

# The Climate Citizens' Assembly of Mallorca:

## Process Evaluation & Digital and Social Media Impact





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Madrid, October 2023



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## **PROCESS EVALUATION**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Climate Citizens' Assembly of Mallorca (MCA) is the first assembly held in Spain set up by members of civil society. The assembly began on November 19th, 2022 and ended on February 14th, 2023.

The MCA achieved its main objectives. Given the context of climate change, the organizers proposed to hold a CA in order to "deliberate on what we should do and present a list of recommendations to public institutions." Over more than 40 hours and five weekends, 60 people debated with experts and each other to propose 56 recommendations, all aimed at addressing the climate emergency.

Despite the Balearic Government's commitment to the objective of the assembly (recommendations which gained the support of 90% of the assembly would be adopted by the Government), the change of government induced by the recent regional elections in Mallorca (May 2023), poses an element of uncertainty due to the lack of guarantees regarding continuity and the recommendations' possible impact on public policies.

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the MCA by independent researchers, thanks to the collaboration of the European Climate Foundation (ECF).

### **Methodology:**

The evaluation of the assembly has benefited from different research methods and, above all, from the extraordinary access we have been given to the assembly's development over the course of all its sessions. This has allowed us to have a broad perspective on the Citizens' Assembly. All the evidence presented comes from the following sources:

- Non-participant observation during all sessions of the Citizens' Assembly.
- Survey of participants with the aim of recording their knowledge, attitudes and experience of the assembly.
- Interviews with coordinators, members of the facilitation team and participants.

### **Acknowledges.**

This report was made possible by a grant from the ECF, but also by the help of the assembly's coordination team. We would like to stress how well the evaluation team was received by the CA's coordinators. They always treated us exceptionally well and they facilitated our presence in all spaces of the assembly at all times. This allowed us to witness all of the discussions, interact with participants in informal spaces, and carry out non-participant observation during every session. This evaluation would undoubtedly be very different without this openness from the organisers.

## **Key Findings:**

### *Governance*

Organisation of an assembly by civil society faces significant challenges. The coordination team was very cohesive. Being highly receptive to the demands of the participants made it possible to create an exceptionally suitable environment for deliberation. The methodological change that the assembly underwent after its third session with the aim of facilitating deliberation among the participants is testament to this. The level of transparency and quantity of information provided between sessions was high, as evidenced by the continuous updates of the official website.

### *Participant Recruitment*

The time frame for the organisation of the assembly was significantly reduced due to delays in obtaining the commitment of the Government of the Balearic Islands (GOIB) and the Mallorca Island Council (CIM). This forced organisers to adapt and make the recruitment strategy more flexible, employing a complementary recruitment method in addition to the lottery process. The final result is a significant presence of participants who were not chosen by lottery. The most expressive manifestation of this in the data is a primarily ideological self-selection bias, which is more pronounced than in other Citizens' Assemblies.

### *Members' Experience*

In general, most of the participants express high satisfaction with the assembly. A growing satisfaction curve is detected as the sessions of the assembly progressed. The increase in subjective capability expressed by the participants at the end of the deliberative process is particularly noteworthy.

### *Facilitation and Deliberation*

The structure of the MCA's deliberative approach was highly influenced by models followed by other assemblies. The MCA was the result of previous research that compared experiences with Climate Assemblies in other parts of Spain and Europe.

The MCA stands out for its very broad remit that is difficult to comprehensively address: "What do we need to do in Mallorca, before 2030, to face the climate emergency in an effective and socially-just way?". During the learning phase of the assembly, the knowledge of experts was given significant importance. On many occasions, this resulted in reducing deliberation time among participants. This structure pushed the participants more towards reaching general agreements, rather than criticising and scrutinising both the information received by experts, and the discussion among participants.

### *Learning and Knowledge Acquired*

Most of the participants showed significant satisfaction in terms of what they learnt and the information they received. Many of them acquired new knowledge, although previously-held strong beliefs did not change in spite of new information. Namely, more sophisticated questions about specific knowledge show little variation before and after deliberation.

To analyze the evolution of knowledge in the MCA we have used studies carried out by experts about, i.e., the consumption of water and sociological studies on public opinion on the island of Mallorca.

*Recommendations*

The MCA ultimately drafted 56 recommendations spanning 6 different categories (transport, energy, consumption, water, ecosystems and education). Of the total number of proposals, 32 received support that was equal to or greater than 90% of the participants.

*Abbreviations:*

BC3: Basque Centre of Climate Change

CA: Citizens' Assemblies

CIM: Consell Insular de Mallorca

ECF: European Climate Foundation

GOIB: Govern de les Illes Balears

MCA: The Climate Citizens' Assembly of Mallorca

SCA: The Climate Citizens' Assembly of Spain

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY.

The Climate Citizens' Assembly on the Island of Mallorca (MCA) originates from the initiative of a group of experts, mostly from the University of the Balearic Islands, which promoted a mini-public in all five Balearic Islands. The MCA is the result of a previous process in which a group of people from civil society obtained external funding the previous year, to study the possible organisation of a CA in the Balearic Islands. For six months, a group convened and used the funding to interview and speak with academic experts, members of civil society and political representatives from the five islands. Their objective was to design a mini-public that encompassed all the islands of the archipelago, combining local issues (the problems of each island) and regional ones (those of the entire archipelago). The preparatory work ended in October 2021 when they secured the commitment of Balearic political institutions to finance the organisation of the CA with public resources.

The start date of the assembly throughout the archipelago was delayed and, in the end, only the island of Mallorca, together with the Government of the archipelago, approved the implementation of the assembly in Mallorca. Delayed from the initial schedule and reduced in ambition to a single island, the MCA gets underway just after summer 2022.

MCA initiative is unique because it's planned by non-government individuals. Both the promotion of a study that aimed to create a mini-public, and its ultimate organisation a year later, was piloted by members of civil society and academic experts. Before starting the MCA in November 2022, a coordination team was formed, which included three members of the original team that had promoted the study a year earlier to design the mini-public in the Balearic archipelago. They were joined by the coordinator of the facilitation team. This group achieved two important milestones before launching the assembly. First, The Government of the Balearic Islands and the Council of Mallorca committed to carrying out the initiatives that arise from the assembly and that have a level of support that is equal to or greater than 90% of participants. Secondly, they secured the necessary funding from the Balearic Government (GOIB) and the Mallorca Council (CIM) for the organisation of the entire deliberative process on the biggest island (Mallorca).



The bottom-up structure of this group and its unique make-up consisting of people with a strong pro-environmental attitude may have had other effects on the composition and dynamics of the process. Possible examples of this vary from the recruitment process (self-selected participants that made the group less representative of the population), to social network messages or expert selection that may have created an environment in which it was more difficult to raise objections to pro-environmental proposals.

The MCA began in September 2022 with the selection of 60 people by lottery, according to socio-demographic criteria (gender, age, education and place of residence). All participants would be rewarded with €60 for each session of the MCA attended, plus a grant for transportation. The question at the heart of the MCA (“What do we need to do in Mallorca, before 2030, to face the climate emergency in an effective and socially-just way?”) was inspired, according to the coordinators of the MCA, by the question asked in the Spanish Climate Assembly (SCA), completed six months earlier (May 2022).

Session 1	Physical basis and global framework of climate change.	November 19th, 2022
Session 2	Energy systems and materials.	December 3rd, 2022
Session 3	Transport, urban and territorial planning.	January 14th, 2023
Session 4	Ecosystems, water and agriculture.	January 28th, 2023
Session 5	Final session for drafting recommendations and voting.	February 18th, 2023

*Table 1. MCA Schedule*

The MCA took place on five Saturdays, spread over the course of four months (November to February). All sessions began at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. The five sessions were held in different municipalities on the island of Mallorca in public schools, which were opened in order to host the assembly. The structure of the sessions was thematic. In this way, the participants addressed a different topic related to climate change in each session. The agenda was prepared by the coordination team. The first session was a general introduction to climate change and its impact, with both

academics and representatives of civil society present. The last session was reserved for joint reflection and the final wording of the proposals. The objective of the coordinators of the MCA, according to their declarations, was to explicitly invite all participants to debate all subjects. As a result, the possibility of dividing participants into thematic groups was rejected, as has been customary in previous European Assemblies.

The objective of this report is to evaluate the five sessions of the MCA, following OECD framework. Analysis of the impact of the MCA will be dealt with in a separate report. For clarity, we have divided the evaluation into four sections that cover the most important aspects of the OECD proposal (process, design, integrity and deliberative experience):

- a) The governance of the MCA
- b) Members' experience
- c) Facilitation and deliberation
- d) Learning and Knowledge Acquisition

The evaluation was made using three different sources of data: a) participants' surveys carried out in the first and last sessions; b) non-participant observation in the five sessions, both in plenary spaces and in small groups; and c) interviews with the organisers and participants collected in field notes.

## 2. THE GOVERNANCE OF THE MCA.

The coordination of the MCA was carried out by a group made up of academic experts and active members of civil society. Unlike Citizens' Assemblies that have been organised in recent years in Europe, the MCA was conceived and planned by civil society. In this report, we do not describe the internal structure of the MCA which can be found in the final document of proposals<sup>1</sup> (p.5). Instead, the focus is on the origins and profile of the coordination team.

The structure of the deliberative process was based on the analysis of previous experiences in Spain and Europe, as well as an exchange with the coordinators and facilitation team of the Spanish Citizens' Assembly on climate change (BC3<sup>2</sup>). They had regular meetings in order to devise the composition of the MCA. It should be noted that the coordinators, according to their own testimonies, had no experience in developing a CA, so external advice was important for them to start with. This does not mean that the MCA was a copy of what had been done at the national level, since, as we will see, the design of the assembly in Mallorca was very different. The final form adopted by the MCA, according to the organisers themselves, was determined by the resources available. In their opinion, it would have been better to extend the Saturday sessions by an extra half day, or hold a multi-day session. However, according to them, there were no more resources to do so.

### **Before the MCA.**

The assembly's agenda was prepared by the coordination team, which was also in charge of contacting experts and planning the information and sessions. In this regard, according to the testimonies of the organisers, they took great advantage of the previous work carried out when designing the Balearic-wide assembly the previous year.

The coordination team was originally made up of three people. Once the resources were available to start the MCA, the facilitation coordinator plus a management assistant joined the team. The three original members of the team were part of the group that undertook the study a year before, which devised a means to carrying out the assembly on all the islands. One of them, moreover, was chosen by the Government of the Balearic Islands in 2020 to coordinate the Committee of Experts for the Energy Transition and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://blocs.uib.cat/assembleapelclima/files/2023/03/AAFF\\_INFORME-DE-PROPOSTES\\_Corregit.pdf](https://blocs.uib.cat/assembleapelclima/files/2023/03/AAFF_INFORME-DE-PROPOSTES_Corregit.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bc3research.org/>

Climate Change of the archipelago<sup>3</sup>. This is a body made up of independent experts created by the 2019 Balearic law on climate change to offer scientific and independent information on climate change and its implications in the Balearic Islands. The other two members of the coordination team also had backgrounds in environmental and political movements of the Balearic archipelago. In short, the members of the coordination team of the MCA had a significant commitment to tackling climate change and its consequences in the archipelago before the launch of the assembly.

The participants were not given any information about the contents of the MCA in advance. Nor were they given information on climate change or global warming, both in general and in the context of the Balearic Islands. Prior to the start of the assembly, only three documents were distributed among the participants, all of which had to do with the functioning of the assembly. The first one explained in simple, pedagogical terms what a CA was, citing different examples previously carried out in Europe (how the selection had been made, what it consisted of and what was going to be done with the results)<sup>4</sup>. The second outlined the principles to be followed in public debate (basic rules of behaviour and respect), as well as the principles by which the deliberative process was to be ruled<sup>5</sup>. This conveyed to the participants the clear objective of their participation. Based on the idea of the climate emergency, the deliberative process had to be a) effective (“propose significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions at the height of the climate crisis we are facing, which can be resolved on a local level”); b) fair (“proposals must consider social justice and benefit the majority”), and c) non-regressive (“proposals cannot contradict positive climate policies currently in force or in the process of being enacted”). Finally, the third document included a glossary of global warming terms<sup>6</sup>.

With these three documents (available on the MCA website and on paper in all face-to-face sessions), the organising team aspired to establish the limits of possible deliberation: "we cannot afford to go backwards on any of the policies." After the first session, the objective of which was to offer more detailed information on climate change in general and its consequences in Mallorca in particular, in the second session, before

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.caib.es/sites/canviclimatic2/ca/comita\\_daexperts/](https://www.caib.es/sites/canviclimatic2/ca/comita_daexperts/)

<sup>4</sup> [https://mcusercontent.com/98a7d1a3db2715081ee2df858/files/64ac10b5-4bd4-421a-6b55-befa6694fcb6/MallorcaPelClima\\_ok.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/98a7d1a3db2715081ee2df858/files/64ac10b5-4bd4-421a-6b55-befa6694fcb6/MallorcaPelClima_ok.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.assembleapelclima.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/posters-acords-principispregunta-1-1.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.assembleapelclima.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Glosari.pdf>

starting with the presentation of experts on specific topics, the organisers dedicated significant time (more than 30') to explaining the principles that structured the MCA (effectiveness, justice and non-regression). At no time was there any debate on these principles, which guaranteed the organisers a general framework from which to make proposals and reject those that did not meet these requirements. These criteria could be applied a posteriori to the proposals made during the MCA and leave out any proposals that breached these guidelines. The criteria had a performative value, which structured the debate in the assembly. It should be noted that there were no reactions against these principles from among the participants. On the contrary, there was a debate and questioning about the political commitment after the upcoming elections, which showed an active attitude on the part of the attendees.

### **Experts and social stakeholders.**

The selection of both experts and social stakeholders had a double function. The purpose of the experts was to provide assembly members with the necessary information so that they can hold informed debates. The purpose of the social stakeholders was to explain their positions and perspectives on how to deal with climate change. From the outset, however, the expert advisors played more of a central role. They were given more time to present information and the debate process was designed to facilitate communication between participants and experts rather than with the social stakeholders.

