



RECOMMENDATIONS & FINAL REPORT

Imprint

Esch Citizens Assembly – Recommendations & final report
Esch-sur-Alzette - June 25, 2026

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recommendations & final report

june 2026

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report documents the first Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette, held between March and June 2026.

It presents the purpose of the Assembly, the way members were selected, the structure of the process, the work carried out across the sessions and the final recommendations adopted by the Assembly. It also records how the recommendations were developed, reviewed, voted on and handed over to the City.

The report has three main purposes :

First, it serves as an official record of the Assembly. It documents what happened, who participated, how the process was organised and how decisions were made.

Second, it serves as a handover document to the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. It presents the final recommendations and explains the reasoning, process and level of support behind them.

Third, it serves as a transparency document for the wider public. It allows residents, institutions and future readers to understand how the Assembly worked and how its conclusions were reached.

The report is structured to follow the Assembly's deliberative journey. It begins with the background and mandate, then explains who participated and how the process was designed. It then documents the seven sessions, describes how ideas became recommendations and presents the final recommendation package. The report closes with follow-up expectations, next steps and reflections on the legacy of this first Citizens' Assembly.

This report should be read as both a record of a completed process and a starting point for future action. The Assembly has completed its mandate by adopting and handing over its recommendations. The next step is the City's review, response and follow-up.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette brought together residents to deliberate on the future of public spaces and community life in the city. Held between March and June 2026, it was created as a pilot process to strengthen participatory democracy in Esch and to test a structured way for residents to contribute to local decision-making.

The Assembly worked on the following guiding question:

How can the City of Esch rethink its public spaces and social spaces in order to strengthen community life among current and future inhabitants?

Public space was chosen as the central lens because it connects many dimensions of everyday urban life. Streets, squares, parks, neighbourhoods and shared facilities shape how people move, meet, rest, play, feel safe, experience climate stress and participate in community life. The Assembly therefore explored public space not only as a matter of urban design, but also as a question of social cohesion, environmental resilience, accessibility, cleanliness, mobility and democratic trust.

The Assembly was composed of residents selected to reflect the diversity of Esch. Members participated as residents, not as representatives of political parties, organisations or interest groups, bringing their own lived experience and learning from expert input and other members to work collectively toward recommendations for the City.

The process followed a progressive deliberative structure: an onboarding session, followed by thematic sessions on urbanism and public spaces, environment and climate, and social coexistence and governance. Members combined expert input, field observation, testimonies, scenario exercises, small-group work and plenary discussion, moving step by step from observation to guiding ideas, thematic clusters and draft recommendations. The municipal administration reviewed the draft recommendations and provided feedback on feasibility and implementation constraints; this informed, but did not replace, the Assembly's own judgement. The final recommendations were adopted through a consent-based voting process, allowing members to express agreement, minor concerns or serious objections.

The recommendations are organised into four thematic clusters:

Cluster A — Public Space Design / Urbanism. Rebalancing mobility away from cars and toward pedestrians, cyclists, residents, children, older people and people with reduced mobility; public spaces that invite people to stay; improved cleanliness through better infrastructure, education and enforcement.

Cluster B — Nature & Climate. Protecting and restoring green and blue spaces, greening public spaces at every scale, integrating biodiversity, a city-wide shade and water strategy, and more sustainable, circular and local materials in public construction.

Cluster C — People & Social Life. Accessible, inclusive, safe and socially supportive public spaces, including accessibility audits with affected people, neighbourhood community centres, basic infrastructure such as toilets and resting places, and a nuanced approach to safety based on design, social presence and dialogue rather than purely securitised responses.

Cluster D — Governance & Civic Life. Making participation a regular part of public-space planning and living together, through participatory workshops, neighbourhood meetings, digital and analogue tools, regular citizens' assemblies, transparent follow-up on every recommendation, and using public space for civic, environmental and language learning.

Taken together, the recommendations express a coherent vision: public spaces that are greener, cleaner, safer, more accessible, and more welcoming — places where people can stay, meet, learn and participate, and where decisions about how these spaces are shaped are more transparent and open to resident involvement.

The handover of the recommendations marks the end of the Assembly's deliberative mandate, but not the end of the process. Responsibility now lies with the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. Assembly members repeatedly stressed that participation must be meaningful, not symbolic — clear, timely follow-up will be essential to maintaining trust and demonstrating the value of this first Citizens' Assembly.

Part 1

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



INTRODUCTION

The first Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette was created as a pilot process to strengthen citizen participation in the city's democratic life. It brought together residents of Esch to deliberate collectively on the future of public spaces and community life.

The Assembly was not designed as a one-off consultation or a symbolic exercise. Its purpose was to create a structured space in which residents could learn together, discuss different realities, weigh trade-offs and formulate recommendations for the City of Esch-sur-Alzette.

At the heart of the process was the idea that public spaces are more than streets, squares, parks or infrastructure. They are the places where daily life becomes visible: where people meet, wait, play, rest, pass through, feel welcome, feel unsafe, experience climate stress and encounter the city as a shared environment.

WHY A CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY?

The Citizens' Assembly was organised to involve residents directly in thinking about the future of Esch. It responded to the need for a participation format that allows ordinary residents to engage with complex local issues in a structured, informed and inclusive way.

Unlike open public meetings, a citizens' assembly brings together a selected group of residents who reflect the diversity of the wider population. Members are given time to learn, exchange and deliberate before producing recommendations.

This format was chosen because the question of public space cannot be answered from one perspective alone. It concerns planning, mobility, climate, social life, safety, accessibility, cleanliness and governance. It also affects people differently depending on age, neighbourhood, language, ability, gender, social situation and length of residence in the city.

The Assembly therefore created a space where different everyday experiences of Esch could meet and be transformed into collective recommendations.

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY IN ESCH-SUR-ALZETTE

The Assembly formed part of a broader effort to strengthen participatory democracy in Esch-sur-Alzette. It was conceived as a pilot for a more durable democratic practice, not only as a single project.

Its aim was to test how residents, municipal actors, experts and facilitators can work together on a shared public question. The process allowed the City to explore how deliberative participation can complement existing democratic institutions and contribute to future decision-making.

The Assembly also created practical learning for future participation in Esch. It showed how residents can be supported to deliberate across languages, backgrounds and perspectives, and how citizen recommendations can be connected to municipal review and follow-up.

PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Citizens' Assembly was implemented through cooperation between several partners, each with a distinct role.

City of Esch-sur-Alzette

The City initiated the Assembly and received the final recommendations. It provided the institutional framework for the process and coordinated the link between the Assembly and municipal services. The City administration also reviewed the draft recommendations before the final deliberation in order to provide feedback on feasibility, existing initiatives and implementation constraints.

DemocracyNext

DemocracyNext contributed methodological expertise on citizens' assemblies and deliberative democracy. Its role was to support the process design and help align the Assembly with international principles and practices of democratic innovation.

Cultures of Assembly

Cultures of Assembly contributed to the broader conceptual and methodological context of the process. Its involvement connected the Assembly to wider reflections on collective democratic practice, urban futures and public participation.

University of Luxembourg

The University of Luxembourg contributed through the independent evaluation dimension of the process. This helped situate the Assembly as both a participatory project and a learning process for future democratic innovation in Esch.

Snakke & Co.

Snakke & Co. accompanied the Assembly as external operator. Its role included process design, facilitation, coordination, synthesis and support for the development of recommendations. The facilitation team was responsible for creating a neutral, inclusive and constructive deliberative space in which members could work toward clear collective outputs.

MANDATE OF THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

The mandate of the Citizens' Assembly defined what members were asked to deliberate on, what was within the scope of the process and what kinds of outputs were expected.

The Assembly was asked to focus on public spaces and living areas as places where community life is shaped. This included physical design, everyday use, accessibility, safety, climate resilience, social interaction and participation in public-space planning.

THE GUIDING QUESTION

The guiding question of the Assembly was:

'How can the City of Esch rethink its public and social spaces to strengthen community life among current and future inhabitants?'

This question gave the Assembly a clear focus while leaving room for different interpretations and perspectives. It allowed members to explore the relationship between public space and community life from urban, social, environmental and democratic angles.

SCOPE OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly focused on public spaces and living areas in Esch-sur-Alzette. This included streets, squares, parks, neighbourhood spaces, pedestrian areas, mobility routes, public facilities and other places where residents meet, move through or spend time.

The scope was deliberately broad enough to connect several themes. Public space served as the common thread across these themes. It allowed members to consider how physical design, social dynamics, environmental pressures and governance practices intersect in everyday life.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Assembly was expected to produce a coherent set of recommendations for the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. These recommendations were expected to be:

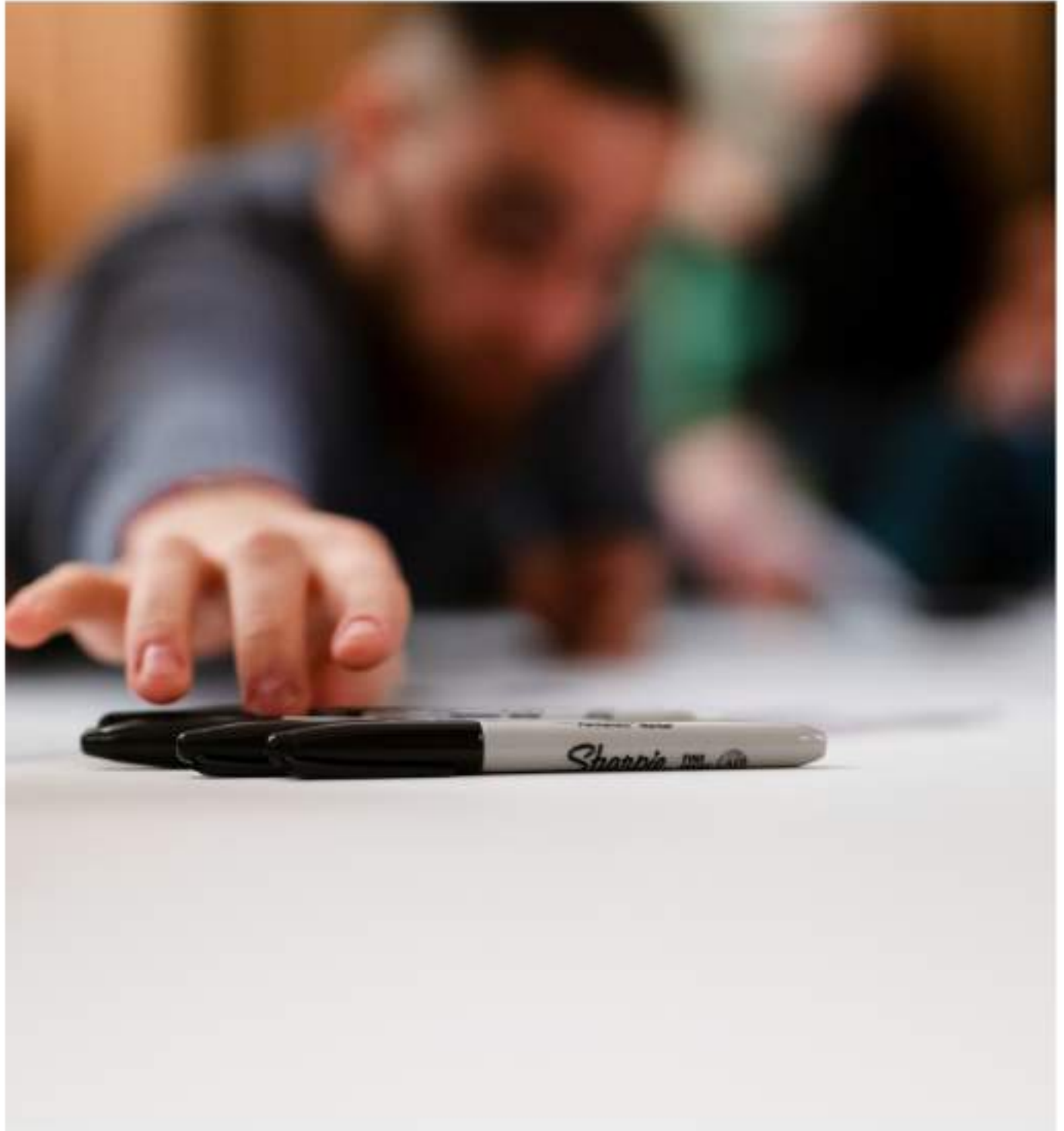
- grounded in the Assembly's learning and deliberation;
- connected to the guiding question;
- understandable to people who did not participate in the sessions;
- specific enough to be reviewed by municipal services;
- accompanied by reasoning and, where relevant, implementation considerations;
- formally adopted through the Assembly's final voting process.

In addition to the recommendations themselves, the Assembly was expected to produce a documented process. This included session outputs, guiding ideas, draft recommendations, administrative feedback, voting results and a public handover.

The final outcome of the Assembly is therefore both a recommendation package and a record of the deliberative process through which that package was developed.

Part 2

HOW THE ASSEMBLY WAS DESIGNED



PROCESS DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

The Esch Citizens' Assembly was designed as a structured deliberative process. Its purpose was not only to gather opinions, but to support residents in developing informed, reasoned and collective recommendations for the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. The process therefore needed to give participants enough time to learn, exchange, question, disagree, revise their views and gradually move from everyday observations to concrete proposals.

The Assembly followed a progressive logic. It began with onboarding and trust-building, then moved through thematic learning sessions, guiding idea development, recommendation drafting, administrative feedback, final deliberation and voting, and finally public handover. Each step built on the previous one. This cumulative structure was central to the legitimacy of the process: the final recommendations were not isolated suggestions, but the result of a documented path of shared learning and deliberation.

OVERALL PROCESS LOGIC

The Assembly was organised around seven sessions held between March and June 2026. Two sessions were shorter: the opening onboarding session and the final public presentation and handover. Five sessions were full working days dedicated to thematic exploration, deliberation, recommendation development and collective decision-making.

