II.
Citizens Jury

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CITIZENS JURY IN KAPOSVÁR

Introduction

The Citizens Jury is one of the most frequently used deliberative techniques that aims at involving stakeholders in the decision-making processes through creating a space where members of the community can debate matters, voice their opinions and make informed decisions. The method was developed and widely used in old democracies where participation and citizens' responsibility are well-established concepts. The aim of this article is to present the theoretical base and the characteristics of the method and to discover the possibilities of its application in Hungary as a relatively new democracy. Current analyses of democratic procedures echo the problems of alignment of citizens, lack of civil participation and, as a result, weakening legitimation. The problem is evident: the process designed to promote fair and at the same time effective decision-making fails in many senses. Consequentially, more and more citizens, decision-makers and researchers alike seem to be disillusioned. As a result, there is an abundance of attempts ranging from democratic theories to applied decision-making designs aimed at solving the problems.

Our aim is to offer a complex framework: we present the experiences of an applied project placed in a theoretical nest. First, we introduce the theoretical work of Habermas as a possible way of interpreting the democratic crisis and present his highly theoretical solutions. The next section can be regarded as a certain interpretation and application: we introduce deliberative methods designed as a possible way of applying the Habermas approach to channel information from the center to the periphery and vice-versa. In line with Habermas' arguments, the emphasis of our research was on the process-design. While deliberative processes are far from being institutionalized in modern politics, the spread of their use allows insight on their functioning. In order to give a balanced view of deliberation, we also present the main criticisms of the method and evaluate its advantages and disadvantages.

With applied methods, the true test comes with on-site experience. The aim of the Kaposvár research was to test the Citizens Jury method in a small region of Hungary to see how citizens respond to the opportunity of being involved in a participative process. The Citizens Jury focused on a relevant local topic; the relationship between education and unemployment in the region. While the process brought important findings to the surface on the policy side, the aim of this article is to present the main methodological findings concerning difficulties in research design and implementation. Through sharing the experiences of our research we hope to contribute to the further development of the method and promote its better use in the Hungarian political and social arena.

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THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Complexity and participation

In the following section we discuss how Habermas attempts to deal with the tension between the models of representative and direct (that is, participatory) democracy[3]. This intellectual endeavor can also be applied as a theoretical model for participatory mechanisms which aim at supplementing and helping decision-making in formal political arenas. As the reader shall see in this section, according to Habermas, the essential building blocks of a working democratic society are communicative platforms which thematize, amplify and channel the ideas, concerns and expectations of the political community. We argue that citizens' juries and other deliberative techniques could serve this role and they are designed and implemented to do so.

One of Habermas' main concerns is how to maintain the possibility of direct participation in complex and pluralist societies. He suggests that the main problem with the direct democratic model is that it is too idealistic and that it makes the democratic process dependent on the virtues of citizens. In this model all members of a political community have to meet from time to time to discuss, debate and thereby give legitimacy to decisions and laws that have bearing on them. In line with this, only when everyone who is affected by those decisions agrees can the decision be considered legitimate.

In contrast, the representative democratic model interprets the process of politics as mere aggregation of pre-given interests, ignoring the question of legitimacy. However, this is also problematic, argues Habermas, since legitimacy cannot be administratively produced but can only emerge discursively from the everyday life contexts of the members of a political community. In order to be able to encompass both sides of the equation, Habermas introduces a distinction between two kinds of political power: communicative and administrative. According to his ideas, political processes should be analyzed not just within an action-theoretical but also within a systems-theoretical perspective,

On the one hand, the action-theoretical perspective, related to the direct democratic ideal, would consist of discussion about the role of citizens in influencing the political system via opinion- and will-formation. Communicative power emerges from the public sphere where discussions take place about everyday life issues connected to the wider socio-political context.

On the other hand, the system-based perspective, which can be related to the representative democratic account, would show the projects that legislation, judiciary and administration are dealing with every day. From this perspective we can see the self-propelling nature of political processes in complex societies in which citizens only take part by casting their votes which, in turn, serve as a basis for the aggregation of their preferences reflecting their interests. Therefore, the tension is between the systematic, self-maintaining character of our political-systems, on the one hand, and the question of meaningful participation, on the other (Habermas, 1997).

At the same time, these two contrasting approaches form a part of his theory of procedural democracy with a view to answering the question of how the complexity of modern societies can be reconciled with participation and the ideal of a self-governing community.

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3   He uses the terms of liberal and republican thought. For simplifying the text, we will instead use the notions representative and participatory democratic models respectively.

Public as warning system

To bring together the different notions of political process, Habermas argues that the democratic process must be connected to the peripheral network of political public sphere in pursuing legitimacy (Habermas, 1996). What does this claim mean? According to his theory, deliberative politics extend beyond the formally-organized political system to a vast communication network which is called the public sphere. This model of deliberative politics tries to grasp the process of opinion- and will-formation as a "two-track" process in which there is a division of labor between "weak" publics and "strong" publics (Baynes, 2002). The "weak" publics refers to the informally organized public sphere ranging from private associations to the mass media while the "strong" publics are comprised of the parliamentary bodies and other formally organized institutions of the political system.

In this division of labor the role of the "weak" publics is not to take over the steering functions of the administrative organs of the "strong" public but to bear the responsibility of identifying and interpreting social problems in a way that is translatable into the language of formally-organized political institutions. As Habermas puts it:

> "To this extent, the public sphere is a warning system with sensors that, though, unspecialized, are sensitive throughout society. From the perspective of democratic theory, the public sphere must, in addition, amplify the pressure of problems, that is, not only detect and identify problems but also convincingly and influentially thematize them in such a way that they are taken up and dealt with by parliamentary complexes. Besides the 'signal' function, there must be an effective thematization. The capacity of the public sphere to solve problems on its own is limited (Habermas , 1996, p. 352)."

The central concept here therefore is problematization which means that the dispersed networks of the public sphere are able to perceive, discuss and redefine problems in a new way. This is not possible for administrative complexes with their logic-oriented operation towards effectiveness due to the fact that:

> "…institutions that decide under time pressure have a weak capacity to detect latent problems (…) and they have little initiative to stage newly emergent problems in a successful and dramatic manner (p. 358)."

The sluice-gate model

The model in which all these different aspects of the modern political life could be integrated is called 'sluice-gate' and introduces a more fine-grained analysis of the relationship between "center" and "periphery" publics which can be identified with the "weak and strong" publics respectively. The processes of communication and decision-making thus lie along a center-periphery axis; they are structured by a system of "sluices". The idea of discourse democracy is that for decisions made at the core to be legitimate, they must be steered by communication flows that start at the periphery and pass through the sluices of democratic and constitutional procedures situated at the entrance to the parliamentary complex or to the courts (Habermas, 1996, pp. 354-359).

For the most part, operations in the core area of the political system proceed according to routines following established patterns (ibid. p. 357). The decisive question in the model is whether the periphery is capable of discovering, identifying and thematizing in a way that can

disturb and, in turn, change the normal patterns and procedures of operation of the institutions at the core (Némedi, 2004). This may happen when the perception of problems and problem situations has taken a conflictual turn and controversies in the broader public sphere primarily ignite around the normative aspects of the problems most at issue.

