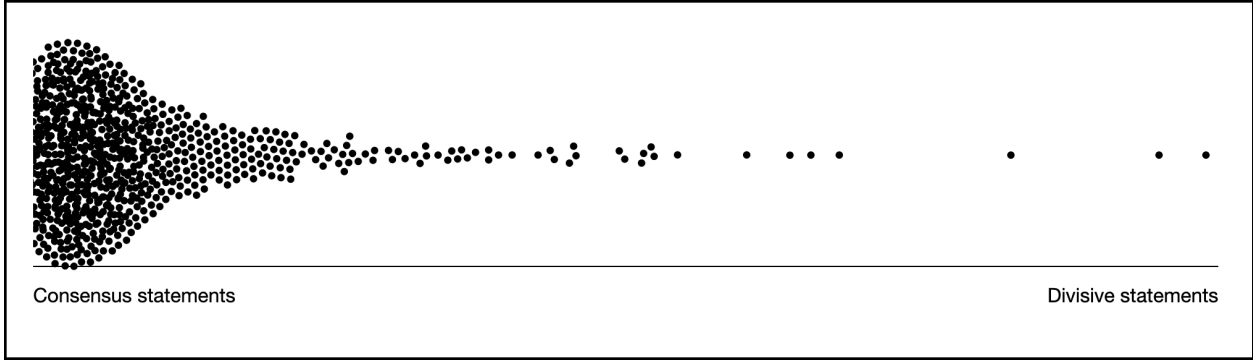
The following tables show statistics from each of the conversations.

Note the images below in each table are from the Polis automatically generated reports and are known as 'beeswarm charts.' Each dot represents a statement. Statements to the left were those that garnered a high degree of consensus i.e participants voted on these in a similar way with the majority either agreeing or disagreeing. Statements to the right were divisive - participants were split between agreement and disagreement. For each of the 5 conversations there were a lot more consensus statements than divisive statements

Food and Land Use

3,617 people voted. They cast 263,065 votes. These people submitted 1,452 new statements. This comes to 72.73 votes per voter on average and 2.35 statements per author.

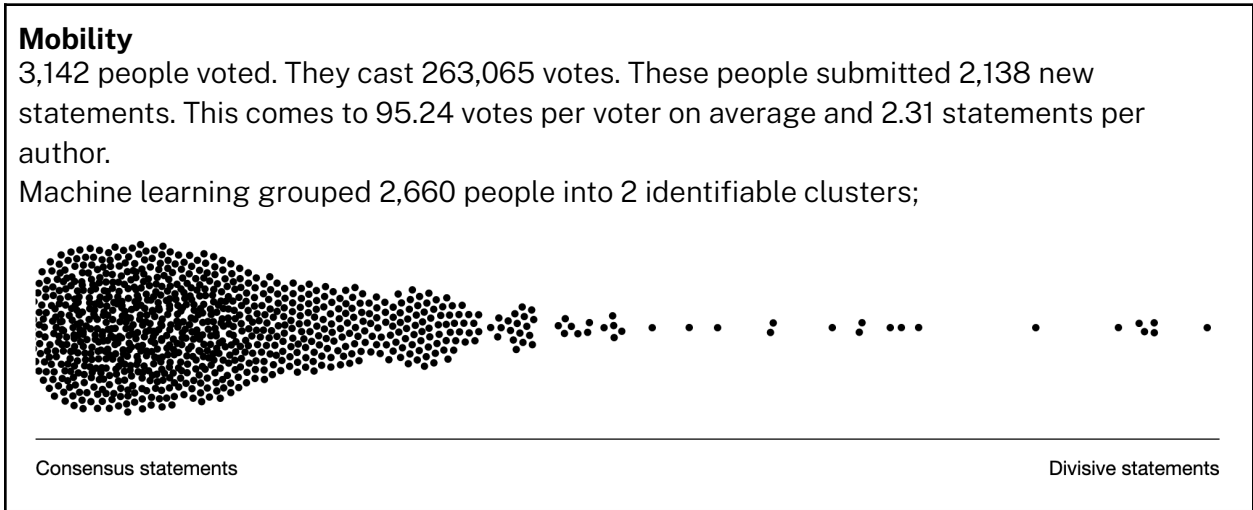
Machine learning grouped 2,968 people into 2 identifiable clusters;



Mobility

3,142 people voted. They cast 263,065 votes. These people submitted 2,138 new statements. This comes to 95.24 votes per voter on average and 2.31 statements per author.