This hierarchy between these two groups is often found in Citizens' Assemblies. The coordinators, according to our field notes, understood that scientists deal with neutral and impartial information, which can be transmitted to the participants without fear of influencing them in a biased way. Participants learn new facts and they can make up their own minds about them. In contrast, social stakeholders represented a specific interest that could strongly influence the participants. Hence, in the design of the deliberation phase, the space for interaction between social stakeholders and participants was significantly reduced.

The expert advisors were primarily academics. The coordinators had taken care to select capable people who had already demonstrated their worth as thinkers and intellectuals. They were well balanced in terms of gender. At no point were experts with different perspectives who could contrast their points of view contacted. The social stakeholders were also selected by the coordination team, with the aim of providing a heterogeneous representation of interests, from representatives of ecological associations

to businessmen. However, the final result when it came to representing the different interests on the island was not totally balanced. For example, the debate could have been very different if representatives of the main tourism or car rental agencies had participated.

### **Participant recruitment.**

The selection of participants was ultimately carried out via two different methods due to a limited time frame. The first method is the usual selection process employed by other CAs. The organisers had the help of the Sortition Foundation to select participants via a lottery and send invitations to 10,000 homes on the island of Mallorca, to which nearly 500 people responded. From this group, 60 people were selected according to socio-demographic criteria (gender, age, level of education, place of residence and income status). However, the postponement of the start of the MCA, due to the delay in reaching an agreement with public institutions, led the coordinators to propose a second method of recruitment. This consisted of enabling a registration form on the MCA's website, via which interested persons could register. Consequently, all those who were interested and registered directly on the website were ultimately treated the same as those who accepted the invitation from the lottery.

The existence of a double recruitment method breaks the idea of the lottery as the only means of selection. If selection via lottery often fails to prevent a certain attitudinal bias in the sample of those who agree to participate after receiving an invitation letter (self-selection), as Peixoto and Spada (2023) recently showed<sup>7</sup>, the act of creating an open website that facilitates the registration of interested people only increases this bias. In the first survey we distributed to the participants we did not ask about how they were recruited. It was only as the sessions progressed that we recorded testimonials from some participants who indicated a recruitment procedure that was different from what we expected. The usual means of communication for the lottery method was a letter posted to an address. Any member of the household could accept the invitation by contacting the MCA. However, according to the testimonies of some participants, some had signed up directly on the assembly's website, filling out a standard form. This inscription almost always came as a result of an invitation from an acquaintance or even from a university professor who encouraged her students to enroll. For this reason, in the second survey

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<sup>7</sup> <https://democracyspot.net/2023/02/22/reflections-on-the-representativeness-of-citizens-assemblies-and-similar-innovations/>

distributed among the participants at the end of the MCA, we introduced this question. According to the answers obtained, only 50% of the participants in the MCA were selected by lottery (through a postal letter). The other half were selected to participate, based on the responses given in the questionnaire, after having voluntarily registered on the MCA website.

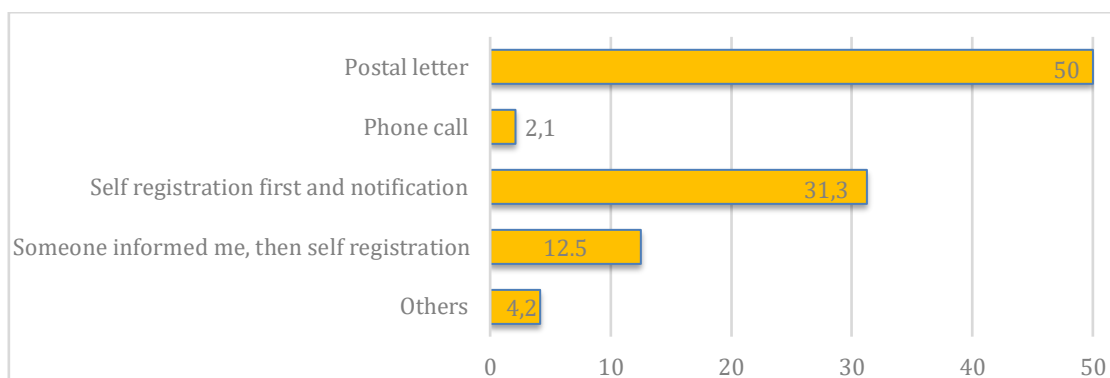


Figure 1. Recruitment in the MCA (%)<sup>8</sup>

If any lottery-driven process generates a self-selection bias, we expect an even greater one by enabling such an open recruitment procedure. For example, we may anticipate a larger-than-expected bias based on age. According to data from the National Statistics Institute, the population between 16 and 29 years of age on the island of Mallorca represents 16.3% of the total population. In the MCA, this population represented 26.8% of the participants. There is a similar bias in the adult population between 45 and 55 years. They represent 15% of the island's population, while in the MCA they accounted for 26.7% of the participants. The balance between men and women was more proportional with respect to their distribution in the island's population. Along with the biased age distribution, there is also an over-representation of people who state they have university degrees. While in the archipelago as a whole 36% of people between 25 and 64 years of age reached higher education, in the MCA they represented 48%<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (n=48). Question wording: Q27. Please, tell us how you were selected to participate in the Citizens' Assembly on Climate change. Options: a) I received a letter by post informing me that I had been selected as a member of the assembly; b) I received a call or email informing me that I had been selected as a member of the assembly; c) I first registered on a voluntary basis and then I was notified that I had been selected; d) I was first informed about the assembly by someone I knew, then I registered and lastly, I was notified that I had been selected; e) None of the above: Please write in this space how you were selected to participate in the assembly.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/mc/redie-eurydice/sistemas-educativos/contexto/nivel-formacion-poblacion-adulta.html>

It is the ideology of the participants, however, that shows a more pronounced bias. Ideology is usually measured by a scale of 0 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right), whereby respondents position themselves somewhere on this continuous scale. We do not have data for the island of Mallorca alone, but given that its population represents almost 80% of the Balearic Islands, we can get an idea based on data for the entire archipelago. According to a recent study by the Gadeso Foundation (2023)<sup>10</sup> regarding the total population of the Balearic Islands, the bulk of the population is in the centre (29.6%), positioning themselves at a "5" on the ideological scale, while in the MCA that portion of the population only represented 14% of participants. The sample of participants is also heavily skewed to the left, since in the MCA those participants who were located on the scale between 0 and 4 (extreme left and centre left) represented almost 60% of participants, when in the Gadeso Foundation study on the population of the entire archipelago, this percentage was less than 30%.

This ideological bias to the left is not entirely strange if we look at data from the SCA. There, too, the sample of participants showed a leaning to the left in comparison with the ideological distribution of the Spanish population. However, in the MCA the ideological bias is much more pronounced than what we observed in the SCA.

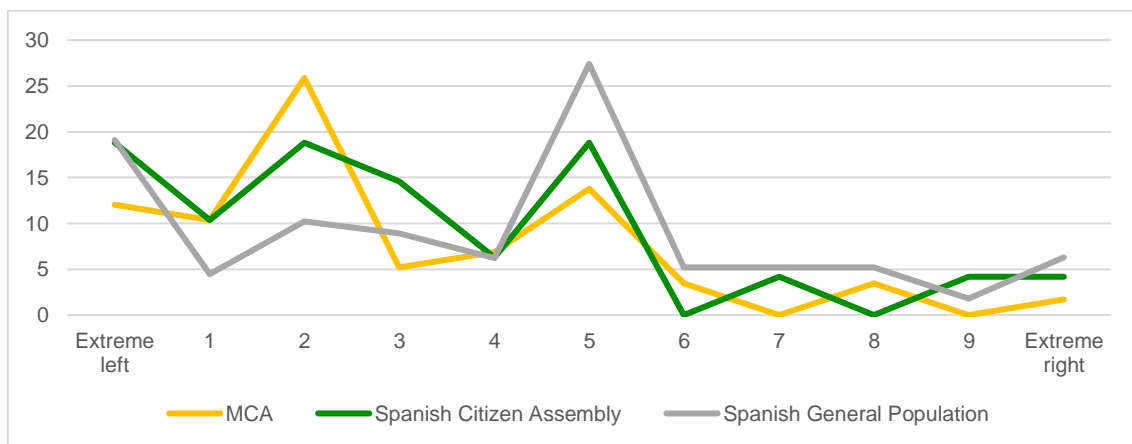


Figure 2. Participants in the MCA by ideology (compared with SCA and Spanish General Population). Source: Spanish Evaluation Report.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.gadeso.org/files/2023/04/qg-n-437.pdf>



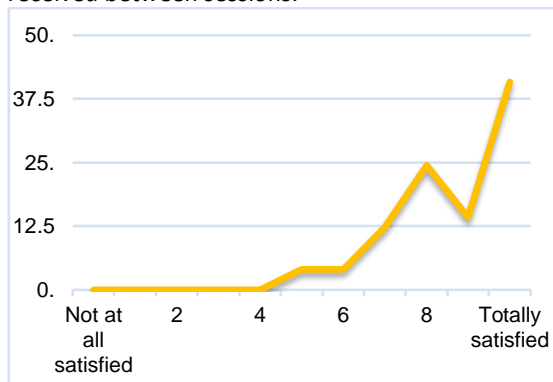
### 3. Members' experience of the MCA.

#### Members' satisfaction with the process.

The participation of those selected was highly consistent during the four months over which the five meetings took place. There were always between 55 and 60 people present and only in a few cases did participants withdraw for unknown reasons. In general terms, according to the information collected in the survey provided at the end of the fifth session (T2), the participants showed a high degree of satisfaction with the MCA.

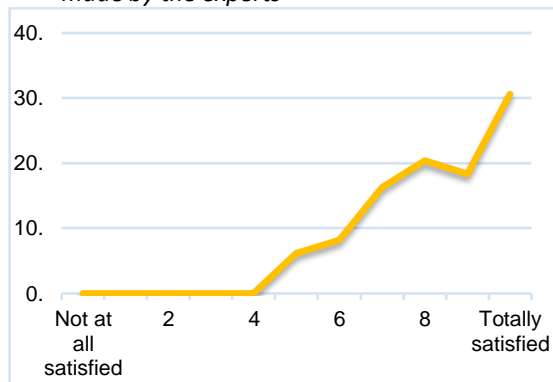
As can be seen in the graphs below, satisfaction is high with 1) the information provided, 2) the interventions of the experts, 3) the plurality of opinions among the experts, as well as 4) the degree of knowledge that each individual subjectively thinks they have acquired over the course of the assembly.

Figure 3. Satisfaction with the information received between sessions.



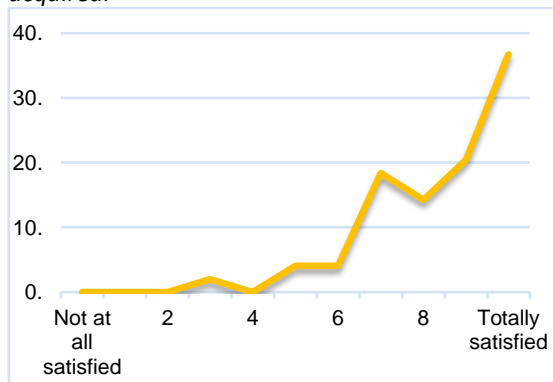
Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49) Source:

Figure 4. Satisfaction with the interventions made by the experts



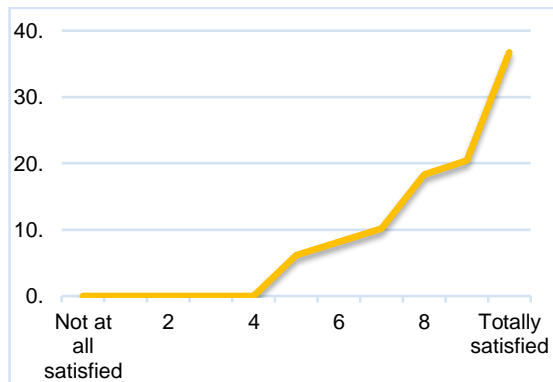
Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49)

Figure 5. Satisfaction with the level of knowledge on climate change that you have acquired.



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49) Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49)

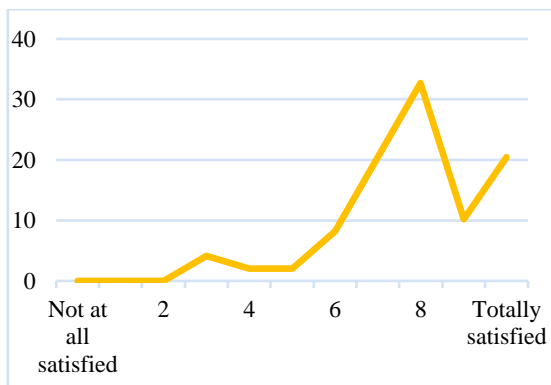
Figure 6. Satisfaction with the plurality of opinions and points of view of the experts.



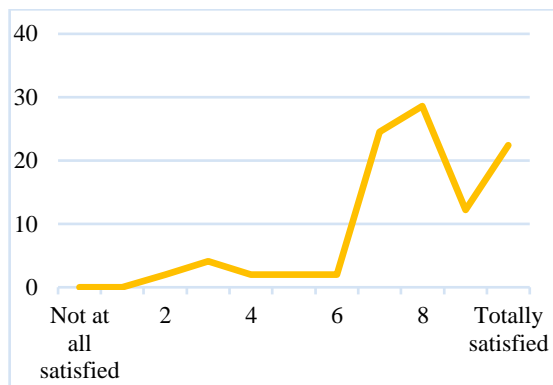
On the other hand, satisfaction with the deliberation phase is equally high, as can be seen in the graphs below. There is significant satisfaction with the time dedicated to group debates, learning, and drafting their proposals. It is true that the level of satisfaction is lower than that expressed by the participants with respect to other aspects (less than 9), so we can assume that participants experienced some inconveniences.

Figure 7. Satisfaction with the length of time spent in working groups. Figure 8.

Figure 8. Satisfaction with the length of time dedicated to training and learning.