To sum up, Habermas tries to solve the problem of participation by locating popular sovereignty in the diffuse network of public spheres.[4] The public distribution of information and perspectives can be viewed as harboring a kind of communicative rationality, but not in the idealized sense that requires complete understanding on the part of each citizen.

The complexity of public spheres suggests a plethora of loosely connected and fragmented discourses in which various groups of individuals achieve partial insights into issues through discussion (Regh&Bohmann, 2002, p. 40). This account presents public reason as an emergent property of a diffused network of discourses. The programmatic message of this theory is therefore to foster processes of communication and to design institutional procedures that at least make it more likely that the political decisions "will be based on reasons that would contrafactually correspond to those emerging from a discourse both open to all and free of coercion" (idem, p. 41).

According to Habermas' theory, in the course of these deliberations taking place in the public spheres, different problems can be identified and solutions can be proposed. The outcome of these deliberations is that they are channeled into the political center which needs these deliberations to justify its decisions, thereby gaining legitimacy for them. The deliberative citizen can and should, therefore, generate communicative power linked to problematic issues which can counter-balance the self-maintaining character of administrative power. This way, the center of his theory is not the actual relationship between citizens and the administration but the relation between public spheres and the administration. So the main question is how mechanisms and institutions that can affectively channel in opinions generated in the public spheres can be established.

As we can see, the bottom line here is to find social mechanisms that can help channeling in hopes, expectations, concerns and opinions of the citizenry. Deliberative techniques, such as Citizens Jury, may be able to play this role[5] and act as in-between communicative platforms between 'periphery and centers'; that is, between citizens and decision-making bodies. In the next section we will briefly describe the characteristics of deliberative techniques in general before discussing the method of Citizens Jury in depth.

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4   For Habermas the preconditions of the emergence of public reason are the 'ideal speak conditions' which basically refer to a set of conditions such as unbiased communication, freedom from coercion, the openness of the debate to all those who are affected and so on. A decision can only be rational if all those who are affected would agree with it under 'ideal speak conditions'. This is the principle of universalization.

    These ideal conditions are contrafactual in the sense that they cannot be found in real life. However, according to Habermas they are anchored in language and can be partly found in the lifeworld, to put it more clearly, in the communicative practices of public sphere.

5   This can only be true if certain minimum requirements are fulfilled in the course of the institutionalisation of these deliberative processes. For further details see Király 2007

CHARACTERISTICS OF DELIBERATIVE PROCESSES

Forms of deliberative processes

As Habermas and other scholars argue, democracy in itself, without spaces for citizen participation and deliberation, is an empty concept without any real substance. This approach to politics, and the emerging need in democratic societies to supplement formal political representation, is often the basis for a growing number of experiments and initiatives that call for new arenas and platforms for citizens to be engaged in influencing decisions that affect their lives. Kasteren & McKenna summarize the characteristics of the deliberative approach as follows:

> *"The community engagement approach eschews a technocratic (top-down) approach in favor of a participatory (bottom-up) model. This means that the normal adversarial approach to contentious political questions (e.g. waste management) is supplemented by a deliberative consensual approach where citizens are involved in decision-making (participatory democracy). This participatory democratic model has three fundamental features. It operates separately from the normal government processes by providing »forums for stakeholder involvement and the development of a stakeholder voice«. Secondly, it empowers people to change norms and standards for expected behavior in a community. Thirdly, it strengthens community ties by building trust in and participation with local government to solve community problems (Kasteren& McKenna 2006)."*

As this quote highlights, these arrangements aim to involve citizens in the deliberation of policies and their practical implementation through the inclusion of a variety of social actors in consultation, planning and decision-making (Pimbert&Wakeford, 2001, p. 25-26). Apart from their involvement dimension, there are also long-term effects of such arrangements, which this article discusses below.

Deliberative techniques have several forms and mechanisms which differ from each other in terms of the level of decision-making, the set-up, the topic and the actors involved. Among other processes, the family of deliberative arrangements includes citizens' juries, citizen's panels, committees, consensus conferences, scenario workshops, deliberative polling, focus groups, stakeholder mapping, public meetings, participatory rural appraisal, and visioning exercises. Several papers have been published to introduce the specific features of various mechanisms (Andersen&Jaeger 1999; Danish Board of Technology, 2006; Europta, 2000). This paper cannot do justice to all the different methods mentioned aimed at involvement and policy shaping. However, it is worth mentioning that the most wide-spread and the most widely-used methods are consensus conferences and Citizens Juries. In this paper we will discuss the latter in depth.

Dimensions of deliberative processes

Generally speaking, all deliberative mechanisms are comprised of three different – mutually complementary – aspects. These three are research, educational and political dimensions. It can also be said that the various participatory methods differ from each other because of the different emphasis they put on these different dimensions, respectively. Transcending the social science research and the educational aspects, these methods become political due to the fact that citizens can also develop recommendations that, in turn, are taken into consideration by their political representatives.[6]

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6 And therein lays a shortcoming of the method - as what is there to ensure that politicians will take citizens' recommendations into account? However, if it does not happen, the processes actually remain only expensive and complicated 'opinion polls'.

These mechanisms are social science research tools in the sense that they are meant to reveal opinions, hopes and fears about a given subject. They achieve these aims by helping participants to get informed about the topic concerned. They grant access to the necessary knowledge which is a precondition for laymen to form their own opinions on complex issues. However, at the end of this learning, negotiation and deliberative process participants develop recommendations or vote on the issue at hand. The results are then submitted to the decision-makers concerned with the particular issue. In this manner, they participate in shaping public policy, as they also 'make their voice heard' in those political arenas which are normally inaccessible to the man in the street. Thus, in this sense, deliberative methods simultaneously have a research, an educational as well as a political dimension.

Features and aims of deliberative processes

Pimbert & Wakeford (2001) use a different kind of description as far as deliberative arrangements are concerned. They argue that the following features are part of every form and technique associated with deliberative processes. As the reader shall see, this description focuses more on the qualities of the process of deliberation; that is, on the dimensions of language use, interaction and value and preference transformation.

Box 1
Some features of deliberative
and inclusionary processes (DIPs)

1. Deliberation is defined as 'careful consideration' or 'the discussion of reasons for and against'. Deliberation is a common, if not inherent, component of all decision-making and democratic societies.
2. Inclusion is the action of involving others and an inclusionary decision-making process is based on the active involvement of multiple social actors and usually emphasises the participation of previously-excluded citizens.
3. Social interaction occurs. This normally incorporates face-to-face meetings between those involved.
4. There is a dependence on language through discussion and debate. This is usually in the form of verbal and visual constructions rather than written text.
5. A deliberative process assumes that, at least initially, there are different positions held by participants and that these views should be respected.
6. DIPs are designed to enable participants to evaluate and re-evaluate their positions in the light of different perspectives and new evidence.
7. The form of negotiation is often seen as containing value over and above the 'quality' of the decisions that emerge. Participants share a commitment to the resolution of problems through public reasoning and dialogue aimed at mutual understanding, even if consensus is not being sought
8. There is the recognition that, while the goal is usually to reach decisions or at least positions upon which decisions can subsequently be taken, an unhurried, reflective and reasonably open-ended discussion is required.