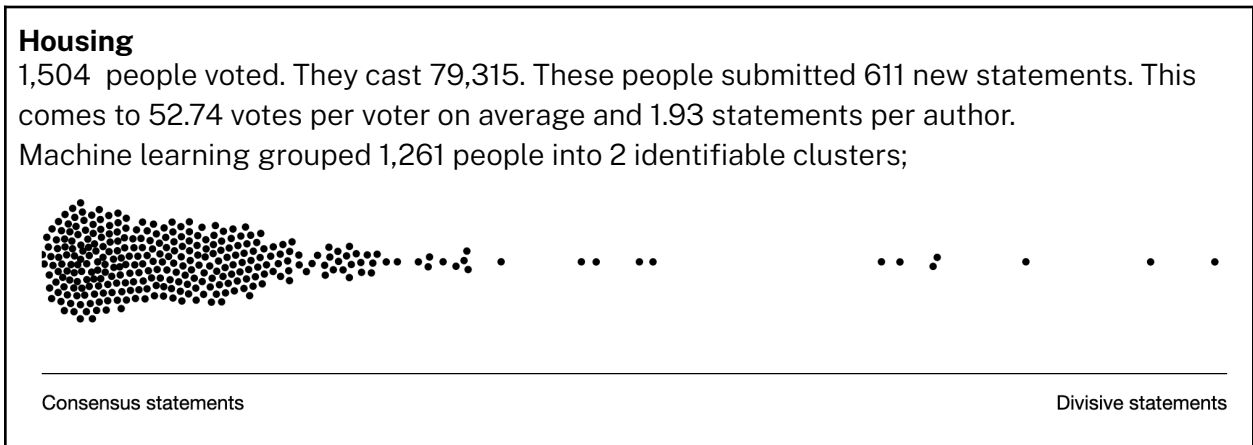
Machine learning grouped 2,660 people into 2 identifiable clusters;



Housing

1,504 people voted. They cast 79,315. These people submitted 611 new statements. This comes to 52.74 votes per voter on average and 1.93 statements per author.

Machine learning grouped 1,261 people into 2 identifiable clusters;



Production and Consumption

1,118 people voted. They cast 61,384 votes. These people submitted 522 new statements. This comes to 54.91 votes per voter on average and 2.20 statements per author.

Machine learning grouped 900 people into 2 identifiable clusters;



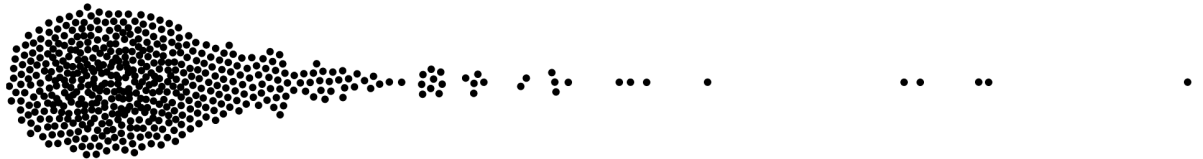
Consensus statements

Divisive statements

Energy

1,756 people voted. They cast 130,798 votes. These people submitted 1,039 new statements. This comes to 74.49 votes per voter on average and 2.15 statements per author.

Machine learning grouped 1,439 people into 2 identifiable clusters;



Consensus statements

Divisive statements

The full reports of the five conversations can be found here:

[Nutrition and land use](#)

[Mobility](#)

[Housing](#)

[Production and consumption](#)

[Energy](#)

What the results revealed

As mentioned, Polis is useful for informing deliberation and dialogue by mapping out the opinion landscape of an issue. It shows:

- Dissensus - by highlighting distinct clusters of opinion and statements that are divisive.
- Consensus - by showing majority opinions, and even more importantly, statements where there is consensus across the clusters of opinion

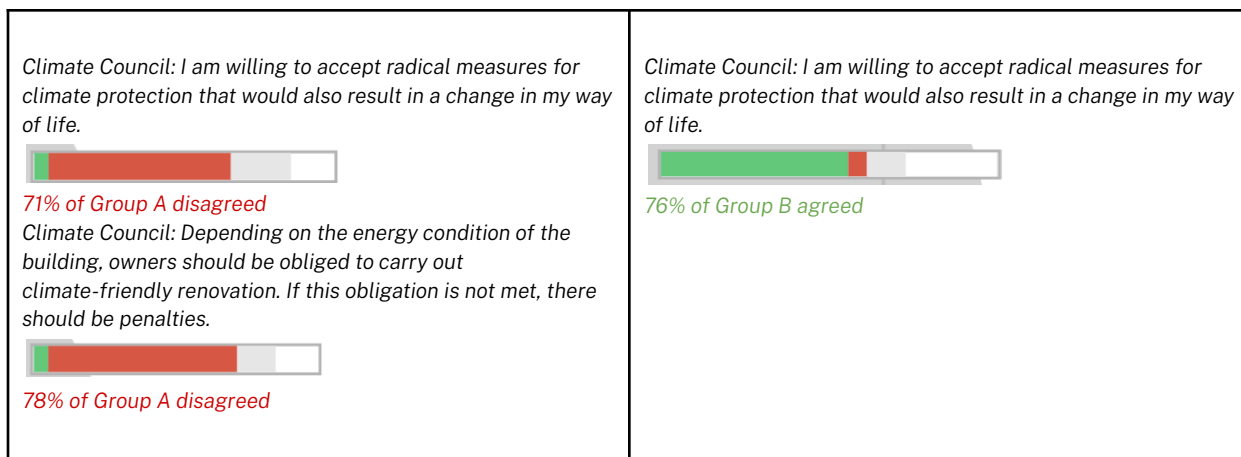
In the results for all five of the conversations on the Climate Council topics, Polis revealed both these elements which will be shown here.