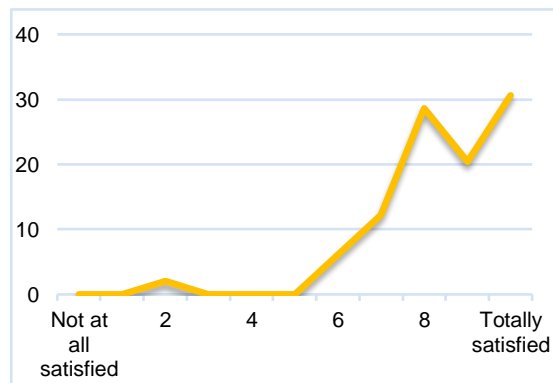


Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49)



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49)

Figure 9. Satisfaction with the group work carried out to deliberate and elaborate proposals.



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=49)

Based on our field notes and non-participant observation during the sessions, there was a real sense of satisfaction with the deliberation process. In private and in the groups that formed during break time, people enthusiastically commented on the discussion dynamics and the process in general. We were able to detect a significant learning curve. In the first sessions, some participants expressed in small groups their uncertainty about the process as well as their lack of skills or understanding of what was happening.

Likewise, at the beginning, there was a lack of confidence in their own abilities, an issue which, by the end of the assembly, was no longer mentioned in informal conversations with participants. In the last session they congratulated each other, highlighting the sense of fulfilment they felt from carrying out the assigned task. The receptive nature of the entire coordination team and the facilitators towards the participants, generated an ideal environment for communication. This allowed for constant adaptation of the process as difficulties arose. This was clear when coordinators changed the structure of the sessions after the third session.

In the second session, for example, one of the participants in one of the small groups, after having listened to the experts and representatives of civil society, sincerely asked the facilitator what they should do if they didn't know anything. Another, in the same session, suggested that it would be helpful if the experts proposed alternative solutions so that the participants didn't have to imagine them from scratch. The fact that each session was dedicated to a different topic greatly narrowed the facilitators' ability to enact change. Time was limited and there were numerous tasks to be carried out within a given session all in quick succession. Some participants expressed this in small groups. After this second session, the coordinators created a satisfaction survey with the aim of collecting the opinion of the participants and their possible suggestions to improve future sessions. When asked about possible changes to the structure of the sessions, many demanded more time for debate:

“My feeling was that we received too much information in too small a space of time. If the information is given briefly, then it is not in-depth enough, and this is a problem when it comes to digesting it. I would have liked to have fewer experts that give information more calmly and more in-depth”.

“We have too little time in the group sessions to discuss and too much time with the speakers in the morning”

[Comments of the participants in the organisers' satisfaction survey]

The coordination group, after carrying out the satisfaction survey at the end of the second session, decided to modify the structure of the sessions. The change sought, according to the comment of the organisers, "to increase the time for debate, in line with what came out of the survey." With this goal in mind, they changed the way information was presented by the experts. Instead of reserving time for the presentation of

information, which took up about two hours in the morning (plus another one and half for questions and answers), the experts would record a video of no more than five minutes and it would be sent to the participants in advance of the deliberative session. The video consisted of a summary of the contents that the expert was going to talk about. In most of them, the video included part of the PowerPoint made by the expert with a clear description of the problem to be discussed.

In this way, the remaining three Saturdays always began with a debate among the participants on the subject, based on the information learnt from the videos. Although this doesn't take into account the fact that some participants did not view the videos, it allowed more time for deliberation. The role of the experts would then be to respond to questions raised by the interaction among the participants. Usually, the facilitators began each session by asking the participants who had seen the video. In the sessions in which we were present, about three quarters of the group raised their hands. For that reason, we cannot guarantee that the information from the experts was received by all of participants. The change prioritised time for deliberation among the participants, but reduced the presence of the experts' content.

The high degree of satisfaction of the participants reflects, however, the careful organisation of the deliberative sessions. Both the coordination team and the group of facilitators spent a lot of time planning the sessions, taking into account the objectives set (give information, deliberate and propose). Great efforts were put into including everyone, as well as being as transparent as possible. All information was available in different formats. The attention also paid to the logistics and movement of the participants contributed to creating a suitable environment for deliberation. However, among many participants, the time given to the debates was noted as a determining factor. "There is not enough time", "everything is going very fast" and other similar comments were expressed informally in the groups that formed during breaks.

The design of the MCA posed a challenge from the start. The fact that the agenda to be discussed was broad (a generic topic for each of the sessions, which in turn was divided into subtopics) possibly had a significant impact on deliberation times.

### **Inclusion and empowerment.**

The feeling of having a responsibility (in making recommendations) proved challenging for almost everyone. As the sessions went on, the comments reinforced the

work they had accomplished, opening optimistic spaces regarding the ability of the participants to solve the general question satisfactorily. A proxy indicator to assess levels of empowerment is the degree to which members report their ability to make quality proposals in the assembly. As figure 10 suggests, this confidence slightly increased at the end of the process, as it is greater than the level indicated at the beginning of the assembly.

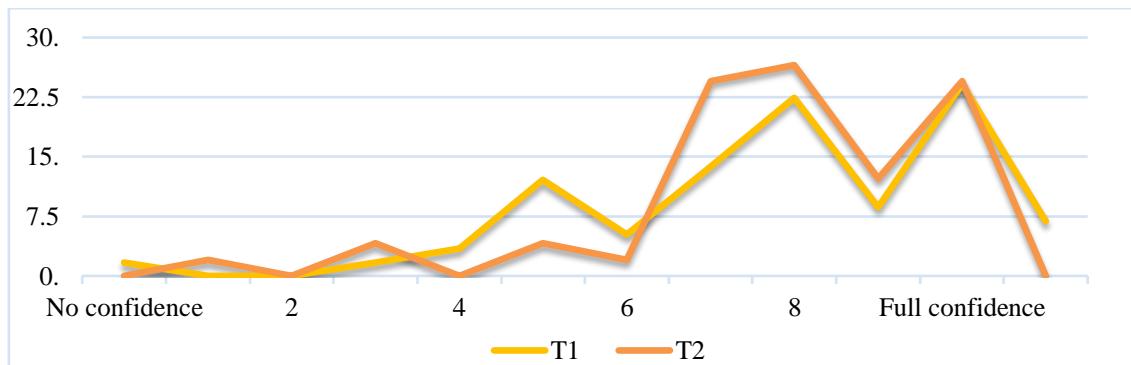


Figure 10. Confidence in the capacity of the assembly to put forward quality proposals.

Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49).

This growth in confidence can also be perceived in other data. Asked what should be done with the proposals emanating from the process, at the beginning of the sessions, only 12% thought that the proposals should be directly implemented. At the end of the process, more than 27% supported this idea. In any case, the participants continued to think that independent experts should play an important role in the final approval of the proposals. This percentage varied slightly from 46% at the beginning to 50% at the end.

As we can see, the deliberative process managed to create a sense of empowerment among the participants in terms of their capabilities. However, in line with what has happened in other assemblies (Elstub et al 2022: 30)<sup>11</sup>, the assembly caused participants to be more trusting of citizens in general. The complexity of the deliberative process seems to make participants reconsider their initial positions on the matter. Support given to the idea of the general public being the last step in the approval of the recommendations made during the MCA decreases, from 19% to 12% (figure 11). In this sense, support they initially gave to the role that political representatives should have in approving the proposals also decreases from 19% to 10%.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/research-report-citizens-assembly-scotland/documents/>

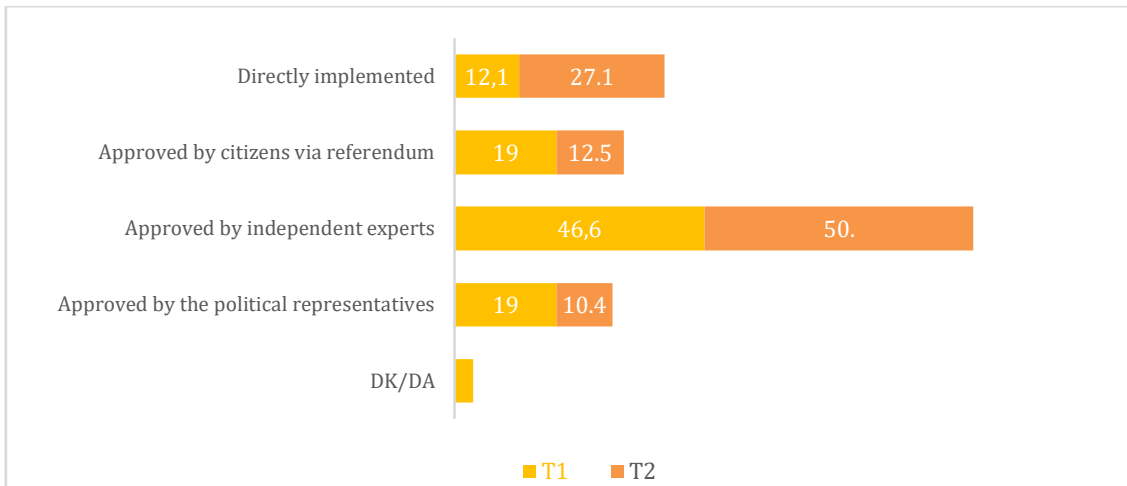


Figure 11. What should be done with the proposals at the end of the assembly  
 Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=48)

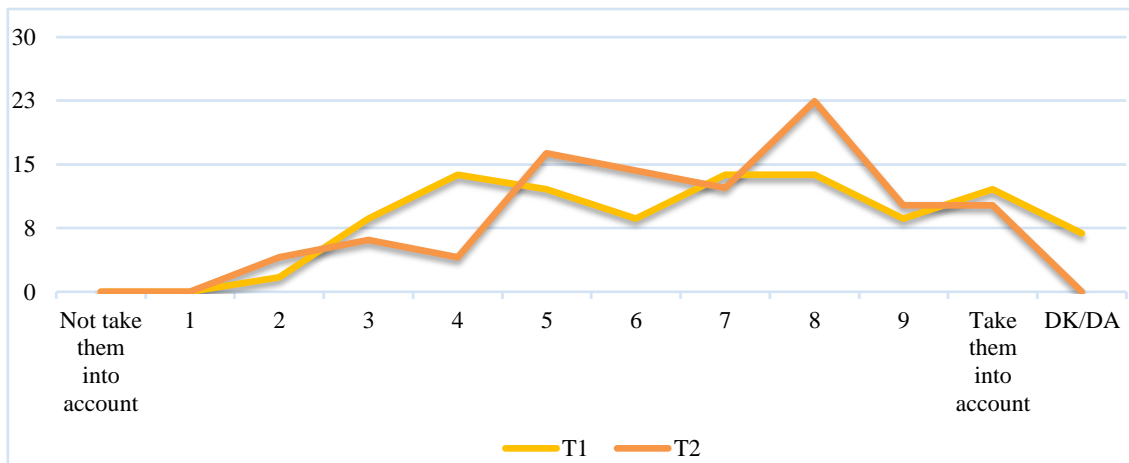


Figure 12. Consell de Mallorca will take the proposals into account.  
 Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49).

One of the crucial elements of CAs is the link between the assemblies and public policies. The fact that the MCA was a civil society initiative further increased the importance of this link. The coordination team, very present at all times in the deliberative sessions, constantly highlighted the initial commitment they had obtained from political representatives to adopt the proposals that had the support of at least 90% of the participants. Throughout the process we can also see the evolution of trust in this regard. At the beginning of the assembly, the percentage of participants that thought that political representatives would effectively execute the MCA’s proposals was already at an estimated 56%, and surpassed 69% at the end of the process, as can be seen in figure 12 (values above 5).

As we can see, the results of the MCA do not differ much from those obtained by other assemblies. Despite the complexity of the subject matter and the established

deliberative structure, the participants show significant satisfaction with the assembly, as well as an increase in their subjective capacity for influence. It is necessary to point out the decreased support for the public to be the ones to give final approval of the proposed recommendations, as has happened with other assemblies<sup>12</sup>, in favour of independent experts. We cannot rule out the hypothesis that this is related to the fact that the MCA and their proposals were increasingly different from Mallorcan society and opinions: giving more power to experts that also had strongly pro-environmental attitudes was a way to increase the chances of approval of the proposals.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/research-report-citizens-assembly-scotland/documents/>

## 4. FACILITATION AND DELIBERATION

### Designing the deliberation structure.

The structure of deliberation is a crucial element within CAs. Through deliberation, it is expected that participants can acquire qualified information, through documents and oral presentations given by experts, that is capable of modifying their opinions. The theory of decisions (Thaler and Sustein, 2009)<sup>13</sup> has revealed the importance of the architecture involved in a decision-making process. Any element can have a significant influence on an individual when making a decision. For this reason, the dynamics of deliberation and the facilitation process are important.

The design of the MCA's deliberation structure followed a model very similar to that of previous assemblies. Neither the coordinators nor the facilitators had significant experience in deliberative processes, which made their design rest on the guidelines of previous experiences, especially the SCA. The architecture of the MCA, as well as other recent European assemblies, gave a central role to the experts, since they were the ones who transmitted information, compared to social stakeholders, who played a smaller role.

In Mallorca, the deliberation process was changed from the third session onwards, as we have pointed out before. In the first two sessions, half of one of the Saturday sessions was centred around testimonies, both academics and representatives of civil society, leaving little room for debate and the drafting of proposals. The coordinators changed the structure after the second session, reducing time given to the experts' oral presentations, substituting it with videos watched previously at home. In these last sessions the participants began to debate from the outset, although it always centred around the information given by the experts.

<b>Participants Reception and coffee</b>	<b>9:00 – 9:30</b>
Welcome: rules and principles of deliberation	9:30-10:00
Academic Experts	10:00-10:45
Questions and answers	10:45-11:30
<b>Coffee break</b>	<b>11:30-12:00</b>
Social stakeholders	12:00-13:30
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>13:30-14:30</b>

<sup>13</sup> *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness*. Penguin Books, 2009.