(PIMBERT & WAKEFORD, 2001, p. 23)

Through this list, one gets the impression of deliberation as a social and communicative process with a strong emphasis on involvement of otherwise powerless groups of people. Moreover, this list by Pimbert and Wakeford also stresses that deliberation tends to encourage people to re-evaluate their initial positions in the debate by getting to know more about the different perspectives and the different solutions of a social problem. This may be one of the most important aspects of deliberative methods which distinguishes them from a mere argument with fixed positions and value sets attributed to actors. Apart from these features, deliberative processes could also be characterized through their aims. As it can be seen in the box below, apart from the plain fact whether results are taken into account or not by decision-makers, deliberative processes also place a special emphasis on long-term effects such as social learning and governance. The aims of deliberative methods are as follows:

Box 2
Aims of Deliberative Processes

- Facilitating dialogues between citizens, experts and politicians;
- Preparing for decision-making on complex issues and the presentation of citizens' viewpoints;
- Encouraging social learning;
- Enhancing the role of civic society;
- Propagating new citizen models based on political participation and public debate;
- Supporting governance instead of government, which means not one, independent political centre should have the authority to make decisions but rather decisions should result from negotiations between various political actors and stakeholders;
- And last but not least, participatory processes mean feedback for politicians, scientists and experts on whether the direction they are taking is supported by society.

Usually, proponents of deliberative methods also stress the influence that participation has on the people involved. It is claimed that involvement not only makes participants more informed but also strengthens their ties to the political community to which they belong. As Laird puts it, people involved in deliberations on common issues, in turn, become better citizens:

"democracy enables people to become fully developed citizens (Laird 1993, p. 354)."

Moreover, in this respect, apart from citizens, deliberative processes could also be valuable learning environments for politicians, experts and bureaucrats. These groups, if participating, could not only get an idea about what people think about the issue at hand but also find out what are the expectations they would have to meet. So, ideally these processes could be fruitful for every social group involved and not only for the 'citizen participants'.

CITIZENS JURY

Background

As it was mentioned above, Citizens Jury was one of the first deliberative processes available in the 'deliberative methods market'; it is therefore now widely-spread and widely-used throughout the world to help laypeople's involvement in decision- and policy-making. The method was developed by Ned Crosby in 1971 to provide solutions for the special problems of democracy in the United States such as dwindling political participation, the influence of lobbyists on policy-making and the growing mediatization of politics (Jefferson Center, *Wp*). These problems together hinder the participation of ordinary people in deliberating common issues and, in turn, hamper opportunities for concerted action and problem-solving in a political community.

Although the principal aim was to answer questions raised by the problems of a developed society with a long history of democratic institutionalization, like the United States, it is now often used in other cultural contexts such as in developing countries like India and in newly-established democracies such as Russia or in the present case Hungary (Wakeford, 2002). We will discuss below questions related to the 'technology transfer' of this methodology to a different political culture. Moreover, through our case study presented in the next section, we will discuss the actual set-up of a Citizens' Jury and provide an insight into the actual functioning of the process.

The Citizens Jury process

The Citizens Jury (CJ) is a complex, long process taking long days and is thus rather demanding as far as the attention span of the average panel member is concerned. As deliberative processes in general, CJs also aim to provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about an issue, deliberate together and develop well-informed, common-ground solutions to difficult public issues. The main features of CJ are summarized by Crosby (1991, 1996) in Box 3 below.

Box 3
Features of citizens juries

- the topic should be one which serves the general public interest and not sectional interests;
- the jury of 12-24 people is given a specific charge to examine;
- the charge should be clear and concise;
- the process is facilitated;
- the panel is selected either randomly or by use of stratified random sampling;
- selection bases may be demographic, attitudinal or both;
- the panel members are paid;
- information is presented to the panel by witnesses who represent divergent viewpoints;
- the panel members have sufficient time to deliberate on and review all their findings and recommendations;
- thus the panel meets most usually for 2-4 days; and the final report of the jury includes an evaluation of the process by the jurors.

The method is seen as offering a means for the development, articulation and transmission to decision- makers and government of informed, deliberated public views on matters of public policy or interest. CROSBY (1991, 1996)

In order to comply with the above-described standards and expectations, the CJ process was designed to provide a framework for information-flow and debate among stakeholders involved in a decision-making process. The main assumption is that citizens who are involved at some level of the problem need to be introduced to the complex problem to enable informed opinion-forming. Thus a crucial point is to incorporate various sources of information in the process to ensure that citizens can access and process information.

The information-flow is managed through different channels: *first,* a brief summary containing the main facts, definitions and pro/con arguments is handed to the citizens usually before the event itself to allow time for participants to familiarize themselves with the problem. In order to support the Jury's work it is useful to include an explanation of the basic professional terminology, since invited experts are the second source of information. *Second,* during the event the Jury holds so-called "hearings" where experts or interest groups – called *witnesses* in the terminology of the method – offer information about the given issue. The *third* source of information is the knowledge of fellow jurors, since the process includes time for debating the hearings and the emerging issues.

Basically, the process is 'built around' a *panel of non-specialists* who meet for a total of twenty to fifty hours to consider carefully an issue of public significance. Apart from getting informed, the CJ also puts a special emphasis on the debating of arising questions and dilemmas, that is, stresses citizens' deliberation which is facilitated by trained moderators.

The role of the moderators is to attempt to level out differences in communicative competences and the discursive bias of more and less dominant personalities throughout the discussions. It is an objective during the process to create a symmetric communicative situation where everyone can express her- or himself.

The CJ itself takes several days and usually consists of the following phases: in the beginning there is an *orientation process* where selected jurors are introduced to the method as well as to the topic they are going to discuss. As interaction is crucial in deliberation, members of the jury should also get familiar with each other and the moderators to facilitate communication. In the second phase, the *hearings* are conducted when witnesses are asked to inform the jurors about the problem and offer their views on it. At this stage it is essential to leave time for the jurors to ask questions to ensure understanding and to process the information. It is useful to leave time after each witness for the jurors to debate since it enables them to build their own picture of the problem as a community. The third phase of the process allows for *overall discussion* of the topic in order to identify those critical points that jurors want to address in the recommendations. This phase usually involves a revision of the hearings and a debate about the main dilemmas. In the final phase citizens' recommendations are outlined and worded to reflect the jury's suggestions concerning the topic. While the above-mentioned structure can be adapted to local needs or specific requirements, there are three critical components common in all CJs: first, selecting the scope of the debate; second, selecting the witnesses, and third; selecting the jurors. In most cases the scope of the debate is partly determined by the contractor who would like to see a certain topic debated in the community or who would like to involve citizens in a decision-making process. Usually though, further negotiations are needed to specify the exact issues to address that are in line with the main idea of the method. The CJ is not aimed at simply collecting the interests or expectations of the community; the idea is not to produce a "wish list". On the other hand, the Citizens Jury is not the adequate method for rubber stamping a pre-formed decision in the community either. The issues tackled need to address relevant questions in the community, they should be open with different paths to follow with well-structure dilemmas to debate. It is very useful to interpret the issues in the form of questions, which can "charge" the process. The questions need to be well-structured to keep the jurors focused on the topic but they should also

give space for different viewpoints to emerge. Below, in box 4 there are some charges that were used in CJ processes organized by the Jefferson Center.

