

Co-creation

A quick overview about
co-creation in public
policy

Purpose

This overview was made with policymakers and local government in mind.

It looks at some key features of co-creation as a way to come up with new and useful ideas and co-design new policies for the Wellbeing Economy

Co-creation is one among different modes of stakeholder engagement in public policy



**Information –
Explain**



**Deliberation –
Debate**



**Co-creation –
Work Together**

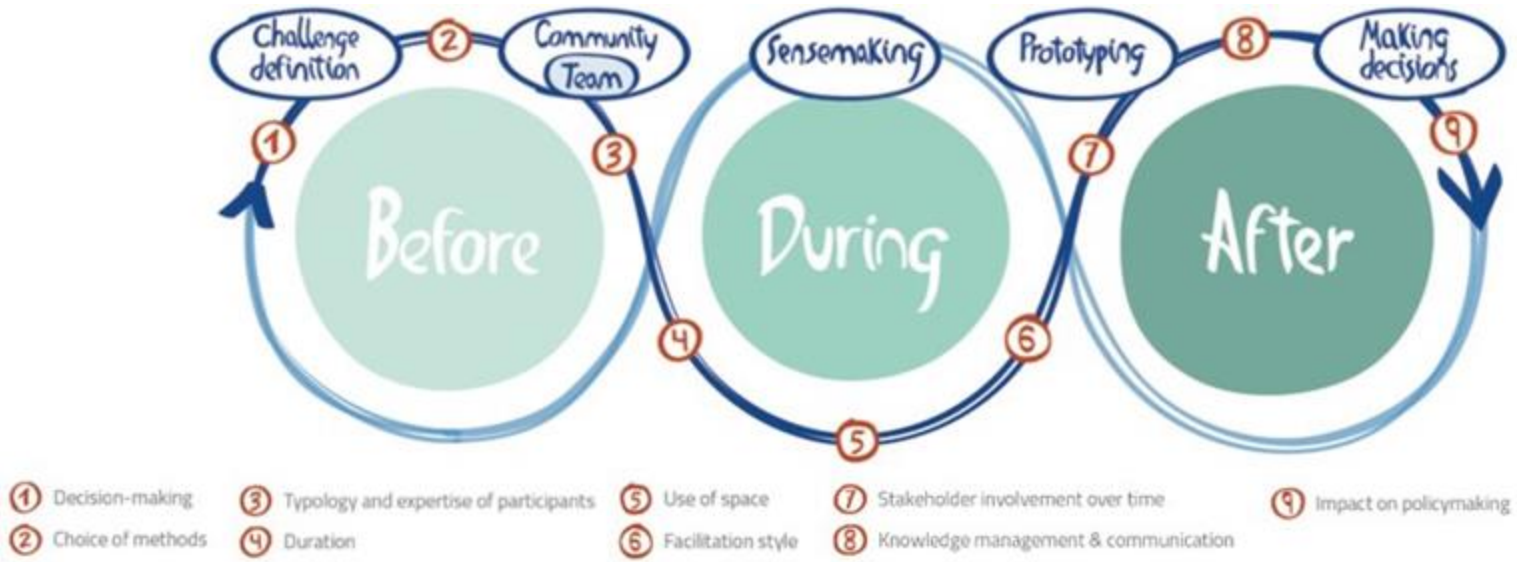
Why Co-Creation?

- Give different groups a place for **meaningful participation**
- Bring **diversity** to complex challenges that cannot be solved alone
- Promote **creativity** and get innovative and relevant ideas
- Debate on **eye level** and recognise that expertise comes in many forms
- Increase people's **trust** in government
- Creating **ownership** among participants
- Develop **visual results**

What does it
look and feel
like?



A quick overview about co-creation in public policy



Source: [JRC Co-creation for Policy Toolbox](#)

Dealing with conflict

Co-creation process understands conflict and crises not as a threat but as an **opportunity to find new solutions** that overcome positional conflicts and foster innovation

Innovation happens when previously not combined elements are put together, and we achieve to overcome differences

