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Civitas Forum  
27 – 29 September  
Malmö  
Fabian Van De Velde,  
Gent City Council



# Participative Communication Policy: The Gent example



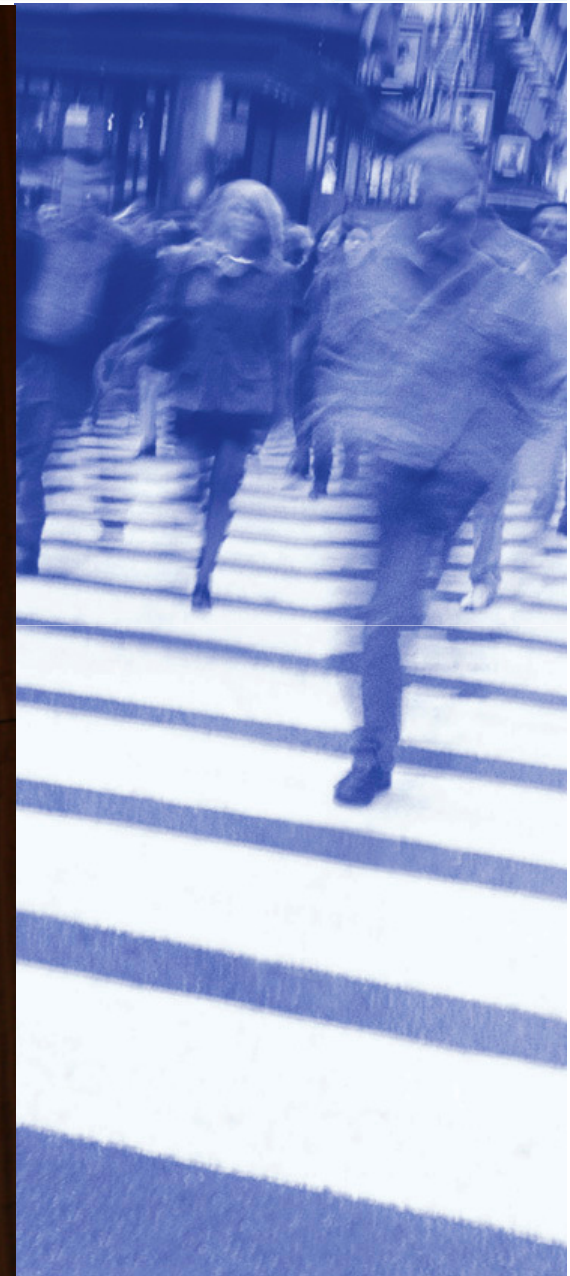
# Traditional Hearing

## Compensatie voor zelfstandigen bij hinder

18/09/2007

Voorwaarden

1. Onderneming  
a. minder dan 10 personen werkzaam  
b. omzet of dienstverlening max. € 2.000.000  
c. geen andere beroepsinkomsten
2. Inrichting ondervindt hinder
3. Gemeente heeft hinder bevestigd
4. Minstens 14 kalenderdagen gesloten
5. Geen andere beroepsinkomsten
6. Erkenning door Participatiefonds als "gehinderde inrichting"
7. Goedkeuring door Participatiefonds van inkomenscompensatievergoeding



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# Method

Several speakers (politicians, technicians, civil servants) give information; one at a time.

The citizens listen to the speaker(s)

A moderator organizes a two-way dialogue between public and speaker



# Strengths

Underlines the importance of a project, investment or redevelopment and the formal commitment to it, of its main partners

Good formal instrument as a first means of informing the public





# Weaknesses

All interested citizens have to be there at the same time  
(e.g. shopkeepers and retailers can not attend because of fixed starting hour)

One person with malicious intentions can have an influence on the audience: bad atmosphere

Favours the citizens who are used to speaking in public

Emphasis on one-way communication (from technicians, politicians to the audience)

No possibility for the citizen of explaining his personal situation



# Soundboard Group

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CiViTAS



Forum 27 – 29 September 2010 Malmö



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23/04/2008 - 7



# Soundboard Group

2004 : contract

Include ALL stakeholders

not only the active “screamers”