The process followed the logic of a deliberative journey:

Onboarding and framing

Members were introduced to the Assembly's purpose, mandate, guiding question and working methods. They also got to know each other and agreed on shared principles for dialogue.

Learning and exploration

Members explored the Assembly's central question from different angles: urban planning, social coexistence, climate resilience and participatory governance.

Deliberation and guiding ideas

After each thematic session, participants formulated guiding ideas. These were not yet final recommendations, but shared orientations that captured what members had learned, observed and prioritised.

Recommendation drafting

The guiding ideas were consolidated into thematic clusters and used as the basis for drafting recommendations.

Administrative feedback

Draft recommendations were sent to the City administration for feasibility review. This step allowed municipal services to clarify what already exists, what is feasible, what may require adjustment and where legal, financial or competence-related constraints exist.

Final deliberation and voting

Members reviewed the administrative feedback, revised their recommendations and adopted the final set through an agreed voting process.

Public presentation and handover

The recommendations were presented publicly and formally handed over to the City.

This structure allowed the Assembly to move from broad reflection to concrete decision-making without rushing the process. It also made the evolution of the recommendations traceable.

LEARNING, DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

Each full working session followed the same basic structure: learning, discussion and deliberation.

The learning phase gave members access to expert input, local knowledge, lived experience or practical examples related to the topic of the day. This ensured that participants were not asked to deliberate from opinion alone, but from a shared and accessible knowledge base.

The discussion phase allowed members to exchange their own experiences and perspectives. Small-group formats were used to make the conversations more inclusive and to give participants more space to speak. These discussions were particularly important in a multilingual and diverse group, where participants came with different levels of confidence, different life experiences and different ways of relating to the city.

The deliberation phase moved the group toward shared outputs. Depending on the session, these outputs took the form of spatial challenges, guiding ideas, draft recommendations or final decisions. The aim was not to erase disagreement, but to identify where common ground existed and where tensions needed to remain visible.

This three-step rhythm helped members build trust in the process. It also made each session understandable: participants knew that they would first learn, then discuss, then produce something that would be carried forward.

A CUMULATIVE PROCESS

A key feature of the Assembly was that each session built on the results of previous sessions. Outputs were documented, synthesised and reintroduced at later stages. This prevented the sessions from becoming isolated workshops and allowed members to develop a shared reasoning process over time.

This cumulative design was essential because the Assembly's central question was complex. Public space in Esch could not be understood from one angle only. It had to be approached as an intersection of spatial design, social life, climate adaptation and democratic governance.

THE ROLE OF EXPERTS AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

The Assembly combined expert input with lived experience. Experts, municipal staff, practitioners and witnesses helped members understand technical, social, environmental and

institutional aspects of public space. Their role was to inform the discussion, not to determine the conclusions.

Participants themselves also brought important knowledge. They knew how streets, parks, squares, neighbourhoods and public services are experienced in everyday life. They could identify places that feel welcoming, uncomfortable, inaccessible, unsafe, neglected or full of potential. Their lived experience was treated as a legitimate form of knowledge, especially because public space is experienced differently depending on age, ability, language, gender, social situation, mobility needs and relationship to the city.

This combination of expert knowledge and lived knowledge allowed the Assembly to move beyond abstract debate. The recommendations were grounded both in information and in everyday experience.

THE ROLE OF FACILITATION

Facilitation was central to the Assembly's design. The role of the facilitation team was to create a neutral, inclusive and constructive space in which all members could contribute.

Facilitators supported the process by explaining tasks, managing time, structuring discussions, encouraging balanced participation and helping groups move from observations to shared outputs. They also helped make disagreement productive. Contradictions between ideas were not treated as failure. They were made visible and carried forward where relevant, so that members could address real trade-offs rather than ignore them.

The facilitation approach was based on constructive neutrality. Facilitators did not decide what the Assembly should recommend. Their responsibility was to protect the quality of the process, make sure all voices could be heard and help the group produce clear and usable outputs.

MULTILINGUAL PARTICIPATION

Esch is a multilingual city, and the Assembly was designed accordingly. Multilingual participation was not treated as a secondary logistical issue, but as a condition for meaningful inclusion.

Members were supported to speak in the language in which they felt most comfortable whenever possible. Small-group work, facilitation and documentation were organised to accommodate different language needs. This mattered because participation is not equal if people can only contribute in a language in which they are less confident.

The multilingual design also shaped the way outputs were handled. Similar ideas often appeared in different languages and formulations. Part of the synthesis work therefore consisted in identifying common meaning across linguistic differences while preserving the intent of participants.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

The Assembly was designed to be accessible in its setting, rhythm, methods and facilitation. The aim was to create conditions under which people with different confidence levels, abilities, backgrounds and participation habits could contribute.

This meant using a mix of formats: individual reflection, pair conversations, small-group work, plenary discussions, field observation, testimony, visual tools, scenario exercises and structured voting. Not every participant contributes best in the same way. A varied methodology helped avoid privileging only the most confident speakers.

Inclusion was also addressed as a substantive theme. Across the process, members repeatedly returned to the question of who is missing, who is excluded and whose needs are treated as secondary in public space. The design of the Assembly therefore mirrored one of its central principles: public space, like participation, only works if different people can actually use it.

DOCUMENTATION AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Assembly relied on documentation throughout the process. Session outputs, guiding ideas, group discussions and recommendation drafts were recorded and synthesised so that the work could accumulate over time.

Technology was used to support this documentation and synthesis work. Digital tools helped capture conversations, identify recurring themes and support multilingual synthesis. These tools did not replace deliberation. They supported the human process by helping ensure that ideas were not lost, especially across languages and group discussions.

The primary source of the Assembly's recommendations remained the work produced by participants themselves: worksheets, cards, group outputs, plenary presentations and final deliberation. Digital synthesis was used as an additional layer to check patterns, compare outputs and support traceability.

For the qualitative analysis of citizen input, the facilitation team was supported by Dembrane, a platform that transcribes, analyzes, and reports on in-person multilingual conversations, helping to map which themes were resonating and where there was consensus or disagreement among participants. For quantitative document processing, structuring, and drafting support, the team used Claude Sonnet 4.6, a large language model developed by Anthropic. Additional translation work was supported by DeepL. All AI-assisted outputs were reviewed and validated by the facilitation team.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEEDBACK

Administrative feedback was built into the process before final voting. After Session 5, the draft recommendations were sent to the municipal administration for feasibility review.

This review had several purposes. It allowed the City to explain what already exists, identify relevant departments, clarify feasibility, name possible obstacles and indicate where recommendations might require adjustment. It also helped members distinguish between quick wins, longer-term measures, measures requiring political decisions and measures that may depend on competences beyond the municipality.

Importantly, administrative feedback was not a veto. The Assembly remained the owner of its recommendations. The City's feedback informed the final deliberation, but it did not replace the judgement of the members. In Session 6, participants reviewed the feedback, revised their

recommendations where they considered it appropriate, and then decided collectively what to adopt.

DECISION-MAKING AND VOTING

The final recommendations were adopted through a consent-based voting process. This voting method was chosen because the aim was not simply to identify a majority preference, but to test whether the Assembly could stand behind each recommendation as part of a collective package.

Members were able to express support, minor concerns or serious objections. Minor concerns were recorded, allowing reservations to remain visible without blocking adoption. Serious objections were treated differently: they indicated that a member could not consent to the recommendation becoming part of the Assembly's final output.

This method allowed the Assembly to distinguish between disagreement that should be documented and resistance strong enough to question whether a recommendation should be adopted. It also encouraged members to use objections carefully and responsibly, taking into account not only their personal view but the collective role of the Assembly.

PUBLIC HANDOVER

The final step of the process was the public presentation and formal handover of the recommendations. This moment marked the transition from citizen deliberation to political and administrative follow-up.

The handover had several functions. It made the Assembly's work visible to the wider public. It recognised the time and effort invested by members. It allowed participants to explain their recommendations in their own words. It also created a public moment of accountability: the City received the recommendations and was expected to review and respond to them transparently.

In this sense, the public handover was not only a closing event. It was part of the democratic logic of the Assembly. The recommendations moved from the deliberative space into the public and institutional sphere, where their follow-up could be seen, questioned and discussed.

Part 3

WHO PARTICIPATED?



WHO PARTICIPATED AND HOW MEMBERS WERE SELECTED

The Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette was designed to bring together a group of residents who reflected the diversity of the city. This was essential to the democratic purpose of the Assembly. The aim was not to gather only those who were already active in local politics, associations or public consultations, but to create a deliberative group in which different everyday experiences of Esch could meet.

Public space is not experienced in the same way by everyone. Age, gender, nationality, neighbourhood, language, education, mobility, length of residence and social situation can all influence how people use the city, how safe they feel, where they feel welcome, and what they expect from public life. For this reason, the composition of the Assembly was a central element of the process.

The members were not asked to represent organisations, political parties or interest groups. They participated as residents of Esch. Their role was to bring their own experience, listen to others, learn from different perspectives and work collectively toward recommendations for the City.

WHY RANDOM SELECTION WAS USED

The Assembly used random selection, also known as sortition, as the basis for forming the group. This method is commonly used in citizens' assemblies because it helps include people who might not usually take part in public meetings or political processes.

Open participation formats often attract people who already have time, confidence, knowledge or strong opinions about a topic. This can be valuable, but it does not necessarily reflect the wider population. A citizens' assembly works differently. By inviting residents randomly and then selecting a balanced group from those who register, the process creates a space where a broader range of people can take part.

Random selection does not mean that the final group is left entirely to chance. In Esch, the process combined random selection with representativeness criteria. This means that the final group was selected from registered residents in a way that aimed to reflect the diversity of the city across several demographic and social dimensions.

INVITATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS

The recruitment process began with a broad random invitation. A total of 10,000 residents of Esch-sur-Alzette aged 16 and over were randomly selected and received a personal invitation to register for the Citizens' Assembly.

The invitations were strictly personal and could not be transferred to another person. This was important to preserve the fairness of the selection process. A person who received an invitation could decide whether or not to register, but could not pass the invitation on to a family member, friend or colleague.

Residents who received an invitation were able to express their interest in taking part. 551 people took up this opportunity. A final panel of members was selected from among those who

registered. Those who were not selected were placed on a waiting list, which enabled the organisers to replace members should any withdraw before the Assembly began.

The residents selected for the Assembly were contacted before the first session. The first session then served as the formal start of the collective process.

REPRESENTATIVENESS CRITERIA

The final selection was guided by criteria intended to reflect the composition and diversity of Esch-sur-Alzette.

The criteria used were:

- gender;
- age;
- nationality;
- level of education;
- neighbourhood;
- number of years lived in Esch-sur-Alzette.

These criteria were chosen because they are relevant to how people experience public space and community life. The selection process therefore aimed to create a group that was diverse not only in demographic terms, but also in terms of everyday perspectives on the city.

ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The Assembly was intended for residents participating as citizens, not as institutional representatives. For reasons of transparency and independence, certain categories of people could not participate.

The following groups were excluded from participation:

- local and national elected representatives;
- municipal employees working in one of the fields addressed by the Citizens' Assembly;
- any other person with a conflict of interest in relation to the purpose of the Assembly.

These exclusions helped protect the independence of the Assembly. They also made clear that the members' role was not to defend an institutional position, but to deliberate as residents.

OVERSIGHT AND TRANSPARENCY

The selection process was accompanied by an independent oversight structure. The purpose of this oversight was to strengthen transparency and trust in both the recruitment process and the design of the Assembly sessions.

This was particularly important because the Assembly was a pilot process. As the first Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette, it needed to demonstrate not only that residents could deliberate constructively, but also that the process itself was fair, credible and independent.

FINAL COMPOSITION OF THE ASSEMBLY

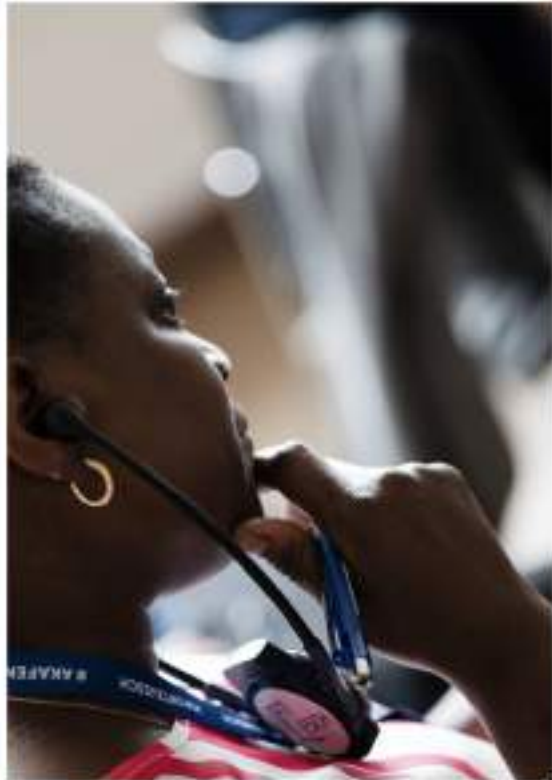
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ROLE OF MEMBERS

This distinction was central to the Assembly's work. Members were not expected to be experts in urban planning, climate adaptation, social policy or governance. They were expected to deliberate as informed residents: to learn from experts and testimonies, reflect on their own

experience, exchange with others and help formulate recommendations that could serve the city as a whole.

Throughout the process, members were encouraged to move beyond individual preference and consider the collective question placed before the Assembly: how Esch can rethink its public spaces and living areas to strengthen community life among current and future inhabitants.



