How sortition works

1   Structured random selection

The citizens' assembly for democracy is designed as a nationwide process. Anyone with German citizenship aged 16 and over is eligible to participate. When drawing from the sample of citizens, it must be certain that all potential participants theoretically have the chance to be selected.

It is possible to draw random samples of the population from the municipal registers of residents in Germany. This procedure is usually used for lot-based participation procedures, such as for this citizens' assembly process. As opposed to drawing a random sample from the phone directories, drawing from the municipal registers offers the advantage that even those who do not have a landline connection may be selected.

In order to ensure that every person over 16 with German citizenship could be drawn by lot, a **structured random selection** is made:

- As a first step, municipalities in all federal states in Germany are chosen from official municipal registers. The registration offices of these municipalities are requested to draw a random sample of their citizens and hand the sample over to the citizens' assembly for the invitation to participate.

- Algorithms are used by nexus in the random selection of municipalities as well as in selection process of the citizens at the local resident registration offices.

The proportion of votes in the Bundesrat serves as a reference for the distribution of the population sample among the federal states:

Federal State	No of votes in Federal Council	Percentage of votes	Random sample if 3% respond	No of participants
Baden-Wuerttemberg	6	9%	464	14
Bavaria	6	9%	464	14
Berlin	4	6%	309	9
Brandenburg	4	6%	309	9
Bremen	3	4%	232	7
Hamburg	3	4%	232	7
Hessen	5	7%	386	12
Mecklenburg-West Pomerania	3	4%	232	7
Lower Saxony	6	9%	464	14
North Rhine-Westphalia	6	9%	464	14
Rhineland-Palatinate	4	6%	309	9

Saarland	3	4%	232	7
Saxony	4	6%	309	9
Saxony-Anhalt	4	6%	309	9
Schleswig-Holstein	4	6%	309	9
Thuringia	4	6%	309	9
Total	*69*		*5333*	*160*

2   Selection of municipalities by size

The selection is based on the official municipal directory of all political independent municipalities (including municipal associations) in Germany (as of 31.12.2018), which is published by the Federal Statistical Office (www.destatis.de).

In the debate about political dissatisfaction, reference is often made to the divide between urban and rural areas, especially with regard to the feeling of being "left out". In order to reflect the different living conditions among the group of participants better, the size of the municipality was thus a selection criterion in the first stage of the selection process.

For this purpose, existing classifications of municipalities according to size, i.e. number of inhabitants were used. To enhance the usability of the random sample, we worked with five size classes.

Size classification	No of inhabitants
I	under 5.000
II	5.000 – 20.000
III	20.000 – 100.000
IV	100.000 – 500.000
V	More than 500.000

In the city states (Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg), addresses can be drawn at the state level, in all other states a municipality has to be randomly selected first from the above mentioned five size classes. In these municipalities, the next step is then to take a random sample from the register of residents.

2.1   Selection of municipalities

Municipalities are selected from the official municipal directory using the "random number" function. In each size class, a selection range between 1 and 3000 is specified so that all municipalities of that size class are assigned a random number. The municipalities are then

sorted in ascending order. The municipality that has received the lowest random number is selected.

If the number of those to be invited is higher than 2 % of the municipality's population, the municipality with the next higher random number is selected instead. The 2 % limit has been set so that families or a circle of friends cannot by chance represent a municipality of a federal state.

Since some states have very small independent municipalities, up to 10 municipalities were selected in the first size class according to this procedure (as was done in Schleswig-Holstein). On the contrary, in North Rhine-Westphalia, only 3 municipalities have less than 5000 inhabitants. In this case, the first and second size classes had to be merged.

2.2   Sample size

The goal was to have 160 participants of the citizens' assembly. With an estimated positive response rate of 3 %, 5333 addresses were planned to be drawn from the registers of residents. The response rate was set purposefully low as not all respondents who stated their willingness to participate could be considered. At the end 4362 people from 76 municipalities were invited since not all municipalities were able to provide any data.

a.   Different sample sizes by federal state and municipal size class

The share of the municipalities of a size class in the total sample of the federal state corresponds to the share that the municipalities of this size class represent of all the municipalities of the federal state.

b.   Composition of participants according to various criteria

The random selection of participants ensures a diversity of participants that is not achieved by other methods such as public invitations or invitations of stakeholders. Procedures for participation based on random sampling can therefore be considered particularly inclusive. But even with this method there is clearly an overrepresentation of older age groups and highly educated people. In order to prevent this, the participants of the citizens' assembly were again selected from a pool of respondents who had expressed an interest in attending.

The decisive factor here is that the distribution of socio-demographic characteristics in the citizens' assembly should correspond as much as possible to the population as a whole. The following characteristics were applied:

Gender | Age group | Level of education | Federal State | Size of municipality |
Migration background

Gender	Percentage of population aged 15 and older
Male	49,3 %
Female	50,7 %
Age group	
15 – 25	12,2%
25 – 40	21,9 %
40 – 65	41,4%
65 and older	24,5%
Level of education	
High school student	3,6%
Without degree	4%
Secondary modern school (till 9th grade)	30,3%
German equivalent of GCSE	29,9%
Higher education entrance qualification	14,3%
University degree, incl. doctorate	17,6%
Migration background	
First or second generation German citizens with migrant background	10,5%

Some of these data were already contained in the data of the registers of residents. Since this was not consistent across all municipalities, this information was required upon registering for the citizens' assembly.