

Citizens Views on Sustainable Consumption

Call for inputs for themes to be addressed by citizens

Dear colleagues and partners,

In the framework of the PACITA project (EU FP7-SiS) we will carry out a major citizen consultation activity on the topic of sustainable consumption on October 25th 2014. The citizen consultation will simultaneously take place in at least nine different European countries and regions. Since we are at the beginning of this endeavor, we would like to encourage you to give us ideas and inputs about relevant themes, challenges, dilemmas and debates in the field of sustainable consumption. Your input will be highly valuable to help us formulate the topics to be later debated and prioritized by citizens.

The issues to be discussed by the citizens should be politically relevant events and should especially be relevant for policy-makers at the European level. The overall aim is to bring the views of ordinary citizens to the policy-makers and thus inform policy-making and influence concrete policies in the years ahead. What do you expect to be the hot and sensitive political themes in the field of sustainable consumption in the years to come? What strategic decisions need to be made? What challenges and dilemmas lie ahead? Do you know of any particularly interesting initiatives that deserve greater attention? Which original solutions are available, but have not yet been implemented (and why)? In short, what are the core issues that need to be discussed with citizens?

This is not just an opinion survey we are talking about. Questions should be linked to real-world processes, events and initiatives at the political level of the European Union. We would also be very grateful to receive suggestions about events (conferences, summits, political fora), procedures and relevant actors the citizen views could fruitfully feed into.

Please send your response to mlj@tekno.dk and benedikt.rosskamp@ulg.ac.be by **September 1st 2013**.

To give you an idea of possible areas for further investigation, please find below a list of potential topics and areas that concern sustainable consumption. Thanks in advance for your contributions.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any query.

Best regards,

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Sustainable consumption: potential themes of interest

This list only constitutes preliminary thoughts of the organizers about the scope of the topic of sustainable consumption. It is not meant to be exhaustive and certainly not to frame your input. We encourage you to also think outside of these themes.

- Policy aspects
 - Which are the main discussions currently going on at the (European) policy level about sustainable consumption?
 - What do you think will or should be on the political agenda when it comes to sustainable consumption?
 - Who are the actors at play? Which ones are relevant to address and at what level?
 - Where are the main disagreements and blockades between interest groups and stakeholders?
 - What kind of policies could help increase sustainable consumption?

- The importance of sustainability
 - Sustainability compared to other urgent global issues (economic development, fighting poverty, energy (in)dependence, other environmental issues etc.)
 - Relative weight of the different sustainability pillars (economic, social, environmental)
 - What are the most important reasons to strive for more sustainability (economic, ethical, material, religious, ...)?
 - The place of consumption in the sustainability concept (in comparison with production for instance)
 - The tension between collective and individual consumer choices and their relation to sustainability
 - Synergies between sustainability and other societal issues (fighting poverty, employment, ...)
 - The importance of sustainability in different sectors of products and services (food, clothing, IT, energy, mobility, ...)

- Is sustainability compatible with our present way of life? With our economic system?
 - Is a new system needed? Is a new system emerging?
 - Can sustainability be scaled up or generalized? How?
 - Is sustainability a strategy for renewed economic development?

- Sustainability and consumption
 - Does sustainability amount to customer empowerment?
 - What power and influence do consumers have on global economic processes or extraction, production, distribution and recycling of consumer goods?
 - What are the best practices and innovation in terms of sustainable consumption?

- Psychological and Sociological aspects of consumption and customer behavior
 - Are current consumption patterns unsustainable? Why?
 - Can a difference be discerned between attitudes towards sustainable consumption and consumption practices? If so, how to explain and remedy it.
 - What are the main factors that determine customer behavior and change?
 - Is sustainable consumption perceived as a sacrifice?
 - What sacrifices are socially acceptable?
 - What feelings and reasoning do sustainable consumption modes imply and create?

- What political measures are to be taken to further enact sustainable consumption modes?

- Which target groups should be targeted in priority to discuss and implement sustainable consumption?