Box 4
Examples of past Citizens Jury charges

Global Climate Change, 2002
1. What potential impacts of global climate change (positive or negative) are most notable or of most concern?
2. Is it likely or unlikely that global climate change will have significant impacts for humans and/or natural systems?
3. In your opinion, what steps, if any, should be taken to address climate change?

Metro Solid Waste, 2001
1. What are the values, in order of priority, that should be reflected in a solid waste management strategy for the metropolitan area?
2. Given those prioritized values, what is the preferred solid waste management strategy for the metropolitan area?
3. To implement the preferred strategy, what tools should be used and what (if any) actions should be taken by government or others?

(THE JEFFERSON CENTER, 2004, p. 34)

The scope of the debate guides the *selection of witnesses* who are expected to provide background information to citizens and present different sides of the issue. As most citizens have a low level of knowledge about policy-formation and implementation processes it is crucial to provide the basic facts concerning the topic of the deliberation as well as an overview of the mechanism guiding decision-making in the field (for example, in case of infrastructure development facts about planned route as well as information about compliance is needed). In case of complex issues it is useful to include experts who can give a deeper insight to the topic than just mere facts, while still offering an independent view. In order to represent the different interests in the field, advocates are invited to act as witnesses. These advocates are expected to take a stand and present the pros and cons of different viewpoints. In order to have a balanced information-flow all interest groups concerned should be invited to the stand. It is important to note that witnesses are not only expected to present their stance but also to engage in dialogues with the other witnesses in order to ensure participants' understanding and to answer their questions.

The selection of jurors is aimed at forming a small group that reflects the characteristics of the given community based on the assumption that a representative group can model the attitude and the behavior of the community. As far as the representativeness of the panel of jurors is concerned, there are serious doubts whether groups so small can really represent 'either in the political or in the statistical sense of the notion' larger communities, even at a local level with small local communities. On the other hand, the strong point of the jury process is the validity of the opinions formed by the process. As Wakeford puts it:

"The statistical representativeness of most quantitative research arises from the large numbers of people that are surveyed. The concept of a Citizens Jury relies instead on the participatory representativeness of twelve citizens. Because the decision is reached after extensive opportunity for deliberation, the conclusion is arguably of greater validity than when an instantaneous response is obtained from a

thousand un-informed citizens. Unlike opinion polls or focus groups, citizens juries are designed to allow participants to represent their own views directly to policy-makers" (Wakefold 2002, Wp.).

In CJ processes, the most commonly used techniques for selecting participants are random selection or stratified random selection. Depending on the topic of deliberation different variables such as age, gender, education or residence can be used to build the sample. Based on exploratory research, targets for each variable are established and filled through random selection. Even if there are incentives to participate – such as travel reimbursement and compensation – it is essential to have a pool of alternates invited to ensure the optimal construction of the jury. As mentioned before, the representative dimension of the CJ is still widely debated and further challenged by the fact that even the most carefully designed selection process cannot guarantee the formation of a fully representative group. Still, if the group of jurors is heterogeneous enough the emergence of the most important viewpoints and interests can be expected. Jurors can also act as messengers for the community, since they take their experiences home and disseminate their knowledge in the community, which enables wider participation. And even when the CJ itself is closed, the debate and dialogue can remain open in the community.

The design of a successful CJ supposes the contribution and cooperation of many actors: in most cases a core research group is contracted to carry out the project financed by different sponsors – corporate, governments, agencies or NGOs depending on the deliberation itself. The work of the research group is aided by an advisory committee who provide expertise both on the methodological and on the content side of the process. As it was mentioned above, well-trained moderators are needed to guide the work of the Jury. Some parts of the organizing can be outsourced such as operational tasks or the sampling phase. While the CJ as an event takes about 20-40 working hours, the preliminary and follow-up works can take months. While preliminary work is regarded necessary, follow-up work is often restricted to writing up necessary academic or professional reports about the project. However, the concept of the CJ calls for a wider dissemination as the objective of the method is not only to deliver recommendations but also to raise awareness and provide information to the whole community. For the sake of further projects, it is also important to give feedback to participants about the fate of their recommendations to make sure that they understand how the CJ contributed to the community.

What can a Citizens Jury offer?

The previous sections of this paper concentrated on the main features of deliberative processes in general and of the CJ in particular. As we could see in the theoretical part, there are high hopes from this whole approach. Even if deliberative processes are not able to offer a fully-fledged alternative to an established and working political system, that is, the representative model of democracy, they are expected to contribute substantially to 'keeping alive' democratic ideals in highly complex societies. As it has been mentioned above, and as we can see below in Box 4., proponents of deliberative democratic methods stress not only the direct outputs but also the long term effects of such processes. This is in line with what one hears about the advantages of the method of the CJ. So what can a CJ offer? Here we can see a list of 'deliverables' as collected by colleagues at the Jefferson Center.

As we can see, the key concept here in this list is 'learning'. This list of outputs shows that Jefferson Center conceives the method, first and foremost, as a learning process. Nevertheless, this process serves as a *classroom* not only for citizens but also for decision-makers involved and through media for the wider public audience as well. Firstly, panel members learn and get informed during the process about the issue at hand. Secondly, decision-makers and public

officials can learn about the views, values and concerns of both the public and the stakeholders involved in the process. Lastly, CJ can be a driver of social learning since, on the one hand the process can be a focus point for wider social debates – or because, if sufficient media attention is present, it can instigate further social debate on the other.

Box 5.
What a Citizens Jury delivers?

Useful citizen input. Citizens Jury projects generate thoughtful, informed, and constructive citizen input that helps public officials make tough choices.

Common ground solutions to difficult problems. By bringing people together and providing an opportunity for them to learn and deliberate as fellow citizens, a Citizens Jury is able to identify areas of agreement and build common ground solutions to challenging problems.

Learn public's values, concerns, ideas. A Citizens Jury allows decision makers to hear directly from citizens, and to learn about their values, concerns and ideas regarding a particular issue or problem.

Focus media and public attention. The planning and implementation of a Citizens Jury can focus the attention of the media and the public on a particular issue or situation. In addition to traditional media coverage, a dynamic web site can keep people engaged with an issue after the actual Citizens Jury.

Learn what informed citizens want, and why. During the Citizens Jury hearings, and in their open report to decision makers and the public, jurors share their recommendations and the reasons for their conclusions.

Respectful and focused public discussion. Citizens Jury projects are professionally moderated by two facilitators who create a safe, respectful and focused environment. All participants and witnesses are treated with utmost respect. The daily agenda for a Citizens Jury is carefully constructed to allow sufficient time for the jurors to complete their work.

Allow citizens to learn in-depth about a key issue. Members of a Citizens Jury hear from background and advocate witnesses who provide a wealth of information and insight about the issue. Media and web coverage can spread information to everyone.

All sides can present their ideas. A Citizens Jury is an opportunity for people on various sides of an issue to present their ideas to an attentive group of citizens.

