

# Report and results

*Phase 1 - Citizens' consultation Laakkwartier on climate change – 7 and 9 June*

## Context

The first two meetings of the Citizens Consultation in Laakkwartier on climate change took place on 7 and 9 June. Together, these two meetings represent phase 1 of the Citizens Consultation where participants jointly define the topics for phase 2 of the Citizens Consultation.

A total of 75 inhabitants of the Laakkwartier took part in the Citizens Consultation phase 1. Ninety inhabitants were selected for the Citizens Consultation phase 1 by weighted selection based on gender, age and living situation (private/social rental or owner-occupied house). [Visit the website for more information on the context of the Citizens Consultation.](#)

Both meetings took place from 5 PM to 9 PM at the Trefpunt Laakhage in The Hague. The programme started with a short welcome speech, followed by a dinner in smaller groups. The dinner allowed the participants to get to know each other better.

## Presentations

The programme continued with a speech by the host Bram Heijkers about the Citizens Consultation process. He also explained that an online survey was available for the inhabitants of the Laakkwartier who had not been selected to provide their input for the Citizens Consultation. [The results of this survey are available here on the website.](#) The Citizens Consultation can decide if it takes these inputs into account in its advice.

Then Harmen de Vrede (energy transition policy project manager at the municipality of The Hague) gave a presentation about climate change in general and what the municipality does to counter it. [The presentation on the process as well as on climate change is available here on the website.](#)

## Participants' questions

After the presentation, the audience had several questions and remarks. These questions and answers, as well as the questions asked by the respondents in the forms, [are listed on the website.](#)

Some of the questions included the following.

**Question:** What is the budget of the municipality?

**Answer:** There is no reserved budget for the time being to implement the actions coming from the advice of the Citizens Consultation. In part this is because the municipality does not know the ideas that will arise from the Citizens Consultation in advance. This makes it difficult to attribute a budget. If advice is shared soon, specify exactly what you expect from the municipality. Should there be money? And for what purpose? The municipality will ultimately take the decisions concerning the budget. They define which budget shall be used for which project.

**Question:** Countering climate change and dealing with the consequences of climate change are two different things. Which topic shall be addressed during these meetings?

**Answer:** There shall be no single definition. This shall be up to the participants of the Citizen Consultation to define its own definition.

**Question:** To what extent does the municipality of The Hague expect problems with connecting solar energy to the electricity grid? More precisely, that the electricity network will be overloaded?

**Answer:** We expect this problem and it already exists. This is the reason that the municipality is having a lot of discussions with the grid operator Stedin. They are jointly trying to ensure that if people acquire solar panels, the energy generated can also be used.

**Question:** Why don't you make sure that the whole of The Hague has the same clean sustainable energy?

**Answer:** Because not every district and every residence is suitable for the same sustainable energy source. We need to look for different energy sources that can be connected to the specific characteristics of the different districts and residences.

**Question:** As a municipality, you achieve the most by making sure that all houses are well insulated. Good insulation decreases the demand for energy. Insulation is thus more important than clean energy.

**Answer:** That is true. This could be a good piece of advice for the Citizen Consultation to give to the municipality.

## Groups in discussion

After the presentations, the participants were divided into groups of 5 to 6 people to discuss the following questions amongst themselves.

- If you see and hear these measures, where do you see the opportunities?
- Where do you feel resistance? What are you worried about?
- What could you do yourself?
- What do you expect from the authorities?
- On which topics should the Citizens Consultation advise the Municipal Council?

After the debate, each participant filled in his or her own form with answers to the following questions.

- What are your concerns?
- Which questions do you have?
- Do you have any ideas you would like to share?
- On which topics should the Citizens Consultation advise the municipality?
- What else do you want to say?
- Do you want to participate in phase 2?

After that, one participant of each group explained the main thrust of the discussions at his or her table to the rest of the audience, and what they agreed or disagreed on. Then they put their group's forms in the ideas box. Some of the themes that emerged from the various groups included the following.

- Individuals, the municipality and the national authorities bear joint responsibility. But who is responsible for what? To what extent is personal responsibility and to what extent municipality responsibility?
- Making housing more sustainable through financing (subsidies) and the good provision of information (central information counter).
- There is a lot of rubbish in Laakkwartier. How can we improve this situation?
- There is also a difference between owned and rented housing. Here, the different interests, needs and problems play significant roles. Rented housing could, for instance,

be badly maintained by landlords. A solution could be to make it obligatory for landlords to insulate their properties as a condition for rental.

- Choosing to make an area more sustainable (more cycle lanes and more green areas for example) hinders other groups in the neighbourhood (car drivers for example). How can you balance the different interests?
- How can we finance the energy transition fairly? How can energy remain affordable for everyone? Could we start with collective financing for example, as we do with health insurance, or subsidies according to financial capacity.
- Stimulate sustainable, affordable and accessible transport, such as public transport and cycling.
- Stimulate sustainable behaviour through subsidies, rewards, awareness and information. For example, eating less meat and recycling products.
- Make sure schools teach sustainability. Start by informing children and young people well, so that they can start taking action from childhood.
- The authorities must adopt and enforce long-term policies.
- The municipality can do more to make business and industry more sustainable.
- Laak is a diverse district. The district houses many migrant workers and is overpopulated. How do we reach everyone? How do we improve social cohesion in the district and enable everyone to be part of the energy transition? And how do we restore the mistrust of the inhabitants towards the authorities?
- Laakkwartier lags behind the rest of the municipality in certain areas. This could increase as a consequence of climate change. How can we overcome it?
- How can we deal with heat stress as a consequence of climate change?

## Topics for the phase 2

As mentioned previously, all participants filled in a form containing topics, concerns, questions and ideas. These forms have provided a tremendous input. The rough uncategorised (anonimised) outcomes of the forms are [available on the website](#).

The organisation has divided this input into 5 topics. These 5 topics include the ideas, concerns and questions divided into a number of subjects. The overview of the 5 topics and the subjects of each topic can be consulted [on the website here](#). The overview is a summary of the answers that are filled in. To create clarity and avoid repetition, not all answers are presented word for word. We hope that these topics are recognisable for you as a participant.

Participants will receive a short list of questions by email in which they can select the topics they want the Citizen Consultation to go into in depth. These topics will be the subjects of presentations by experts in the next meeting.

## Moving to phase 2 with 30 participants

The respondents could indicate on the form if they wished to go to phase 2 of the Citizens Consultation. In the end, 60 participants answered positively. To reach a group of 30 participants, an additional selection was done based on gender, age and living situation. These participants were invited to participate in phase 2 of the Citizen Consultation. They will eventually come to a joint advice that will be submitted to the Municipal Council.

During the process, the rest of the participants of phase 1 will be kept informed about the developments of phase 2 of the citizen consultation.