Dissensus

Polis' machine learning identified clusters of opinion where there were clear patterns of distinct values and perspectives.

The following voting characteristics below from the [Housing](#) conversation provide an example of the kind of results that emerged. In this example, as with all 5 conversations, two distinct groups A and B were identified.

Group A was smaller with 357 people grouped	Group B was larger with 904 grouped
<p>Statements and voting patterns that characterized group A</p> <p><i>Austria must assume a global role model in climate protection.</i> Majority against</p>  <p>65% of Group A disagreed</p> <p><i>Conversion to renewable energy sources is often not possible in old houses</i></p>  <p>71% of Group A agreed</p> <p><i>Climate Council: There should be a mandatory exchange of old heating systems for house and apartment owners, in which they switch to renewable energy sources.</i></p>  <p>72% of Group A disagreed</p>	<p>Statements and voting patterns that characterized group B</p> <p><i>Austria must assume a global role model in climate protection.</i></p>  <p>75% of Group B agreed</p> <p><i>Climate Council: In Austria, many houses and apartments are empty, while new ones are constantly being built. Therefore, there should be a mandatory vacancy survey in every municipality and owners should be obliged to report vacant apartments and houses.</i></p>  <p>88% of Group B agreed</p> <p><i>Climate Council: There should be a mandatory exchange of old heating systems for house and apartment owners, in which they switch to renewable energy sources.</i></p>  <p>64% of Group B agreed</p>



Statements preceded by “Climate Council:” were some of the seed statements created during the 4th weekend by the Climate Council. Each working group therefore got feedback from Austrian citizens on their statements. In this case 5 of their statements figured as defining the clusters.

The differences between the two clusters in the Housing Polis conversation was part of a pattern that was repeated across the other four conversations. Broadly speaking, each time the main social controversies were revealed:

Larger group in every conversation (sometimes A sometimes B)	Smaller group in each conversation (sometimes A sometimes B)
Willingness to change (the status quo/one's own way of life) In favor of government committing to climate measures	No/low willingness to change
Accepts the influence of the field of action on the climate	Denial of the influence of the respective field of action on the climate
Austria should be a global role model on climate measures	Against Austria as a global role model
Generally for radical and urgent measures	Skeptical about the urgency and dangerousness of the climate situation.

In each conversation the size of the cluster representing the more pro-climate measures was significantly larger than the cluster representing those that were more skeptical about action to reduce emissions. However the size of the opinion groups cannot be used to infer

the distribution of these opinions in the Austrian population as a whole, as no socio-demographic metadata was collected.

The likelihood is that there was significantly more interest in the Climate Council for those who felt the need for climate measures and that this corresponded with their desire to participate in this exercise. Despite the lack of accuracy here, the results nevertheless provide a map to show this central tension is present in Austrian society (as well as significant points of consensus detailed in the next section.)

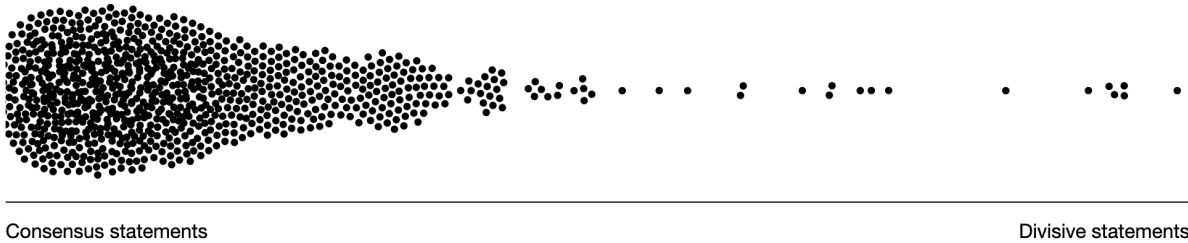
The core themes of dissensus that emerged in each topic were as follows:

<p>Food and Land Use</p> <p>Promoting vegetarian/vegan diets</p> <p>Food affordability</p> <p>Road pricing in big cities</p>	<p>Mobility</p> <p>Speed limits</p> <p>Car-free or public transport & cycle-friendly city centers</p> <p>Car as the best means of transport</p>	<p>Housing</p> <p>Building renovation obligation for owners</p> <p>Mandatory heating system replacement</p> <p>Possibility of switching to renewables in old houses</p>
<p>Production & consumption</p> <p>Willingness to reduce own consumption</p> <p>Relief for climate-friendly lifestyles</p> <p>Advertising for climate-damaging products</p> <p>A climate commission</p> <p>Climate in curricula and school curricula</p>	<p>Energy</p> <p>Higher prices for climate-damaging products & services</p>	<p>Some overarching themes of polarization</p> <p>Willingness to change own lifestyle</p> <p>Austria's role as a global role model</p> <p>Priority of social balance</p> <p>Climate protection ensures human survival</p> <p>Relevance of the respective topic for the climate</p>

Consensus

Now taking the perspective of consensus the results reveal that there was a much higher number of statements that people agree upon than there were polarizing statements.