(JEFFERSON CENTER, 2004)

Apart from this 'extended classroom' dimension of the method, a few more important characteristics of this list are worth mentioning. One is that it presents 'respectful and focused public discussion' as a result and not as a feature of the process, hence discussion conducted in a proper manner is understood as something which has value in itself. Secondly, it is stated that all sides in a CJ (should) have the opportunity to express their opinions and mark their standpoint in the public debate. This is also presented as an outcome of the process, as something which has value in itself, probably because CJs seek to be microcosms or models of public debates at the social level. Therefore, showing all sides of a complex problem is an essential element of the process as far as social learning is concerned. Thirdly, the claim that CJs can find solutions to complex problems and consensus: common standpoints can arise from the discussion of contentious issues. Probably this is the outcome which extends the method beyond the horizons

of a learning process, may this learning be individual, organization or social. Apart from being a driver for learning at various levels, the possibility to solve complex problems and social dilemmas makes CJs a powerful political tool as well.

Social learning and public discussion of a political matter can also have far-reaching effects on society. If we refer back to Habermas' original idea of bringing the citizens back into the decision-making process, we can say that through creating a forum for participation and opinion-forming, the political arena itself can become more citizen-friendly. An open political debate can thus signal an open environment which could help citizens to rebound with democratic values and processes that have been lost from the characteristic operation of most modern democracies.

Critical voices

While there are certain presumptions the CJ is not fully able to meet, there are also high hopes and expectations attached to the method. However, there are also critical voices raised as far as the process and outcomes of the CJs are concerned. Glasner (Glasner, 2001) and Kasteren & McKenna (Kasteren & McKenna, 2006) both criticizing a particular process draw our attention to the possible drawbacks of the method in general. However, their critiques were based on one project each (i.e. two projects) that they had attended and analyzed (thus their experience may not be enough to allow for generalization), yet, as the reader shall see, certain problems they highlight may present themselves during the organization and implementation of CJs in general. So, this section of the paper will draw on their works and present their arguments briefly.

After following a CJ in the United Kingdom, Kasteren and McKenna voiced a number of concerns regarding whether the project is able to achieve the objectives of deliberative democracy. At the most basic level, they argue, the CJ was not representative of the population concerned. Fourteen to twenty strong groups of citizens can never be representative in a statistical sense. However, even being aware of this constraint, Kasteren and McKenna claim that certain social groups may be over-represented. While in a lot of cases, the management of the project attempts to be painstakingly correct this through the selection process of project participants, at the end of the day, there are 'too many' of a certain social group in the panel or 'not enough' from other social groups. This may be because, as Kasteren and McKenna suggest, pensioners have strong community commitment, or because the unemployed have more free time than the active younger generation or because mothers with small children just simply do not show up due to their children's illnesses, etc.

Secondly, McKenna and Kasteren have serious doubts concerning the degree to which participants actually read and understand the debriefing documents. They emphasized the fact that the information the debriefing documents contained did not really appear in nor was referred to in the jurors' discussions. They pointed out that the jurors, instead of using the knowledge acquired beforehand, "appear[ed] to adopt ideas that were well articulated by not just experts on the day but also other CJ members who appeared knowledgeable and/or were relatively articulate" (op cit, p. 26). Many who have organized a CJ or any other kind of deliberative process may have the same experience about the knowledge level of the citizens before and after sending the debriefing document. However, one also can argue that if this is a common problem, organizers can take this into account and provide extra time for the group to process the information presented in the document together.

The third concern raised by Kasteren and McKenna is whether the CJ as a procedural process can really be called democratic. They highlighted that "the participants' personalities (especially dominance and submission) and the manner in which they resolve differences (dialogical vs.

dialectical assertion) impacted strongly" on the group discussion (op cit, p 26). This power differential seems inherent in communication and cannot be ruled out.

Moreover, discussions in the CJ appear to be quite unfocused in many instances as jurors often tell their own personal narratives or expressions of particular interest instead of focusing on the issue at hand. According to Kasteren and McKenna, there was not much evidence of adopting a forensic approach by calling for opinions supported by evidence. This lack of clarity and consistency during the discussions calls into question the recommendations the citizens develop at the end of the process. Are they really the results of open discussion and debate concentrating on the question concerned? Or are they just a compilation of haphazardly gathered ideas and opinions from the more dominant participants of the group? It is possible that this question cannot be answered in general but only in case of each CJ organized. However, it may worth asking this question in the planning and implementation phase of a CJ, along with the other concerns discussed so far.

Glasner is even more critical as far as the CJ method is concerned. He calls the similarities between the forensics and the CJs (discussed in depth in section 4.g of this paper) the 'rituals of precision', claiming that these similarities are merely strategies of gaining legitimacy. According to him, these procedural requirements are not employed systematically and correctly and thus just serve to decorate a role-play.

Accordingly, Glasner's 'verdict' of the method of the CJ is rather negative. One gets the impression that CJs do not have any emancipatory potential. They cannot help to raise the voices of the unheard in society, but they are - or will become - a tool for masking pre-established power relations. Key actors and powerful organizations, both public and private, can organize juries whenever they want about whatever questions they want to legitimize about themselves and their policy. Using Glasner's own words:

> *"Key actors may establish juries as part of a sophisticated public relations exercise. User involvement becomes a technology of legitimation. It can also become a token in the armoury of more powerful champions (…) translated as 'playing the user card'. This suggests that an important role for juries may be educational and consultative rather than the promotion of active citizenship (Glasner, 2001, p. 44)."*

McKenna and Kasteren are more approving as far as the objective of the method is concerned. They highlighted that, despite their concerns, it is clear from their findings that people were quite happy with the outcomes of the process they followed up and enjoyed the interactions and the discussions. Furthermore, the belief that their recommendations would be taken seriously positively reinforced this sense of satisfaction. Again, this may be true for other CJs as well. Organizers usually report that citizens were very positive about the process at the end and had a strong interest about whether their ideas would be put to use. So, McKenna and Kasteren depict CJs as processes which have their deficiencies but can be improved and are worth improving.

UTILIZING DELIBERATION IN HUNGARY
– THE CASE STUDY OF THE KAPOSVÁR CJ

Deliberative processes like CJs address problems that derive from the very essential nature of representative democracy where the power of decision-making is put in the hands of selected individuals, the representatives. As described above, delegation of power often results in the alienation of individuals from politics and lack of participation and involvement and thus low-quality decisions. The widespread use of deliberative methods implies that deliberation can be implemented in various cultural and social environments. While we believe that the deliberation techniques can be adapted to fit different cultures and communities, the process and its results will be influenced by the framework of implementation. Thus the aim of this section is to discover how deliberation works in Hungary, what are the difficulties and limits of application, how citizens respond to such initiatives and what results they bring to us. The problem is two-sided: on the one hand there can be difficulties in implementing a deliberative process such as the identification of key stakeholders, the low response rate of citizens, etc. On the other hand, there is a need to evaluate the usefulness of the process itself: what role deliberation can play in the Hungarian context, what are its advantages and disadvantages. While we certainly cannot give a definitive answer to all those questions, we hope that through presenting the experiences of organizing a CJ in the region of Kaposvár, Hungary and through evaluating it, we can contribute to the further development of the method and its successful application in Hungary.

