

Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation in Czechia

Main Findings of the OECD Public Governance Review of
Czechia and Key Recommendations Moving Forward

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Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation in Czechia

Outline

- Context
- Main findings from the OECD Public Governance Review of Czechia (2023)
- Key Recommendations
- Focus: centre of expertise on citizen and stakeholder participation
- Conclusion

Context

The OECD Public Governance Review (“PGR”) of Czechia (2023)

- Assesses the capacities of the public sector;
- Supports the government in engaging in ambitious public governance reforms;
- Under the aegis of its Public Administration Reform Strategy “*Client-Oriented Public Administration 2030*”.

This morning, we are focusing on the first chapter of the PGR: “**Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation in Czechia**”



Key Recommendations from the Public Governance Review of Czechia

Chapter 1: Fostering citizen and stakeholder participation in Czechia

Definition

- Consider adopting a single definition of citizen and stakeholder participation.

Enabling Environment

- Consider reviewing the legal and regulatory framework for citizen and stakeholder participation to establish a mandatory “participation check”.
- Consider designing an integrated open government strategy that includes a strong participation component.
- Consider creating a centre of expertise on citizen and stakeholder participation to coordinate and harmonise practices across public institutions.
- Consider extending the mandate and composition of the existing Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations and transform it into the Government Council for Citizen and Stakeholder Participation.

Literacy

- Consider updating the existing Methodology and Manual for Public Involvement in the Preparation of Government Documents to include more recent trends and practices
- Consider including a dedicated course on participation in mandatory training requirements
- Consider setting up a community of practice dedicated to citizen and stakeholder participation including both public officials and non-public stakeholders.

Transparency and Information

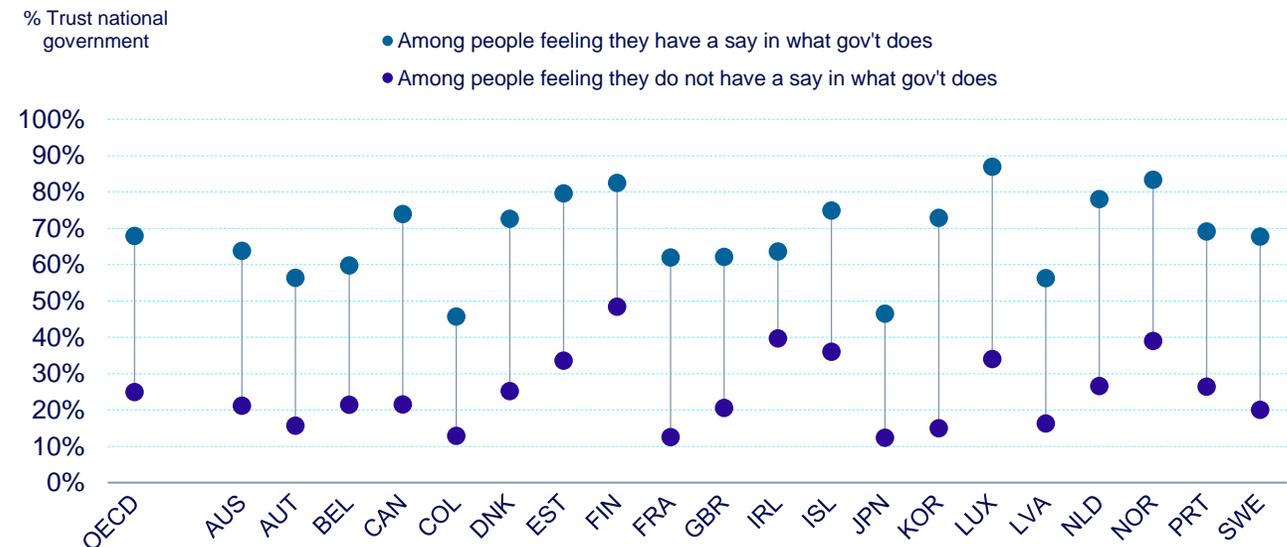
- Proactively disclose all relevant information regarding participatory processes
- Consider creating an integrated government-wide participation portal.

Experimenting with emerging tools and practices

- Pilot representative deliberative processes at the local level

The importance of having a say in what the government does in a polycrisis era

- OECD countries have been exposed to **various shock to their economic and social stability** over the past few years.
- There is a general **decline of trust** among citizens.
- Just over **4 people out of 10** trust their national government.
- Among those who have the feeling of **having a say in what the government does, the level of trust is substantially higher.**
- **Opening new channels for citizen and stakeholder engagement in policymaking is essential** to rebuild trust in government.