This is shown visually by the beeswarm charts which all resembled this configuration.(example below from the Mobility conversation)



This is a common feature of Polis conversations that demonstrates how societies or communities have more uniting them than dividing them, something that is rarely acknowledged in political discourse.

The core areas of consensus that emerged in each topic were as follows:

Food and Land Use	Mobility	Housing
Food waste should be greatly reduced.	Create high speed train connections between European capitals.	Recycle, reuse, upcycle building materials from construction sites and demolished houses
Ugly/wonky fruit and veg should be traded on an equal footing in order to reduce food waste. Restrict the use of unnecessary packaging materials	Expand, standardize and make cheaper International rail traffic to become a real alternative to flying.	Increase rainwater storage tanks in areas with drought
Soil protection measures are needed -by renovating old buildings instead of sealing new soil. -by building up the humus layer through natural agriculture	Replace business trips with online conferences where possible.	More urban greening
Diversify afforestation beyond one tree species	Transport of goods across Europe must be reduced or increasingly shifted to rail.	Water city trees regularly or plant drought-resistant trees.
	Increase capacity and affordability of public transport especially in rural areas.	Coordinated planning for transport, energy and building infrastructure to increase energy-efficiency

<p>Production & consumption</p> <p>True costs for products when transporting goods within the EU and beyond</p> <p>Products should (once again) be repairable</p> <p>Focus on circular economy</p> <p>Against any privatization of water</p> <p>Significantly extend statutory warranty to make it necessary to manufacture longer-lasting products.</p> <p>Promotion of sufficiency and enoughness</p>	<p>Energy</p> <p>Use waste heat from production processes for district heating or hot water preparation</p> <p>Switching to renewable energy sources must be affordable for everyone.</p> <p>Set up photovoltaic systems on road embankments (similar to Switzerland)</p> <p>It is not enough to pass measures on to the average citizen, major CO2 emitters must be involved.</p> <p>Invest in research for electricity storage from sun and wind</p>	<p>Some overarching themes of consensus</p> <p>Protection of the natural environment and green spaces</p> <p>Recycling, reusing and upcycling</p> <p>Affordability of alternatives in transport and energy</p>
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How the Climate Council finalized its recommendations (5th and 6th weekends)

The 5 Polis conversations ran until Sunday 8th May. During the following 3 days the team responsible for the digital engagement analyzed the automatically generated reports. These full reports can be accessed via the following links:

- [Nutrition and land use](#)
- [Mobility](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Production and consumption](#)
- [Energy](#)

The main features of the 5 conversations were distilled into a more concise headline report so that climate council members would be able to better digest the information. These were sent to the Climate Council members on Thursday 12th, two days ahead of the fifth weekend so they had a chance to familiarize themselves with the content. These summaries were also shared [publicly on the Climate Council website](#). Here is [a translated version](#) of the headline report for the Energy topic.

On the penultimate weekend of the Climate Council (May14th/15th) the citizens reconvened in Vienna to work intensively on finalizing the recommendations that would feature in the report to be delivered to the national parliament.

The facilitators had the task of digesting the information themselves to give the council members a good overview of the material produced so far. In a session lasting 3 hours 50 minute the working groups had to digest and take into account information coming from 2 sources:

- Feedback from the Scientists on the draft recommendations they produced so far
- The Polis headline reports



In finalizing the recommendations the citizens had to take into account a large amount of information from the Scientists.

As far as the Polis results were concerned the priority for the groups in each topic was to examine and evaluate the overall and opinion cluster voting results that provided feedback on their own Climate Council statements. It was also suggested that they:

- Focus on any Council statements with high levels of consensus around acceptance or rejection
- Consider any new statements from the public with high approval/rejection values, previously clarified with the Scientific Advisory Board
- Consider the significance of the dissenting opinion clusters that had formed and what this might mean for the recommendations they were creating.

During the remainder of the fifth weekend, the ten working groups for the five fields of action reformulated their recommendations following the input from scientists and the general public via Polis. After this there was a temperature check to see if the citizen council as a whole accepted what each group had produced.

They were asked whether there were any "justified serious objections" to the recommendations. Council members would make a "justified serious objection" if, in their opinion, a recommendation contradicted the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2040 or the "impact manifesto" they had created in the first weekend.

Wherever serious objections arose separate solution dialogues were held on these controversial topics, which were facilitated using the [dynamic facilitation](#) method. Between the fifth and sixth week-end, the overall results were sent to the citizens, so that they had time to read all the recommendations at their leisure.

On the sixth weekend, the plenary discussed the final recommendations. If there were no or less than ten "substantiated serious objections", the recommendation was accepted and included in the report to be delivered to parliament. Serious objections to individual recommendations were documented in the report. As there were no more than nine objections to any of the recommendations, this meant that all recommendations were accepted by the citizens.

Final Recommendations

On Monday 4 July, the Austrian Climate Assembly published its report consisting of 93 recommendations. The report was officially received at a press conference with Leonore Gewessler, Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology and Martin Kocher, Minister for Labor.

A translated version (by Deepl translate) of the official report can be found [here](#).

General recommendations

- Introduce a fundamental right to climate protection;
- Abolish climate-damaging subsidies;
- Form and expand cross-border alliances for climate protection;
- Implement effective CO2 pricing;
- Support the labor market towards climate protection;
- Raise awareness for uncomfortable measures.