In order to put the case study in context, first we will briefly describe the relevant characteristics of Hungarian society. Then we will present the organization process of the Kaposvár CJ, pointing out the crucial points in organization and implementation. Finally, we will make an attempt to evaluate the outcome of the CJ and to point out the strengths and weaknesses of applying the process in Hungary. Throughout the case study we will refer to other deliberative projects in order to place the Hungarian experience in a comparative perspective.

The context of application

Hungary is a relatively new democracy that has been building its democratic structure since the 1989 transition. While the country has completed the stage of democratic transition and entered the phase of early consolidation (Ágh, 2001), it still shows some deficiencies such as a low level of citizen participation and a low level of civil representation. The lack of democratic experience and long-standing traditions of suppression can partly explain the fact that the Hungarian civil life is currently underachieving: it is weak with a small number of NGOs and grass root organizations. Indifference and a sense of futility of action prevails among citizens which can also be explained by so-called "transition-fatigue" resulting from facing extreme economic difficulties after the long-awaited change of regime. The transition itself was not a great push towards participation since its consensual nature implied the dialogue of the old and the new elite bringing to life a rather elite-driven democratic structure where high politics truly float above society. While alienation from high politics is not only a Hungarian characteristic, here it also affects local level politics: due to the strong centralization and to the elite-driven nature of Hungarian politics, national politics tend to dominate local politics as well (Bőhm, 2006). While the concepts of subsidiarity and decentralization seem to gain meaning, their implementation is often lop-sided and thus not very effective. Still it would be wrong to conclude that the average citizen is fully ignorant of politics as the political arena is full of protests and political turbulence fueled both by

the parties and the media. A lack of opportunities for citizen involvement as well as a lack of will to participate is accompanied by a low level of factual political knowledge and at the same time strong opinions about politics. This creates a rather difficult field for deliberation in Hungary.

Making a Citizens Jury happen

Within the framework of the European INTUNE (Integrated and United: a Quest for Citizenship in an Ever Closer Europe) the Empirical Social Research Center at the Corvinus University of Budapest was in charge of organizing a CJ in the region of Kaposvár. The aim of this project was to discover how this deliberative method could be applied in Hungary and how it could tackle regional problems and involve citizens of the area. Due to the fact that Hungary is a rather newborn democracy, the concept of responsible and informed citizenship as well as participatory democracy is not yet rooted. Thus, it was an open question how citizens would react to a deliberative method, whether they could adapt to its rules, take advantage of the opportunity offered and get involved in shaping local policies. Due to this mission, this research project was different from most CJs which are carried out in order to support decision-making processes. Here, the emphasis was on the methodological side, on lessons that could be learned from applying the method.

For selecting the scope of the debate, exploratory research was conducted in the region of Kaposvár. This small region is situated in Central-Western Hungary. It is not qualified as an underprivileged region but it still falls behind the national average in many social-economic indicators among which unemployment seems to be critical. It is especially so as the area is characterized by structural differences in the demand and supply side of the employment market. There are other related problems present such as a brain-drain from the region towards both more developed regions and foreign countries; the dominance of underprivileged minority groups among the unemployed; concentration of job-supply in the center of the region Kaposvár and a high unemployment rate in the agricultural sector with the lack of an educated work force to fuel industry and services. It seems that local educational and employment opportunities are not synchronized. This issue seems to affect many in the region: some have experienced unemployment and lack of a proper education while others worried for their children's future or tried to look for suitable employees for certain positions. As a result the problem of unemployment with a focus on educational issues was deemed adequate for a CJ debate.

Box 6.
The Citizens Jury charges in Kaposvár

1. Whose responsibility is the implementation of proper vocational guidance and the educational structure?
2. What are the main tasks of schools?
3. How could the quality of vocational training be improved?
4. What is the main educational objective: to meet local needs or to motivate students' mobility?

One of the major concerns was how to inform citizens who are yet inexperienced in debating policy issues about such a complex issue. In order to ensure that the basic information is communicated effectively, the research group developed an informative brochure that contained

an overview of the problem with specific details about the region, and also highlighted the crucial points. These brochures were articulated in the form of questions – the "charges" – and the possible answers were presented as dilemmas in order to offer some initial points for the debate. The brochure on the one hand was intended as an introductory booklet which offered a complex overview, and on the other was used to serve as a reference point for all participants: beyond the basic facts it also contained a brief description of the related problems and possible solutions as voiced by experts, so that participants could look up certain topics or expressions during the event as well. While the brochure did not contain a glossary, it did offer definitions of frequently used terminology to make sure that all participants shared a common understanding of the most important terms.

In the *selection of witnesses* the objective was to present the problem from multiple perspectives – local authorities and local business were represented, as well as a more general national approach. In order to keep the debate focused on the region, two out of three experts were invited from the local arena: one of them being the head of the local Employment Agency, the other being the director of a local company as well as the president of the Chamber. On the part of the Employment Agency, panel members could learn about how the local government targets the problem of unemployment in the region, what it perceives as critical points and what developments it intends to introduce. On the employment side, jurors could get information about how unemployment is perceived on the business side, why there is such an asymmetry between what employees can offer and what employers are looking for and how education could address this question better. Along with local experts, a researcher specialized in the relation and interaction of employment issues and education was invited to introduce panel members to the overall system and present some ideas that could contribute to its better functioning. Again, there was great concern about how citizens would respond to the selection of experts, how they would address them and if they would have the energy to follow and understand their message. As a result we decided to involve one more researcher - a sociologist - in the process who was not invited to attend as a witness but rather acted as an assistant to the panel. Members were free to ask him questions at any time of the process; they could consult him and ask him for help in understanding the issues. In order to ensure a balanced information-flow, the researcher was asked to refrain from sharing his personal opinions or from offering additional information. His role was rather to be a reliable source of information who could recall experts' opinions correctly and who could help with wording questions or offering definitions.

The *selection of jurors* was integrated in the process of selecting participants for the deliberative survey. As the exploratory research suggested a divide between citizens living in the regional center, Kaposvár and the surrounding villages, location was taken as a variable among other demographic variables such as gender and age. While the sampling process itself was designed by the research team, its implementation was outsourced to a polling agency. As a result of the survey, 15 members were invited to join the Citizens Jury. Based on the experiences of earlier deliberative processes, ensuring that the invited participants actually show up is critical. In the Kaposvár research the potential participants were first interviewed and asked whether they were interested in taking part in such an event. The 15 invited participants were selected from those who answered yes. Before the event they were sent the information brochure in order to inform them about the process and the problem itself and also to motivate them and to keep their attention. Later, several participants confirmed that they were flattered by being sent the document and that it made them feel motivated to participate. Invited participants were also contacted by phone during the week preceding the event to increase the rate of actual participation.

The event itself was hold on 21–22 June 2008 at the university of Kaposvár. Out of the 15 invited participants, 10 attended the event but as one of them could only stay for 1 day, the jury was launched with 9 participants.