Professional and independent  
moderation





## Soundboardgroup: first evaluation

Dialogue/discussion/  
conflict handling

Respect

No formal decisions

Informal influence

Interaction changes community  
life

Interaction changes the project  
itself



# Information Market





# Method

A general powerpoint presentation (with or without voice-over) is shown to the public

The presentation can be watched the whole evening/afternoon

Projectpartners have stands where interested citizens can discuss the plans/the project



Every project partner  
brings his/her own  
information,  
illustrations

Alderman or mayor  
are present during  
part of the  
evening/afternoon





# Strengths

Neutralizes opponents by splendid isolation  
(one-on-one): no impact on general  
atmosphere

Everybody can discuss with a technician or  
politician his personal situation and come to  
an agreement

Easily accessible

Repetitive element of the presentation  
enhances knowledge

Organizer is in control of the information



# Strengths

The public can choose out of a wide range of information present

Two-way communication is guaranteed

One-on-one relation favours those people not used to speaking for large audiences

Direct contact between politicians and civilians reduces the gap between civil society and decision makers





# Weaknesses

Preparation is very labour intensive. A good powerpoint presentation with voice-over takes a lot of time

The evening itself: a lot of technicians and civil servants needed to obtain a good result: between 15 and 20 people present

Organization: you need a good venue to combine the stands and the powerpoint





# Dialogue Café





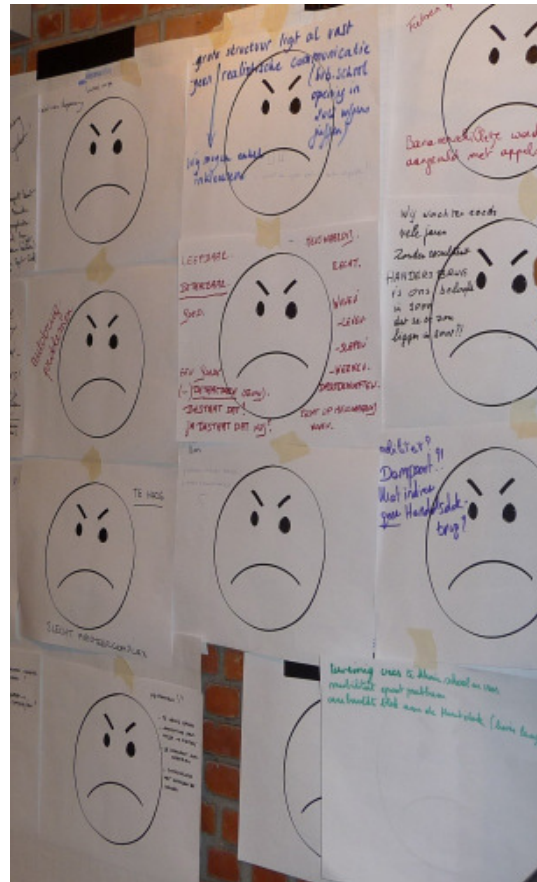
# Method

A general oral introduction  
prefaces the method of  
the dialogue café

A powerpoint (preferably with voice-over) makes sure that all participants dispose of the same information

People are gathered in groups of 5 to 6 per table (a total of 150 people) One person Per table is appointed as reporter

An "emo round" with smileys: what do you like/ dislike in the presentation assesses the mood of the audience



# Method

The first question correlated to the presentation provokes discussion at every table

Technicians, politicians and civil servants join the groups to offer assistance where necessary

Every reporter presents the ideas of his/her group

After the first question everybody swithes table

This is repeated two times (three questions in total)

At the end the results are presented in plenum

The dialogue café is ended by a reception





# Strengths

People are very enthusiastic

Everybody present gets the opportunity to give his opinion

Relaxed atmosphere with motivated self-conscious citizens

All remarks are written down: this is a mine of information for the political and administrative people



# Weaknesses

Preparation is very labour intensive. A good powerpoint presentation with voice-over takes a lot of time

You need to work with registrations: this means that you have to limit the number of participants

The evening itself: a lot of technicians and civil servants needed to obtain a good result: between 15 and 20 people present

Organization: you need a good, flexible venue to accomodate the people





# Thank you!

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