Field of action: Energy

- Adopt effective climate protection law immediately
- Expand emission-free energy nationwide with the goal of 100 percent supply from renewable energy
- Require energy suppliers to adjust their pricing

- Eliminate subsidies for fossil fuels
- Effective CO2 pricing in the energy sector
- Use areas that have already been sealed to generate energy and avoid further soil sealing
- Municipalities and public administration –act as role models and use savings potential
- Financial service providers –act as role models and use savings potential
- Companies –act as role models and use savings potential
- Promote green investments
- Compulsory implementation of spatial energy planning with citizen participation

Full and detailed [Energy](#) recommendations in the translated official report.

Field of action: Production and Consumption

- Set up a non-partisan climate commission
- Create experimental spaces for social and technological innovations
- Make reparability of products mandatory
- Prohibit the destruction of brand new goods
- Energy labels are to become mandatory for other consumer goods and take the entire product life cycle into account
- Expand and tighten the EMAS environmental management seal of approval
- Increase private investment capital in climate-impacting investments: green stock index and green government bonds
- Introduce more favorable credit conditions for climate-impacting projects
- Expand financial citizen participation in regional climate-friendly projects
- Anchor climate protection in curricula and study plans as well as in adult education
- Massively restrict advertising for climate-damaging products and ban particularly climate-damaging products
- Introduce or expand refill stations in supermarkets/drugstores
- Create a coordination office for climate-effective synergies between companies
- Reduction of plastic packaging waste
- Establish a center for circular economy

Full and detailed [Production and consumption](#) recommendations in the translated official report.

Field of action: Food and Land use

- Create political incentives for climate-friendly nutrition
- Introduce climate-friendly and respectful food pricing
- Introduce greenhouse gas tariffs based on the climate footprint for food from third countries
- Introduce a ban on destroying food
- Use available suitable agricultural land to contain the climate crisis, for example to generate energy efficiently
- Compulsory use of climate-friendly food in restaurants and canteen kitchens
- Establish a legal framework for portion sizes in canteen kitchens and restaurants
- Implement unit prices instead of bulk packs

- Ban bulk discounts on groceries
- Promote self-sufficiency with renewable energy in communities and farms
- Promote energy production from waste (biomass) and close nutrient cycles
- Check and align agricultural policy measures at EU and national level with regard to their actual climate impact
- Promote CO2 binding through sustainable forestry and make tree planting in public spaces mandatory
- Create the basis for humus growth
- Targeted support for small and medium-sized companies in the implementation of climate protection measures
- Promote innovative, climate-friendly production and distribution channels for agricultural products
- Promote knowledge and education on climate-friendly nutrition
- Anti-discrimination law for vegetables and fruit: introduce a purchase obligation for crooked vegetables
- Create awareness for the climate-friendly handling of food
- Promote transparency and make it mandatory to label product standards for food
- Promote and promote public distribution refrigerators

Full and detailed [Food and land use](#) recommendations in the translated official report.

Field of action: Mobility

- Introduce a climate-neutral mobility guarantee
- Promote public transport
- Encourage cycling and walking
- Introduce higher taxes for climate-damaging vehicles
- Shift zoning from community to regional or state level
- No new registrations (first registrations) of cars with combustion engines from 2027
- Strengthen parking space management, promote city tolls and car-free inner cities as further options
- Force climate-friendly freight transport -introduce equal competitive conditions for rail and road
- Ecologize commuter allowances and mileage allowances
- Reduce speed on roads
- Optimize car sharing
- Reduce company cars
- Introduce a kerosene tax
- Expand international rail traffic
- Make returns in online trade chargeable
- Implement inclusivity and accessibility in all public transport
- Awarded a free public transport ticket
- Set up more charging stations for electric vehicles
- Develop Car Lifetime Calculator
- Enshrine the tax deductibility of bicycles in law
- Reduce trips to school and kindergarten with private cars
- Introduce a monthly car-free day

Full and detailed [Mobility](#) recommendations in the translated official report.

Field of Action: Housing

- SOS 2024 – Immediate offensive for retrofit funding
- Stop soil sealing! – Promote renovations more than new construction
- Stop soil sealing! – Relocate spatial planning competencies
- Stop soil sealing! – Implement development deadlines for building plots
- Mandatory installation of photovoltaics
- Introduce vacancy tax and vacancy reporting obligation
- Create energy self-sufficiency in buildings
- Harmonization of the legal framework for climate-neutral buildings
- Z'amm Wohnen - CO housing from 0 to 100+
- Develop and legally anchor the best possible climate-friendly construction and renovation standards
- Introduce CO2 pricing for building materials
- Reduce gray emissions, promote circular economy: recycling of building materials
- re-compact stock
- ZU-KU-NFT*: Climate-friendly retraining and apprenticeship program in the construction industry
- Re-evaluation of risk areas
- Mobilize building land that has already been dedicated
- Energy seal of approval with a refurbishment effect
- Adapt monument protection to suit the climate

Full and detailed [Housing](#) recommendations in the translated official report.