MEMBER LIST

Abdalrahman	Mohamedalhafiz
Altan	Harun
Antico Rodríguez	María Betania
Babacic	Minela*
Becker	Patrick
Boutas	Nadia
Cavaleiro	Julie
Civovic	Erwin
Clemens	Kevin
Correia Borges	Edna Lenira
Da Costa Oliveira	Alexandra Anabela
Datcu Philippo	Anca Maricica
Di Palma	Laurent
Dogan	Meryem
Dsouza	Zico
Durakovic	Ina
Gomes Ganeto	Maria Jose
Hasan	Hakan
Kazemi	Sayed Mustafa
Kozar	Elma
Lamas Encarnacao	Sofia*
Nesa	Mariam*
Nickels	Nicolas Joseph*
Novalic	Leila
Nsioza Ndong	Marie Corine
Pereira De Sousa	Paulo*
Pereira Moreira	Jérôme
Pereira Neves	Hugo Manuel*
Plaquevent	Mathieu
Reimen	René
Rodrigues Moreira	Tiago
Schumacher	Marie Alix
Schumann	Simon
Schwarze	Michael
Silva Branco	Soraia
Stévenart	Alain
Thill	Bernard
Wagner	Danielle
Wang	Bowen
Yakelela	Bakela
Pinto Silveira	Florabela Maria
Varela Monteiro	Fatima João

*Participants that have withdrawn their membership during the process.

Part 4

THE JOURNEY OF THE ASSEMBLY



THE JOURNEY OF THE ASSEMBLY

SESSION 1 — ONBOARDING AND BUILDING A SHARED FOUNDATION

The first session of the Citizens' Assembly took place on 16 March 2026 at the Hôtel de Ville. It marked the formal start of the process and focused on creating the conditions for constructive deliberation.

Before moving into thematic work, members were introduced to the Assembly's mandate, the guiding question, the process roadmap and each other. The session helped transform a group of individually selected residents into a working Assembly with a shared purpose.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 1 were to:

- welcome members and introduce the Citizens' Assembly;
- clarify the purpose, mandate and guiding question;
- explain the process from onboarding to public handover;
- identify expectations and definitions of success;
- co-create shared rules for dialogue and collaboration.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session combined introductory inputs, interactive exercises and group work. Members received an overview of the Assembly's role, the sequence of sessions and the expected path toward recommendations.

The guiding question was introduced as the common reference point for the full process:

HOW CAN THE CITY OF ESCH RETHINK ITS PUBLIC AND SOCIAL SPACES IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY LIFE AMONG CURRENT AND FUTURE INHABITANTS?

This early orientation was important to clarify what the Assembly could influence, how recommendations would be developed and how the work would later be handed over to the City.

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Members took part in interactive exercises that made the diversity of the group visible. They exchanged on where they live, how long they have lived in Esch, what connects them to the city and how they see the future of public spaces.

This helped create first connections between members and made clear that the Assembly brought together different neighbourhoods, life experiences and perspectives.

EXPECTATIONS AND DEFINITION OF SUCCESS

Members reflected on what would make the Assembly successful. On the process level, they emphasised being heard, taken seriously and able to contribute in a respectful and balanced setting. On the outcome level, they wanted to produce concrete, useful recommendations that would have a real impact on everyday life in Esch.

Success was therefore understood as both a good deliberative process and a tangible result.

SHARED GOALS

Across the group discussions, several shared goals emerged:

- generating meaningful impact;
- ensuring inclusion and consideration for all;
- creating respectful and open dialogue;
- learning from different experiences;
- receiving transparent follow-up from decision-makers;
- keeping the process informed, creative and constructive.

These goals showed that members expected the Assembly to be more than a discussion format. They wanted it to produce recommendations that would be taken seriously.

THE ASSEMBLY AGREEMENT

The main output of Session 1 was the Assembly Agreement.

Members agreed that the Assembly should be based on four shared values:

Respect — listening to each other and valuing every contribution.

Inclusion — making sure everyone has a place and every voice matters.

Open-mindedness — welcoming different perspectives.

Empathy — seeking to understand before responding.

These values were translated into practical rules: listening actively, speaking one at a time, sharing space, asking questions, disagreeing respectfully, staying constructive and respecting personal boundaries.

BALANCES TO MANAGE

The session also revealed balances that would need to be managed throughout the process.

Members wanted structure and clarity, but also enough openness for genuine discussion. They wanted concrete impact, but also a positive and non-stressful process. They wanted everyone to be heard, while still moving toward collective decisions.

These balances became important reference points for the facilitation of later sessions.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 1

Session 1 produced three main outputs:

- a shared understanding of the Assembly's purpose and process;
- a first set of expectations and success criteria;
- the Assembly Agreement, defining how members wanted to work together.

Session 1 established the social and procedural basis for the Citizens' Assembly. Members began to build trust, clarified what they expected from the process and agreed on shared rules for dialogue. With this foundation in place, the Assembly was ready to move into its first thematic session: urbanism and public spaces.

SESSION 2 — URBANISM AND PUBLIC SPACES

Session 2 took place on 21 March 2026 and was the first full thematic working session of the Citizens' Assembly. After the onboarding session had established the group's shared foundation, this session turned members' attention to the city itself.

The focus was urbanism and public space: how planning decisions, street layouts, mobility, greenery, seating, accessibility and the design of squares influence how people live together in Esch.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 2 were to:

- understand how urban planning shapes everyday life and social interaction;
- explore public spaces in Esch through direct observation;
- identify spatial challenges affecting community life;
- formulate first guiding ideas for future public-space planning;
- create a shared basis for later recommendation drafting.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session began with expert input from Daisy Wagner, Head of the Division du Développement Urbain at the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. The input introduced planning concepts and explained how urban design choices influence the use and quality of public spaces.

Members then took part in a guided field trip through Esch. They observed different types of public spaces, including places that had recently been redesigned, spaces that felt underused, and areas where tensions between different uses were visible.

In the afternoon, participants returned to group work. They discussed their observations, identified spatial challenges and drafted guiding ideas in the format:

Public spaces in Esch should... because...

FIELD OBSERVATION

The field trip was central to the session. It allowed members to move beyond abstract discussion and look at concrete places together.

Participants paid attention to questions such as:

- What works well in this space?
- What does not work?
- Who uses this place?
- Who seems to be missing?
- Does the space invite people to stay, or mainly to pass through?
- What makes the space feel welcoming, uncomfortable, safe or unsafe?

This direct observation changed the quality of the afternoon discussions. Members referred to specific streets, squares, courtyards and design details rather than speaking only in general terms.

FROM OBSERVATION TO GUIDING IDEAS

The working method followed a clear progression:

observation → challenge → thematic clustering → guiding idea

First, members reflected individually on what they had seen during the field trip. They then shared their observations in small groups. Facilitators helped groups identify recurring challenges and formulate them clearly.

The challenges were then clustered thematically. Based on these clusters, members developed guiding ideas for the future of public spaces in Esch.

This method made the process traceable. It showed how concrete observations from the city were gradually transformed into broader orientations for future recommendations.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

A shared diagnosis emerged across the groups: many public spaces in Esch are currently dominated by cars, too mineral, insufficiently green, under-equipped for everyday use and not always accessible or welcoming for everyone.

Members repeatedly pointed to:

- too much concrete and too little greenery;
- a lack of shade, water and climate comfort;
- public spaces that function mainly as transit areas;
- insufficient benches, fountains, playgrounds and activity infrastructure;
- cleanliness problems, including overflowing bins and cigarette waste;
- traffic dominance and conflicts between cars, pedestrians, cyclists and e-scooters;
- safety concerns, especially linked to poor lighting and specific locations;
- accessibility barriers such as narrow sidewalks, missing ramps and unclear navigation;
- underused spaces, including hidden inner courtyards and empty shop windows;
- weak communication of the city's cultural, social and public-space offer.

THEMATIC CLUSTERS

The outputs of Session 2 were synthesised into eight thematic clusters.

Greening and Climate Comfort

Members described many public spaces as too mineral, sterile or uncomfortable during warm periods. They called for more trees, plants, green façades, shade and water elements.

Cleanliness and Care

Cleanliness appeared as a recurring concern. Members connected the issue both to infrastructure, such as bins and ashtrays, and to shared responsibility and behaviour.

Spaces to Stay

Many public spaces were experienced as places to pass through rather than places to spend time. Members called for more seating, play elements, sports equipment, cafés, fountains and amenities.

People Before Cars

Car traffic and parking were seen as taking up too much space and reducing comfort, safety and liveability. Members called for safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, while recognising that residents, deliveries and people with specific needs still require access.

Safety and Perceived Security

Members raised concerns about poor lighting, low activity levels and certain locations perceived as unsafe. They discussed the difference between safety through presence, safety through design and safety through policing.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Accessibility was understood both physically and socially. Members highlighted narrow or obstructed sidewalks, missing ramps, unclear signage and the need to design spaces for children, older people, people with disabilities, families and newcomers.

Activation of Underused Spaces

Participants identified hidden courtyards, vacant storefronts and overlooked spaces as untapped potential. They saw opportunities for greening, seating, events, signage and intergenerational meeting places.

Identity and Communication

Members noted that Esch's public spaces should better communicate the city's assets, history and activities. Better signage, more visible information and better-maintained surroundings were seen as part of making the city more welcoming.

TENSIONS AND TRADE-OFFS

Session 2 also surfaced several tensions that would remain important throughout the Assembly.

Members wanted fewer cars, but recognised the need to maintain access for residents, deliveries, emergency services and people with reduced mobility.

They wanted livelier spaces, but also quiet places to rest. They wanted cleaner and better-managed spaces, but recognised that this requires infrastructure, maintenance and behaviour change.

They discussed safety, but did not reduce it to one solution. Some members saw more visible police presence as reassuring, while others emphasised lighting, activity and design as ways to make spaces feel safe without becoming overly controlled.

These tensions were not resolved during Session 2. Instead, they were documented and carried forward into later sessions.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 2

Session 2 produced:

- a shared diagnosis of spatial challenges in Esch's public spaces;
- 31 guiding idea cards produced by participants;
- eight thematic clusters;
- a first set of guiding ideas for future public-space planning.

Session 2 marked the moment when the Assembly began to work directly with the city as a lived environment. Members observed public spaces together, identified challenges and translated their observations into first guiding ideas.

The session established several themes that would remain central until the final recommendations: greening, mobility, cleanliness, accessibility, safety, places to stay, underused spaces and the need for public spaces that are designed around people.

SESSION 3 — ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

Session 3 took place on 18 April 2026 at Maison Projet Metzschmelz. It added the climate and environmental dimension to the Assembly's work on public space.

After Session 2 had focused on how urban planning shapes everyday life, Session 3 asked how public spaces can remain liveable as Esch faces rising temperatures, heavier rainfall, drought and other climate-related pressures.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 3 were to:

- understand how climate change affects public spaces in Esch;
- connect climate impacts to everyday experience;
- explore the role of public spaces in mitigation and adaptation;
- identify what makes public spaces resilient and liveable;
- formulate guiding ideas for climate-resilient public spaces.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session took place at Metzeschmelz, a former industrial site currently being redeveloped with climate resilience, low-carbon mobility and renaturated waterways in mind. This gave the day a concrete setting: members discussed future public spaces in a place that is itself being transformed.

The morning began with expert input from the City's ecological service and Transition Minett. Members learned about climate stresses affecting Esch, including heat, heavy rain, drought and the relationship between mobility, urban design and emissions.

Members also visited the "Climate in Esch" exhibition, which presented the main signs of climate change in Luxembourg and Esch, as well as existing municipal responses.

In the afternoon, participants moved from analysis to imagination and then to guiding ideas. They worked in groups to map climate causes and consequences, imagine Esch in 2050 and formulate rules for future public spaces.

LEARNING AND CLIMATE MAPPING

A central part of the morning was a collaborative climate card exercise. Members mapped the cause-and-effect chain of climate change and connected it to local examples in Esch.

The exercise helped participants understand that climate change is not an abstract future issue. It already affects streets, squares, parks and neighbourhoods. Members discussed heat, flooding, drought, traffic, emissions, building practices and the vulnerability of people who depend on public space.

This created a shared vocabulary for the rest of the session, including concepts such as mitigation, adaptation, urban heat islands and sponge-city principles.

FROM FUTURE VISION TO GUIDING IDEAS

After the learning phase, members were invited to imagine Esch in 2050 on a hot summer day, in a public space that had successfully adapted to climate change.

Across groups, the imagined futures were strikingly similar: more trees, green façades, shaded streets, open water, fewer cars, quieter public spaces, children playing safely and people spending time outside in comfort.

From these future visions, groups worked backwards. They identified what currently stands in the way, what would need to change and which principles should guide the design of future public spaces.

The guiding ideas were again formulated around the structure:

Public spaces in Esch should...

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Several shared observations emerged from the session.

Members saw greenery not as decoration, but as infrastructure. Trees, plants, green roofs, green façades and living surfaces were understood as necessary for cooling, air quality, health, biodiversity and quality of life.

Car dominance was again identified as a major issue, now with an added climate dimension. Reducing car space was linked not only to comfort and safety, but also to emissions, noise and the need to make room for people.

Water was understood both practically and socially. Members discussed fountains, drinking water, water play, renatured waterways and sponge-city design as ways to cool the city, manage rainfall and create more pleasant spaces.

Participants also recognised that public space can play an educational role. Several ideas proposed using public spaces to communicate environmental information, climate challenges and local solutions in accessible and engaging ways.

THEMATIC CLUSTERS

The outputs of Session 3 were organised into several thematic clusters.

Greening and Nature

This was the strongest theme of the session. Members called for more greenery at every scale: trees, gardens, green façades, green balconies, green roofs, green floors and protection of existing green spaces.

Mobility and Car Reduction

Members called for public spaces to be reclaimed from cars and designed around walking, cycling, play and social connection. Mobility hubs, pedestrian-priority streets and better alternatives to car use were discussed.

Shade and Heat Comfort

Members stressed that public spaces must remain usable during heat waves. Shade from trees, canopies, parasols and other cooling elements was seen as essential for children, older people and people with health vulnerabilities.