Small groups: drafting of proposals	14:30-17:00
Public presentation of proposals and prioritisation	17:00-18:00

*Table 2. Second Session Schedule*

Despite these structural changes, the expert advisors continued to be central elements in the sessions of the MCA. For the coordinators, that was the most important thing. Aside from the proposals made by the participants, they commented on the importance of knowledge and debate around the information provided by experts on such complex topics. That is why, they said, they were committed to selecting experts capable of transferring "objective information". For them, the representatives of civil society had a minor role, because they had opinions based on specific interests, which could influence the decisions of the participants. This was reflected in a significant reduction of their role in the deliberation process, until it almost disappeared after the reform carried out in the third session. This framework, which strived for impartiality and neutrality, using scientific knowledge as a basis, meant discussion, for the most, part revolved around the information provided by academic experts.

Given the short amount of time for the deliberation of each topic (a single session), the aim was for discussion to bring up any doubts that the participants might have about what the experts were saying as quickly as possible. However, there was no space for the participants to reflect together on what the experts were saying. After listening to them or watching their videos, the participants were asked by the organisers to ask questions about issues that they had not always understood or about which they wanted to deepen their knowledge. These questions were transcribed by the facilitators on cards. The experts were not able to answer all the questions due to lack of time, which meant a selection of questions to be answered had to be made (in the first two sessions the selection was made by the coordinators, in the following ones they were selected by the experts themselves). The coordinators emphasised at this moment that all questions would be uploaded to the assembly's website.

Once the question-and-answer session was over, in a plenary session with no space for reflection among the participants, they were divided into small groups. In these groups, the facilitators began a discussion in which the participants were in turn subdivided into pairs or groups of three, aimed at getting the participants to raise ideas associated with the topic that had been "discussed" with the experts. These were ideas

that, although they did not have to be very elaborate, had to attempt to solve a problem or imagine an alternative to a given situation. One of the experts present in the room, gave immediate feedback at the end of the session to the ideas that emerged, in terms of their sustainability, associated risks, and the feasibility of implementation. After this (in the afternoon), the small groups would meet again to work for two or three hours on the more detailed elaboration of these ideas, in order to turn them into recommendations. To do this, they had to think about its justification, the problem it intended to solve and those responsible for its execution.

### **Critical discussion.**

The coordinators and facilitators continually stressed throughout the sessions the importance of reaching common ground regarding climate change. In each session it was repeated that if the recommendations reached 90% support among the participants, the political leaders were committed to implementing the measures. The way in which the deliberation was framed, emphasising the importance of agreement and consensus among the participants, was to the detriment of criticism and disagreement during the deliberative process.

The experts' positions were conveyed in a way that avoided confrontation. This was either because of the absence of experts with different views, or because the participants themselves could not do it or were immediately corrected by the facilitators in case of suggesting criticism. After the reform of the deliberative sessions, the organisers introduced an opportunity for feedback on the ideas raised by the participants. After having asked the experts their questions and receiving their answers, they convened in small groups. In a dynamic similar to that of brainstorming, the small groups proposed ideas generally aimed at solving a problem. But there was no possibility of real dialogue with the expert. When the expert commented on each of the ideas, the participants could not confront their position. "There was no time" the facilitators said. Some of the facilitators remarked on the lack of consistency in discussion, since it was difficult to confront the opinions of others, not only between the participants and the experts, but also among the participants themselves. This lack of scrutiny facilitated the sharing of ideas, but on few occasions were the ideas confronted or criticised in the interest of their improvement. At the end of the day, two groups shared a draft of their recommendations. The objective, according to the facilitators, was to enhance the scrutiny of the recommendations prepared by each group. However, the sessions were dominated by the

desire for consensus. The debates almost never implied the questioning of any measure, beyond little qualifications. Carrying out this critique at the end of the day did not help foster debate, since everyone was already tired.

This lack of confrontation between the positions of the experts and the ideas that arose among the participants was the result, for some of the facilitators, of the design of the sessions, which were output-driven. In many cases, the facilitators were "forced" to interrupt the participants because they had to move on to the next issue.

The objective of the MCA's structure, according to what the coordinators told us, was to circulate scientific information among the participants. The assembly was an opportunity for them to involve the public in this debate. The rules that the coordinators established at the beginning posed an epistemic dimension to the assembly (the proposals had to be "effective", "fair" and "non-regressive"), which was later reflected in the deliberation process. The lack of space for reflection among the participants within the sessions favoured general agreement.

As has been pointed out with respect to other assemblies, the information and evidence shown during a deliberative process follow complex paths. The hope was that the participants of an assembly would be able to learn from scientifically-verified information that is as neutral as possible. However, sometimes that learning process is highly conditioned by the design of the sessions; in this case, it was conditioned by the way in which deliberation was initiated. In the next chapter we address the participants' level of knowledge and their changes in opinion during the assembly.

## 5. LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED.

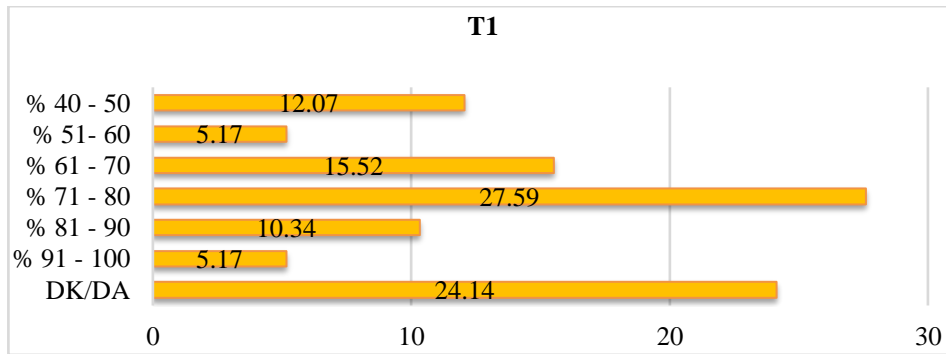
CAs expose participants to new information, through presentations from experts and interactions with each other. Ideally, this exposure to new information within a deliberative context, should help participants learn about the issues being considered in the assembly. This learning, according to the literature on deliberation, allows participants to reflect on their own ideas and may even lead them to change their minds. As we will see below, the learning process in Mallorca is more complex than it seems.

In order to assess how much the participants have learnt during the MCA, we will go beyond the usual analysis on specific questions of knowledge. We will contrast these questions with questions associated with beliefs about crucial aspects of climate change. The objective is to better understand the evolution of the participants' opinions during the deliberative process.

### **Learning**

The level of knowledge of the participants in an assembly is usually assessed through questions that can be verified by data. In the case of the MCA, we posed three generic questions related to topics that were going to be dealt with in the assembly. These were related to 1) the sector that consumes the most water on the island (homes); 2) the means of transport that causes the most pollution (fossil-fuel cars) and 3) the percentage of energy consumption from fossil sources on the island (89%). In parentheses we have indicated the correct answer.

As we can see in the following graphs, the only question that allows us to verify that some learning has taken place is the last one. At the beginning of the assembly, only 10% of participants correctly stated the percentage of energy consumption from fossil sources, a number which doubled by the end of the assembly. In the graph, a general improvement can be seen in the second survey, with many more participants approaching the correct figure (89%) compared with what was seen in the first session. However, it should be noted that most of the participants did not get the correct answer even after being given the information and taking part in discussions.



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58)

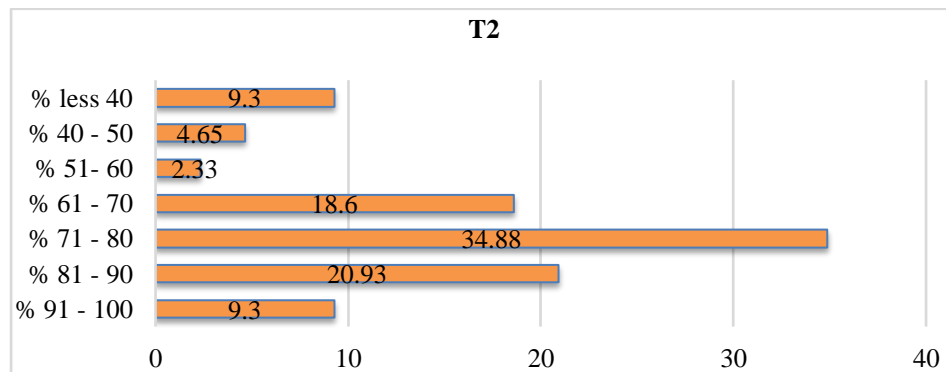


Figure 13. The percentage of energy consumption on the island of Mallorca that comes from fossil fuels (coal, gas or oil) is...? Please indicate the percentage you think is correct:

Source: Mallorca Evaluation T2 (N=43)

Regarding the other questions, most of the participants' responses were incorrect. The sector or activity that consumes the most water in Mallorca are households with a consumption of approximately 45%. Instead, most of the participants indicated before and after the deliberation process that the biggest consumer of water was tourism (which actually consumes around 24%). The figure speaks to an extraordinarily high tourist consumption, similar to agricultural consumption, figures that are in no way representative of other areas of Spain in which household consumption is 15% and agricultural consumption is 80% (Andalusia). However, the largest consumers of water are Mallorcan households themselves, despite the high consumption of tourists. This question may be more complex than it seems, because it is not normal to separate the consumption of tourists from that of households. Tourists usually consume from the same water distribution networks as the population of the territory; therefore, it is difficult to separate the data. If it can be differentiated, it is due to the effect that the pandemic had on the Balearic Islands, where tourism dropped drastically in 2020. Some researchers from the Balearic Islands University compared the consumption of urban water distribution networks that year with previous years and they found a decrease in water

consumption of 24.2% in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions<sup>14</sup>. This is the figure that has been attributed since then to the water consumption of tourists, compared to a consumption of 45% by the Mallorcan population.

As for the other question about the means of transportation with the greatest environmental impact in terms of pollution, the correct answer is land transportation and the use of cars with gasoline. However, before and after the deliberation process, the participants indicated that the largest polluter is air transportation. Flights pollute a lot in relative terms, but its overall impact decreases in relation to other means of transport.

These responses pose a significant challenge to the deliberation process. In principle, they question one of the epistemic pillars of CAs. As has happened in other cases (Elstub et al, 2020), learning among the participants is unequal. It must also be taken into account that two of the thematic sessions were modified to increase the time for deliberation, reducing the time for the experts' presentations. The subject is complex and the effect on participants of the learning mechanism of CAs is being underestimated. This is something that will require more research.

The error in these last two questions is something that goes beyond the failure of the evidence presented to the participants, because it presupposes a general agreement among the participants around a central idea: tourism is negative. In terms of climate change, is this wrong? To understand this answer, it would be necessary to better understand the context of the island of Mallorca and the archipelago in general.

The islands have seen the presence of tourists increase exponentially over the last twenty years. Mallorca, for example, had just over 900,000 inhabitants on January 1, 2022. That year, slightly less than 12 million tourists arrived. Mallorca airport is the third largest airport in Spain, only behind Madrid and Barcelona. It is true that tourism provides an invaluable source of wealth (around 40% of the regional GDP in 2019). From the point of view of the population, however, mass tourism poses pressing problems that are discussed in local newspapers and in gatherings between acquaintances: high housing prices, over-crowded beaches, over-exploitation of water resources, the need to import more food, etc. A survey carried out at the end of 2022 by the *Fundament Associació*

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<sup>14</sup> Celso Garcia, Bartolomé Deyà-Tortella, Jorge Lorenzo-Lacruz, Enrique Morán-Tejeda, Pablo Rodríguez-Lozano & Dolores Tirado (2022) Zero tourism due to COVID-19: an opportunity to assess water consumption associated to tourism, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, DOI: [10.1080/09669582.2022.2079652](https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2022.2079652)

foundation, recorded the Mallorcan population's general criticism of tourism, especially due to its environmental impact<sup>15</sup>. If we consider climate change and the threats it entails (the subject of the MCA), it is very possible that these elements were at the forefront of the participants's minds when considering the most serious problems.

In the experts' presentations, for example, the disproportionate level of consumption existing on the island was mentioned: "we'd need around 10 islands to be able to sustain this way of life". Data like this, in addition to many other facts that the experts referenced, surely implicates tourism as a leading cause of climate change, an image shared by the population as a whole, as shown by the *Fundament Asociación* survey<sup>16</sup>. However, this poses a dilemma about deliberative experiences that is worth noting. To what extent do shared values and facts in a territory challenge the ways in which we interpret knowledge?