Response from the Parliament

At the time of writing the report has been received by Parliament. In spite of some disparaging statements from an Austrian People's Party politician, the climate minister from the Green Party Leonore Gewessler stated that the report will be taken seriously and has promised to respond to all the recommendations and bring them into the political process. The recommendations will be examined over the summer and an initial statement from the government will be given in the autumn 2022.

Lessons learned

The Polis public engagement connected to the Austrian Citizens Climate Council was set up and implemented by Martin Rausch and Andy Paice, both closely associated with the Co-Intelligence Institute and informed by the principles of its [Wise Democracy Pattern Language](#) (WDPL).

From our perspective linking a major national citizens assembly to a digital platform such as Polis was a wonderful precedent with multiple gifts in the form of many insights that can be used to create richer implementations in the future.

Therefore this section will outline the lessons learned in the light of some of the elements we were aiming to achieve which are listed below. It will refer to relevant principles from the WDPL via hyperlinks.

Our intentions for using Polis were...

1. To engage the Austrian Public

Using the digital platform Polis for a national conversation to inform the climate council mini-public is an example of interaction between [Microcosms and Populations](#). To date most national climate assemblies have been set up as standalone mini-publics of 100-150 citizens designed to be broadly representative of the population. So for the national scale this addition was an innovation. (Although it built on previous work linking local citizens assemblies with Polis in the UK.)

2. To receive feedback on the Climate Council's work

The Climate Council was designed to work in a [cyclical](#) way with feedback loops whereby the council would receive inputs, i.e from scientists, politicians and civil society stakeholders. It would deliberate, come up with ideas and then those ideas would be once again share, principally with scientists, who would give their feedback. One of the main reasons for using Polis was therefore to also be able to share its work with the Austrian public and receive feedback.

3. To crowdsource new ideas

Another important principle behind using Polis was the possibility of advancing the conversation. Beyond feedback on the council's draft ideas it also enabled new input, with the Austrian public being able to engage and share their ideas.

4. To inform the Council of the opinion landscape (regarding climate action)

Measures required to address climate change often involve social and economic change which is usually desired by some and resisted by others. So Polis' capacity to identify

clusters of attitudes, values, opinions and highlight social tensions would be important information for the citizens to take into account.

5. To inform the Council of consensus statements

Finding potential consensus statements across divides was seen as a key asset that could help the council to formulate recommendations acceptable to the greatest number of Austrians.

Lessons in how the Climate Council was informed of the digital public engagement

In order for the Climate Council to gain the full potential from the results that Polis was going to offer, they would need to have had a firm grasp of the intentions and purposes of the public engagement as outlined above. For this to happen it would have been helpful for us to first give the organizing team a good experiential learning of Polis and its uses well in advance of the Council sessions which would enable this to be conveyed to council members. Unfortunately due to time constraints this was not possible.

So when we introduced the digital conversation with Austrian society to the Climate Council during the fourth weekend, the main purpose that was conveyed was the feedback the council would receive on their draft recommendation ideas and the other purposes were not stated to the same degree.

This is where the [contextual set up](#) of the Climate Council was a constraining factor and had an impact on how Polis was received by the council members. In the huge amount of work required in preparing the sessions, relatively little time was available for experientially introducing the publicity team and facilitators to the multiple gifts that the platform could offer the Climate Council. This made it more likely that the digital tool was seen by the facilitation team as an additional element that would be useful to have rather than an integral element of the process.

As a result the Council members also had a limited introduction to Polis.

Learning: as there is a whole art of how to host and facilitate an assembly well, likewise there is an art and education needed surrounding the Polis tool. Before it is introduced to the participants of an assembly, a facilitation and publicity team would benefit from a good experiential workshop on what Polis is, how it works and its potential to bridge social and attitudinal divides.

The lack of time for this meant that on the fourth weekend many of the citizen council members crafted their seed statements for Polis under the assumption they would get feedback on their own thinking (rather than receiving new ideas). This had ramifications that

can be seen in the following sections for how the conversations were publicised, how the public engaged and then how the results were used.

Lessons in how the 5 conversations were distributed (during the engagement phase)

Learning: the communications necessary for engaging the public in the 5 topics enabled greater exposure for the work of the climate council. The fact of engaging the public with its ideas and creating an opportunity for interaction was seen as a success particularly by the publicity team. It enabled greater [distributed intelligence](#) in the society as a whole for the council process, its work and some of its initial ideas.

Due to the predominant focus on getting feedback on the Climate Council's draft ideas many of the council members were sharing the surveys with friends as a way of asking for feedback. Newspapers were also looking to Polis to see what the early stage work of the Climate Council was. As a result there was a need to implement a means by which climate council statements could be identified by anyone voting or visiting the conversations.

Therefore a fix was implemented whereby all of the statements created by the working groups that seeded the 5 conversations were preceded with the prefix "Climate Council:"

This worked to enable a differentiation from all of the other statements submitted by the Austrian public.

It didn't work to the extent that from the very first day so many participants submitted new ideas that the Climate Council's work was lost amidst the quantity of statements. There was some disappointment due to the discrepancy between the publicized use and the reality of voting on the platform. Some council members were saying their friends had to vote through hundreds of statements to get to the council statements when they shared the Polis links.