Exercise 1 (annex) offers practical conflict-resolution ideas

Co-creation follows a “discomfortable” pattern

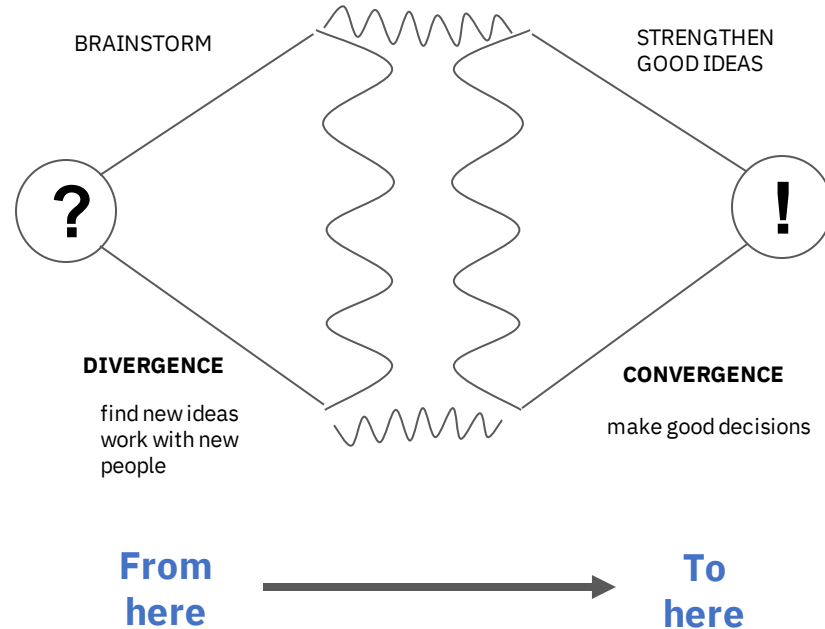
Divergent thinking

generating alternatives

free-for-all open
discussion

gathering diverse
points of view

unpacking the logic of
a problem



Convergent thinking

evaluating
alternatives

summarizing key points

sorting ideas into
categories

arriving at general
conclusions

Based on: Sam Kaner, Lenny Lind et. al. (2014)'s 'diamond of participation'

Power Imbalances

Co-creation process and purposes face risks with regard to power that can undermine its outcomes

- **polarised conflict** to an extent that it is impossible to navigate differences
- process becomes co-opted and misused for **vested interests**
- powerful people become **even more powerful** or **status quo reinforced**
- **unaddressed power relations** sideline the process
- people **don't appear** in the process

Addressing Power Imbalances

Check also exercise
3 (annex)

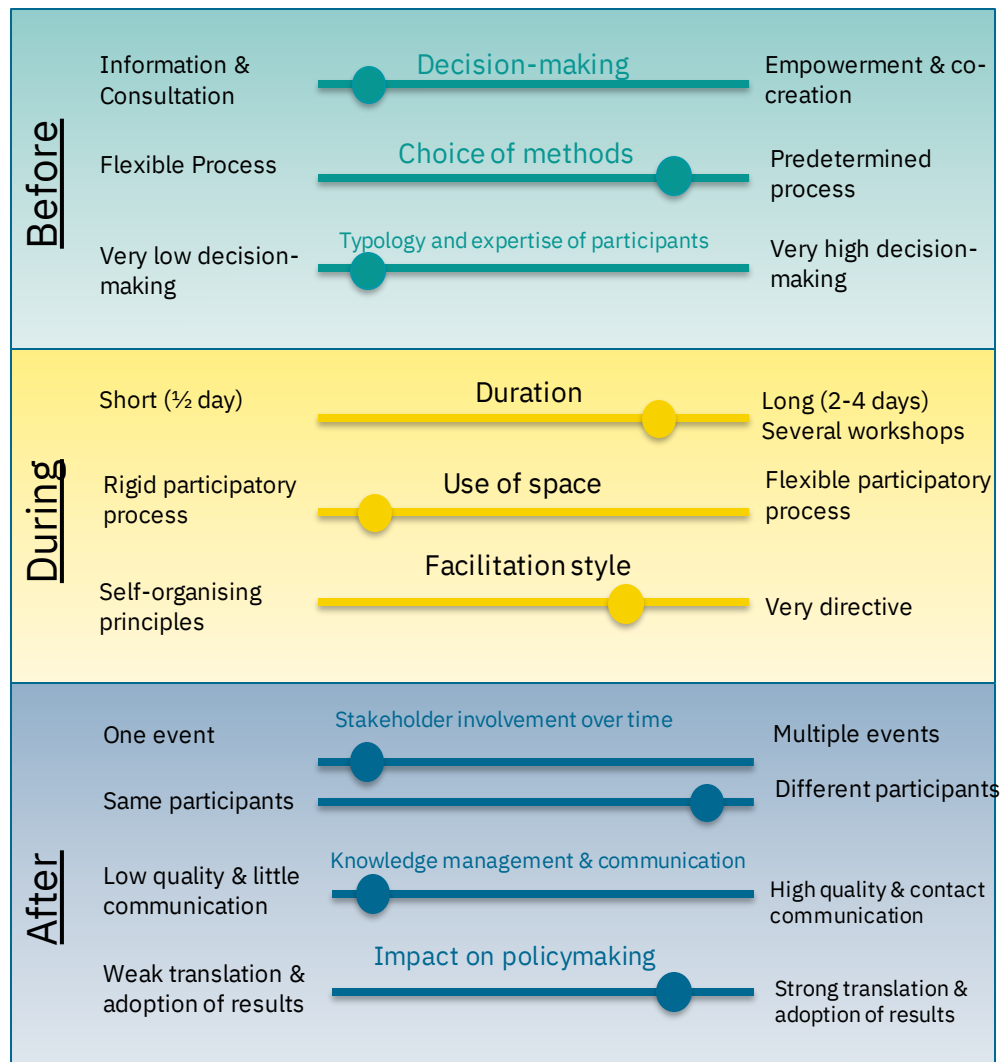
Here are some ideas to deal with power risks