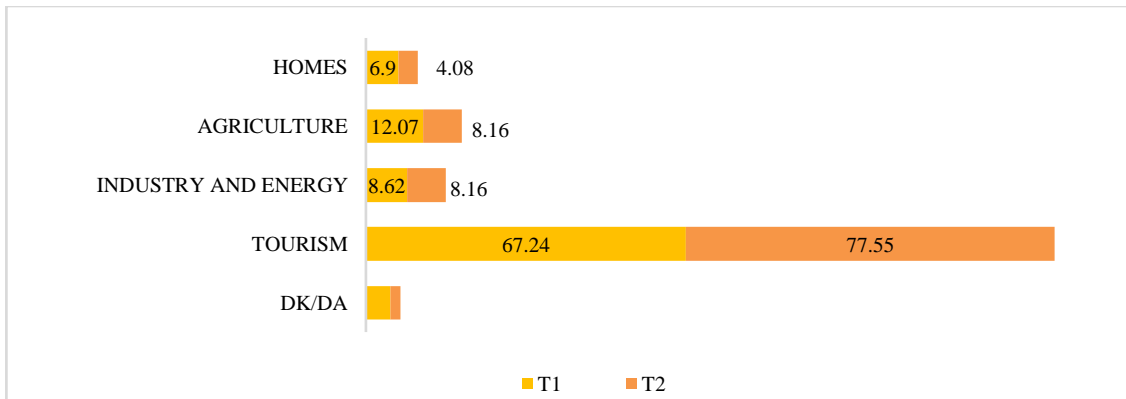
Deliberative theory expects facts to help contextualise the opinions and beliefs of participants in a new way. This is normally the case, at least if the matter in question becomes a matter of reflection. But no matter how long the participants spend reflecting on an issue, isn't it overly optimistic to think that people are going to digest all the information provided in an efficient way? In the case of the MCA, it is true that not much time was devoted to debate, and much less to reflecting on data or facts. The assembly raised very general debates without significant spaces for dialogue between the participants and with the experts. Each session was dedicated to a general theme with multiple thematic derivations, which prevented the participants from spending extra time on any of the topics addressed, while the facilitators conducted the discussion to achieve predefined objectives, continuously accelerating the deliberative process to be able to advance to the next step. A common response of the facilitators to the participants in many of the sessions was "there is no time, let's move on", making it difficult, at least, to reflect on the evidence. This lack of time and the need to move on to the next topic was perhaps one of the reasons why the MCA consolidated beliefs the participants already shared: If there was no tourism, the threats caused by climate change would be very different in Mallorca. The dilemma is that the structure of the assembly did not foster a debate about the consequences that could arise from a decrease in tourism, in an economy that is highly dependent on the wealth derived from the sector.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.fundament.es/encuesta-22-23-experiencia-turismo-mallorca/>

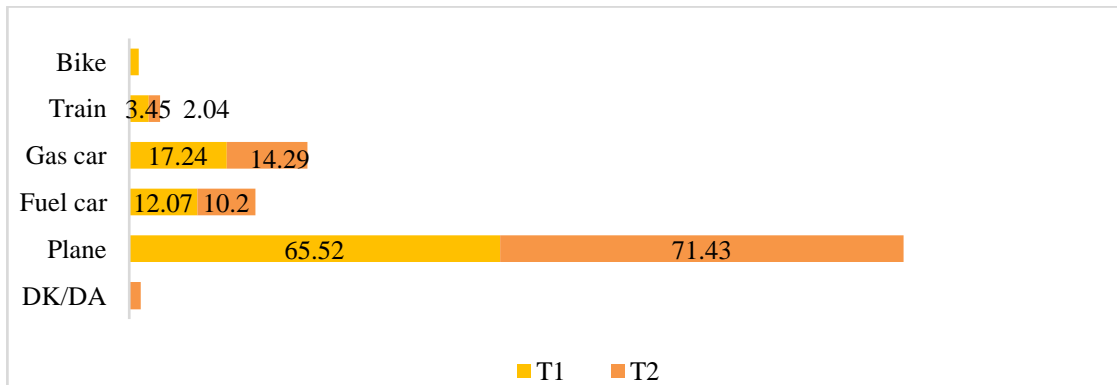
<sup>16</sup> <https://www.fundament.es/encuesta-22-23-experiencia-turismo-mallorca/>

Figure 14. Which of the following sectors consumes the most water on the island of Mallorca?



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49)

Figure 15. Which of the following modes of transport do you believe to have the biggest environmental impact in terms of air pollutant emissions?



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49)

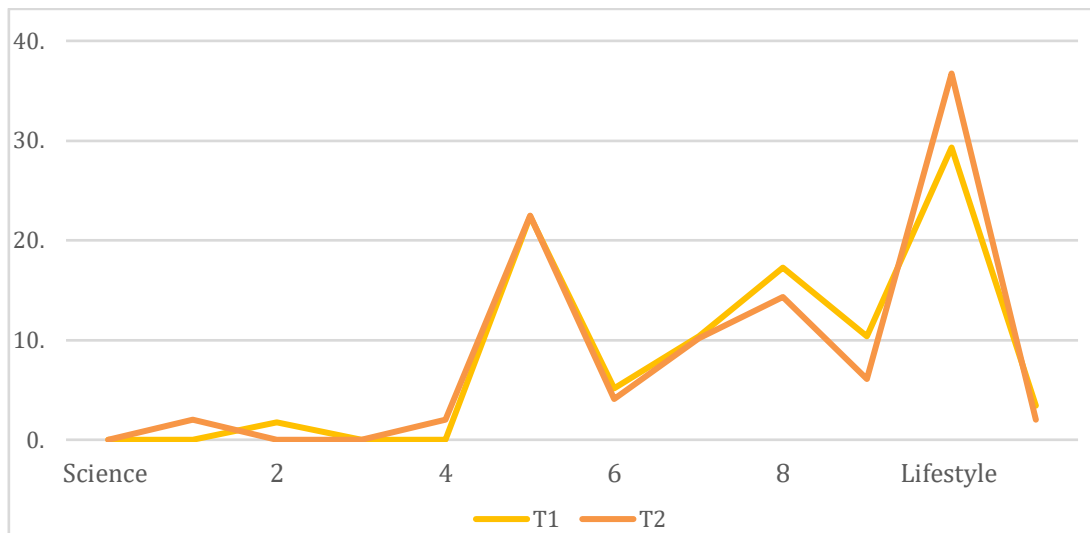
Certainly, the issue of tourism reflects an opinion existing on the island as shown by the survey carried out by the *Fundament Asociación*. However, it must not be forgotten that the sample of participants was significantly biased by ideology and education. Perhaps this would also have an influence, since left-wing discourse on the island is much more critical of tourism than that of the more conservative parties, which have governed the island for many years. From the point of view of climate change, it also seems easier to consider the negative impact of a practice (tourism) that has not always been on the island, than to think about the daily practices of local people. And here we may find another important problem that we can see by looking at the trajectory of the participants' beliefs and attitudes before and after the MCA. In any case, as other reports on Citizens' Assemblies have shown (Elstub et al, 2020), the fact that the participants didn't use the evidence to debate and develop their recommendations is not an isolated occurrence in Mallorca. It seems more like a question that requires more reflection.



### Beliefs and attitude changes.

In general terms, the participants' opinions about the problem of climate change do not vary significantly before and after the MCA. This reflects the extent to which concern for climate change is present in society. The vast majority of participants think that climate change is due to human intervention. In addition, participants agree that climate change must be combated even if this means implementing measures against economic growth. Likewise, before and after the assembly, the participants thought that technology will be important, but not decisive, in solving the problem. Any solution should be more related to a change in lifestyle.

Figure 16. How to solve the problem: Science and technology vs. change lifestyle.



Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49).

The participants, in turn, show a significant agreement that the solution lies in changing attitudes in daily life even if they represent a greater inconvenience. Here the MCA did not produce a change in this trend, but rather it reaffirmed the measures that many participants were already thinking about before the assembly began.

As we can see in Table 1, the majority of participants affirm that they accept changes in their daily lives. In all cases there is a significant increase in those who say they are in favour of these changes. Without a doubt, this change in attitude is tempered by the broad consensus among the participants before the assembly began regarding almost all the measures that could be taken to mitigate the effects of climate change. We could say that by the end of the assembly, this general agreement among participants is consolidated.

In order to better understand the participants' changes in opinion and the impact the MCA has had on them, we are going to analyse the changes that occurred regarding the participants' beliefs. We are referring to questions that require more sophisticated knowledge to resolve, which is usually part of the framework of deliberative assemblies. Being for or against one of these beliefs implies a very different position regarding climate change and the type of measures that are advocated for. In turn, it requires specific knowledge that cannot be solved with stereotypes.

	<b>Before MCA</b>	<b>After MCA</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Reduce the speed limit on motorways to 110 km/h</b>	79.3%	83.7%	+ 4,4
<b>Raise taxes on international air transport</b>	67%	81.6%	+ 14,6
<b>Increase the price of products and goods according to their ecological footprint</b>	70.7%	81.7%	+ 11
<b>Remove combustion cars from circulation</b>	63.7%	69.3%	+5,6
<b>Prioritise renewable energies, even if production costs and the final price for the consumer are higher</b>	77.5%	89.7%	+12,2
<b>Encourage homeowners to renovate and isolate house despite the high cost</b>	77,6%	93,9%	+16,3
<b>A minimum energy supply at a very low price and, at the same time, increase the cost of excess consumption for both households and companies</b>	81%	94%	+12,8

Table 3. Positive attitudinal change before and after MCCA  
Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49).

For example, the following sentence "water in rivers that is not used reaches the sea and is wasted" concentrates two antagonistic positions. The first, which is in favour of the statement, wants to use all available water as a resource for consumption, not only for the population, but also for intensive agriculture production. This is a typical argument among Spanish farmers that are reliant on irrigation. The second position, which would be against the statement, underlines the importance of ecosystems and, therefore, that the water that reaches the sea is not wasted, since it maintains the natural balance between fresh and salt water, and it allows the river to have a minimum water flow. This is a typical argument among ecologists, who prefer rivers to carry enough water and flow into the sea because that improves the quality of life of all ecosystems. The fact that these are not common arguments in debates among the population is what allows us to better visualise the impact of a deliberative assembly precisely dedicated to the mitigation of climate

change. At the same time, it must be remembered that the island of Mallorca experiences significant water anxiety, due to the lack of resources (limited rainfall, overexploited aquifers) and an increase in tourist activity. How have the beliefs of the participants changed?

As we can see, the majority of the participants did not agree that the water from the rivers that reaches the sea is lost, but at the end of the MCA this majority was significantly consolidated, increasing by almost 12%. As often occurs in these types of questions, at the end of the MCA the number of participants who did not answer decreased significantly. We can assume that this decrease is caused by an increase in knowledge and confidence in answering somewhat more sophisticated questions. However, a third of the participants still maintained a more productivist perspective. The increase in the majority comes largely from the increase in those who decided to answer.

<b>Water that is unconsumed is discharged into the sea, wasted and has no use</b>		
	<b>Before MCA</b>	<b>After MCA</b>
Agree	36.2%	35.4%
Disagree	44.8%	56.3%
DK/DA	19%	8.3%

*Table 4. Water that is unconsumed is discharged into the sea, wasted and has no use*

*Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=48)*

The most significant change experienced by the participants is their change of opinion regarding the implications of the fight against climate change. When asked if this fight would mean economic degrowth, the majority (53.4%) disagreed at the beginning of the MCA. However, at the end of the assembly the majority (55%) agreed with this statement. This change of opinion is in line with many of the answers that the participants gave to other questions seen previously, as attitudinal changes. For this reason, there is an alignment with other issues seen in the MCA.

<b>Fighting climate change requires economic degrowth</b>		
	<b>Before MCA</b>	<b>After MCA</b>
Agree	41.4%	55.1%
Disagree	53.4%	34.7%
DK/DA	5.2%	10.2%

Table 5. Fighting climate change requires economic degrowth.

Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49)

It is worth noting the response of the participants to another sentence: "Aquifers are an underused source of water." As happened with the question related to river water reaching the sea, being in favour of this statement concentrates a productivist position where people tend to defend against palliative measures in the face of climate change. Being against it, on the other hand, is evidence of a different position with a more ecological dimension. As we see in the table below, although a slight majority (41%) agreed at the beginning of the MCA with the fact that the aquifers were overexploited, in the end, the majority agreed (49%). This is a controversial issue if we see the high number of non-responses both at the beginning of the assembly and at the end.

<b>Aquifers or groundwater are an under-utilised source of water</b>		
	<b>Before MCA</b>	<b>After MCA</b>
Agree	39.7%	49%
Disagree	41.3%	36.7%
DK/DA	19%	14.3%

Table 6. Aquifers or groundwater are an under-utilised source of water.

Source: Mallorca Evaluation T1 (N=58); T2 (N=49)

The question of knowledge and learning in deliberative Assemblies is much more complex than is usually appreciated. This epistemic dimension is one of the crucial elements of any CA, but a detailed analysis of this dimension raises challenging issues. We have seen that climate change is a present concern and that participants tend to associate many of the problems for which there is already scientific evidence with climate change. However, we can also see that knowledge and the reality in which one lives has

a more complicated relationship than we usually acknowledge. The general consensus of the participants to identify tourism as the cause of many of the problems to do with climate change reflects the state of opinion on the island. So strong is this state of opinion that they rank tourism as the number one problem, regardless of their own daily practices that have even worse effects on the environment.

All this data must be considered with caution. In the deliberation process, many ideas were raised aimed at mitigating climate change that did not involve tourism, rather there were suggestions to improve, for example, services and infrastructures that would allow the population not to use their car to go to work when travelling within the island. Just by reading the final recommendations, the breadth of vision of the participants is evident. However, the data shows the complexity involved in the learning process.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

The MCA ultimately drafted 56 recommendations spanning 6 different categories (transport, energy, consumption, water, ecosystems and education). Of the total number of proposals, 32 received support that was equal to or greater than 90% of the participants. These proposals should be adopted by the Mallorcan government, however, the change of government due in the May 2023 elections presents an element of uncertainty in this regard.

	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Support above 90%</b>
<b>Transport</b>	16	8
<b>Energy</b>	10	6
<b>Consumption model</b>	14	9
<b>Water</b>	4	1
<b>Ecosystems</b>	7	5
<b>Education</b>	5	3

*Table 7. Recommendations and support above 90%. Source: All the proposals and the support they received can be viewed here: <https://assembleapelclima.uib.cat/files/2023/04/PROPOSALS-2.pdf>.*

The proposals are heterogeneous in content. The proposal with the largest amount of support (100%) aims to promote the installation of community renewable energy

infrastructure. The proposal with the least support (61%) suggests establishing an environmental card for people. It is striking that in the Transportation category, 62% of the proposals aim to limit tourism in one way or another. Most of the proposals regarding energy are aimed at expanding the use of renewably-sourced electricity, although no proposals are made for primary energy sources. Many of the proposals regarding consumption promote a more sustainable way of life, encouraging recycling and the more rational use of resources, in addition to promoting local trade and more sustainable food.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS.

The organisation of a Citizens' Assembly always poses significant challenges, this is particularly the case when it is an assembly promoted by members of civil society. From recruiting participants to making recommendations, there was considerable work and effort put in by many people. The MCA shares many similar elements with other recently organised assemblies such as the one in Scotland or the Convention Citoyenne in France. The organisers also had regular contact with the organisers of the Climate Assembly in Spain, which took place shortly before. Regardless, it is necessary to highlight the effort and dedication of the coordination team that went into the organisation of the assembly. With no previous precedent for organising a Citizens' Assembly, the team managed to develop a structure following demanding standards. The attention to detail and the possibility of improvement from one session to another positively influenced the evolution of the assembly. The coordinators were very open to learning. They emphasised at all times that the MCA was only one experience within a longer series of events that would bring about Assemblies on the other islands of the archipelago. In the organisation of the MCA, one of the most critical elements was the use of two different methods of recruiting the participants. This transferred to the final sample of participants a greater self-selection bias than is usually found in other assemblies.

