



Towards a Crowdsourcing Pilot for
EU Citizens: Recommendations
from the EUCROWD Project
ECAS Brussels, March 2018



CONTENTS

Contents	2
EUCROWD Project Description	3
RECOMMENDATIONS	5
1. Policy field topics	5
Issues that could be crowdsourced at EU level:	5
2. Tools	6
Technological platform to be used for a crowdsourcing pilot at the EU level:	6
3. Time frame of the implementation	7
Democratic policy-cycle phases benefiting from crowdsourcing:	7

EUCROWD PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The European Citizens Crowdsourcing (EUCROWD) project took place from September 2016 to March 2018, under the framework of the [Europe for Citizens programme 2016](#) of the European Union.

The project focused on raising citizens' awareness of innovative channels of e-participation in politics and policy, and to foster a democratic debate on the future of the European Union.

The project was implemented in partnership with the following organisations:

- Institute for Electronic Participation (INePA), Slovenia (<http://www.inepa.si/english>)
- European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), Belgium (<http://ecas.org/>)
- Stichting Netwerk Democratie, the Netherlands (<http://netdem.nl/en/>)
- Science for You (SciFY), Greece (<http://www.scify.gr/site/en/>)
- ManaBalss.lv, Latvia (<https://manabalss.lv/>)
- Open Ministry, Finland (<http://avoiministerio.fi/>)
- Démocratie Ouverte, France (<https://democratieouverte.org/>)
- The Democratic Society (Demsoc), UK (<http://www.demsoc.org/>)

The EUCROWD's objective was to increase citizens' understanding of the EU's policy-making process and encourage democratic engagement by establishing a framework for an EU level pilot of crowdsourcing.

According to a study published by ECAS in 2016 '[Towards a crowdsourcing pilot at the EU level: Taking decisions with citizens and not for them!](#)', crowdsourcing legislation has the potential to reduce the gap between EU decision-makers and citizens and contribute to the creation of more engaged citizenship. It allows people to participate in debates in a constructive way and to learn from each other throughout a deliberation process ("Wisdom of the crowd" principle).

Before launching a crowdsourcing pilot at the EU level, some issues needed to be further explored, verified and decided through national debates with citizens and stakeholders. Mainly, three specific questions had to be answered:

1. Which EU policy areas are the most suitable to be open to the crowdsourcing method at the EU level?
2. Which technological platform/s should be used to make the crowdsourcing process more efficient?
3. In which stage of the policy process would the crowdsourcing method take place?

The EUCROWD's framework was based on organising national events to collect information related to citizens' knowledge on crowdsourcing and their answers to the questions raised. Each national event gave an overview of crowdsourcing practices and concluded with recommendations for a crowdsourcing pilot at the EU level.

Six national events were organised in different European capitals to consult local citizens and the final conference, the Digital Democracy Day 2018, was organised in Brussels to present to EU stakeholders the outcomes of the EUCROWD project:

- 'How can citizen's crowdsourcing foster democracy in Europe?', Institute for Electronic Participation (INePA), 26 October 2016, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- 'Taking control of politics: can digital democracy help?', Democratic Society (DemSoc), 9 February 2017, London UK.
- 'Crowdsourcing a new European Democracy', Netwerk Democratie, 14-15 March 2017, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- 'Let's crowdsource the future of Europe', Science for You (SciFY), 9 May 2017, Athens, Greece.
- 'Co-build politics with citizens to foster democracy in Europe', Démocratie Ouverte, 20 June 2017, Paris, France.
- 'Open democracy in practice: Crowdsourcing', Avoin Ministeriö, 11 October 2017, Helsinki, Finland.
- 'From crowd to action – the future of digitalised democracy in Europe?', ManaBalss, 23 November 2017, Riga, Latvia.
- 'Digital Democracy Day 2018 - Crowdsourcing EU legislation: Taking decisions with citizens' and not for them!', European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), 27 February 2018, Brussels, Belgium.

All the reports can be found online <http://www.inepa.si/eucrowd/results/#Reports>:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Policy field topics

Issues that could be crowdsourced at EU level:

The national reports highlighted that several topics related to different aspects of citizens' daily life can be subject to crowdsourcing. However, in the view of starting a concrete crowdsourcing pilot project, only one topic should be selected in order to make the process more efficient and to give a good example for the future use of the platform.