Water

Water was seen as both a cooling element and a public-space quality. Participants proposed fountains, water play, renatured waterways and free drinking-water access.

Climate Resilience and Systemic Design

Several ideas went beyond individual interventions. Members called for sponge-city principles, circular economy logic, climate-conscious construction and planning that anticipates future climate impacts.

Citizen Education and Communication

Participants proposed using public space to raise awareness about climate change through panels, visible energy information and engaging educational moments linked to public events.

Governance and Public-Space Protection

Members linked climate resilience to planning decisions. They stressed that existing green and public spaces should be protected before new construction is authorised.

Community and Social Life

Climate-resilient public space was also seen as social space. Members connected greening, play, shade and comfort to the possibility of meeting others and reducing isolation.

TENSIONS AND TRADE-OFFS

The discussions also revealed several tensions.

Members recognised the difference between individual responsibility and systemic change. Citizens can adapt their behaviour, but many meaningful changes depend on city planning, infrastructure and policy choices.

Cost and feasibility were also discussed. Some climate measures require significant investment, while the cost of inaction may be even higher over time.

Car reduction remained a key trade-off. Members supported reclaiming space from cars, but also recognised that alternatives such as public transport, cycling infrastructure and mobility hubs must be available before access is restricted.

The pace of urban development was another concern. Members worried that new construction can reduce existing green space if protection is not built into planning decisions from the start.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 3

Session 3 produced:

- a shared understanding of how climate change affects public spaces in Esch;
- 32 guiding idea cards produced by participants;
- thematic clusters on greening, mobility, shade, water, resilience, education, governance, community life and waste;
- a set of consolidated guiding ideas for climate-resilient public spaces.

Session 3 expanded the Assembly's understanding of public space. Members no longer looked only at whether spaces are pleasant, safe or accessible today. They also considered whether these spaces will remain liveable in the future.

The session produced a clear direction: Esch's public spaces should become greener, cooler, less car-dominated, more water-rich and more resilient. They should help the city adapt to climate change while also supporting social life.

SESSION 4 — SOCIAL COEXISTENCE AND LIVING TOGETHER

Session 4 focused on the social dimension of public space. It asked what makes public spaces in Esch feel inclusive, safe and welcoming — and what prevents some people from feeling at home in them.

After the previous sessions had examined urban design and climate resilience, this session shifted attention to lived experience. It explored how different people experience the same spaces differently depending on age, ability, social situation, origin, gender, time of day or personal history.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 4 were to:

- understand how different people experience public space in Esch;
- identify factors that create inclusion or exclusion;
- explore perceptions of safety and belonging;
- reflect on accessibility and basic needs;
- formulate guiding ideas for inclusive and welcoming public spaces.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session combined testimony, exchange and role-based deliberation.

The morning began with a testimony panel. Members heard from people with direct experience of social work, vulnerability and accessibility barriers in Esch. The purpose was to make less visible experiences of public space more concrete and to invite members to listen before debating.

This was followed by World Café discussions, where members reflected on moments when they had felt welcome or unwelcome in public spaces in Esch, and what would make spaces safer and more inclusive for everyone.

In the afternoon, members took part in a public-space design game. They worked with fictional resident profiles and challenge scenarios to explore trade-offs between different needs in a shared public space. The game made visible how easily vulnerable users can be overlooked, even when an intervention is well-intentioned.

The session ended with the drafting of guiding ideas in the format:

Public spaces in Esch should...

TESTIMONIES AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

The testimony panel grounded the session in real-life experiences. Members heard about public spaces from the perspective of people who encounter social, physical or institutional barriers in everyday life.

The testimonies helped make clear that public spaces are not neutral. A space can be legally open to everyone while still feeling inaccessible, unsafe, uncomfortable or exclusionary to some.

The discussion also expanded the understanding of public space. Members recognised that the experience of public life does not stop at parks and squares. Shops, pharmacies, cafés, public buildings and service spaces also shape whether people feel welcome in the city.

WORLD CAFÉ DISCUSSIONS

During the World Café, members exchanged around three guiding questions:

- When have you felt welcome in a public space in Esch?
- When have you felt unwelcome or excluded?
- What would a public space need so that everyone can feel safe and welcome?

Members identified cultural events, parks and moments of intergenerational or intercultural mixing as positive examples. They also named experiences of exclusion linked to poor lighting, inaccessible paths, racism, sexism, fear at night, closed social groups and lack of basic facilities.

These discussions showed that inclusion is not only about physical access. It is also about atmosphere, behaviour, trust, dignity and the feeling of belonging.

SCENARIO GAME

The scenario game asked members to take on the perspective of fictional residents with different needs and vulnerabilities. They then had to respond to public-space scenarios such as terrace expansion, bench redesign, heatwaves, toilet closures or noise regulation.

The exercise revealed a recurring pattern: the needs of the most vulnerable characters were often the hardest to protect. A measure that improved comfort or order for one group could create exclusion for another.

Examples included hostile bench designs that prevent sleeping, pop-up interventions that block accessible routes, or the closure of public toilets that undermines dignity for people who depend on them.

The game helped members understand that inclusive public space requires deliberate design. If vulnerable users are not considered from the beginning, they are likely to be excluded by default.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Several shared observations emerged from the session.

Members recognised that safety is complex. A space can feel unsafe because it is dark, empty or badly maintained. But measures such as cameras or police presence can also make some people feel monitored or targeted.

Accessibility was understood as a baseline, not an add-on. Public spaces should be designed for people with disabilities, older people, children, families, newcomers and people in vulnerable situations from the start.

Members also stressed that public spaces should support encounter across difference. Esch's diversity was seen as a strength, but one that requires places and activities where people can actually meet.

Basic needs appeared as an important condition for inclusion. Public toilets, shade, seating, accessible routes, drinking water and shelter were discussed not as details, but as foundations of dignity and participation.

THEMATIC CLUSTERS

The outputs of Session 4 were organised into several thematic clusters.

Safety and Security

Members called for public spaces that feel safe without becoming closed, sterile or overly controlled. Lighting, visibility, social presence and the ability to report nuisances were discussed alongside concerns about surveillance.

Inclusion and Accessibility for All

Members stressed that spaces should be designed for different ages, abilities and life situations. The needs of people most often overlooked should be considered from the beginning.

Listening, Empathy and Shared Responsibility

Public spaces were understood as shared spaces where conflict cannot always be avoided, but can be managed. Members called for responsibility from both residents and municipal actors.

Social Connection and Welcoming Spaces

Participants called for spaces that help people of different backgrounds meet, exchange and feel part of community life.

Integration and Civic Education

Members linked public space to language learning, civic education and integration, especially for newcomers and young people.

Community Life and Communication

Activities in public space should be better communicated and made more visible, including beyond digital channels.

Mobility and Car-Free Zones

Reducing car presence was discussed not only as an environmental issue, but also as a matter of safety, accessibility and inclusion.

Green, Clean and Wellbeing

Members again linked greenery, water, cleanliness and wellbeing, showing continuity with Sessions 2 and 3.

Housing and Basic Social Needs

Housing was raised as an adjacent issue. Members recognised that housing insecurity affects dignity and the ability to participate in public life, even though it goes beyond the core public-space mandate.

TENSIONS AND TRADE-OFFS

The session surfaced several important tensions.

The first was liveliness versus tranquillity. Members wanted animated spaces, but also quiet places where residents can rest and feel comfortable.

The second was security versus freedom. What reassures one person may make another feel policed or excluded.

The third was access versus commercial or event use. Terraces, festivals or temporary installations can bring life to a place, but can also obstruct movement or reduce free public space.

The fourth was cleanliness and order versus human need. Measures designed to make spaces look orderly can sometimes exclude people who rely on those spaces for rest, shelter or basic dignity.

These tensions became important for later recommendations, especially those concerning safety, accessibility, community centres and public toilets.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 4

Session 4 produced:

- a shared understanding of how public space is experienced differently by different people;
- 24 guiding idea cards produced by participants;
- thematic clusters on safety, accessibility, social connection, shared responsibility, integration, mobility, wellbeing and housing-related vulnerability;
- a set of guiding ideas for more inclusive and welcoming public spaces.

Session 4 deepened the Assembly's understanding of public space by asking who public space is actually for — and who is currently left out.

The session showed that inclusion is not automatic. Public spaces must be designed, managed and programmed with different users in mind. Safety must not come at the cost of exclusion. Accessibility must be treated as a starting point. Basic needs must be recognised as part of dignity.

SESSION 5 — FROM GUIDING IDEAS TO DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Session 5 took place on 9 May 2026 and marked the transition from learning and exploration to recommendation drafting. By this stage, members had already worked through the Assembly's main thematic dimensions: urbanism, climate and environment, social coexistence, inclusion, accessibility, safety and public participation. The purpose of Session 5 was to bring this accumulated work together and begin transforming guiding ideas into concrete draft recommendations for the City of Esch.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 5 were to:

- review the work produced across previous sessions;
- reflect on participation and governance in Esch;
- bring in additional perspectives, including younger residents;
- organise the guiding ideas into workable thematic clusters;
- draft concrete recommendations for administrative feedback;
- ensure that the recommendations were clear, specific and understandable to someone who had not been in the room.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session began by looking back at the Assembly's journey so far. Members were reminded that their work had gradually moved from observations to challenges and from challenges to guiding ideas.

The session also introduced a governance perspective. Members discussed how citizens can be involved in shaping public spaces and local decisions, and what meaningful participation should look like in Esch beyond this Assembly.

The second half of the day was dedicated to recommendation drafting. Members worked in thematic groups, using the guiding ideas from previous sessions as their starting point. Each group translated broad orientations into more concrete proposals.

FROM 91 GUIDING IDEAS TO FOUR CLUSTERS

Across Sessions 2 to 4, the Assembly produced a broad set of 91 guiding ideas. These reflected the full range of what members had observed, discussed and prioritised: mobility, greening, cleanliness, accessibility, safety, social connection, climate resilience, public participation and democratic follow-up.

Before Session 5, these guiding ideas were consolidated into four thematic clusters:

- **Public Space Design / Urbanism**
- **Nature & Climate**
- **People & Social Life**
- **Governance & Civic Life**

This clustering step was necessary to make the material workable. Many ideas overlapped, repeated one another in different languages or addressed the same concern from different angles. The aim was not to remove ideas, but to organise them so that members could build recommendations from them.

GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION

The session included a reflection on how residents and institutions can work together to shape the city.

Members discussed existing and possible forms of participation in Esch, including how residents can be heard before major decisions on public space are taken. They also reflected on what the City should do in return for the time and effort invested by citizens in the Assembly.

This governance discussion was important because participation had already appeared as a theme in earlier sessions. Members did not only want better-designed public spaces. They also wanted clearer procedures, better follow-up and more regular opportunities for residents to be involved in shaping them.

STUDENT AND YOUTH PERSPECTIVES

The session also brought in perspectives from younger residents. Their contributions reminded members that decisions about public space, climate adaptation, mobility and community life will affect younger generations over the longest period.

Children and young people raised concrete needs that echoed several Assembly themes: more and better playgrounds, covered areas, inclusive spaces for children with disabilities, comfortable places to spend time, and more pet-friendly infrastructure.

These inputs strengthened the intergenerational dimension of the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION DRAFTING

In the afternoon, members worked in four thematic groups. Each group received the guiding ideas relevant to its cluster and used them to draft recommendations.

The task was to move from broad principles to concrete proposals. Facilitators supported groups in making recommendations specific, actionable and understandable.

Each recommendation was developed around a common logic:

- What is the issue or challenge?
- What should the City do?
- Why does it matter?
- What could be a first step?
- What tensions, trade-offs or limits need to be acknowledged?

This format helped keep the recommendations grounded in the Assembly's earlier work while making them usable for administrative review.

CROSS-GROUP REVIEW

After the first drafting round, groups reviewed each other's work. This cross-group review helped identify unclear wording, missing elements, overlaps and possible contradictions.

The purpose was not to weaken recommendations, but to improve their clarity and coherence. Members could ask whether a recommendation was understandable, whether it reflected the Assembly's previous work and whether it would make sense to someone outside the process.

After receiving feedback, groups revised their drafts and prepared them for plenary presentation.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS PRODUCED

By the end of Session 5, the Assembly had produced a set of draft recommendations organised across four clusters.

The draft recommendations addressed:

- reducing car dominance and redesigning mobility around people;
- making public spaces places to stay, not only pass through;
- improving cleanliness through infrastructure, education and enforcement;
- protecting and restoring green and blue spaces;
- greening public spaces and integrating biodiversity;
- creating shade and water strategies for heat adaptation;
- using sustainable and circular materials;
- addressing accessibility, safety and social connection;
- creating neighbourhood community centres;
- strengthening participation and transparent follow-up;
- using public space for civic, environmental and language learning.

These recommendations were not yet final. Their status at this stage was deliberately provisional. They were considered mature enough to be sent to the municipal administration for feasibility review, but they still belonged to the Assembly and would be revised and voted on in Session 6.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 5

Session 5 produced:

- a consolidated structure of four thematic recommendation clusters;
- draft recommendations based on the guiding ideas from earlier sessions;
- a first recommendation matrix for administrative review;
- a clear transition from exploration to final deliberation.

Session 5 was the turning point of the Citizens' Assembly. Until this point, members had mainly explored, learned, observed and formulated guiding ideas. In this session, they began producing the recommendations that would later be handed over to the City.

SESSION 6 — FINAL DELIBERATION AND VOTING

Session 6 took place on 6 June 2026 and was dedicated to final deliberation and voting.

After Session 5, the draft recommendations had been sent to the City administration for feasibility review. Session 6 brought this feedback back to the Assembly. Members reviewed the administration's comments, clarified and amended recommendations where needed, and formally adopted the final recommendation package through a consent-based voting process.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 6 were to:

- review the City's administrative feedback;
- clarify which recommendations could move forward as written;
- amend recommendations where wording, scope or competence issues needed clarification;
- decide how to handle recommendations considered not feasible at this stage;
- finalise vote-ready wording;
- adopt the Assembly's final recommendations through consent voting;
- prepare the public handover of the recommendations.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session opened with a recap of how the Assembly had reached this point. Members were reminded that the draft recommendations were the result of a cumulative process: shared learning, field observation, lived experience, thematic deliberation, guiding ideas, clustering and recommendation drafting.