The work carried out by the facilitation team was also noteworthy. They also had no concrete experience in the field of deliberation, but they did have a lot of experience in the field of facilitation. Their learning curve was exponential, since from the very beginning they always tried to make deliberative spaces better. They always showed a clear predisposition to improve their work and make the deliberation better for the participants, within the limits of the framework that they were working within. Here we must highlight the importance of a good relationship between the facilitation and

coordination teams. The discussions are better when the spaces and pace of the deliberation are agreed upon by all. In the end, the facilitators are the ones assisting the participants, therefore, they have a lot of insight as to what is happening and what can be improved.

The satisfaction of the participants with the MCA is very high, which reflects the good organisation of the assembly and the work carried out by the coordinators and the facilitation team. Their receptiveness to the demands of the participants contributed to an adequate progressive adaptation of the deliberation process.

The deliberative approach of the MCA achieved the main objective, which was the drafting of recommendations (56), many of which adequately responded to the objectives that the coordinators set themselves from the beginning. There was no need to apply the principle of non-regression with which the coordinators wanted to guarantee the epistemic value of the MCA. However, this also created a deliberative space where controversy and disagreement were fairly absent, rather it tended more towards general agreement and consensus.

The assembly was organised with the aim of involving all the participants in the debate on climate change, in the hopes of discussing the most appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of climate change from a scientific point of view. This contributed to giving a very significant emphasis to academic experts in the deliberation process, which reduced time for deliberation among the participants. Consequently, scrutiny and confrontation of the arguments presented was one of the weakest elements of the MCA. There was hardly any time for it. It is very possible that this structure influenced the general consensus, by reducing the capacity of the participants to confront the academics, as well as limiting discussion among themselves. This is also reflected in terms of knowledge acquisition and learning, where previously prevalent ideas did not change in spite of all the information provided.

# **DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT ANALYSIS**

*Coco Bates and José Luis Fernández-Martínez*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. There are three major peaks in the digital media coverage of the MCCA which coincide with key moments in the timeline of the assembly: the initial announcement of a Balearic CCA (December 2021), the launch of the MCCA (October 2022) and the presentation of proposals to the President of the Balearic Government following the final session (February 2022). An overall trend of increased coverage can be observed, with the majority of articles published after the end of the assembly and relatively few being published while the assembly was ongoing (primarily due to privacy concerns regarding the deliberation stage). At the time of writing, content was still being published about the MCCA in the media, with three articles published about the assembly in the first three weeks of September 2023.

2. Each of the major phases of the MCCA (before, during and after the assembly) can be distinguished by specific types of content. Pre-assembly coverage almost-exclusively reported on the MCCA's launch and structure; during the assembly, content diversified and often focused on the different topics covered in the sessions; and after the end of the assembly the most common theme was the recommendations. The first stage, which saw the most repetitive content being published across different sources, gained the least interaction on social media, showing relatively low levels of interest among the general public for content of this kind.

3. The vast majority of the media coverage analysed featured the MCCA as the main topic (83%). However, this type of content received less engagement overall on social media than content in which the MCCA was a secondary topic. This is particularly evident in terms of shares on X and Facebook, where the average number of shares per article for content in which the assembly was the main topic was 11.2 compared to an average of 19.6 shares per article for content in which the assembly was not the main topic. This shows, firstly, the limitations of the communication strategy in embedding the assembly in mainstream environmental and political discourse, and secondly, that this failure to do so may have lessened the campaign's overall impact, given that content not solely about the assembly had a greater effect on the general population. That being said, the number of articles published in which the MCCA is a secondary topic has gradually increased over time, suggesting the assembly's media presence, and therefore impact, is still evolving.

4. The articles which received the most engagement on social media are about proposals that may affect tourist activity on the island, including the number of visitors and cruises, renting a car and accessing beaches. This points to public concerns, particularly among an international readership, about possible legislative outcomes of the assembly.

5. Of the 94 entries examined, the majority were published in digital newspapers (56%), with CSO and third sector websites the second most common type of media outlet (16%). Furthermore, 64% of all entries were published in subnational sources (including local, provincial and regional media outlets). The three sources with the highest average number of interactions per article are all German media outlets (*Focus*, *B.Z.* and *RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland*), mostly due to their coverage of proposals that would affect German tourists.

6. The assembly's Instagram page was the most popular social media account in terms of followers, with 1,158 at the time of writing. The impact of the assembly's Facebook was limited, but one of the most successful things about this channel is that

content and engagement was at its highest while the assembly was ongoing, precisely when digital media coverage was at its most sparse. Hence, leveraging different media channels (both social and digital media) proved helpful in maximising the overall impact of the MCCA.

# 1. DIGITAL MEDIA ANALYSIS OF THE MCCA

## Introduction and Methodology

The purpose of a climate citizens' assembly (CCA) is to use the insights of ordinary citizens to help shape climate policy in a way that can be beneficial to policymakers, participants and the wider population alike. While the primary goal of any climate assembly is to educate *participants* about many of the complex issues surrounding climate change so that they can make informed proposals, this acquisition of knowledge can and often does go beyond just those taking part in the assembly. In fact, with the implementation of an effective communication strategy, CCAs can provide a unique opportunity to increase awareness of climate-related issues among the general public and provoke lasting debate on the topic, as has been the case with several national CCAs, such as the *Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat* in France for example. Therefore, as part of any assessment of a CCA, it is necessary to examine the effect it has had on the general population. Given the fact that digital media is one of the most powerful ways to influence the public, an analysis of the media coverage of the assembly is required.

The Mallorca Citizens's Climate Assembly (MCCA), which took place between November 19th 2022 and February 18th 2023, was one of the first regional CCAs in Spain of its kind.<sup>17</sup> In many ways it was modelled on the national Spanish Climate Citizens' Assembly, although it was naturally much smaller in scope. To examine the impact, it has had in digital media, a qualitative and systematic analysis of the content published about the MCCA was carried out. This consisted of creating a database of 94 digital media entries: some of which were provided by the assembly's communication team while others were sourced via a comprehensive backlink search (which identified any content that included a link to the MCCA's official website). These entries are up to date as of September 2023. After collating this content, the following information was recorded for each entry:

- Publication date (month and year);
- Publication title;
- URL;

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<sup>17</sup> The MCCA covers the island of Mallorca only, not the entire Balearic archipelago. However, it was initially designed to cover the Balearic Islands in its entirety.

- Media outlet name;
- Media type: digital press (differentiating between newspapers, general magazines and other magazines); institutional websites (mainly websites of ministries, municipalities and foundations); social organisations and third-sector websites (e.g., NGOs and companies); and audiovisual media (TV, radio, and podcasts);
- Main geographical scope (international, national, and subnational);
- MCCA as the main topic (yes/no);
- Specific topic (open text);
- Manner of introducing/presenting the MCCA (open text);
- Impact on Facebook: number of likes;
- Impact on Facebook: number of shares;
- Impact on Facebook: number of comments and,
- Impact on X (formerly known as Twitter): number of shares.

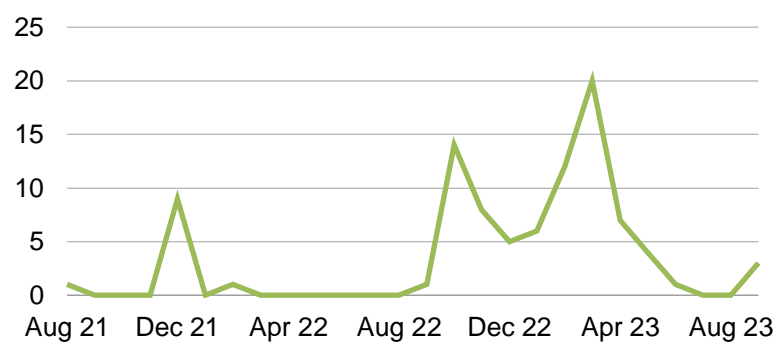
The data collected can be split into two different categories: one pertaining to the digital media coverage of the MCCA and the other concerning social media engagement with this content. Hence the analysis in this report will be structured in a similar way. Firstly, the media presence of the assembly itself will be examined in terms of its evolution over time, the sources in which the assembly features and the main topic of this coverage. The following section will look at how the public has engaged with this content on social media, documenting interactions in terms of article published, media outlet, main topic and how this engagement has evolved over time. In doing so, it is possible to evaluate both the impact the MCCA has had in the media, as well as the impact that this coverage has had on the general public.

### **Coverage of the MCCA in Digital Media Over Time**

Between the 30th August 2021 and the 18th September 2023, a total of 94 entries were recorded in digital media about the MCCA. As can be seen in the graph below (Figure 1) these entries are distributed across the two-year period and three major peaks can be observed. These coincide with some of the key moments in the assembly's timeline: the first peak in coverage is in December of 2021 when 9 articles were published. This is when the assembly, which was originally an archipelago-wide climate assembly, was first announced to the public. The second peak in coverage occurs almost

a year later, in October 2022, with the publishing of 14 articles. This takes place just before the start of the MCCA (in November 2022) as the launch of the assembly was delayed due to organisational issues. After this peak, the coverage drops slightly in December, while the assembly was ongoing, to a total of 5 articles that month. The third, final and most significant peak in coverage takes place in March 2023, when 20 articles were published in the media. This spike occurs just after the end of the assembly (in February 2023) and it coincides with the presentation of the proposals to the President of the Balearic Government (Francina Armengol) on the 14th March. This period analysed can also be broken down into the following three stages: before the assembly, during the assembly, and after the assembly, and each of these phases can be characterised by a different type of content that was published.

Figure 1. Evolution of published entries on the MCCA. Source: Own elaboration.



*Before the start of the assembly: the announcement of the MCCA.*

There was a total of 30 articles published before the start of the assembly. As previously mentioned, the MCCA evolved from what was originally a Balearic-wide CCA, and because of this change in design, there were effectively two separate media launches that took place almost a year apart. As a result, the purpose of every article published during this period is to announce the assembly. Basic information about the assembly's objectives and structure was reported on, providing readers with a general overview of how the assembly will be carried out, who will take part, and what they hope to achieve over the course of the sessions. This means that there was a particularly high level of repetitive content being shared across different media outlets during this time, with the aim of spreading awareness about the assembly. Image 1 and Image 2 show some of the similarities in content between different articles. One entry that stands out during this period is an article published in *ARA Balears* (Image 3), which, while still announcing

the start of the MCCA, goes beyond some of the basic facts mentioned in the majority of other articles, to discuss the challenges of climate change, why action must be taken urgently, and how the MCCA is an important way to combat the climate crisis. It is important to note, however, that the author of this particular article, David Abril, was one of the organisers of the MCCA and has been a promoter of the assembly from the start. He therefore has a unique and partial perspective on both the assembly and climate change as a whole, which would account for the article's distinctiveness. In general, coordinators of the assembly played a key role in raising awareness about the MCCA in the media, and as a result, coverage of the assembly is, by and large, positive in tone and perspective, particularly during this period. It is essential to bear this in mind when considering the impact of the media coverage, as the slightly contrived and one-sided nature of the content will undoubtedly have influenced public perception of the assembly.

Image 1. Example 1 of a news article announcing the launch of the assembly. Source: dBalears.



Com hem d'afrontar el canvi climàtic des de Mallorca? Aquesta és la pregunta que s'ha llançat per carta a més de 10.000 persones de l'illa. Totes són possibles candidates a participar de l'Assemblea Ciutadana pel Clima de Mallorca. D'aquestes 10.000 persones, 60 seran les triades per a poder participar en les diferents sessions que es duran a terme entre els mesos de novembre i febrer a Mallorca. La selecció es farà sota els criteris següents: gènere, nivell de renda, nivell educatiu, distribució territorial i edat. A més es promourà la participació de gent jove, a partir de 16 anys, ja que són les generacions joves i les futures les que seran especialment afectades per la crisi climàtica. Aquesta selecció es farà amb el suport de l'entitat europea Sortition Foundation.

L'Assemblea consta de cinc sessions que es duran a terme els següents dies: 19 de novembre, 3 de desembre, 14 de gener, 28 de gener i 18 de febrer de 10 a 18 hores. Al llarg d'aquests mesos, les 60 persones seleccionades cercaran i debatran solucions a la següent pregunta: què necessitem fer a Mallorca abans de 2030 per a afrontar l'emergència climàtica de forma efectiva i socialment justa?

Segons el professor Pau de Vilchez Moragues, aquesta és una fita històrica per a Mallorca. «Es tracta d'una experiència pionera que a Espanya s'ha fet en l'àmbit nacional però mai en l'àmbit regional. Tenim exemples semblants a França, Irlanda i Gran Bretanya. L'Assemblea Ciutadana pel Clima de Mallorca servirà per apropar la crisi climàtica a la ciutadania, per saber què implica i, sobretot, per trobar plegats les solucions a aquesta amenaça», ha explicat De Vilchez.

Image 2. Example 2 of a news article announcing the launch of the assembly. Source: Fora Vila.



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#### NOTICIES RECENTS

**Els veterinaris aclareixen "confusions" de la Llei de Benestar Animal**  
28 SETEMBRE 2023

**Joan Simonet: "Els incendis són el gran enemic del medi natural"**  
28 SETEMBRE 2023

**El Govern Balear crea una web per informar de la nova Llei de Benestar Animal, que demà entra en vigor**  
28 SETEMBRE 2023

ALTRES ARTICLES

Image 3. Example of a news article that is more unique in terms of content. Source: ARA Balears.



*During the assembly: the deliberation phase.*

The three months when the assembly was ongoing (November 2022 - February 2023), was the period in which the least coverage in digital media was recorded, with only 17 entries in the database. This is partly due to the organiser's choice to protect the anonymity of the deliberation process, hence little information was released to the media at this stage. However, the entries are more much more varied in content compared to that of the previous phase, and many of them reported on the themes that were covered in each session, including topics such as renewable energy, transport and rising sea temperatures. *dBalears* for instance published an article on the assembly's second session (held on December 3rd 2022) which focused on the archipelago's energy usage and goal to reach 37% renewables by 2030. Likewise, *Fora Vila* reported on the assembly's fourth session (held on January 28th 2023) which explored the effects of climate change on marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean. While both of these articles were limited in terms of the specific content, they could publish about the deliberations due to privacy concerns, they both reported on the key topics covered in each session, listed experts that gave presentations during the sessions and included quotations from some of these speakers. This kind of content is an effective way to educate members of the public on issues being discussed during the sessions, thereby increasing the assembly's reach to beyond the participants themselves. It is unfortunate, therefore, in terms of the success of the assembly's media campaign, that content of this kind is relatively uncommon, as more coverage of this nature may have contributed to a greater educational impact among the general public.