Source: OECD (2021), OECD Trust Survey

Context of Chapter 1

Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation in Czechia

- Assesses policies and practices relating to citizen and stakeholder participation in Czechia against the **OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017)**, the first and only international legal instrument on Open Government
- 10 Provisions** that provide a framework for both the governance and implementation of Adherents' open government agendas
- Sources: 2021 OECD Survey on Open Government, 2021 Perception Survey for Delegates of the OECD Working Party on Open Government, in-depth interviews during the OECD fact-finding mission to Prague

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government

The pathway for the first international legal instrument on Open Government

Open government strategies and initiatives are needed more than ever to regain citizens' trust in governments. Countries are increasingly acknowledging the role of Open Government as a catalyst for good governance, democracy and inclusive growth. Open government principles – i.e. transparency, integrity, accountability and stakeholders' participation – are progressively changing the relationship between public officials and citizens in many countries. A scan of existing initiatives, however, reveals that there is a diversity of definitions, objectives, and implementation methodologies that characterize open government strategies. The OECD has therefore developed a **Recommendation of the Council on Open Government** that defines a set of criteria that will help adhering countries to design and implement successful open government agendas.



First international legal instrument on Open Government

- Informal Experts Group on Open Government
- 2016 Global Forum on Open Government – attended by 30 Ministers and 50 HoD
- Regional Networks on Open and Innovative Government in LAC, MENA, SEA

Online Public Consultation on the Draft Recommendation

- > 100 participants from 44 different countries
- Input received from NGOs, citizens, government officials, private sector, academia, media
- Remarkable outreach on social media

A firm evidence base for the Recommendation

- 2015 Survey on Open Government – 54 countries (all OECD members)
- 2016 OECD Global Report on Open Government
- 2017 Survey on Ombudsman Institutions

OECD at the forefront of Open Government for 15 years

- Open Government Reviews
- Capacity building seminars
- Open State
- Public Governance Reviews
- 2001 Citizens as Partners

Rationale for developing the Recommendation and its scope

- Ensure that open government principles are rooted in the public management culture;
- Identify an enabling environment that is conducive to an efficient, effective and integrated governance of open government;
- Promote the alignment of open government strategies and initiatives with, and their contribution to, all relevant national and sectoral socio-economic policy objectives, at all levels of the administration;
- Foster monitoring and evaluation practices and data collection.

Process for developing the Draft Recommendation

November 2016 (54th PGC):

- Establishment of the Informal experts group on Open Government comprising 16 OECD Members and Partners

December 2016:

- Launch of the OECD Report on Open Government: the Global Context and the Way Forward

March 2017:

- First meeting of the Informal Experts Group to inform the development of the Recommendation

July – September 2017:

- Online public consultation

December 2017:

- Council adoption



Main findings from the OECD Public Governance Review of Czechia

Chapter 1: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation of Czechia

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

1. What is Citizen and Stakeholder Participation?

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government defines participation as “*all the ways in which citizens and stakeholders can be involved in the policy cycle and in service design and delivery*”.

The OECD defines the **different actors** that public institutions can involve in their participatory mechanisms as:

Stakeholders

Any interested and/or affected party, including: institutions and organisations, whether governmental or non-public, from civil society, academia, the media or the private sector.

Citizens

Individuals, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, religious and political affiliations; and in the larger sense, “an inhabitant of a particular place”

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

Key differences when involving **stakeholders** and **citizens**

	TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS	BENEFITS	CONSIDERATIONS
CITIZENS	<p>Individuals without any affiliation: open to all citizens, or specific groups of citizens (young, residents of an area, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public opinion/ judgement• Diversity of views and voices• Can be representative of broader public• Public communication and public learning• Tailor made and effective solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires breaking down barriers to participation• Motivation to participate should be ignited• Requires clear links to decision making, invitations from high-level figures
STAKEHOLDERS	<p>Individuals with an affiliation: CSOs, businesses, trade unions, think-tanks, public service users, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official stakeholder perspectives• Expert opinion and knowledge• Ensures representation of key players	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low threshold for participation• Clear interest and incentives• Experience interacting with public authorities and role in decision making

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

1. What is Citizen and Stakeholder Participation?

Participation brings two types of benefits:

- **Better and more democratic processes** (intrinsic benefits) → participation can improve and democratize the process of public decision-making
- **Better results** (instrumental benefits) → participation can improve the quality of policies, laws, and services.