The administration's feedback was then introduced. The purpose was to help members understand what already exists, what appears feasible, what needs adjustment and where legal, financial, technical or competence-related obstacles may apply.

The session was structured in three main parts:

- review of administrative feedback;
- revision and finalisation of recommendations;
- consent voting on the final recommendation package.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEEDBACK

The draft recommendations sent to the administration were organised into four themes, twelve umbrella recommendations and eighty sub-actions.

The four themes were:

- **Public Space Design / Urbanism**
- **Nature & Climate**
- **People & Social Life**

- **Governance & Civic Life**

The administration reviewed each sub-action and classified it into one of four categories:

- feasible as written;
- feasible with adjustments;
- needs clarification;
- not feasible at this time.

At a glance, the feedback showed that most recommendations could move forward, but that several needed tighter wording or clearer scope. The administration identified:

- 52 sub-actions as feasible as written;
- 7 sub-actions as feasible with adjustments;
- 15 sub-actions as needing clarification;
- 6 sub-actions as not feasible at this time.

This feedback helped the Assembly distinguish between recommendations that could be fast-tracked, recommendations requiring amendments, and recommendations where members needed to decide whether to drop, merge or keep an idea despite administrative concerns.

TRIAGE AND REVIEW CAROUSEL

Before the formal vote, members worked through the recommendations in a structured review process.

Recommendations assessed as feasible as written were proposed for fast-tracking. They would still be formally voted on, but did not require additional group work unless members raised concerns.

Recommendations requiring clarification, adjustment or consolidation were taken into a review carousel. Members visited thematic stations, reviewed the administrative feedback, added written comments and proposed improvements.

At each station, members considered whether a recommendation should be:

- kept as written;
- amended;
- merged;
- removed.

The purpose of the review carousel was to ensure that every member engaged with the full recommendation package before voting. It also allowed the Assembly to improve wording, add clarifications and respond to feasibility concerns without losing the intent of the original recommendations.

FINALISING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

After the review carousel, thematic groups reviewed the comments and suggestions collected from the full Assembly. They decided which changes to integrate and prepared final wording for the vote.

Groups focused on changes that improved clarity, feasibility or completeness. Where the administration had identified vague wording, groups added more precise formulations. Where overlaps existed, recommendations could be consolidated. Where concerns were isolated, groups were encouraged not to weaken a recommendation unnecessarily.

The aim was to reach wording that was clear enough to vote on and strong enough to represent the Assembly's collective intent.

CONSENT VOTING METHOD

The final recommendations were adopted through consent voting. This method was used to test whether the Assembly could stand behind each recommendation as part of the final package.

Members used three voting signals:

Agreement

Members showed support when they consented to the recommendation.

Minor concern

Members signalled a minor concern when they could consent to the recommendation but wanted a reservation recorded.

Serious objection

Members stood up when they had a serious objection and could not consent to the recommendation being included in the final package.

Minor concerns were counted and recorded. They did not block adoption. Serious objections were also counted. If serious objections exceeded the agreed threshold, the recommendation would be withdrawn.

The agreed threshold for Session 6 was 20% of the Assembly. With 40 members, this meant that a recommendation would be withdrawn if more than 8 members raised a serious objection.

VOTING PROTOCOL

Each recommendation was voted on in the same way.

First, the recommendation was read aloud. Any final wording changes were stated clearly. Members then showed one of the three consent signals. The number of minor concerns and serious objections was recorded. The outcome was then announced as adopted or withdrawn, depending on whether the serious-objection threshold had been reached.

The voting protocol recorded:

- recommendation ID;
- number of minor concerns;
- number of serious objections;
- outcome.

This made the final report more transparent. Support was visible, reservations were not hidden and the outcome of each vote could be traced.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 6

Session 6 produced:

- revised and finalised recommendation wording;
- a transparent voting protocol;
- the final adopted recommendation package of the Citizens' Assembly;
- recorded minor concerns and serious objections;
- preparation for the public handover on 25 June 2026.

Session 6 was the decisive moment of the Assembly. Members moved from draft recommendations to final collective decisions.

The session balanced two forms of legitimacy. On the one hand, the recommendations were tested against administrative feedback and feasibility concerns. On the other hand, the final judgement remained with the Assembly members.

Through review, revision and consent voting, the Assembly adopted its final recommendation package. The next step was the public presentation and formal handover of these recommendations to the City of Esch-sur-Alzette.

SESSION 7 — PUBLIC PRESENTATION AND HANDOVER

Session 7 took place on 25 June 2026 and marked the public closing moment of the Citizens' Assembly. Its purpose was to present the results of the process, recognise the work of the Assembly members and formally hand over the final recommendations to the City of Esch-sur-Alzette.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

The objectives of Session 7 were to:

- present the Assembly's process and recommendations to the public;
- give Assembly members a visible role in explaining their work;
- formally hand over the recommendations to the Mayor and City representatives;
- clarify the next steps for municipal review and follow-up;
- close the Assembly's mandate.

OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

The session was designed as a public handover event. It included a short presentation of the Assembly's journey, the presentation of the final recommendations by theme, a formal handover of the report and a discussion on next steps.

The central moment of the evening was the handover of the recommendations to the City. This marked the transition from citizen deliberation to municipal consideration.

The discussion on follow-up was an important part of the event. Throughout the process, Assembly members had stressed that participation should lead to transparent responses and visible next steps. The handover therefore created a public moment of accountability: the City received the recommendations and was expected to review them and communicate how they would be followed up.

KEY OUTPUTS OF SESSION 7

Session 7 produced:

- the public presentation of the Assembly's work;
- the formal handover of the recommendations;
- public recognition of the members' contribution;
- the formal closing of the Assembly's mandate.

Session 7 closed the deliberative phase of the Citizens' Assembly. The recommendations moved from the Assembly into the public and institutional sphere. The next responsibility lies with the City.

Part 5

THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS



FROM IDEAS TO RECOMMENDATIONS

The final recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly were the result of a cumulative process. They were not drafted in one session and they were not based on isolated opinions. They emerged gradually from the Assembly's shared learning, field observations, lived experiences, discussions, guiding ideas, administrative feedback and final deliberation.

This chapter explains how the Assembly moved from first observations to final recommendations.

A CUMULATIVE DELIBERATIVE PROCESS

The Assembly followed a progressive structure. Each session produced outputs that were documented and carried forward into the following sessions.

- Session 1 created the social and procedural foundation. Members agreed on shared rules, values and expectations.
- Sessions 2, 3 and 4 generated thematic insights and guiding ideas on urbanism, climate resilience, social coexistence, accessibility, safety and inclusion.
- Session 5 transformed the accumulated material into draft recommendations.
- Session 6 reviewed the draft recommendations, integrated administrative feedback and adopted the final package through consent voting.

This structure ensured that the recommendations were connected to the full process, rather than to one discussion or one working group.

FROM OBSERVATIONS TO CHALLENGES

The first substantive step was observation. Members were invited to look closely at the city and at their own everyday experiences of public space. In Session 2, this happened through a guided field visit. Members observed specific streets, squares, courtyards and public spaces. They identified what worked, what did not, who was present, who was missing and what made spaces feel welcoming or uncomfortable.

In later sessions, observation also included lived experience, testimonies, scenario exercises and climate mapping. Members were not only asked what they preferred, but what they noticed, what they had experienced and what different groups might need.

These observations were then translated into challenges. Members identified recurring problems such as car dominance, lack of greenery, poor accessibility, insufficient amenities, cleanliness issues, lack of shade, feelings of insecurity, weak communication and exclusion of vulnerable users.

FROM CHALLENGES TO GUIDING IDEAS

The next step was to formulate guiding ideas.

Guiding ideas were written as broad orientation statements, usually in the format:

Public spaces in Esch should...

This format helped members connect each idea to a reason. It encouraged them to move beyond simple wishes and explain why a change mattered.

Across the thematic sessions, the Assembly produced a broad set of 91 guiding ideas. These captured the full range of issues that members had observed, discussed and prioritised.

The guiding ideas were not yet final recommendations. They were the raw democratic material of the process: a record of what members considered important after learning, discussion and deliberation.

CONSOLIDATION INTO THEMATIC CLUSTERS

Before recommendation drafting, the 91 guiding ideas were consolidated into four thematic clusters:

- **Public Space Design / Urbanism**
- **Nature & Climate**
- **People & Social Life**
- **Governance & Civic Life**

This step was necessary because many ideas overlapped, repeated one another in different languages or addressed the same concern from slightly different angles.

The purpose of clustering was not to eliminate ideas. It was to make the material workable. Similar ideas were grouped together, contradictions were preserved where relevant, and the material was organised so that members could draft recommendations from it.

The 91 guiding ideas were then translated into a more focused set of 30 drafting ideas. These became the working basis for Session 5.

DRAFTING RECOMMENDATIONS

In Session 5, members worked in thematic groups and began turning guiding ideas into draft recommendations.

The drafting work asked members to become more concrete. Each recommendation had to explain:

- what issue it addressed;
- what the City should do;
- why the measure mattered;
- what a first step could be;
- which tensions or trade-offs needed to be acknowledged.

This format helped make the recommendations usable for administrative review. It also pushed groups to make their proposals understandable to someone who had not participated in the discussions.

The result of Session 5 was a set of draft recommendations organised under umbrella recommendations and sub-actions.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEASIBILITY REVIEW

After Session 5, the draft recommendations were sent to the City administration for feasibility review.

The purpose of this step was to inform the Assembly before final voting. The administration was asked to clarify:

- what already exists;
- what is feasible as written;
- what could be feasible with adjustments;
- what needs clarification;
- what is not feasible at this time;
- what legal, technical, financial or competence-related limits may apply.

This feedback helped members understand how recommendations might move toward implementation, where wording needed to be clarified and where a recommendation depended on actors beyond the City.

The feasibility review was not a veto. It was an information step. The Assembly remained responsible for deciding what to adopt, amend, merge or remove.

REVISION AND FINAL DELIBERATION

In Session 6, members reviewed the administrative feedback and revised the recommendations.

The work focused on improving clarity, feasibility and coherence while preserving the Assembly's intent. Recommendations that were already feasible could move forward quickly. Recommendations that were unclear or only feasible with adjustments were reviewed and amended. Recommendations considered not feasible at this stage were discussed so that members could decide whether to drop, merge or retain the underlying concern in another form.

This revision phase was important because it connected citizen ambition with administrative reality without making feasibility the only criterion for legitimacy.

CONSENT VOTING

The final step was consent voting.

Each recommendation was presented to the Assembly and voted on using three possible signals: agreement, minor concern or serious objection. Minor concerns were recorded but did not block adoption. Serious objections were counted against an agreed threshold.

This method allowed the Assembly to record both support and reservations. It also made visible whether a recommendation could be carried by the group as part of the final package.

The voting protocol recorded the final wording, the number of minor concerns, the number of serious objections and the outcome for each recommendation.

WHY THIS PROCESS MATTERS

The path from ideas to recommendations is central to understanding the Assembly's democratic value.

The recommendations were not simply collected. They were built. Members learned from experts, observed the city together, listened to lived experiences, discussed tensions, formulated guiding ideas, drafted proposals, reviewed feedback and made final decisions collectively.

This process gives the recommendations their legitimacy. They are the endpoint of a structured deliberative path: from observation to challenge, from challenge to guiding idea, from guiding idea to recommendation, and from recommendation to collective adoption.



FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

A. PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN / URBANISM

A1 — RECLAIM SPACE FROM CARS AND REDESIGN MOBILITY AROUND PEOPLE

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be reclaimed from cars and redesigned for people.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City of Esch reduce car dominance in the city centre and redesign mobility around people, especially pedestrians, cyclists, residents, children, older people and people with reduced mobility. In line with the final vote, the City should actively support and push forward existing plans for a peripheral long-term parking hub that is directly connected with the city centre through frequent shuttle buses. The City should also actively engage with national authorities and private parking operators, including major employers and retailers, to expand the public charging network, advocate for national policies aligned with Agenda 2030, and explore the conversion of municipally owned staff parking for public use. At the same time, the City should improve cycling infrastructure by making routes safer, clearer and more continuous. This includes physically separating bike lanes from car traffic where possible, using distinct surface colours to distinguish bike lanes from pedestrian paths, creating a publicly available map of the complete network, addressing specific hotspots where lanes are obstructed or end abruptly, such as Mësserstrooss, and creating dedicated waiting areas for cyclists at major intersections. The shared bike network should be expanded on the basis of a formal demand analysis that includes direct user feedback, and the user experience should be improved through a better mobile application and stronger maintenance of the bikes, particularly the tyres. Where selected two-way roads are converted into one-way roads to create space for protected cycle lanes, this should be accompanied by traffic-calming measures, including 30 km/h speed limits and physical design changes such as lane narrowing or speed bumps. The Assembly also recommends that the City study where pedestrian-only zones can be extended or newly created.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
A1.1 (A1.1+A1.2+A1.4+A1.5)	The citizen assembly recommends the municipality to actively support and push forward existing plans for a peripheral long-term parking hub that is directly connected with the city centre through frequent shuttle buses.	27	1	0
A1.3	The municipality should actively engage with national authorities and private parking operators (including major employers and retailers) to expand the public charging network. This includes advocating for national policies aligned with Agenda 2030 and exploring the	26	2	0

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
A1.6	conversion of municipal-owned staff parking for public use. Improve cycling infrastructure with a focus on: 1) Safety: Physically separate bike lanes from car traffic where possible. 2) Clarity: Use distinct paint colours to distinguish bike lanes from pedestrian paths and create a publicly available map of the complete network. 3) Continuity: Address specific hotspots where lanes are obstructed or end abruptly (e.g., Mësserstrooss) and create dedicated waiting areas for cyclists at major intersections.	24	4	0
A1.7	Expand the shared bike network based on a formal demand analysis that includes direct user feedback. Additionally, improve the user experience by upgrading the mobile application and ensuring the quality and maintenance of the bikes, particularly the tyres.	25	2	1
A1.8	Continue converting selected two-way roads into one-way roads to create space for protected cycle lanes, but mitigate increased vehicle speeds by implementing a combination of traffic calming measures. This should include both setting a 30 km/h speed limit and using physical design changes such as narrowing car lanes or installing speed bumps.	24	4	0
A1.9	Study where pedestrian-only zones can be extended or newly created.	26	1	1

Why this matters: Car traffic currently occupies large amounts of public space and contributes to noise, air pollution and perceived danger. Reducing car dominance would improve the quality of public spaces and make the city more comfortable for walking, cycling and staying. The final wording also recognises that several mobility elements depend on national authorities, private operators and existing plans, and therefore require active municipal advocacy rather than action by the City alone.

