

## **Citizens' Assembly on Climate**

PRESS RELEASE

### **Former President Horst Köhler takes on patronage of Germany's first Citizens' Assembly on Climate**

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The first nationwide Citizens' Assembly on Climate ([buergerrat-klima.de](http://buergerrat-klima.de)) will take up work on 26 April 2021 under the patronage of former President Horst Köhler. Advised by leading scientists, 160 randomly drawn citizens – representing Germany on a small scale- will develop recommendations on Germany's climate policy for the next legislative period. Throughout twelve sessions until 23 June, participants will discuss how to achieve the climate policy goals set out by the Paris Agreement. The topics of transportation, buildings and heating, energy production and food will receive particular attention. A broad civil society alliance initiated the Citizens' Assembly on Climate in December 2020. The participants of the Citizens' Assembly will vote on the results at the end of June. The final recommendations will be presented to all parties in the German Bundestag in autumn.

Former German President Horst Köhler on the need for a Citizens' Assembly on Climate: "Can we manage to protect acceptable living conditions for all people on our planet by changing the way we produce, consume and live? If Germany wants to achieve the goals it committed to with the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, we need a great willingness to change in our society. That's why it's so important that citizens are involved in the search for solutions - and that politicians take their suggestions seriously."

Following successful citizens' assemblies on climate policy in France and the UK, among others, the first Citizens' Assembly on Climate in Germany is now starting on the recommendation of Scientists for Future. The citizens will discuss in a non-partisan and open-ended way which concrete measures they recommend to achieve the climate goals in Germany. The Citizens' Assembly aims to answer the question "How can Germany achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement - considering social, economic and ecological perspectives?"

### **The Concept of the Citizens' Assembly**

Citizens' assemblies have become increasingly popular in recent years and are seen as a tool to counteract the growing polarisation in society. For the Citizens' Assembly on Climate 160 participants were selected to represent Germany on a small scale. The process is politically neutral and characteristics such as age, gender, level of education and place of residence of the participants are taken into account.

"A citizens' assembly brings people from different backgrounds into conversation with each other. Accompanied by experts, they develop recommendations for a future worth living together. This way, the Citizens' Climate Assembly can provide politicians with a basis for effective decisions and at the same time counteract the the increasing fragmentation of society," explains Percy Vogel, Chairman of the Board of the association BürgerBegehren Klimaschutz (*Citizens' Initiative Climate Protection*), which is co-organising the Assembly.

It is the third time that a nationwide citizens' assembly will meet in Germany. The recent "Citizens' Assembly on Germany's Role in the World" presented its findings to the President of the Bundestag, Wolfgang Schäuble, only this March. In 2019 a first citizens' assembly on Democracy was held.

### **Broad-based Advisory Board and Scientific Network**

The Citizens' Assembly on Climate will be supported by an advisory board composed of representatives from business, social and environmental associations, civil society, religious communities, and other interest groups to ensure that different perspectives are heard and that the process is neutral. Members of the advisory board include the German Tenants' Association, the German Association of the Automotive Industry, the German Nature Conservation Ring, and the German Association of Energy and Water Industries.

In terms of content, the Citizens' Assembly is advised by scientists from a wide range of disciplines as well as by experts from the various thematic areas of the Citizens' Assembly. The Scientific Board is chaired by Prof. Dr. Ortwin Renn, Scientific Director at the Institute for Transformative Sustainability Research (IASS), Potsdam. The Citizens' Assembly on Climate is sponsored by the BürgerBegehren Klimaschutz e. V. association, and is implemented by the participation institutes ifok, nexus, and IPG, which have many years of experience in organising citizens' assemblies. The Citizens' Assembly on Climate is financed by foundation grants and donations.

Further information: [www.buergerrat-klima.de/presse](http://www.buergerrat-klima.de/presse)

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## About the Citizens' Assembly on Climate

The Citizens' Assembly on Climate project started in December 2020 with a call from Scientists for Future advocating for a first lot-based Citizens' Assembly on Climate before the end of 2021. The Citizens' Assembly on Climate, for which 160 people were randomly selected, will meet over twelve sessions between April and June. The Citizens' Assembly on Climate is mandated to make recommendations to policy-makers within the legal requirements of the Paris Climate Agreement for Germany that ensure compliance with the obligations under the Climate Agreement and achieve the greatest possible effect on climate protection in Germany and other countries in the world. Questions of social, economic, and ecological compatibility shall be taken into account.

## Sponsor

The Citizens' Assembly on Climate is run by the non-profit association BürgerBegehren Klimaschutz e.V. The association was founded in 2008 with the aim of promoting primarily municipal climate protection measures through citizens' initiatives and referendums. [www.buergerbegehren-klimaschutz.de](http://www.buergerbegehren-klimaschutz.de)

## Implementation

The three institutes ifok, nexus, IPG are thematically independent and ensure a professional, neutral and open-ended implementation of the process.

ifok is the European market leader for participation and part of the international Cadmus Group. For 25 years, ifok has been shaping the issues of tomorrow through integrative processes, dialogue, neutral moderation, and specialist expertise. This is how jointly supported results emerge that have an impact. [www.ifok.de](http://www.ifok.de)

nexus designs and moderates participatory processes: from complex public participation projects to multi-stakeholder formats. The institute designs decision-making processes together with the participants and focuses on transparent communication, active cooperation, and sustainable consensus. [www.nexusinstitut.de](http://www.nexusinstitut.de)

The Institute for Participatory Design is an institute for design and innovation processes. It plans sustainable and meaningful solutions with actors from civil society, business, politics, administration, and science. To this end, the Institute uses design-oriented and collaborative methods. [www.partizipativ-gestalten.de](http://www.partizipativ-gestalten.de)