- **reframing problems** so they are shared
- pursuing solutions and institutions rather than generating knowledge
- creation of a **safe space**
- getting buy-in from the leadership
- prepare for people that will circumvent the process using their personal relationships
- remember **shared concern to build trust**
- **experienced facilitation**, given the high potential for conflicts among identities and interests
- tracking process results is critical to **foster ongoing engagement**
- **shift power** away from powerful actors and towards marginalized actors
- include existing institutional roots or multi-scalar networks

First steps to organise your co-creative process

This is a framework for self-assessment when structuring co-creation processes.

It is based on a set of criteria that can be scaled up or down, with each variable having an effect on the others as a whole



First steps to organise your co-creative event

<u>Step</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Guiding questions</u>
1	Name	<p>Give a name that allows participants to have an idea of what the event is about</p> <p>You can revisit this step later</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- what are keywords to the content and activities of the event?
2	Short Description	<p>Provide a quick overview of the workshop's purpose so that participants know what they can expect to do or accomplish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- how can the event be summarised into one or two paragraphs?
3	Objectives	<p>Derive around 3 main objectives you aim to achieve with the event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- what does success look like?- what specific problem or challenge are we trying to solve?- what do we want to create through this event?
4	Activities	<p>List the different activities you plan to have in the event</p> <p>Make sure there is variety around activity's types (e.g. analytical, individual brainstorm, group discussion, icebreaker, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- what remarkable moments could happen?- what kinds of activities should be done?- do the activities capture well the objectives of the event?- do the activities allow for meaningful participation?

First steps to organise your co-creative event

<u>Step</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Guiding Questions</u>
5	Flow of the Event	Create the agenda of your event. To get people's attention and mood up, it is important to have opening activities, breaks, and check-ins between activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- does the event have a good balance of activities?- what are the most important activities?- is there any activity missing?
6	Participants	Create a list of participants based on the objectives you aim to achieve with the event. Make sure you send all necessary information to participants before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- who do we want to be there?- who do we need to be there?- will the event be open to public or to a specific group?
7	Outcomes	Define what are the expected results of the event Think also how you would like to do the communication of your event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- what kind of tangible output do we expect to co-create?- how do we want to communicate the event?
8	Challenges	Identify potential risks while planning and running the event, and brainstorm ideas on how to deal with those	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- what are potential challenges and obstacles?- how can we be prepared to address them?

Reference

This overview is based on the Handbook on Co-creation developed by the Joint Research Center (JRC) of the European Commission and Climate-KIC

[Click here to check the full document](#)

Matti, C., Rissola, G., Martinez, P., Bontoux, L., Joval, J., Spalazzi, A. & Fernandez, D. (2022) Co-creation for policy: Participatory methodologies to structure multi-stakeholder policymaking processes, Matti, C. and Rissola, G. editor(s), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, doi:10.2760/211431

Exercise 1: Dealing with Conflict

In the co-creation process, conflicts between participants based on their existing knowledge, worldview, personal preferences are bound to come up. Here are 3 tactics to try to resolve these.

Zoom-out: There can often be disagreement about how to achieve a certain end. One way to bring the conversation to a more constructive place is by asking guiding questions which zoom away from the point of tension, to a broader level where there is agreement. Re-enter the conversation by bringing in other voices to the exchange to make the discussion even more plural and less polarised. (e.g. disagreement about a policy measure, zooms out to talk about the real world impact/goal, before broadening the conversation with more perspectives)

Diversify: As above, one way to depolarise a conflict is also to intentionally bring additional voices into the discussion. This makes the discussion less conflicting and more nuanced, making navigating an intermediate solution more possible.

Deepen: Another way to resolve conflict is to deepen the conversation away from the specific point of tension to what is underneath the tension. In this situation, using question prompts like: What makes this important for you? (And why?)
What would alternatives need to feel viable for you?