The orientation phase was scheduled for Saturday morning when the session included the introduction of the participants and moderators, an introduction to the CJ method and a brief overview of the discussed problem based on the informational brochure that was sent out to the participants one week before the event. In the orientation phase interaction was limited to self-presentations in order to leave time for participants to get accommodated. Along with an introduction of the method and the topic it was essential to set the informal rules of the game: all the participants were given the possibility to speak up, those who seemed too shy were motivated to share more through guided questions while those who tended to dominate the floor were politely turned down. It was also made clear that only those who could be present for both days were welcome in the process, which caused one juror to leave. After the lunch break where participants had the opportunity to get to know each other more, the afternoon session was dedicated to the hearings. All three hearings followed the same structure: first the witness could give a short presentation, then the floor was opened to questions and answers and finally the witness was asked to leave so that the jurors could discuss information and express their opinion freely. In order to capture the main points one of the moderators was in charge of taking notes while the other moderated the discussion. After each hearing the notes were shown to the participants who were asked to add missing points or other important arguments. Each hearing was thus closed with a short report accepted by all participants.

The first presenter was the head of the local Employment Agency who gave an overview of the local situation and of the Agency's activities. One of the main strengths of the presentation stemmed from the fact that the presenter was used to talking to the local community so her report was focused and easy to understand. The citizens seemed to respond well since they asked relevant questions and during the discussion they repeated some information and arguments and raised new issues. The second presentation was given by the head of the Chamber and director of one of the leading local businesses. His experience in leading resulted in a less interactive presentation: while the director tended to dominate the floor, the participants were more cautious in forming questions. It seems that with local experts, not only professional knowledge and experience but local reputation matters as well. While questions were scarce, the participants were motivated to discuss the information freely after the witness left. The third witness was a researcher working on the relation of education and unemployment. His presentation focused on the wider picture with an introduction to system dynamics. Jurors were not that motivated to learn about the wider context and they did not pick up on new ideas. Their passivity can partly be explained by fatigue: as the time frame was rather limited all hearings were scheduled for one afternoon which clearly resulted in an information overload. In order to ease their tasks and to prepare the next day's work, the day was finished with a game in which participants were asked to gather ideas about critical problems and their possible solutions. After the sessions, dinner was served to participants. In terms of group dynamics it was interesting to see that, while in the morning most of the participants said that they would leave right after the sessions, in the evening most of them decided to stay and keep on discussing informally.

Due to the limited time available, there was a need to support the jurors in their work of developing recommendations. Based on the notes taken during the hearings and accepted at the end of each section, the moderators collected a list of critical issues as well as restructured and rephrased the charges. On the second day, the jurors were handed the reports of the first day while the results of the final discussions were placed in visible places. The morning session of the second day was dedicated to the debate and the wording of the recommendations. First, the jurors were

presented the list of critical questions which they debated. Technically, it meant that while one moderator was in charge of guiding the discussion, the other continuously took notes that were projected so that jurors could follow. This technique was especially useful at the second part of the morning session when jurors were debating and wording the actual recommendations. This last part was rather time consuming as participants seemed to feel responsible for their output and dedicated time and attention to forming recommendations that reflected their opinions. In order to ensure that all jurors accept these recommendations, jurors were convened to vote on the final text after the lunch break. After accepting the wording, the participants were asked about their reflections, opinions and feelings about the event both in words and in writing. While the participants filled out questionnaires, a brief report (including a photo of participants, a brief discussion of the method and the Kaposvár event and the recommendations arising therefrom) was copied and distributed to the jurors. The event was closed by expressing gratitude to the participants for their valuable input, many of whom responded by enthusiastically thanking organizers for the opportunity to share and discuss their ideas.

Evaluation of the Kaposvár project

In line with the main research objectives, the evaluation of the Kaposvár CJ focuses on lessons of implementation rather than policy results (for content analysis see Vépy-Schlemmer, 2009). Thus we suggest the following dimensions for evaluation: in the methodological dimension we discuss how citizens responded to the method and what difficulties characterized the application in the Hungarian context. In the informative dimension we analyze the information flow of the process, while in the participative dimension we evaluate the output to see how citizens contributed to the decision-making process.

We think that as a pilot-project the Kaposvár CJ taught important methodological lessons. The method was flexible enough to be adapted to the Hungarian context: the citizens' response rate was acceptable, they were open to learning about the project and 16% of the respondents declared that they would be willing to participate, and another 13% said that maybe they would be willing to participate. There was uncertainty about the actual turn-up rate, as the communication with would-be participants was not always effective: some did not receive any material beforehand, while others were not informed properly about the venue. One important lesson is therefore that special attention should be paid to ensure that participants get the necessary support and information from the organizer team. While the sampling complied with high academic standards, the resulting group was not truly representative: as in other CJs the older generations were overrepresented, since the actual turn-up rate was higher for the older generations (see Kasteren and McKenna, 2006 critics described in section 3.d). With deliberative methods this bias is difficult to manage since substitutes cannot be drawn from the sample.

Implementing the CJ method was not without difficulties: most of the participants had not had any similar experience and they apparently did not know how to behave. However, they had a rather open attitude and they were willing to comply with the rules of the game: after the adaptive morning session most of them began to share their opinions and engage in discussions. In terms of group dynamics only one serious problem emerged: the topic of unemployment became quickly connected to minority, especially Roma issues which resulted in the isolation of one Roma participant. Being mainly excluded and even covertly attacked, this participant chose to ignore the other participants except the moderators and the experts who tried to target the problem through involving the participant in informal discussions. Due to the efforts of the experts and their respect and reputation among participants, the isolation was partly broken

by the second day when some group members decided to involve the isolated participant in some discussion. While the gap could not be fully overcome, we believe that the problem was effectively handled in this short time frame. However, the issue of minorities should not be underestimated since it can emerge within various social contexts, especially in regions which are considered underdeveloped in economic terms. A lesson of the Kaposvár CJ is that in case a minority is clearly affected by the problem (as for example the higher rate of unemployment among minorities), it is important to address it directly during the CJ process. Participants should be offered information about the situation and problems of minorities. Avoiding the problems seems to sustain constant underlying references and a stereotyping approach which does not get openly debated.

In terms of operational issues this CJ was shorter than the usual and participants were not provided accommodation during the event. While the time frame proved to be rather short, the schedule was still followed and all necessary phases were implemented. Fortunately, not providing accommodation did not pose problems, as participants were willing to arrange their travel and respect the schedule of the program.

As for *the information-flow,* the different information channels were not equally effective. The brochure that was sent to participants did not prove to be helpful. Most participants did not read the material beforehand, and none of them used it during the event. While it would be interesting to see what the reasons behind this phenomenon are, the participants did not reflect on the document in the feedback. This phenomenon is again in line with Kasteren and McKenna's (2006) experiences, although in Kaposvár it can be rather explained by ignorance (as in not reading the material) and by problems of understanding.

The most effective information channel was that of the hearings: panel members responded well to witnesses, they listened to the presentations and were ready to ask questions. They also incorporated the received information and repeated it during the debates. In fact they not only understood but also accepted what witnesses said since they shifted a great deal of the responsibilities on the side that was missing from the debate: the educators. This highlights one of the main deficiencies: while the problem was introduced as being part of a complex integrated system with schools, the government, business and students (and their families) involved, the schools were not represented and thus the information-flow was not balanced. Local experts seemed better at capturing the jurors' attention, since participants were not eager to learn about the complex system and rather focused on local issues. It was very useful though to include one researcher in the process who assisted panel members since participants often turned to him with different questions concerning facts or definitions. To put it in a simplistic way he acted as both a glossary and a memory since he could recall, and in the cases it was needed, decode experts' answers and opinions.