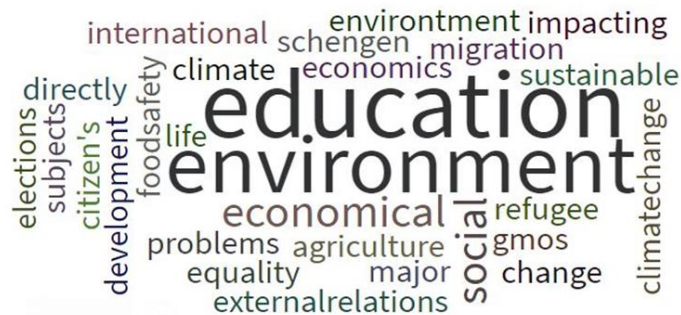
From the national reports the following main topics emerged:

- Citizenship education (e.g. Active participation)
- Constitutional issues (with a view on Constitutional design of the EU);
- **Environment** (e.g. on Climate change, Vehicle taxes, Emission regulations and Urban planning);
- **Healthcare.**

As 'Common safety concerns in public health' and 'Environmental issues' are both shared competences of the EU, we consider one of the two policy fields suitable for a first crowdsourcing pilot project at EU level.

For a future crowdsourcing experience in the EU in which policy sectors do you think it would be feasible?

 **Poll locked.** Responses not accepted.



2. Tools

Technological platform to be used for a crowdsourcing pilot at the EU level:

The tool related topic suggests the possibility of using:

- The existing tools at national level;
- EU level platform;
- Mix of the above.

The recommendation is to use for the pilot project a **single platform at the EU level** which should include certain characteristics proposed in the national reports:

- Transparent and open-source;
- Multilingual;
- Include multiple ways of participation and contributions;
- Scalable;
- User-friendly.

Another feature that emerged from the national events was the fact that each topic should have a **tailor-made platform** designed for the purpose of **that particular issue**.

The existing platforms and tools that give a very good example for a possible EU level platform are the following:

- Parlement&Citoyens
- Manabalss
- DemocracIT
- SynAthina
- D-CENT
- Stem van West
- The People's Assembly
- IdeaScale
- Vouliwatch.gr
- Take Task
- Mazaksslogs.lv
- Sveikas Vaikas

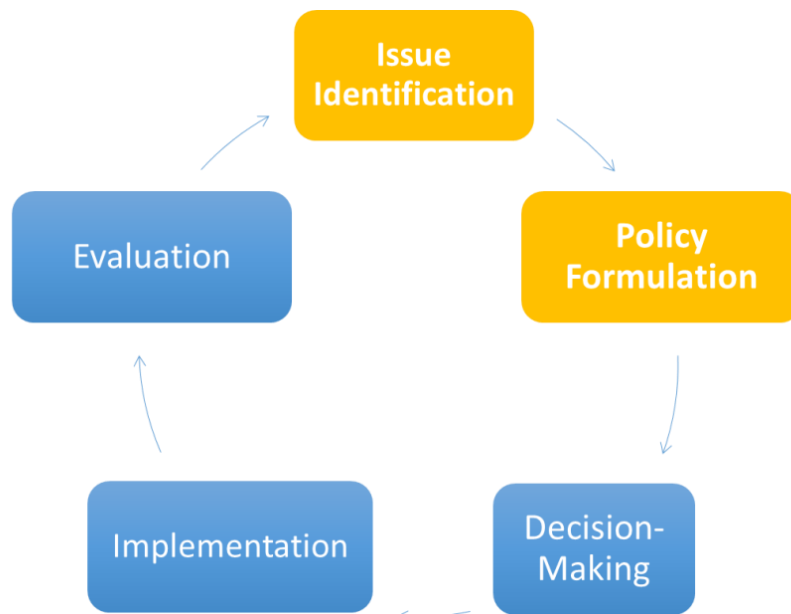
3. Time frame of the implementation

Democratic policy-cycle phases benefiting from crowdsourcing:

The best time frame according to most citizens is the **initial stage** of policy-making processes in order to collect inputs that are not too technical and from all parts of society. However, it is also important for citizens to be involved in the next phases of the decision-making process.

A crowdsourcing process can take place in different policy-making stages: Issue identification, Policy formulation, Decision-making, Implementation and Evaluation (feedback).

The recommendation is to implement a crowdsourcing pilot project at the EU level mainly in **two** of the five phases: **first, 'issue identification' by collecting ideas and second, 'policy formulation' through solutions identified by citizens**. Policy-makers should ensure citizens' contributions are taken into consideration (*impact*) by keeping them involved in the Decision-making and Implementation phases. Last but not least, citizens should be allowed to give feedback on the whole process through the Evaluation phase.





European Citizen Action Service
77, Avenue de la Toison d'Or
B-1060 Brussels, Belgium
+32 (0) 2 548 04 90
info@ecas.org
www.ecas.org