First step: Use the existing mobility and parking knowledge base to focus the immediate follow-up on the peripheral parking hub connection, priority cycling gaps and pedestrianisation potential. Commission a user-demand analysis before expanding the shared bike system, and identify concrete cycling hotspots to be addressed first.

Tensions and trade-offs: Car reduction must be sequenced carefully. Alternatives must be credible before access is restricted. Residents, deliveries, emergency services, people with reduced mobility and local businesses must remain able to function. The final voting table no

longer treats the proposed 10–12 hour parking limit as a separately voted measure, so this should not be presented as an adopted element unless confirmed elsewhere.

A2 — MAKE PUBLIC SPACES PLACES TO STAY, NOT ONLY PLACES TO PASS THROUGH

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be equipped so that people of all ages have reasons to stay and use them.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City equip public spaces with more amenities that encourage people to stay, meet and use public areas in everyday life. These amenities should include benches, shaded seating, shelters, resting points, playgrounds, recreational equipment, chess tables, ping-pong tables, drinking fountains, water elements, small cooling features, greenery and other simple infrastructure that makes public space more comfortable and attractive. Greening should be made more concrete through shade trees, grass and flower beds, vertical or horizontal gardens where ground space is limited, and community-led initiatives such as resident-sponsored flowerpots. The Assembly also recommends adding benches and shade solutions, such as parasols, in places that clearly lack them, including along Boulevard Aloyse Meyer. Public spaces should also be able to host low-threshold cultural activities: the City should designate specific public spaces as performance zones for street music, open-stage formats or comparable events. These spaces, and public events more broadly, should be designed with accessibility for people with reduced mobility as a primary consideration.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
A2.1	Add benches, shaded seating, shelters and resting points in selected public spaces.	27	1	0
A2.2	Add playgrounds, recreational equipment, chess tables, ping-pong tables or comparable low-threshold activity infrastructure.	26	2	0
A2.3	Install drinking fountains, water elements or small cooling features where appropriate.	25	3	0
A2.4	Increase greenery in public spaces by planting more shade trees, adding grass and flower beds, and exploring solutions like vertical or horizontal gardens where ground space is limited. Support this with community-led initiatives like resident-sponsored flowerpots.	25	3	0
A2.5	Designate specific public spaces as 'performance zones' for activities like street music or events. Ensure these zones, and all public events, are designed with accessibility for people with reduced mobility as a primary consideration.	26	2	0

Why this matters: Many public spaces are experienced as transit areas rather than places to stay. Better amenities create reasons for people of different ages, cultures and backgrounds to meet. They can also increase outdoor activity and improve the image of Esch. Children's contributions during Session 5 strongly echoed this need: they called for more and better playgrounds, covered areas, hammocks, inclusive spaces for children with disabilities and more pet-friendly infrastructure.

First step: Select a small number of priority public spaces, including places visibly lacking shade or seating, and assess which additions would most improve everyday use. This should include identifying possible performance zones and checking them for accessibility from the beginning.

Tensions and trade-offs: Liveliness and calm both matter. Some amenities and performance zones may increase activity or noise, while other residents may want quieter spaces. Maintenance, vandalism risks, accessibility and fair distribution between neighbourhoods must be anticipated.

A3 — IMPROVE CLEANLINESS THROUGH BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE, EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be clean and waste-free through adequate infrastructure.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City strengthen cleanliness in public spaces through a combination of infrastructure, reporting tools, awareness and enforcement. The City should increase the number and visibility of litter bins in high-use spaces, increase dog-waste bins and dog-bag dispensers, and install more ashtrays in high-traffic public areas such as bus stops and parks. Ashtrays should be emptied more frequently, placed away from prohibited zones such as playgrounds, and not attached directly to benches. The Assembly also recommends promoting the existing city app as a reporting tool for overflowing public bins. Reports should be used to create a demand-based cleaning schedule and to identify hotspots where larger-capacity bins or more frequent emptying are needed. Awareness campaigns, including in primary schools, should encourage shared responsibility for keeping the city clean. For repeated or serious waste violations, the City should advocate at national level for stronger enforcement competences for municipal agents. In parallel, the City should review waste policy to make correct disposal easier, for example by increasing free collections or piloting collective bin systems.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
A3.1	Increase the number and visibility of litter bins in high-use public spaces.	27	1	0
A3.2	Increase the number of ashtrays in high-traffic public areas (e.g., bus stops, parks), ensuring a more frequent emptying cycle. Placement	27	0	1

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
	should avoid prohibited zones (playgrounds) and not be directly attached to benches.			
A3.3	Increase dog-waste bins, dog-bag dispensers and dog-related cleanliness infrastructure.	25	3	0
A3.4	Promote the existing city app for citizens to report overflowing public bins. Use this data to create a demand-based cleaning schedule and identify hotspots that require larger capacity bins or more frequent emptying.	28	0	0
A3.5	Launch awareness campaigns, including in primary schools.	27	1	0
A3.6	Advocate at the national level to expand the competencies of municipal agents for direct enforcement of waste violations. In parallel, review the waste policy to incentivise correct disposal (e.g., by increasing free collections or piloting collective bin systems).	27	1	0

Why this matters: Public spaces cannot be clean if the required infrastructure is missing, badly placed or insufficiently maintained. Cleanliness contributes directly to residents' well-being and to the image of Esch. The final wording also shifts the focus from punishment alone to a combination of practical infrastructure, citizen reporting, awareness and fair enforcement.

First step: Launch a visible cleanliness campaign and combine it with an immediate hotspot review of bins, ashtrays and dog-waste infrastructure. Promote the city app for reporting overflowing bins and use the data to adjust cleaning schedules.

Tensions and trade-offs: More infrastructure means more maintenance. Enforcement needs to be fair, visible and legally sound. Municipal agents currently have limited powers, so some elements require national-level advocacy. Correct disposal should be made easier before enforcement is intensified.

B. NATURE & CLIMATE

B1 — PROTECT AND RESTORE EXISTING GREEN AND BLUE SPACES

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be designed to be green and climate-friendly from the outset, including when new construction is planned.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City create, protect, properly maintain and restore green and blue spaces. The City should map existing green and blue spaces, including protected, vulnerable and restorable areas. It should also increase the creation and proper upkeep of green public spaces, with examples raised during the process including Brühlplatz and Stalingradplatz. Restoration should focus on green and blue spaces

that have been degraded, lost, weakened or disconnected. Because maintenance is affected by budget and staff limitations, the Assembly recommends complementary structured citizen-engagement programmes, such as neighbourhood guiding projects, adopt-a-tree approaches, and partnerships with social organisations. These measures should support, not replace, the City's responsibility for public green-space maintenance.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
B1.1	Map existing green and blue spaces, including protected, vulnerable and restorable areas.	27	1	0
B1.2+B1.4+B1.5	The municipality must increase the creation and proper upkeep of green public spaces (e.g., Brühlplatz, Stalingradplatz). To complement these efforts, the city must develop structured citizen engagement programmes, such as creating 'guiding projects' for neighbourhoods (e.g., 'adopt-a-tree') and exploring partnerships with social organisations.	25	3	0
B1.3	Restore degraded or lost green and blue spaces.	26	2	0

Why this matters: Participants stressed that green and blue spaces are essential urban infrastructure, not decoration. They cool the city, improve well-being, support biodiversity and make public spaces more pleasant and usable. Once green space is lost or neglected, it is difficult and costly to recover.

First step: Create or update a map of existing green and blue spaces and use it to identify priority areas for protection, restoration, better maintenance and citizen-engagement pilots.

Tensions and trade-offs: This recommendation may conflict with development pressure, housing needs, land ownership, event use of parks and municipal capacity. Citizen engagement can help, but it must not become a substitute for adequate municipal staffing and budgets.

B2 — GREEN PUBLIC SPACES AT EVERY SCALE AND INTEGRATE BIODIVERSITY

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be comprehensively and permanently greened, with a strong focus on schools, biodiversity and climate-friendly planting.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City prioritise greener schoolyards and integrate biodiversity into public spaces where appropriate.

Because existing green spaces do not always receive proper maintenance due to budget and staffing constraints, the Assembly recommends that the City complement its core maintenance responsibility through additional channels: making use of the second employment market, including ADEM placements and students, and creating structured

opportunities for residents to volunteer a defined number of hours to support specific greening and maintenance projects.

For all new schools, greening and solar energy should be integrated from the design phase. For existing schools, the administration should conduct an assessment and implement a phased plan over five to ten years so that all schools progressively benefit from greener, more climate-adapted and multifunctional outdoor spaces. This approach should also have pedagogical value by actively involving students. The City should support urban biodiversity by creating space for insects, birds, aquatic life and other fauna where appropriate. The Assembly also recommends replacing municipal gravel gardens, or 'Schottergäert', with living planting.

The City should identify waste dumping hotspots — including locations such as Rue Victor Hugo and Place Stalingrad — and deploy a multi-faceted response that acknowledges the complex causes of the problem, including overcrowded housing and a lack of bins. Actions should include increasing collection frequency, reinforcing controls and fines, and clarifying the obligations of property owners, including Airbnb-type rentals, regarding waste management.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
B2.1	Existing green spaces do not always receive proper maintenance due to budget and staff limitations by the city. Whilst we think the city should prioritise and secure the necessary budget for this core task, we also recommend complementary measures; make use of the 2nd employment market (ADEM, students), creating structured opportunities for citizen engagement, such as "adopt-a-tree" programs and offers by the city for residents to volunteer a given amount of hours to support specific greening and maintenance projects.	26	2	0
B2.2	Prioritise greener schoolyards.	28	0	0
B2.3	For new schools, integrate multifunctional shelters (sun/rain protection, green roofs, solar panels) from the design phase. For existing schools, we suggest a progressive improvement plan over the next 5-10 years to match newly built schools, with an immediate action plan to meet a defined minimum standard that is both an improvement and realistic with current budget constraints. We recommend to understand these upgrades as including pedagogical benefits of this initiative, framing it not just as an environmental upgrade but as an educational opportunity for students.	26	2	0
B2.4	Support urban biodiversity by creating space for insects, birds, aquatic life and other fauna where appropriate.	28	0	0
B2.5	Replace municipal gravel gardens or 'Schottergäert' with living planting.	25	2	0

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
B2.6	Identify waste dumping hotspots (e.g., rue Victor Hugo, Place Stalingrad) and deploy a multi-faceted strategy that acknowledges the complex causes of the problem (overcrowded housing, lack of bins). Actions should include: increasing collection frequency, reinforcing controls with fines, and clarifying the obligations of property owners (including for Airbnb-type rentals) regarding waste management.	25	2	0
B2.7	Add benches and shade solutions (e.g., parasols) in public spaces, targeting areas that are clearly lacking them, such as along Boulevard Aloyse Meyer.	27	0	0

Why this matters: Greenery is functional infrastructure. It cools the city, improves air quality, supports biodiversity and makes social life possible. Schools are a particularly important starting point because children experience heat, lack of shade and poor outdoor design directly, and because greening can become part of everyday environmental learning. Waste dumping undermines greening efforts and requires a response that addresses both infrastructure and social causes.

First step: Assess schoolyards and identify one or more pilot sites where greening, solar energy, shade and biodiversity can be combined. At the same time, identify municipal gravel gardens that can be replaced with living planting, and map the main waste dumping hotspots to inform a targeted response.

Tensions and trade-offs: Biodiverse or wilder planting can be misunderstood as neglect. It requires clear signage, maintenance and communication. Solar, shade, greening and school operations must be planned together. Existing schools may need phased upgrades because of budget and construction constraints. Addressing waste dumping requires coordination between cleanliness, housing and social services.

B3 — CREATE A CITY-WIDE SHADE AND WATER STRATEGY FOR HEAT ADAPTATION

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be shaded and water-rich so that they remain comfortable and usable for everyone, especially during heat waves.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City develop a city-wide shade and water strategy for public spaces. The strategy should include a heat vulnerability map, more trees and climate-adapted plants, shade concepts for public spaces, drinking fountains in neighbourhoods, and water play areas or fountains where appropriate. Water features should be designed responsibly, using automatic shut-off systems, limited operational hours and water circulation where feasible. The City should also use more permeable and cooler materials instead of concrete and asphalt wherever possible.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
B3.1	Commission or update a heat vulnerability map.	25	2	0
B3.2	Plant more trees and climate-adapted plants.	27	0	0
B3.3	Require shade concepts for public spaces.	25	2	0
B3.4	Install drinking fountains in neighbourhoods.	24	3	0
B3.5	Increase the number of water play areas and fountains, ensuring they are designed to conserve water by using automatic shut-off systems, limiting operational hours, and incorporating water circulation where feasible.	26	1	0
B3.6	Use more permeable and cooler materials instead of concrete and asphalt where possible.	26	1	0

Why this matters: Heat waves will make mineral public spaces increasingly uncomfortable and sometimes unusable. Shade, drinking water and cooling infrastructure are basic conditions for children, older people, people with health vulnerabilities and anyone using the city in summer.