The OECD distinguishes between **three levels** of citizen and stakeholder participation.

Information

One-way relationship, reactive and proactive disclosure of information.

Consultation

Two-way relationship, provision of relevant information, collection of citizens' feedback on the outcomes of the process. Usually not binding

Engagement

Citizens and stakeholders are given the opportunity to collaborate during all phases of the policy cycle and in service design and delivery.

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

1. What is Citizen and Stakeholder Participation?

Finding n. 1

The national government of Czechia currently **does not have a single official definition**, typology or classification for citizen participation and/or stakeholder participation.

The absence of a common definition of what constitutes (non-electoral) participation can represent an **obstacle to the harmonious implementation** of participatory policies and practices across the public sector.

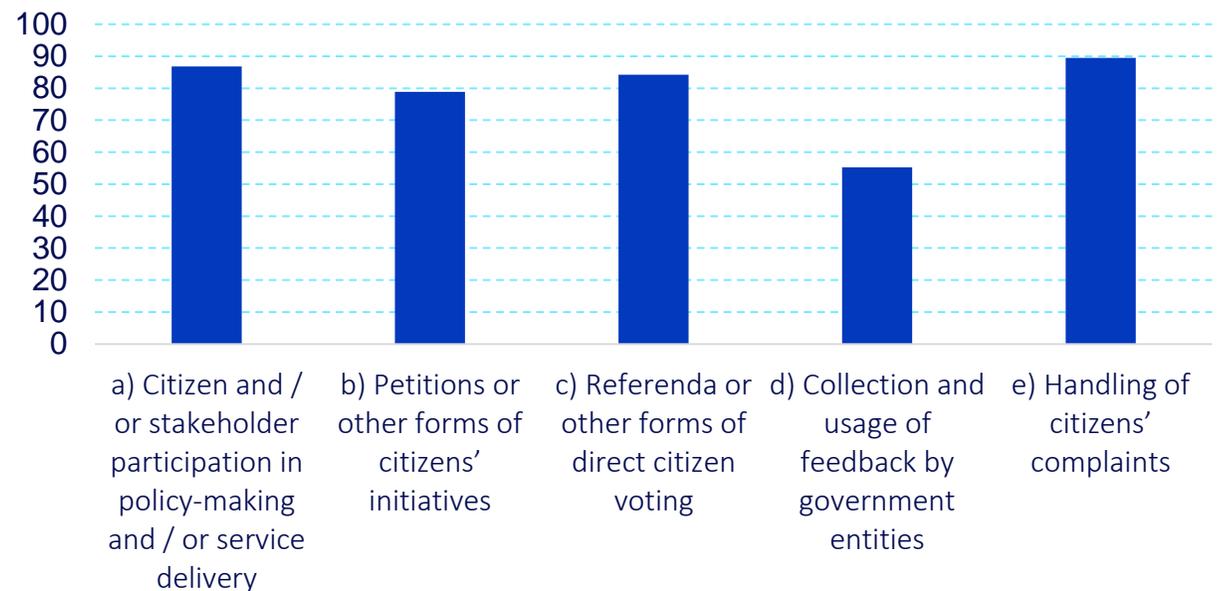
Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

2. Enabling environment for participation Legal and regulatory framework

The enabling environment for citizen and stakeholder participation consists of the set of **rules, procedures and institutions** that enable the organisation and implementation of participatory processes.

The **institutionalization** of participatory practices is key to ensure that participation goes beyond *ad hoc* and one-off initiatives and to create a participation culture.

Availability of legal provisions regarding citizens and stakeholder participation in OECD countries



N=38

Source: OECD (2021), OECD Survey on Open Government

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

2. Enabling environment for participation **Legal and regulatory framework**

Finding n. 2

Traditional forms of democratic participation, such as **voting, being elected, and referenda**, are well institutionalised in Czechia (Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedom of 1992, Information Law of 1999, Government Legislative Rules).

However, there is **room to deepen and broaden the legal and regulatory framework** for citizen and stakeholder participation throughout the policy cycle and in service delivery.

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

2. Enabling environment for participation

Policy documents

Policy documents, such as strategies, national policies, institutional plans, memos, action plans, **give direction to a country's policy agenda**, outline policy objectives, detail initiatives to achieve them, and facilitate monitoring and evaluation of reforms.

Policy documents can be used to **harmonise practices** across government.