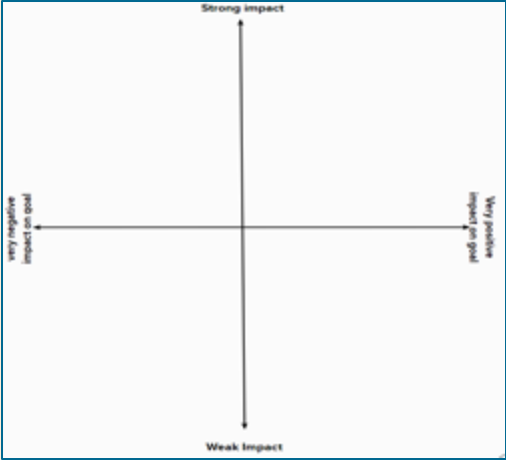
Exercise 2: Example of a session

<u>Time</u>	<u>Label</u>	<u>Methods</u>	<u>Aim</u>	<u>Who</u>
10 min	Arrival & Opening remarks	Welcome participants Presentation	intro into the format, and moderator	moderation
10 min	Short Input	presentation explain relevance of the topic, boundaries, questions for discussion	give background	moderation (define a speaker)
5 min	Q&A	People raise hand; questions of understanding	provide clarity	moderation
5 min	Group Assembly	Color post-its underneath participants' chair; colors find themselves together	Split up into groups	moderation
10 min	Vision Journey I	Explain the task. Allow time for participants to write down ideas on post its Silent Brainstorm: "What would the world look like if wellbeing for people and planet were achieved?"	Gather individual aspiration for the vision we are targeting	Participants

Exercise 2: Example of a session

<u>Time</u>	<u>Label</u>	<u>Methods</u>	<u>Aim</u>	<u>Who</u>
20 min	Vision Journey II	In the groups: everyone presents themselves and then their post-its, quick discussion	Share aspirations for what achieving the goal means for participants	Participants
5 mins	Explainer	<p>Introduce new task. We want to map crucial factors that enable or hinder the achievement of the goal</p> <p>Why: to create a shared understanding of the context we navigate in</p>	Explain next task	Moderation
5 min	Enablers & Drivers I	<p>Silent brainstorm of 5 most relevant ideas.</p> <p>Guiding question: "What are the crucial factors influencing the prospects of achieving wellbeing for people and planet in our community?"</p>	Gather ideas on what is important	Participants

Exercise 2: Example of a session

<u>Time</u>	<u>Label</u>	<u>Methods</u>	<u>Aim</u>	<u>Who</u>
5 min	Enablers & Drivers II	<p>Silently, everyone puts their ideas on a grid:</p> <p>vertical axis: level of strength</p> <p>horizontal axis: direction of effect</p> 	Share ideas on what is important	Participants
20 min	Enablers & Drivers III	<p>Discussion among the small groups</p> <p>Guiding questions: Does anyone have questions on an idea? does anyone think a factor deserves a very different assessment and why? What are the three most important factors?</p>	Discuss ideas on what is important	Participants

Exercise 2: Example of a session

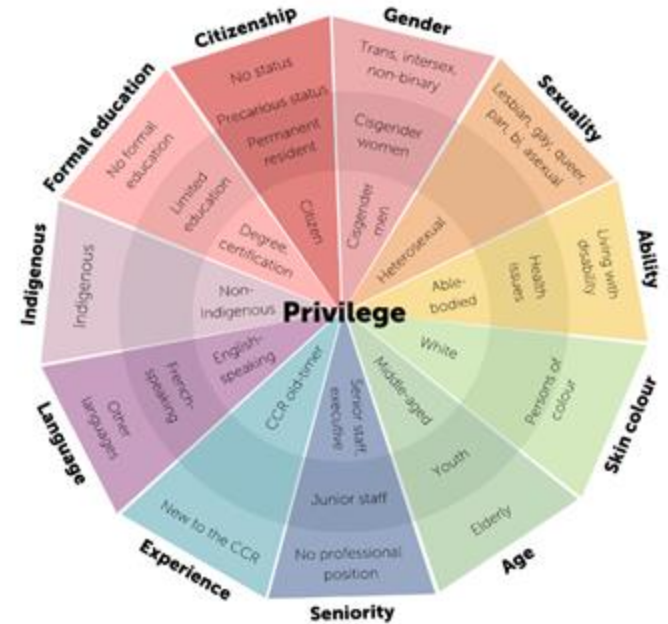
<u>Time</u>	<u>Label</u>	<u>Methods</u>	<u>Aim</u>	<u>Who</u>
20 min	Convergence	Discussion among the entire group Each group presents what they have. Agree on what are the most powerful and positive factors.	Discuss ideas on what is important and create consensus	Participants & Moderation
5 min	Closing remarks	Highlight what the group achieved, and how this will be taken forward.	Closing	Moderation

Exercise 3: Creating an inclusive session

Privilege mapping exercise:

Begin the session with everyone identifying independently what positions of power and privilege they have, and how this influences their perspective. (keep this to themselves)

Share in a circle a commitment from each participant how they will turn up in the session.



Source: [Canadian Council for Refugees](#)