*After the final session of the assembly: the proposals.*

The period following the assembly's final session has seen by far the most coverage in digital media relative to the previous two stages. Between February 18th and

September 18th 2023, 45 entries were recorded, almost exactly half of all entries in the database. This is partly because organisers no longer had to protect the anonymity of the participants and their deliberations, and so the proposals were made publicly available as soon as the final session had ended. It is also partly because some of the proposals that were announced were somewhat provocative given the possible effects they may have on the island, its inhabitants and tourists (several articles referred to the proposals as drastic [*Drastische*]).<sup>18</sup> As a result, the proposals were heavily discussed in the media, and some even more so than others. The proposal to limit the capacity of certain beaches for instance was one of the most widely covered topics during this period. This is particularly evident in German-language newspapers, for example *Mallorca Zeitung* and *Mallorca Nachrichten*, which are aimed at tourists and expat communities in Mallorca, as it is a popular holiday destination among German tourists. Some newspapers were forced to clarify the extent to which the proposal, if implemented, would affect tourists after articles were published with misleading headlines, suggesting that the proposals included restricting beach access for foreigners.<sup>19</sup> The proposals to reduce the number of visitors, rental cars and cruise ships on the island were likewise heavily reported on in the media at this time.

After this final peak in digital media coverage in March of 2023, and the extensive discussion of the proposals, the assembly almost disappears in the media from mid-June onwards, with zero entries recorded over the summer. However, what is notable is that in September of 2023, as late as 7 months after final session, there is an uptake in coverage of the assembly in the news. At the time of writing in September 2023, three articles were published about the assembly in mid-September, showing its enduring presence in the media. Two of these three articles address what is arguably the next phase of the MCCA - securing the new government's commitment to honouring the proposals that gained over 90% support from participants after the recent change of governing party on the island.

### **Types of Media Outlets and Geographical Scope**

Figure 2 illustrates the type of media outlets that have published content related to the MCCA. The vast majority (56%) of these sources are digital newspapers, with 53

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.mallorcazeitung.es/umwelt/2023/03/20/grosse-mehrheit-klima-mallorca-schutzen-84717104.html> and [https://www.focus.de/panorama/welt/klimaschutz-mallorca-will-zahl-der-urlauber-auf-den-inseln-beschaenken\\_id\\_188857146.html](https://www.focus.de/panorama/welt/klimaschutz-mallorca-will-zahl-der-urlauber-auf-den-inseln-beschaenken_id_188857146.html)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.mallorcazeitung.es/wirtschaft-tourismus/2023/03/08/straende-zugangsbeschaenkung-auslaender-klimawandel-84300077.html>



articles published. A quarter of the entries were published by institutional or third sector websites, with 23 articles. Audiovisual sources (including TV, radio and podcast) published 14% of the content, online magazines published 4% and finally, persona websites, with only 1 entry, accounted for 1% of all media sources. As for the territorial scope of these media outlets (Figure 3), the majority (64%) are subnational sources (local, provincial, or regional), many of which are either Balearic-, or more specifically, Mallorca-centric. 28% are national, while 8% are international media outlets, which is a small but significant percentage considering the scope of the assembly. A total of 44 different media outlets reported on the MCCA over the two-year period analysed.

Figure 2. Coverage of the MCCA, by type of digital media. Source: Own elaboration.

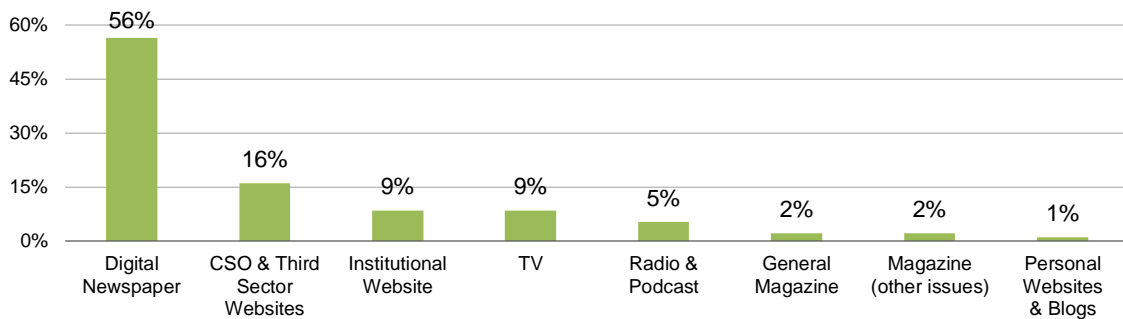
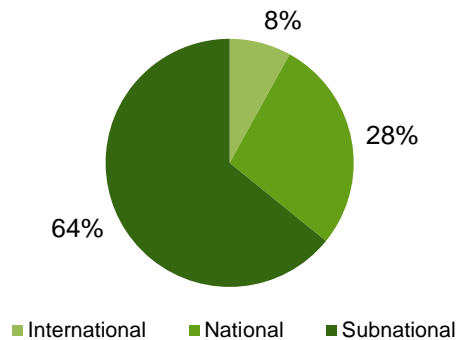


Figure 3. Coverage of the MCCA, by territorial scope. Source: Own elaboration.



### Main Topic of the Content

In examining the content published about the MCCA, one of the key steps was to determine whether or not the assembly is the main topic for each entry. Of the 94 articles analysed, an overwhelming 83% of them featured the assembly as the main topic. On the one hand, this shows that the communication strategy was successful in getting a lot of pieces published that explicitly discuss the assembly in the media, often in quite an in-depth way. However, it also indicates that perhaps what was less successful about the

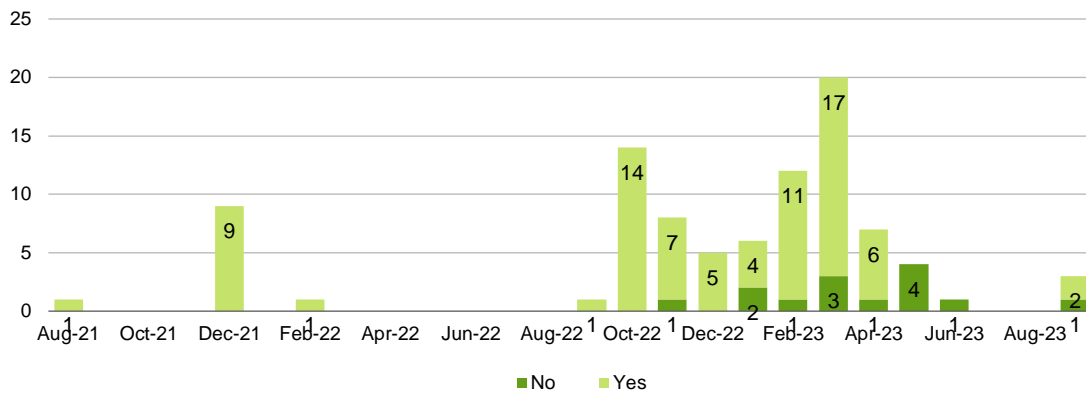
strategy is that it failed to tap into a broader realm of digital media, beyond straightforward articles which simply report the structure and objectives of the assembly without placing it in a broader context. An example of content in which the assembly is not the main topic, rather it is mentioned alongside other related issues, can be seen in an article published in *Catarsi*, in May 2023 (Image 4). In this extensive piece about green municipalism, the assembly is referenced as an example of a regional CCA. While this is a very brief mention (the percentage of text discussing the assembly is about 0.5%), articles such as these are arguably able to reach a much wider audience, and therefore can have a bigger impact.

Image 4. Example of a news article in which the assembly is not the main topic. Source: *Catarsi*.



As can be seen in Figure 4, articles published in the first phase of the assembly (that is, before its launch) are all specifically about the MCCA. There was also very little content published during the second stage of the assembly (while it was ongoing) in which the assembly was a secondary topic: just 4 entries. However, the number of entries that are not specifically about the MCCA grows over time, reaching a peak of 4 in one month in May 2023. Furthermore, from May 2023 onwards, entries in which the assembly is not the main topic outweigh those in which the assembly is the main topic for the first time by 3:1. This suggests that even though the assembly has finished and media coverage of the MCCA has diminished, content continues to be written about the assembly in pieces with broader subject matters, which is testament to the longevity of its presence in digital media.

Figure 4. Evolution of published entries on the MCCA, by main topic. Source: Own elaboration.



In summary, the entries in the database can be divided into three different stages: before, during and after the assembly, and they each differ in the type of content published in that period. In the first phase, media coverage of the assembly was saturated with articles announcing the launch of the MCCA and its structure, and was therefore largely repetitive in nature. Content published during the second phase was more varied and educational, focusing on the topics addressed during each session. In the final stage, media coverage predominantly focused on the assembly's recommendations (some of which were discussed more than others), and there was a relatively higher percentage of international media sources reporting on the MCCA at this time. Additionally, of all of the entries analysed, the majority are primarily about the MCCA, which indicates that while the communication team was effective in spreading specific information about the assembly in the media, the assembly failed to reach a level of renown whereby it was mentioned in the media in other, broader contexts. That being said, an increasing number of articles in which the assembly is a secondary subject have been published during this final phase, indicating that the impact of the assembly is very much still evolving. In the following section, an examination of social media engagement with these different types of content (distinguished by the three different stages, as well as their main subject matter), will explore which of these kinds of content has had the greatest impact on the general public.

## 2. SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT WITH THE DIGITAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE MCCA

While the analysis in the previous section has been limited to the coverage of the MCCA in digital media, this section exclusively addresses social media engagement with this content. Social media is one of the most effective ways to impart information, spread awareness, and foster debate. It also offers very tangible metrics that can be used to assess the reach of certain ideas and content. Hence examining social media engagement is indispensable when analysing the impact of any CCA. In the case of the MCCA, data was collected for 80 entries in the database using an online index of social engagement data<sup>20</sup>, there is no available data for the remaining 14 entries. This data includes the number of Facebook engagements (likes, comments and shares) as well as the number of shares on X (formerly known as Twitter). Facebook and X have been singled out as they are the most common platforms for sharing content of this kind, and analysis of this data has been broken down into the following categories: 'Engagement by Article Published', 'Engagement by Media Outlet', 'Engagement by Main Topic', and 'Engagement Over Time'. Examining social media interaction in this way can provide vital insights into the assembly's effects on the general public.

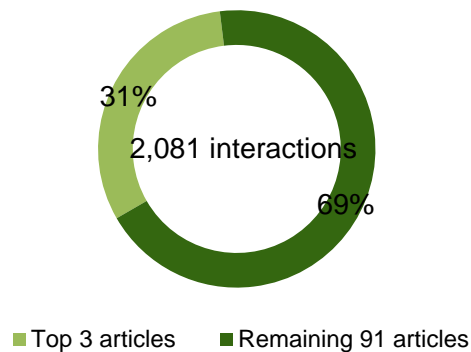
### **Engagement by Article Published**

A total of 2,081 engagements were recorded on Facebook and X on content published about the MCCA over the two-year period studied. That is an average of 26 interactions per article. However, as to be expected, these interactions were not evenly distributed across all of the entries in the database. In fact, engagement ranges from 0 to 442 interactions per article, with 11 entries gaining no engagement at all. Furthermore, the top three articles in terms of engagement garnered just under a third of all interactions (Figure 5).

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<sup>20</sup> Data collected using online marketing tool BuzzSumo in September 2023.

Figure 5. Distribution of total interactions. Source: Own elaboration.



It is worth looking more closely at these top articles which had the most social media engagement. It is notable that two of these three articles (Image 5 and Image 6), which received 351 and 163 interactions respectively, are both published by German media (*Focus* and *B.Z.*). Furthermore, they both discuss some of the most contentious proposals, including limiting visitors, cruises and beach access on the island. In fact, the article in *Focus* misstates the fact that the government of the Balearic Islands has promised to examine all proposals with at least 50% approval, rather than the correct figure of 90%, which may have led to heightened concern among readers and therefore greater interaction with the content. In the article in *B.Z.*, readers are able to like or dislike the article on the website itself, and there are three positive reactions and 18 negative reactions which is indicative of the type of response this content has induced. As mentioned in the previous sections, there were a large number of articles of this kind published at this time, which is to be expected given the considerable amount of engagement they have provoked in the general public.

Image 5. Entry with the highest total social engagement. Source: Focus.

**Um das Klima zu schützen, will Mallorca weniger Touristen zulassen**

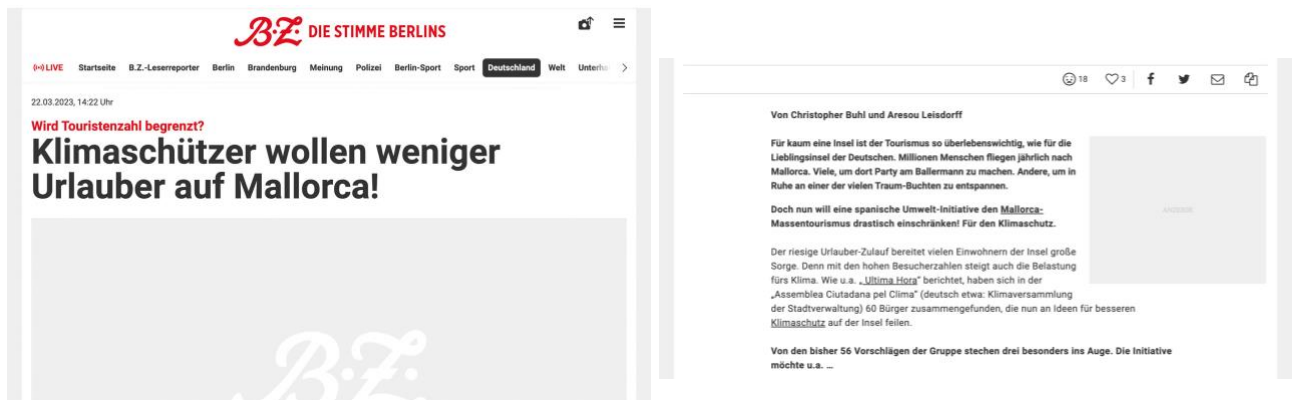
**Das Wichtigste**

- Um Klima und Natur ihrer Insel zu schützen, haben die Mallorquiner zum Teil drastische Forderungen zum Klimaschutz aufgestellt.
- So soll es eine Obergrenze für Mallorca-Urlauber und eine Zugangsbeschränkung für Strände geben.