Finding n.3

In Czechia, objectives and initiatives to promote more and active involvement of citizens and stakeholders appear in a very high number of policy documents:

- Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030
- Policy Statement of the Government
- Client-Oriented Public Administration 2030
- Strategy for Co-operation Between the Public Administration and Non-governmental Non-profit Organizations 2021-2030 and Action Plan 2021-2024
- OGP Action Plan of Czechia 2023-2024

This multiplicity of policy documents highlights **the interest** of the Czech government to foster participation in policymaking. However, it also entails implementation challenges as these documents **lack visibility or remain unknown** across the administration and the wider public.

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

2. Enabling environment for participation **Institutional responsibilities**

Across OECD countries, institutional responsibilities for citizen and stakeholder participation **differ widely**, depending on the administrative architecture and the historical development of the participation agenda.

Finding n.4

In Czechia, institutional responsibilities for citizen and stakeholder participation are distributed among different ministries.

This distribution raises concerns about the clarity and consistency of the leadership of the participation agenda. It is difficult to identify who to turn to when organising a participatory process.

Ministry of Justice

OGP Action Plan
OECD Working Party
on Open
Government

Ministry of the Interior

Legal framework for citizen
participation
Strategy Client-oriented
public administration 2030

Ministries of Environment and Regional Development

Participation agenda in
their policy fields

Regulatory Impact Assessment Unit

(Office of Government)
Methodological guidance on
stakeholder participation for
the central administration

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

2. Enabling environment for participation **Existing bodies including non-public stakeholders**

Finding n.5

The Czech government has established numerous advisory and working bodies (PPOVs, or consultative bodies), both temporary and permanent, to support its activities. These bodies include civil society stakeholders.

However, evidence suggests that the functioning of the consultative bodies **depends on the political will of the administration in power and on the profile of their members.**

Among the existing consultative bodies, the **Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations** helps the government to create a suitable environment for the existence and the activities of NGOs.

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

3. Participation literacy across the administration and society

Most governments across the OECD have elaborated **guidelines, toolkits, manuals, and trainings** on different open government policies and practices to raise awareness and build their staff's and civil society's literacy.

Finding n.6

The Czech government published several guidelines to build literacy across civil servants on citizen and stakeholder participation both in the preparation of government documents and in regulatory impact assessment.

- Methodology for Public Involvement in the Preparation of Government Documents (2009)
- Manual for Public Involvement in the Preparation of Government Documents (2010)
- Methodology of the Participation of NGOs in Working and Advisory Bodies of the Central Authorities and in the Creation of their Policy Documents (2022, as part of a commitment of the OGP Czech Action Plan 2020-2022)

In line with most OECD countries, the Czech government offers specific trainings on citizen and stakeholder participation.

Main findings of the OECD PGR of Czechia: Fostering Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

4. Transparency and high-quality information as basis for citizen and stakeholder participation

Information, effective public communication, and data are the pre-requisites for informed and more impactful participation.

Finding n.7

In Czechia, Access to Information is Regulated by the 1999 Law on Free Access to Information (Act 106/199).

Czechia is mostly aligned with the OECD standards regarding proactive disclosure of information.

Finding n.8

Limited information about and lack of communications around participatory processes are among the key challenges the Czechia faces in fostering better citizen and stakeholder participation.

Key Recommendations

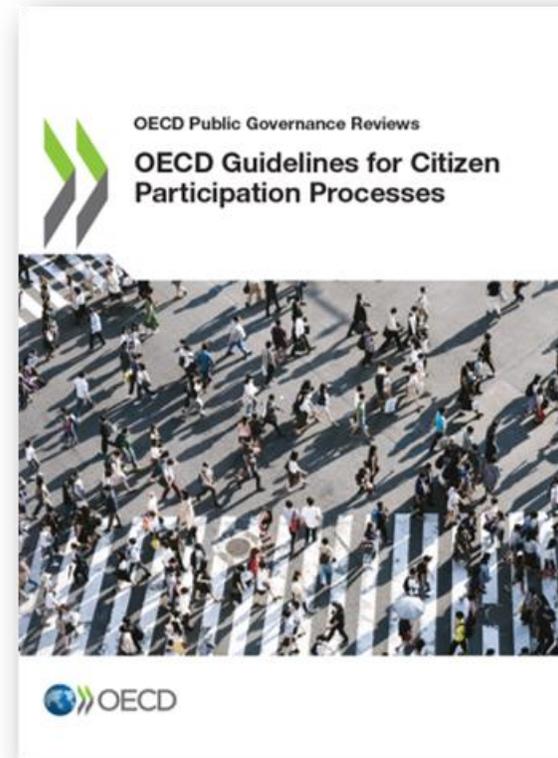
Key Recommendations

1. Defining Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

Definition of Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

Consider adopting a single definition of citizen and stakeholder participation.

