

# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION? HELL NO!

**François Jégou**

Designer & researcher at Strategic Design Scenarios, Lead Expert of  
URBACT European Network of Cities and Urban Innovative Action program,  
Trainer at the French National Institute for Public Policies

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Not everyone is convinced by the value of citizen participation...

**"Participatory  
democracy? What's  
the point? Citizens are  
already given a right  
to vote for people to  
represent them"**

**"Working with citizens  
is useless because  
they are not experts"**

**"Citizens are better at complaining than at finding solutions"**



**They are many reasons & pretexts for NOT involving citizens...**



**And these reasons are used as arguments for continuing business as usual... Meaning doing policies without involving the people they're made for.**

# Citizen participation? Hell no!

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Because it slows down every project or process.

Citizen participation? Hell no!

Because citizens have tons of different interests, the consensus is unreachable.

Citizen participation? Hell no!

Because citizens are already given a right to vote for people to represent them.

Citizen participation? Hell no!

Because it requires a lot of resources to train citizens.

Citizen participation? Hell no!

Because citizens don't understand politics & how a city administration works.

Citizen participation? Hell no!

Because it requires too many human resources.



# Why a game?

A provocative game to put your foot in it. To express things that elected officials and/or civil servants would never dare to say.



# The point?

To list and identify all the arguments that are often heard to better deconstruct them



## How to play?

1. In sub-groups, participants each draw 2 cards from the deck placed in the centre.
2. Individually, they look at the cards in their hands without revealing them to the others, then discard those that are less relevant to them.
3. The discarded cards are placed face up on the table and can be retrieved

by the other players. New cards can be drawn from the deck.

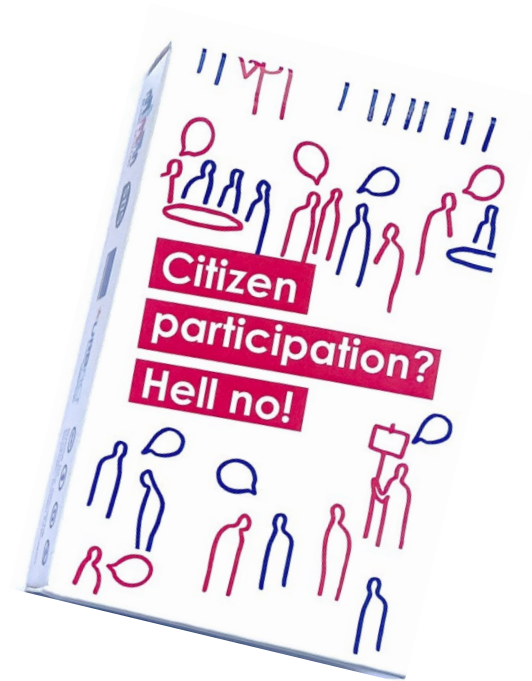
4. The round ends when each player is satisfied with the 2 cards in his or her hand.

5. Each player, in turn, reveals their hand to the rest of the group and quickly comments on their cards.

# Why playing that game now?

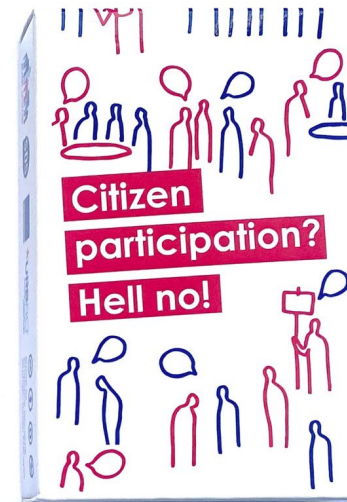
How can you help beneficiaries of EU programs overcome these obstacles to participation?

What arguments can you put forward to overcome reluctance to participate?



**You want the game?**

**It's downloadable online but you can also ask partners of Active Citizens for a physical version**



**EN**

**FR**



## LAST ADVICES BASED ON THIS AFTERNOON PRESENTATIONS/CONVERSATIONS

- **Be honest and sincere about your participatory process... Don't make promises you can't hold...** (And it's ok and fair not to take citizens' recommendations or views into account if you're clear how they will contribute to the democratic deliberation...)
- **Be creative, don't only use ready-made methods from the shelves... invent, imagine, try out new ways...** (otherwise, processes will become boringly similar from one to another and we will restrain/limit democratic stimulation/innovations)
- **You may push for participation but don't impose the how... to reduce the risks of fake participation...**



More info:  
<https://urbact.eu/activecitizens>