As for the third channel of information, which was based on interaction between fellow jurors, the results are two-sided: on the one hand interaction among participants was vivid and participants were willing to discuss many different questions which enabled a deeper understanding of the problem. On the other hand their attitude was rather consensus-oriented as they tried to avoid conflicts, and thus instead of debating the dilemmas, members quickly arrived at a conclusion they could all accept. Concerning information flow one feature deserves to be mentioned: as most of the participants were middle-aged or older, they were socialized as employees in the socialist era. As a result, they apparently had a common understanding of how the employment market and the recruitment of employees should work and these cognitive schemes influenced the absorption of information to a great extent. So while participants were eager to learn more about the local situation and they accepted opinions offered by experts, they used the new information to further develop their own original ideas about how recruitment should work. A very telling

example is that most of our participants were sent to factories to get on-site training as students and most of them remembered having an experienced skilled worker by their side explaining the tricks of the work. During the debates these participants promoted the idea of sending students to factories during their summer breaks which would prove to be difficult to organize since most factories have shut down in the region. As a possible solution they thought about making DVDs or websites with similar content that students could even watch at home, which of course would lack precisely the on-site training element and the personal touch. This feature points to an important lesson in applying CJs: the time allowed for discussion and debate is not only dedicated to gathering ideas and opinions but it also allows time for participants to integrate and digest new ideas and approaches – which is usually a time-consuming experience.

The *participative dimension* is rather complex. There was clearly an empowerment effect of the project since nearly all members were enthusiastic about the project, liked the idea of participation and they were pleased to be listened to. However, their participation was not very effective in the sense that they could not clearly grasp their role and their competencies. While they were willing to learn about the system and could integrate new information, they still could not see the main system dynamics. As a result, they could only partly formulate adequate recommendations: some of the recommendations were rather lists of what they expected from the center, from high politics and only some addressed issues that could be tackled locally. Concerning the recommendations made, we refer again to the fact that due to the similar socialization context the participants shared some basic values and views. These surfaced in the recommendations as well since they formulated some "prerequisites" - actions that the central government should take in order to enable local empowerment and development. While these suggestions would certainly help in local development, the idea of waiting for central actions seems deeply rooted.

One of the advantages of deliberative processes as we described earlier is that it can create valuable learning environments not only for actual participants but for politicians, experts and bureaucrats as well. While the participating experts did express their interest in the citizens' opinions and were positive about the CJ process, this dimension was not been explored in depth during the project. The dissemination and the expected spill-over effect are still to be measured in Kaposvár.

In order to evaluate fully on the participative dimensions, we should make a difference between the output of the CJ (the recommendations presented above) and the overall outcome - being the effect it has on policy processes. The latter is still to be seen but in advance the jurors were rather skeptical about how decision-makers would respond to their ideas. In a sense the Kaposvár CJ members had similar experiences to other jurors:

> *"The jurors view on the process: Almost without exception the jurors were enthusiastic about their experience. They were glad of the chance to meet different people, to learn about the issue before them, to make a contribution to society, and to help resolve a policy problem. Nearly all said they would take part in another jury and recommend it to others. A substantial minority of jurors said they had changed their minds in the course of the session. Their criticism centered on there being insufficient time to absorb information and strong doubts about the jury's capacity to influence the commissioning authority."* (Coote&Lenaghan, 1997, p. iv.)

To sum up, the Kaposvár project as a pilot-project served important lessons since citizens responded well to the idea of participation and opinion-forming. While the low-level of knowledge and the short time frame together hindered the formulation of truly useful citizens' output, participation had strong informative and empowering effects. In order to evaluate the process – and especially its outcome – it would be important to see what the reaction on the decision-maker side was, and how responsive local authorities are.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems to be equally true that both the Hungarian political elite and society at large deserve a shift from a conflict-based to a more consensus-oriented approach. However, how this can be done in a country where this has no historical or cultural background still remains a tormenting question. Due to historical and cultural differences Hungarians cannot mechanically follow and implement methods developed in Western countries, yet these may be changed and adopted to better operate in a Central-European context. One such method aiming to further the consensus-based approach is the CJ. In this article we attempted to give an overview of how a CJ method was implemented in a Hungarian small region: we introduced the theoretical framework as well as the methodology and gave an insight into how it can be applied in the Hungarian social-political environment.

The lessons learned in Kaposvár offer important feedback on the possible application of deliberative methods in Hungary. The first lesson is the fact that a CJ can indeed be organized: while deliberation and participation are not embedded in the Hungarian civil culture, citizens on the one hand, are still willing to come and share their opinions and experts, on the other hand, are also available to take part in such processes. The second lesson is that the process did have a strong social learning dimension: citizens became more informed about the topic as well as about the local situation and they became familiar with certain aspects of local governance, local policies and decision-making processes. The learning went beyond facts and information: participants learned about participation and discussion, although due to the small N problem, the change in attitude is hard to evaluate. The project also had an awareness-raising as well as an empowerment effect since citizens left with a strong desire to influence the community. In this sense the Kaposvár project was a success, even if it did have its shortcomings.

The most important "problem" might not stem from the method or its application but rather from the fact that citizens are not used to deliberation. Participants were a bit lost in the process, they certainly needed strong guidance: having moderators take notes for them as well as write up reports of discussion, having the constant support of an expert proved to be the most useful tool of the process. While useful, this strong support can easily strengthen communication and information asymmetry between under-informed participants and over-represented experts. Participants who do not fully understand their role and tasks can easily generate most of the shortcomings described by the critics: the discussion is consensus-oriented which does not allow for the debate of critical issues and thus results in overgeneralization and useless recommendations.

In order to overcome those shortcomings, certain improvements can be suggested: citizens need information and training not only about the topic but about the CJ process itself. Information about their competencies would also be useful to enable them to place themselves in the decision-making framework. The chosen topic should also be more local and focused in order to ensure that citizens are interested in the question, motivated to participate and able to form meaningful output that is in line with their competencies and local opportunities. It might be stated that the more focused a charge is and the more identifiable social alternatives are available, the more the citizens' output will be meaningful and will exert effect on policy-making. On the one hand, this emphasizes the responsibility of the organizers to develop charges which allow for meaningful decisions on behalf of the citizens. On the other hand, it also highlights the fact that the CJ may not be a panacea for every social dilemma even at a local context. While the method has its limits, we believe it can be applied to involving citizens in local decision-making, to raising awareness and the level of information and thus to promoting social learning in a community.

In this paper we introduced lessons learned and evaluated output, but the critical question of what the outcome will be is still open. The CJ process, along with other deliberative methods, should not only be implemented in the community but should also be applied to real decision-making processes. We believe though that it is crucial to monitor the fate of the output, to evaluate how it was perceived and what kind of influence it had on the decision-making process. Implementing isolated projects can offer important experience in an academic sense, but the possible long-term effects of bonding with democratic values and taking active roles and responsibility in the community will only surface if these deliberative processes are integrated not only in the social but in the political arena as well.

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