The definition should be communicated widely to ensure that all public officials and non-public stakeholders are aware of and use it.



Key Recommendations

2. Strengthening the enabling environment for participation

Legal and regulatory framework

Consider **reviewing the legal and regulatory framework for citizen and stakeholder participation to establish a mandatory “participation check”**.

Consider **adopting an integrated law / decree on participation**.

Policy Documents

Consider designing an **integrated open government strategy** that includes a strong participation component

Institutional Responsibilities

Consider creating a **centre of expertise on citizen and stakeholder participation** to coordinate and harmonise practices across public institutions.

Consider mandating the establishment of a **unit or person dedicated to citizen and stakeholder participation** in every public institution.

Consider locating the centre of expertise in the **Office of the Government or in the Ministry of the Interior**.

Existing bodies including non-public Stakeholders

Consider extending the mandate and composition of the existing Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations and transform it into the **Government Council for Citizen and Stakeholder Participation**.

Key Recommendations

3. Fostering participation literacy across the administration and the wider society

Update existing methodologies and guidelines

Consider **updating the existing Methodology and Manual for Public Involvement in the Preparation of Government Documents** to include **more recent trends and practices** and to provide **more concrete advice** on non-electoral participatory practices and processes.

Trainings

Consider including a **dedicated course on participation in mandatory training requirements for senior public officials** and for all newly hired public officials to introduce them to the concept and its practices.

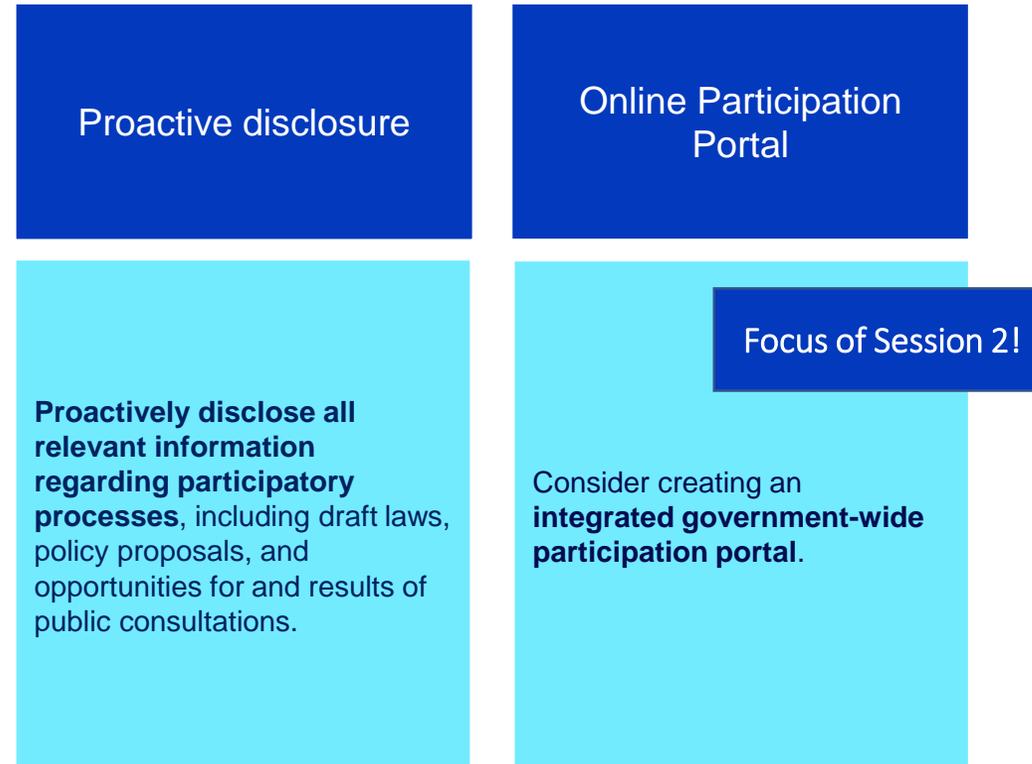
Consider creating a single training catalogue that lists all trainings on participation and open government offered by the national government and international actors.

Community of Practice

Consider setting up a **community of practice dedicated to citizen and stakeholder participation** including both public officials and non-public stakeholders.