First step: Commission or update a heat vulnerability map and use it to identify priority spaces where shade, drinking water, responsible water features and permeable materials are most urgently needed.

Tensions and trade-offs: Water features require maintenance and responsible water management. Trees need soil volume, space and long-term care. Some interventions may reduce space currently used for parking or traffic, but these trade-offs should be addressed openly as part of climate adaptation.

B4 — USE SUSTAINABLE, CIRCULAR AND LOCAL MATERIALS IN PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be built using sustainable and regenerative materials and techniques and designed around circular economy principles.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City apply sustainable and circular construction principles to public buildings, public housing, public infrastructure and public space projects. The City should continue pilot projects for reusing materials in public construction and, to address logistical challenges, start with smaller-scale projects or specific material types in order to establish a feasible workflow and inventory system. Public projects should be designed so that materials can be recovered or reused later. The City should avoid

unnecessary concrete and prioritise durable, recyclable and climate-responsible materials. The Assembly also recommends strengthening the commitment to local sourcing in public procurement by exploring all legal avenues, actively promoting local resources through clear public signage, for example 'wood from our forests', and establishing a process to monitor implementation. Public education or communication on circular economy and sustainable construction should accompany these efforts.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
B4.1	Continue the pilot project for reusing materials in public construction. To address logistical challenges, start with smaller-scale projects or specific material types to establish a feasible workflow and inventory system.	25	2	0
B4.2	Design projects so materials can be recovered or reused later.	25	2	0
B4.3	Strengthen the commitment to local sourcing in public procurement, exploring all legal avenues. Actively promote this use through clear public signage (e.g., 'wood from our forests'), and establish a process to monitor implementation.	25	2	0
B4.4	Avoid unnecessary concrete and prioritise durable, recyclable, climate-responsible materials.	25	2	0
B4.5	Organise public education or communication on circular economy and sustainable construction.	20	2	0

Why this matters: Construction has long-term environmental consequences. Circular and local materials can reduce waste, reduce emissions, build local expertise and make municipal climate commitments more visible. Public projects can also demonstrate new practices and make sustainable construction understandable for residents.

First step: Identify one upcoming public construction or renovation project where reuse, recoverability or local sourcing can be piloted, documented and communicated publicly.

Tensions and trade-offs: Sustainable, circular or local materials may involve higher upfront costs, procurement constraints, storage problems or technical validation. Long-term lifecycle costs and legal procurement options should therefore be considered from the beginning.

C. PEOPLE & SOCIAL LIFE

C1 — HOUSING-RELATED VULNERABILITIES AS A BACKGROUND CONDITION FOR PUBLIC LIFE

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be accompanied by access to stable support structures and by municipal action where housing-related vulnerabilities affect participation in public life.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly notes that housing insecurity can affect people's ability to participate equally in public life. People who lack privacy, stability or a registered address may also face barriers to social services, community life and everyday participation. The Assembly therefore recommends that the City improve coordination between municipal services, social services and housing actors for residents in precarious living situations. It also asks the municipal government to formally and actively lobby national authorities to create a clear and effective legal framework for addressing private housing vacancy and empowering municipalities to act. In parallel, the City should develop a programme to make underused municipal buildings, particularly schools, available for community use during non-school hours, including evenings, weekends and holidays, as accessible and affordable spaces for local associations and clubs.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
C1.1+C1.4	The country's second-largest city must empower itself to influence clear and effective legislation to combat the vacancy of private housing. The municipality must have the means to act.	22	4	0
C1.2	Improve coordination between municipal services, social services and housing actors for residents in precarious living situations.	25	2	0
C1.3	Develop a programme to make underused municipal buildings, particularly schools, available for community use during non-school hours (evenings, weekends, and holidays) as accessible and affordable spaces for local associations and clubs.	24	3	0

Why this matters: Housing instability can undermine dignity, privacy, social support and the ability to participate in public life. Although many housing levers sit outside municipal competence, the Assembly identified concrete municipal and advocacy roles linked to coordination, vacant-property frameworks and the community use of municipal buildings.

First step: Clarify which municipal services and external actors should be part of a coordination pathway for residents in precarious situations, prepare a formal national-level advocacy position on private housing vacancy, and identify one or more municipal buildings or schools that could pilot community use outside normal operating hours.

Tensions and trade-offs: This recommendation touches on private property, national legislation, rent regulation and housing policy. These questions go beyond the direct scope of a public-space Assembly and beyond many municipal competences, which is why the City's role should be framed as coordination, use of its own assets and national-level advocacy.

C2 — MAKE ACCESSIBILITY AUDITS WITH AFFECTED PEOPLE A STANDARD PRACTICE

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be physically accessible and designed for everyone, regardless of age, ability or social situation.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City make accessibility audits with affected persons a standard practice. People affected by barriers should be directly involved in the planning and design of public spaces and in the programming of public events. This should include people living with visible and invisible disabilities or conditions, older people, children, people with reduced mobility and others who encounter barriers in everyday public life. The Assembly also recommends increasing clean, maintained and accessible public toilets and ensuring that playgrounds and related infrastructure meet current accessibility standards.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
C2.1	Conduct accessibility audits of existing public spaces with affected persons.	23	3	0
C2.2	Involve people affected by barriers directly in the planning and design of public spaces.	22	4	0
C2.3	Involve affected persons in the programming of public events.	19	7	0
C2.4	Increase clean, maintained and accessible public toilets.	21	5	0
C2.5	Ensure playgrounds and related infrastructure meet accessibility standards.	25	1	0

Why this matters: Inclusive planning without the people concerned is neither effective nor legitimate. Accessibility barriers are concrete and widespread: narrow sidewalks, missing ramps, unclear navigation, insufficient signage, inaccessible toilets, poorly designed event layouts and playgrounds that exclude some children.

First step: Conduct accessibility audits of existing public spaces with affected persons to establish a baseline, identify recurring barriers and map retrofitting needs. The same approach should be translated into a practical accessibility checklist for public events.

Tensions and trade-offs: Public toilets and playgrounds are exposed to vandalism and require maintenance. Retrofitting takes time and resources. The Assembly sees these as constraints to manage, not reasons to defer the work.

C3 — CREATE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES AS EVERYDAY MEETING PLACES

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should actively help connect people of diverse backgrounds and facilitate positive cross-community encounters.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City establish neighbourhood centres at both neighbourhood and city level. These centres should be open to all ages, cultures and backgrounds. They should function as low-barrier places where residents can drop in, meet others, ask questions, host activities, find information and connect with community life. The City should use vacant or underused City-owned spaces to test neighbourhood centre functions and should include community noticeboards for residents who are not active on social media. These centres should also be made available to associations and community groups.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
C3.1	Establish centres at neighbourhood and city level.	15	11	0
C3.2	Use vacant or underused City-owned spaces to test community-centre functions.	21	4	0
C3.3	Include community noticeboards beyond social media.	25	1	0
C3.4	<i>Host parrainage / sponsorship programmes pairing newcomers with long-standing residents.</i>	—	<i>Dropped</i>	—
C3.5	Make centres available to associations and community groups.	23	3	0

Why this matters: Annual events are valuable but not enough. Continuous community building requires permanent places for contact. Neighbourhood centres could reduce isolation, especially for people who do not speak French or Luxembourgish and do not know where to find help. They can also strengthen local associations by giving them accessible places to meet and organise activities.

First step: Use vacant or underused buildings already owned by the City to test neighbourhood centre functions at neighbourhood level, with clear opening times, basic staffing, visible information and a simple process for associations to use the space.

Tensions and trade-offs: Not everyone will immediately find their way to these spaces. Accessibility, staffing, programming, neutrality and long-term maintenance must be planned from the beginning. The originally discussed parrainage or sponsorship programme for newcomers was not voted separately in the final protocol and should therefore not be presented as an adopted element unless confirmed elsewhere.

C4 — IMPROVE SAFETY THROUGH DESIGN, SOCIAL PRESENCE AND EVIDENCE-INFORMED DIAGNOSIS

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should feel safe at all times through lighting, design, social presence and careful attention to lived experience.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City take a nuanced and evidence-informed approach to safety in public space. The City shall organise a biennial community well-being survey, framed in positive terms, to gather resident experiences. To ensure robust results, this should be conducted in partnership with a professional body such as STATEC or a university. In practical terms, the City should redesign places where poor lighting, low visibility or poor spatial layout reduce perceived safety, and improve lighting, sightlines and activity across the day and evening. The Assembly also recommends enabling dialogue between communities around safety, misunderstanding, racism and gendered experiences. For situations involving homelessness, drug use, intoxication or vulnerable groups, the Assembly recommends exploring night-time social worker presence who can engage and de-escalate. Cameras should not become the default answer everywhere: the City should evaluate where cameras are justified and where design improvements or social presence would be more appropriate.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
C4.1	<i>Conduct a perception-versus-reality audit comparing perceived insecurity with actual incident data.</i>	—	<i>Dropped</i>	—
C4.2	Organise an annual 'community self-assessment meeting' based on the real lived experiences of residents to work on the topic of 'How is it to live in Esch?'. They should focus on the different neighbourhoods, with an annual rotation system.	24	0	1
C4.3	Redesign places where poor lighting, low visibility or poor spatial layout reduce perceived safety.	23	1	1
C4.4	Improve lighting, sightlines and activity across the day and evening.	23	2	0
C4.5	Enable dialogue between communities around safety, misunderstanding, racism and gendered experiences.	24	1	0
C4.6	Explore night-time social worker presence for situations involving homelessness, drug use, intoxication or vulnerable groups.	24	1	0
C4.7	Evaluate where cameras are justified and where design/social presence would be more appropriate.	23	2	0

Why this matters: Perceived insecurity does not always match actual crime patterns, but perceptions still shape how people use public spaces. A careful combination of data, lived experience, design, dialogue and social presence can help avoid both underreacting to real problems and over-securitising public space.

First step: Define the method for the perception-versus-reality audit and the biennial well-being survey with a professional partner, while identifying priority places where lighting, visibility, layout or evening activity should be improved first.

Tensions and trade-offs: Some perceptions of insecurity are shaped by broader social dynamics and may take time to change. Data on crime and incivilities can be biased by reporting and enforcement patterns. Some locations may require cameras or police intervention, but these should not become the default response everywhere.

D. GOVERNANCE & CIVIC LIFE

D1 — MAKE PARTICIPATION A REGULAR PART OF PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should be planned through genuine participation with residents.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that resident participation become a regular part of public space planning, not an exceptional add-on. The City should define a framework for regular citizens' assemblies in Esch. For major public space projects, the City should allocate 1% of the project budget to citizen engagement, including at minimum proactive information campaigns for local residents, such as flyers and online information, and accessible consultation workshops. The City should also organise neighbourhood meetings between residents, administration and elected officials, use idea boxes, surveys or opinion polls where appropriate, create or strengthen a digital participation platform, and promote and improve existing tools such as Report It.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
D1.1	Define a framework for regular citizens' assemblies in Esch.	24	4	0
D1.2	For major public space projects, allocate 1% of the project budget to citizen engagement. This must include, at a minimum, proactive information campaigns for local residents (e.g., flyers, online info) and accessible consultation workshops.	22	3	0
D1.3	Organise neighbourhood meetings between residents, administration and elected officials.	20	5	0
D1.4	Use idea boxes, surveys or opinion polls where appropriate.	23	2	0

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
D1.5	Create or strengthen a digital participation platform.	23	0	0
D1.6	Promote and improve existing tools such as 'Report It'.	23	2	0

Why this matters: Participation improves planning quality, increases trust and gives residents a stronger role in shaping the places they use every day. The final vote emphasises that participation needs a clear mandate and dedicated resources, rather than being added informally at the end of a project.

First step: Define a participation framework for future citizens' assemblies and major public space projects, including when participation is triggered, how residents are informed, how workshops are made accessible, how feedback is processed and how results are reported back.

Tensions and trade-offs: Participation must be meaningful. If residents are asked for input but do not see how it is used, trust may be weakened rather than strengthened. A 1% budget allocation creates a concrete resource base but must be applied proportionately and transparently.

D2 — GIVE TRANSPARENT FOLLOW-UP ON EVERY ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDATION

Linked guiding idea: Recommendations should receive transparent municipal feedback with clear reasons, responsible departments and follow-up steps.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City provide transparent follow-up on every Assembly recommendation. For each recommendation, the City should provide a written response stating whether it will be pursued, adjusted, postponed or not pursued. If a recommendation is refused, delayed or only partly accepted, the City should explain why. The response should name the responsible department and next steps where possible. Follow-up should be made accessible to Assembly members and interested residents, and the City should organise a follow-up meeting before summer 2027.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
D2.1	Provide a written response to every recommendation.	24	1	0
D2.2	State whether each recommendation will be pursued, adjusted, postponed or not pursued.	25	0	0

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
D2.3	Give reasons for refusals, delays or partial acceptance.	24	1	0
D2.4	Name responsible departments and next steps where possible.	23	1	1
D2.5	Make follow-up accessible to Assembly members and interested residents.	25	0	0
D2.6	Organise a follow-up meeting before summer 2027.	25	0	0

Why this matters: Members invested serious time and work in the process. Transparent follow-up shows respect for that work and motivates future participation. Without visible follow-up, participation risks being perceived as symbolic.

First step: Create a public tracking document showing the status of every recommendation and schedule a follow-up meeting before summer 2027.

Tensions and trade-offs: The City may not be able to implement every recommendation. The Assembly does not require automatic implementation, but it does require transparent reasoning, clear responsibility and follow-up that residents can understand.

D3 — USE PUBLIC SPACE FOR CIVIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Linked guiding idea: Public spaces in Esch should foster civic and environmental education and language learning from an early age.