In this context the fix was necessary. From a scientific perspective, it meant a bias was introduced into what would have otherwise been an organic conversation. Seeing that a statement was from "the Climate Council" may have influenced voters either positively or negatively depending on their feelings towards the Council.

Also a few days later, during a key communications opportunity (a national radio broadcast on the Climate Council) when high participation on the platform was anticipated, there was a strong expectation that the public should be able to recognise the Climate Council's statements.

Therefore a technical, temporary fix was used by employing the “metadata function” (normally used to gather demographic information from participants) as a way of pushing Climate Council statements to the forefront of the voting order.

The downside to this was that the algorithms were slightly skewed, albeit temporarily, which would have had a slight effect on how clustering of opinion groups took place.

Learning: More time and co-creation is needed between different internal implementation teams for outcomes that fulfill everyone’s needs i.e communications, assembly members and digital democracy implementation.

Polis has its gifts and limitations, so for future assemblies it is important to have co-design sessions with the publicity and facilitation team well in advance, to work out how their needs can be compatible with communicating Polis in a way that helps everyone understand its multiple purposes.

For example in the case of this engagement we might have concluded that Polis be used simply as a voting tool on Climate Council statements for say the first few days, then after a given period, open it up to everyone to submit comments. However, time pressures didn’t enable us to think through these possibilities in the moment.

Lessons from public feedback

There was some feedback regarding the tool of Polis itself. Some people emailed and complained there were too many similar statements, some didn't realize they could submit their own statements without having to go through all the statements, some felt it was overwhelming to spend hours on Polis and still see "100+" statements to comment on.

Learning: The original plan was to have light touch moderation which did not require many people to be working on monitoring the conversations. However it was evident that greater capacity for moderation and monitoring the five conversations would be needed especially when running a national conversation. Capping the number of statements and filtering through only those which are truly original ideas or comments would reduce overwhelm for voters. It would require a larger moderation team than what was available for this engagement.

A short, high quality explanatory video for people voting and submitting comments would also have helped people to understand where to vote and to encourage them to vote as much as they want without having to spend hours on the platform.

The Climate Council itself had received some criticism from a couple of political parties that felt the whole project was under the sway of the Green Party. When the public engagement was launched this criticism was extended to the use of Polis, too. The Austrian Freedom Party questioned its legitimacy in a letter to parliament asking what the need was for this digital platform.

Learning: When Polis is used at scale for informing a national democratic process, the power dynamics at stake are increased and some form of criticism is to be expected. There is also a potential to educate that Polis is completely non-partisan and that it enables all ideas from all sides to be heard, voted upon and potentially improved to help elicit responses that garner greater public buy-in.

Lessons in how the Climate Council received the results of the Polis conversations

Polis was chosen as a tool for its ability to give a representation of what the whole of Austrian society is thinking on the issues of climate protection measures. The opinion clusters recognised by its machine learning provide a map of the opinion landscape. Regardless of the precision of the actual proportion and numbers related to those clusters, it gives an impression of the whole situation. This is a version of [holopticism](#) whereby any member of the public -not just an official or power-holder -is able to perceive an impression of the whole.

The Citizens' Council process had already brought scientists, politicians and civil society stakeholders into the conversation. Polis enabled a way of bringing the wider Austrian society into the conversation, thus activating another holistic principle of endeavoring to bring the [whole system into the conversation](#) in order to create outcomes that work for the whole society, the whole planet and future generations.

Creating those mutually beneficial outcomes also depends upon making sure [as much important information](#) would be taken into account by the Climate Council. The mini-public had very privileged conditions of having access over several weekends to a range of expertise and time to deliberate and digest those inputs. This desirable feature of mini publics means they become an informed public. A consequence of this privilege may mean the mini-public becomes a bubble in itself that may lose its appreciation of the attitudes prevalent in wider society.

When it comes to attitudes over climate action, most Western societies have some version of a division between those who feel the need for urgent, radical measures and those who feel such measures are a threat to comfortable lifestyles, stability and prosperity. Those

attitudinal differences and how they play out has a powerful influence in shaping politics and climate decision making.

Those differences themselves need to be understood and taken into account in order to put forward recommendations that can have buy-in from across society and different perspectives. The danger of the mini public is that it loses sight of these societal differences as it deepens its understanding of the issue. It has to understand potential resistance to its own ideas and use that [diversity and disturbance creatively](#).

The advantage of Polis is in its potential to remove the possibility of this blindspot. It contributes to having [full spectrum information](#), complementing the scientific and political input with its opinion clusters, exposing the social tensions around the issues. Integrating and digesting these tensions gives the mini-public a possibility of [metabolizing the polarization](#) it sees represented in the opinion clusters.

The intention of using Polis was therefore to integrate all of these dimensions into the workings of the Austrian Climate Council. So how did that work in practice? How did the results of the Polis conversations affect the final recommendations? How did they use the information?

The answer is that the results were mixed.