Key Recommendations

4. Enhancing transparency and providing high-quality information as a basis for citizen and stakeholder participation



Key Recommendations

5. Experimenting with emerging tools and practices

Deliberation

Embed deliberation **in existing participatory spaces**, for example **in existing consultative bodies** (e.g. councils) to improve inclusion and representation in the councils and bring citizens (as individuals) into these processes.

Pilot representative deliberative processes at the local level, for example, in subnational participatory budgeting.

Focus of Session 2!



Focus

Centre of Expertise on Citizen
and Stakeholder Participation



The Centre of Expertise on Citizen and Stakeholder Participation

- Is situated in a **central administration** (Office of Government or Ministry of Interior)
 - Is a clear and visible **point of contact** for administrations, citizens and non-public stakeholders with respect to participation.

Participation Agenda

The Centre designs an **integrated open government strategy** with a strong **participation component** to anchor the participation agenda in a broader context and fully exploit synergies with initiatives to promote transparency and accountability.

Such an integrated agenda **can gain higher visibility and enhance implementation.**

Participation Literacy and Trainings

The Centre **produces or updates existing guidelines and toolkits** on citizen and stakeholder participation.

It **raises awareness and conducts promotion campaigns** about the materials targeting both public officials and non-public stakeholders.

It **organises and performs dedicated training sessions.**

Coordination across Administrations and Consultative Bodies

The Centre coordinates the **network of participation units/officials** across public administrations.

It is part of the **Government Council for Citizen and Stakeholder Participation.**

It **animates the community of practice** dedicated to citizens and stakeholder participation.

OECD GOOD PRACTICE: THE FRENCH INTERMINISTERIAL DIRECTORATE FOR PUBLIC TRANSFORMATION AND ITS CENTER FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



TRANSFORMING ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC SERVICES THROUGH A CITIZEN- CENTRED APPROACH

- The DITP is located in the Ministry of Transformation and the Public Service and **responding to the Presidency of the Republic**.
- It steers and coordinates the **national OGP Action Plan** cycle and the French Open Government Network, internal and external to the administration.
- It includes an **Interministerial Center for Citizen Participation (CIPC)** which offers strategic and methodological support to ministries and state services that wish to involve citizens in the development of public policies.
 - The CIPC is responsible for supporting administrations in their participatory projects and for ensuring the quality of the procedures, transparency and monitoring.
 - It provides ministries and state services with resources and provides access to service providers specialized in facilitating participatory processes (in person or online).
 - It leads a community of public officials responsible for citizen participation through capacity-buildings and trainings adapted to their needs.
 - It manages and runs the platform www.participation-citoyenne.gouv.fr which makes available all non-obligatory citizen consultations carried out by the State.

BEST PRACTICE: BRAZIL'S NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONALISING PARTICIPATION AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

- The National Secretariat for Social Participation is responsible for the **creation and implementation of citizen participation processes** in policymaking at the federal level.
- It performs **studies and research** on citizen participation and social dialogue to improve the quality and enhance the impact of participatory processes.
- It strives to **institutionalise and embed** citizen participation in policymaking.
- It is composed by three Directorates: **Popular Education; Participatory Planning and Budgeting; Digital Participation and Network Communication.**
- It launched the **Participatory Pluriannual Plan (PPA Participativo)** to set the goals and objectives for Brazil over the following four years in order to eventually move towards a participatory budget at national level

Conclusions

CONCLUSIONS



THE FUTURE OF CITIZEN
AND STAKEHOLDER
PARTICIPATION IN

CZECHIA

- Czechia is showing clear **ambition** to move towards more impactful citizen and stakeholder participation throughout the entire policy cycle, as evidenced by the numerous policy documents and strategies covering the topic.
- **Islands of good practices** in terms of citizen and stakeholder participation already exist (e.g. a strong culture of advisory and working bodies including non-public stakeholders) but sometimes lack of impact.
- **More clarity on the overarching vision and more coordination in the design and implementation of the participation agenda** are needed to meet the ambition of the Czech government.

CONCLUSIONS



THE FUTURE OF CITIZEN
AND STAKEHOLDER
PARTICIPATION IN

CZECHIA

- The establishment of well-defined and innovative governance mechanisms, the use of new tools, and the experimentation of innovative citizen and stakeholder participation formats will allow Czechia to move forward and achieve its objectives.
- The recommendations of the Public Governance Review and today's seminar provide inputs in this direction.



Děkuji!

Get in touch!

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