Recommendation: The Citizens' Assembly recommends that the City use public spaces as places for civic education, environmental awareness, language learning and accessible information. The City should offer language cafés in public spaces and create a language friends model pairing newcomers with long-standing residents. It should install interactive panels or accessible information points on Esch's history, culture, environment and participation opportunities. The City should also organise civic and environmental education activities in public space, including for children and youth, and make public information visible, multilingual and accessible beyond purely digital channels.

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
D3.1	Offer language cafés in public spaces.	24	0	1

ID	Sub-action	Agree	Minor concern	Object
D3.2	Create a 'language friends' model pairing newcomers with long-standing residents.	22	3	0
D3.3	Install interactive panels or accessible information points on Esch's history, culture, environment and participation opportunities.	25	0	0
D3.4	Organise civic and environmental education activities in public space, including for children and youth.	25	0	0
D3.5	Make public information visible, multilingual and accessible beyond purely digital channels.	25	0	0

Why this matters: Language is a key route into belonging. Better information and civic learning can support integration, reduce misunderstandings, strengthen respect and create new meeting places. Public spaces can become everyday learning environments rather than only transit or leisure spaces.

First step: Pilot regular language cafés and a language friends model in existing public places or future community centres, while mapping existing civic, cultural, environmental and multilingual information offers.

Tensions and trade-offs: Programmes require coordination, facilitators, continuity and maintenance. Public information tools must remain accessible, multilingual and up to date. Analogue and visible formats matter because not all residents rely on digital channels.

PRIORITISATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

After the final adoption of the recommendations, Assembly members were invited to indicate which recommendations they considered particularly important or urgent. This prioritisation exercise was intended to support the public handover and help the City understand which elements members wished to highlight most strongly.

The prioritisation ¹ was not a second vote and does not change the status of the recommendations adopted during the final deliberation. All adopted recommendations remain part of the Assembly's final package. The prioritisation should instead be understood as an

¹ Members submitted their priorities in different formats. Some ranked full umbrella recommendations, some selected sub-actions, some used a priority scale, and some added qualitative comments. Because the formats were not uniform, the results should not be read as a statistical ranking. Instead, they were analysed thematically to identify recurring priorities and messages.

additional layer of interpretation: it shows where members saw particular urgency, symbolic importance or potential for visible impact.

Several clear patterns emerged.

First, members repeatedly prioritised recommendations linked to social inclusion, dignity and the basic conditions for participating in public life. Housing-related vulnerabilities were highlighted as especially important. Members stressed that access to decent and stable living conditions affects quality of life, social inclusion and the ability to take part in community life. In this sense, housing-related vulnerability was understood not as a separate issue, but as a background condition that shapes how people experience public space and belonging in Esch.

Second, members gave strong importance to regular citizen participation and transparent follow-up. Several responses emphasised that the City should not treat participation as a one-off exercise. Residents want to be involved in shaping public spaces before major decisions are taken, and they want clear responses after they have contributed. The follow-up meeting before summer 2027 was specifically identified as important. This confirms one of the central messages of the Assembly: participation must be meaningful, visible and accountable.

Third, nature, climate and biodiversity emerged as a major priority area. Members highlighted the protection and restoration of green and blue spaces, the greening of public spaces at every scale, the integration of biodiversity, and the need to care for existing green areas. These recommendations were seen not only as environmental measures, but also as direct contributions to well-being, health, comfort and quality of life. Members described nature as part of the city's shared home and as something that should be integrated into urban design rather than displaced by it.

Fourth, several members prioritised public-space comfort and everyday usability. This includes benches, shade, resting places, playgrounds, recreational equipment, drinking water, greener spaces and low-threshold activity infrastructure. These elements may appear small individually, but members saw them as central to making public spaces more welcoming and usable. They are especially important for children, older people, people with reduced mobility, families and residents who depend strongly on public space in everyday life.

Fifth, cleanliness was identified as a practical and visible priority. Members supported a combined approach based on better infrastructure, education and enforcement. Particular importance was given to awareness-raising, including in schools, and to making it easier for residents to take responsibility for shared spaces. Cleanliness was understood as both an environmental issue and a sign of care for the city.

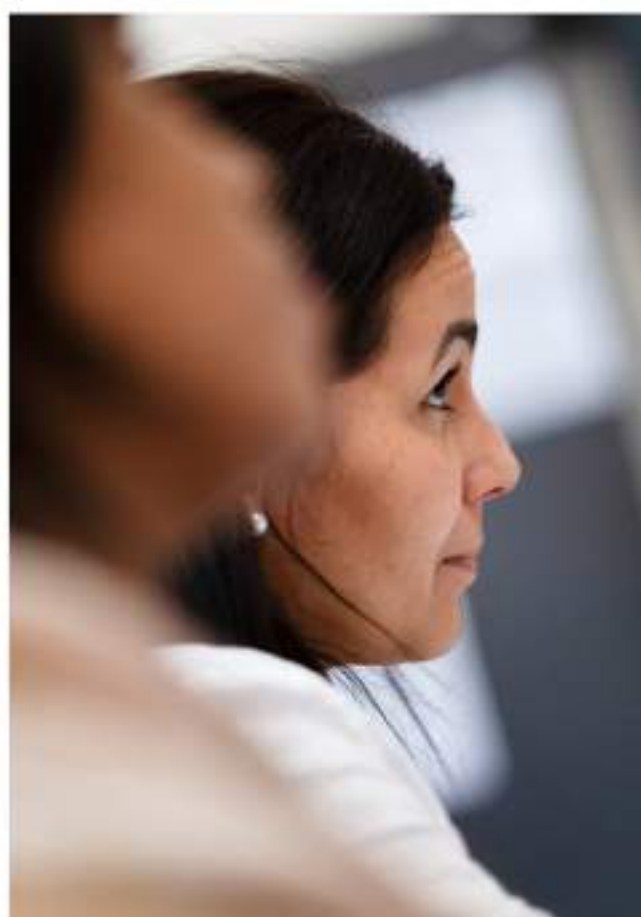
Sixth, mobility and the reduction of car dominance remained important, especially in relation to the city centre. Members stressed that public space in and around the centre of Esch should become more people-oriented, more comfortable and more welcoming. Several comments referred specifically to the area around the town hall, Place de la Résistance, Rue de l'Alzette and the wider central area. Members noted that many of the recommendations relate directly or indirectly to these spaces. They also observed that newer neighbourhoods such as Nonnewisen, Belval and parts of Lalleng often feel better arranged and more comfortable than the historic centre.

A recurring qualitative message was that the centre of Esch should become more “heemleech”: more welcoming, comfortable, familiar and pleasant to spend time in. This word captures an important aspiration of the Assembly. Members did not only ask for technical improvements. They asked for public spaces that feel cared for, human-scaled and connected to everyday life.

The prioritisation exercise also highlighted the importance of communication. Members noted that many activities and initiatives already exist in Esch, but that information does not always reach residents effectively. Better communication — through the Esch app, visible public information, multilingual channels and non-digital formats — was seen as an important condition for participation, inclusion and community life.

Taken together, the prioritisation inputs point to an implementation logic rather than a single winning recommendation. Members want the City to start where improvements can make everyday life more visible, tangible and trustworthy: greener and more comfortable central spaces, better cleanliness, stronger communication, accessible meeting places, regular participation and transparent follow-up.

The prioritisation therefore reinforces the overall message of the Assembly. Public spaces in Esch should be designed and managed not only as infrastructure, but as shared places of dignity, encounter, comfort, nature, learning and democratic trust.



Part 6

LOOKING FORWARD



NEXT STEPS

The handover of the Citizens' Assembly's recommendations marks the end of the deliberative phase, but not the end of the process. The value of the Assembly depends not only on the quality of its recommendations, but also on how the City reviews them, communicates about them and follows up on them.

Throughout the Assembly, members repeatedly emphasised that participation should not remain symbolic. They expected their work to be taken seriously, assessed transparently and answered with clear explanations. This expectation was already present during the first session and became one of the central messages of the final recommendation package.

FROM CITIZEN DELIBERATION TO MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITY

After the public handover, responsibility moves to the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. The City is expected to review the recommendations and assess how they can be taken forward.

This review may involve different municipal departments and, in some cases, actors beyond the municipal level. Some recommendations may be implemented directly by the City. Others may require cooperation with national authorities, private operators, associations, schools, social services or infrastructure providers.

The recommendations should therefore be reviewed not only as individual measures, but also as part of a broader vision for public space, community life, climate resilience and participation in Esch.

TRANSPARENT RESPONSES

A key condition for trust is a clear response to each recommendation.

For every recommendation, the City should indicate whether it will be:

- pursued;
- adjusted;
- postponed;
- not pursued.

Where a recommendation cannot be implemented as proposed, the reason should be explained. This may include legal limits, budget constraints, technical feasibility, ongoing projects, competence issues or the need for cooperation with other actors.

A transparent response does not require that every recommendation be implemented exactly as written. It does require that the work of the Assembly be answered seriously and publicly.

MAINTAINING THE LINK WITH ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

The Assembly members invested significant time and attention in the process. They should be informed about the follow-up after the handover.

A follow-up meeting before summer 2027 would allow the City to report back on progress, explain decisions and maintain a link between the Assembly and municipal action. This would also help members understand what has happened with their recommendations and where further work is needed.

Maintaining this link is important for democratic trust. It shows that citizen participation does not end when the report is submitted.

LEARNING FOR FUTURE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES

The first Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette was both a deliberative process and a pilot for future citizen participation. Beyond the recommendations themselves, it generated practical learning about how residents can be involved in complex local questions.

The Assembly demonstrated that residents can work constructively on complex urban issues when the process is carefully designed. Meaningful participation requires time, structure, clarity and follow-up. When these conditions are present, citizens can contribute seriously to the future of their city.

WHAT WORKED WELL

- A clear guiding question that connected public space, social life, climate, mobility, accessibility and governance.
- A progressive structure that moved from onboarding to learning, deliberation, drafting, feedback, voting and handover.
- A strong link between lived experience and expert input.
- Field-based and experiential methods that made issues concrete.
- Multilingual small-group work that supported participation.
- Traceability of outputs from observations to final decisions.
- Administrative feedback before final voting, without replacing Assembly ownership.
- A clear and understandable voting method.
- A public handover with visible follow-up commitments.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

- Balancing openness for discussion with the structure needed to reach outputs.
- Managing a broad topic that touched many policy areas.
- Maintaining clarity on mandate and competence.
- Working across languages and synthesising multilingual outputs fairly.
- Translating broad ideas into implementable recommendations.
- Handling real tensions such as fewer cars versus necessary access, liveliness versus quiet, and safety versus over-policing.
- Time pressure in the final phase.

Future Assemblies can build on these lessons. The process showed that residents are able to engage with complex questions when the conditions are well designed: when information is accessible, discussions are facilitated, differences are respected and outputs are clearly connected to decision-making.

CONCLUSION

THE LEGACY OF THE FIRST CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY OF ESCH-SUR-ALZETTE

The first Citizens' Assembly of Esch-sur-Alzette brought together residents to deliberate on a question that touches the daily life of everyone in the city: how public spaces and living areas can strengthen community life among current and future inhabitants.

Over the course of the process, members moved from learning to observation, from personal experience to shared analysis, and from guiding ideas to final recommendations. They examined public space not only as a matter of urban design, but as a shared condition for social life, climate resilience, accessibility, safety, cleanliness, mobility and democratic participation.

The Assembly showed that residents are able to engage seriously with complex questions when the right conditions are created: clear information, accessible language, respectful facilitation, time for discussion, space for disagreement and a transparent route toward decisions.

The process also made clear that participation does not end with the handover of recommendations. For the Assembly to have lasting value, its work must be reviewed, answered and followed up transparently. Members repeatedly stressed that democratic participation must be meaningful, not symbolic. Clear responses from the City will therefore be essential to maintaining trust and showing that the time and effort invested by residents matters.

As a pilot process, the Citizens' Assembly has created learning for Esch beyond the recommendations themselves. It has tested a way of working in which residents, municipal actors, experts and facilitators contribute to a shared democratic process. It has shown that public space can become a starting point for broader conversations about how the city wants to live together.

The legacy of this first Assembly will depend on what happens next. Its success will be measured not only by the quality of the process, but by the seriousness of the follow-up. The recommendations now move into the responsibility of the City of Esch-sur-Alzette. The task ahead is to review them, respond to them and identify how they can inform concrete decisions.

The Citizens' Assembly has completed its mandate. Its members have delivered their collective work. The next chapter belongs to the City — and to the continued democratic conversation between Esch and its residents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Esch-sur-Alzette and the project team would like to thank all members of the Citizens' Assembly for their time, commitment and openness throughout the process.

Over several months, members contributed their experiences, questions, concerns and ideas to a demanding collective process. They listened to different perspectives, worked through disagreements, reflected on complex challenges and developed recommendations for the

future of public spaces and community life in Esch. Their contribution forms the heart of this report.

We also thank the experts, practitioners, witnesses, municipal staff, students and young people who contributed to the sessions. Their input helped Assembly members better understand the urban, social, environmental and democratic dimensions of public space in Esch.

The process was made possible through the cooperation between the City of Esch-sur-Alzette, DemocracyNext, Cultures of Assembly, the University of Luxembourg and Snakke & Co. Each partner contributed to the design, implementation, evaluation or facilitation of the Assembly.

Special thanks go to the municipal services of the City of Esch-sur-Alzette for their support, logistical coordination and administrative feedback on the draft recommendations.

Finally, we thank all those who supported the Assembly behind the scenes: facilitators, translators, organisers, venue teams, communication staff and technical support. Their work helped create the conditions for an inclusive, multilingual and constructive deliberative process.

This first Citizens' Assembly was a collective effort. Its value lies not only in the recommendations adopted, but also in the democratic practice it made possible.









We, the Members of the Esch Citizens' Assembly,