From the facilitators' feedback we heard that examining the digested Polis conversation reports had a positive effect in helping some of the working groups to come to conclusions. They said it was useful to see how much agreement or resistance their statements and other statements received. The voting they observed on their ideas helped them to sense they were in the right ballpark for them to be accepted by Austrian society.

The working groups also noted that some of their statements were conservative compared to others that were even more radical which also helped them to feel they were in the right [range of tolerance](#).

In the digested Polis reports, the facilitators also clustered the new proposals and ideas which had emerged and presented them to the citizens. In one group, a cluster got picked up and transformed into a measure which became part of the final recommendations.

On the side of the limitations that prevented the citizens from making the full use of the results that Polis offers was the lack of [enough time](#) to spend looking into the reports and digesting the full implications of the data.

On the fifth weekend, the session for using the Polis results and finalizing the recommendations, was also when working groups had to digest feedback from the scientists after 'the long night of science'. The scientists commented on the feasibility of the recommendations and many of the groups prioritized looking at this rather than the Polis

results. As a result many didn't refer to the results very much or take time to read the reports.

There was some feedback that there may have been an assumption amongst the citizens that they had already accumulated a lot of knowledge about the issues and that it was less important at this stage, 5 weekends into the process, to need to integrate the opinions of the general public.

Some other feedback from council members was the fact that there was no way of telling how representative the sample of those voting was. In the Polis reports the opinion clusters representing those wanting more progressive climate measures were much larger than those wanting a more conservative approach. The nature of Austrian society tells us the proportions would be quite different if there were a representative sample of people taking the survey.

Therefore there was a question of validity and the degree to which the results should be given attention. This was unfortunate. Regardless of the exact proportions and numbers, the opinion landscapes revealed by Polis can be seen as an indication of the real clusters of opinion that exist in society.

Using metadata and linking the statements to demographics could also have helped in showing how representative the statements were.

Unfortunately, due to factors mentioned previously, we didn't manage to explain these things to participants or have the conditions to make the choices around setting up the metadata.

Learning: In order to make use of the Polis results, a citizens' assembly not only requires good briefing on how to use and read the results but also a [good amount of time](#) to integrate useful understandings. In order to formulate recommendations that can have the largest buy-in from the whole society, it needs time to reflect on the implications of different opinion clusters.

Participants in assemblies already have huge amounts of information to assimilate. Polis results can seem overwhelming if enough preparatory work isn't done to facilitate their digestion. So in future iterations of processes like this we should create a greater space in between the closing of the Polis survey and the creation of the report digest so that the materials given to an assembly are as concise and as easy to understand as possible.

Similarly, making sure there is the space and time to brief the whole organizing team on important Polis functions such as metadata can help increase an understanding of aspects such as validity and representation.

Finally, it may have been better to run the Polis conversation at a much earlier stage in the Climate Council proceedings. In this way it could have been framed as a way to:

- Understand social and political tensions towards climate measures in the wider Austrian society
- Be an early stage method to crowdsource ideas
- Provide useful insights that might inform speakers' presentations

Conclusion

The overall conclusion from our point of view at CII is that in terms of using Polis the Austrian Citizens' Climate Council did not fulfill its potential: that of playing its role in helping the recommendations become an indisputable reflection of the 'voice of Austria.'

If the final recommendations of the council could have demonstrated in its report how the concerns of those dissenting opinion clusters in the 5 conversations had at least been addressed in some way, it could have pointed to its conclusions being a possible [shared orientation](#) a larger '[out of many. one](#)' voice.

Nevertheless it did provide valuable information to the Citizen members of the council and it enhanced the process in terms of:

- Creating a nationwide conversation that gave a great deal of exposure to the work of the Climate Council
- Enabling detailed input on the specific 5 themes or 'fields of action'
- Producing new ideas, some of which were taken up

Most importantly it has created a precedent for further [iterations](#) of using Polis, building on the learnings from this example of using the digital democracy platform at a national level.

Resources & Acknowledgements

Klimarat Report - [klimarat.org](https://www.klimarat.org)

Article by Ines Omann on Der Klimarat -

<https://positionen.wienenergie.at/blog/gastbeitrag-der-klimarat/>

Feedback from Martin Rausch, Jenna Buchy, Adam Pawloff, Laura Grossman, Paula Spielauer - Klimarat Organisation and Facilitation team

Recommendations

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Darshana Narayanan, Andrew Smith, Christopher Small of Computational Democracy

Computational Democracy Polis Reports - <https://compdemocracy.org>

Interviews of Martin Rausch and Andy Paice by Liz Barry of Computational Democracy

Rosa Zubizarreta, Jennifer Atlee, Tom Atlee - facilitating a space for reflection and feedback on the process

The Wise Democracy Pattern Language - wd-pl.com

Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies - <https://knoca.eu/>

Citizen Assembly for Climate Action 2022 Video - Martin Rausch and Markus Goetsch - <https://youtu.be/3OPk2XUur04>

Evaluation Report of the Austrian 'Klimarat' UWK, Assessment of the Perspectives of the Members and the Public - University for Continuing Education Krems (UWK) Dr. Katrin Praprotnik, Dr. Daniela Ingruber, Dr. Sarah Nash, Roman Rodenko