Tausende Urlauber werden die kommenden Osterferien wieder auf Mallorca verbringen. Schon jetzt ist auf der Baleareninsel kaum noch ein freies Hotel zu finden. Doch die Mallorquiner haben langsam genug. Zu sehr belastet der Massentourismus die Bewohner und das Klima.

Die Initiative „Assemblea Ciutadana pel Clima“, der insgesamt 60 Einwohnerinnen und Einwohner der Insel angehören, hat jetzt 56 Vorschläge für mehr Klimaschutz erarbeitet und fordert eine Obergrenze für Urlauber auf Mallorca oder eine Zugangsbeschränkung zu den Stränden.

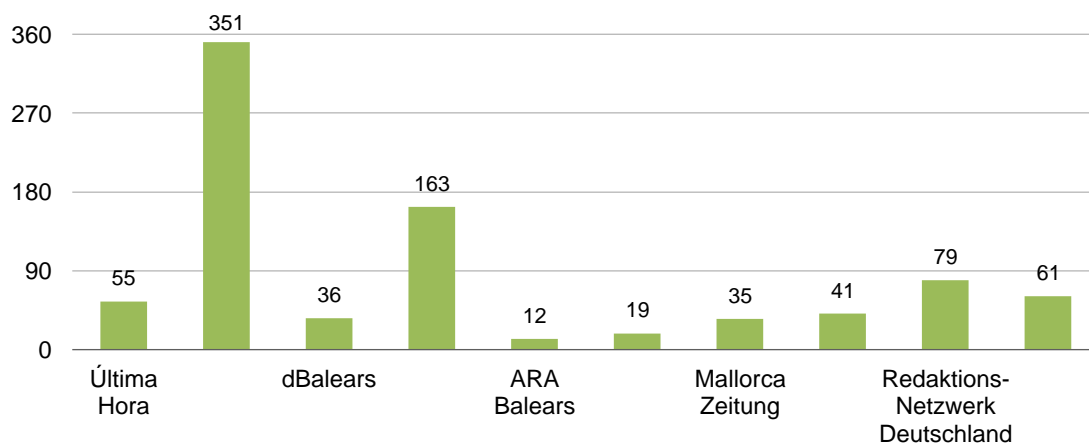
Image 6. Entry with the second highest total social engagement. Source: B.Z.



### Engagement by Media Outlet

The top three media outlets in terms of engagement are *Última Hora*, *Focus* and *dBalears*, with 442, 351 and 250 interactions respectively. These three sources alone garnered just over half of all engagements recorded for their 16 articles published. However, while both *Última Hora* and *dBalears* published 8 and 7 articles respectively, *Focus* only published one to receive that much interaction. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the average number of interactions per article for each media outlet (Figure 6) to gain a better understanding of which sources had the biggest impact. In this graph, both *Focus* and *B.Z.* (which published the two most interacted with entries) stand out with the highest average engagement rate, but it is also worth highlighting *RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland* (another German digital newspaper), *Sinc* and *Última Hora*, which all received relatively high levels of interaction. While *ARA Balears* was the media outlet with the most published entries about the MCCA with 10 articles, and it gained a fairly high number of interactions overall (121), it performed significantly lower than other sources in terms of average interaction per article.

Figure 6. Average number of interactions per article in the 10 media outlets with highest levels of engagement. Source: Own elaboration.

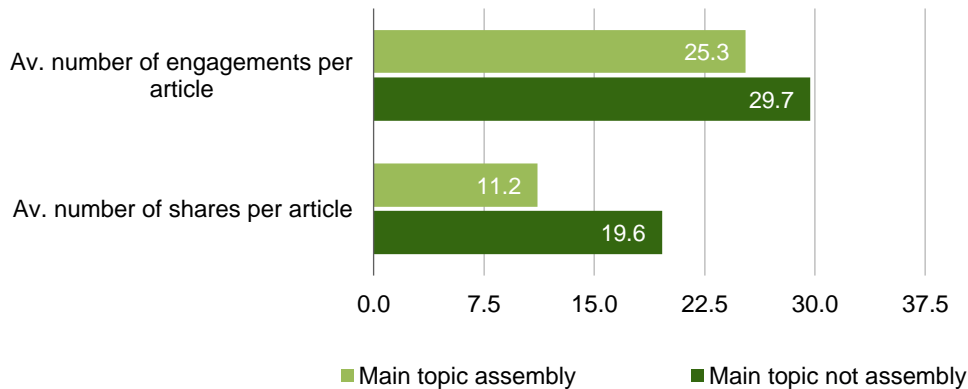


As for the type of source that has generated the most engagement with its content, by far the most predominant group was digital newspapers, with 74% of interactions, followed by general magazines with 17%. This is to be expected given that 9 out of 10 of the sources in Figure 6 with highest levels of engagement are digital newspapers, and the only source that is a different kind of media, is *Focus*, a general magazine. The remaining categories mentioned in the previous section (CSO & Third Sector Websites, Institutional Websites, TV, Radio & Podcast, Magazine [other issues] and Personal Websites & Blogs) received under 10% of the recorded engagement, showing the minimal impact they had as a whole.

### **Engagement by Main Topic**

As discussed in the previous section, there were significantly more articles published where the MCCA was the main topic (85%) than articles where it was not (15%). Therefore, these entries that are primarily about the assembly gained significantly more interaction overall on social media, with 1,695 engagements for the 78 articles about the MCCA compared with 386 engagements for the 14 articles in which the MCCA is a secondary topic. However, despite that being the case, entries in which the assembly is not the main topic have much higher rates of average engagement per article. Figure 6 shows how this type of content performed better both in terms of average social media engagements in general, as well as average number of shares on social media (on both Facebook and X). Furthermore, two of the 4 articles with highest levels of engagement in the database are not primarily about the MCCA, showing the interest among the general population in these types of articles. Both of these two articles were published in *Última Hora*, a national digital newspaper, and they received 139 and 121 interactions respectively. The first is an article about a recent change in the island's catalogue of environmental education activities, whereby Vox, the far-right political party who run the department of Environment, Rural Environment and Sports in Mallorca, has replaced an activity related to climate change with another activity related to hunting. This is an ecologically and politically contentious subject that has understandably generated a lot of debate on social media. The MCCA is only briefly mentioned after a quotation from one of the organisers of the assembly, De Vílchez. The second article is an interview with the same coordinator in which he discusses the proposals of the assembly and states the need for more solar parks and renewable energy in general on the island.

Figure 6. Average number of interactions per article in the 10 media outlets with highest levels of engagement. Source: Own elaboration.



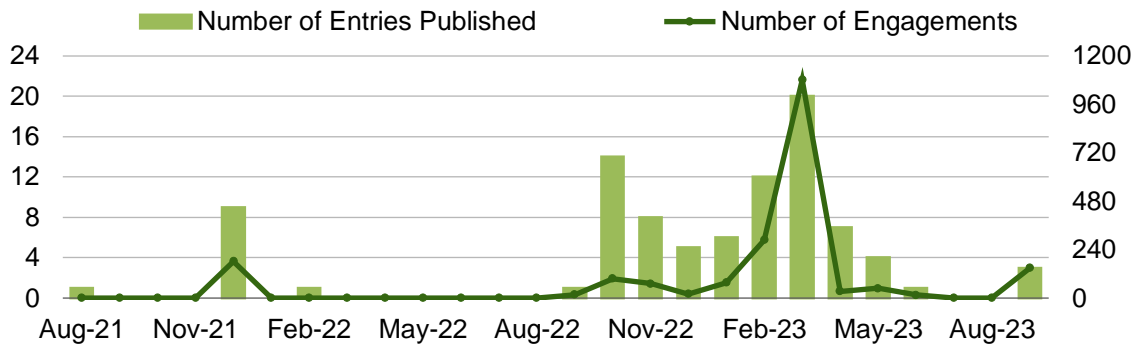
### Engagement Over Time

Finally, to further understand the ways in which the content published about the MCCA was interacted with on social media, it can be insightful to examine how this engagement has evolved over time. By comparing the number of entries published with the number of interactions they received, it is possible to determine which moments in the timeline of the assembly produced the coverage that was engaged with most on social media (Figure 7). Of the three major peaks in coverage discussed in the previous section, the first two gained very little interaction on Facebook and X relative to the number of articles published (183 engagements in December 2021 and 97 engagements in October 2022). These peaks coincided with the initial announcement of a Balearic CCA followed by the eventual start of the MCCA, and the content published in these two months was fairly repetitive expositional coverage of the basic facts about the assembly. The third peak in coverage, however, observed in March 2023, has a significantly higher level of engagement. This peak occurred when the proposals were announced after the final session of the assembly, and it reached 1,081 interactions which is more than 10 times that of the previous peak, and averages a total of 54 interactions per article that month compared with only 20 in December 2021. This illustrates how much more interest in and consumption of content of this kind there was among the general public. Lastly, the final month analysed, September 2023, in which there were only three entries recorded, garnered a significant amount of engagement on social media. On average, these articles received 50 interactions each, which is only slightly less than the average in March 2023. This shows ongoing engagement and interest in digital media coverage of the MCCA.

Figure 7. Evolution of engagement over time, in comparison with the number of entries published.

Source: Own elaboration.





In conclusion, examining the level of engagement on social media with media coverage of the MCCA allows for several insightful observations. Firstly, this has shown that some of the most stirring entries recorded were articles in German-language newspapers (both local to Mallorca as well as German national papers) about possible limitations for tourists in Mallorca. Secondly, this analysis, while limited in scope, confirms that although there was significantly less content published where the assembly was a secondary topic (only 15%), overall, this type of coverage generated much higher levels of interest among readers, with entries not primarily about the assembly garnering almost double the amount of shares on social media. And finally, the data shows that the MCCA is still a topic that readers are consuming and actively engaging with as of September 2023, despite the fact that this is 7 months after the end of the assembly.

### 3. Social media IMPACT of the MCCA

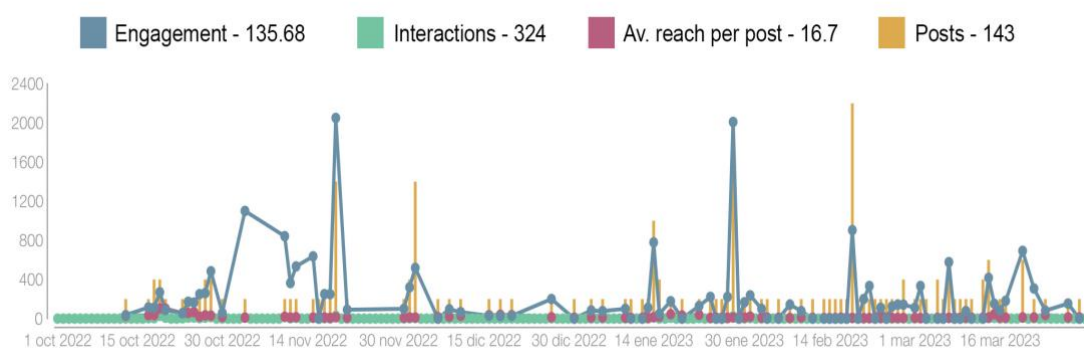
In addition to examining engagement with the digital media coverage of the MCCA on social media, analysis of a CCA's impact cannot be done without considering levels of engagement on the assembly's own social media channels. Unfortunately, in-depth research into the social media of the MCCA has been hindered by a lack of access to the backend metrics of the assembly's official accounts. In this section, therefore, the analysis is largely limited to an overview of Facebook activity, thanks to a social media report kindly provided by the agency responsible for the assembly's communication strategy. The report documents Facebook metrics for the assembly's official page over a 6-month period, from October 1st 2022 until March 31st 2023. From this report, insights can be gained regarding the communication strategy adopted and its impact on social media.

By the end of March 2023, the number of followers on the MCCA's official Facebook page was 48. Since this social media report was made, however, the page has gained an additional 6 followers as of September 2023. This is a notably small community, especially in comparison to the assembly's official X and Instagram accounts, which have a total of 367 and 1,158 followers respectively at the time of writing. The official YouTube account also has a bigger community with 65 subscribers, but it is still relatively small. Furthermore, more content was shared on Facebook compared to on Instagram, with 143 posts on Facebook and 123 posts on Instagram, yet it failed to reach as big a community, nor gain as much engagement. Facebook garnered 324 interactions (likes comments and shares) during this period, while Instagram garnered a total of 2,648 interactions (likes and comments alone). That is more than 8 times the level of engagement seen on Facebook, and amounts to an average of 22 interactions per post on Instagram, compared with an average of 2 interactions per post on Facebook. The post with the highest number of interactions on Instagram is a post-dated October 17th 2022, which encourages viewers to consider what they would do to try and stop climate change. The post has 411 likes and 7 comments. Additionally, the most viewed video on the assembly YouTube channel is the official campaign video, posted 19th October 2022 which has 385 views, 15 likes and zero comments.

Although Facebook activity was significantly lower than that of other social media platforms, it is worth examining which publications gained the most traction in terms of reach and interactions, and when the most posts were published. A total of 1,842

impressions were recorded across the 143 posts on Facebook. The post with the biggest reach at 196 impressions, announces the start of the assembly on the day of its first session, 19th October 2022, with a link to the assembly's official website. It also received 26 interactions, which is significantly high relative to other posts. The post with the highest level of overall engagement, a metric which takes into account the number of reactions, comments, shares, clicks, impressions, reach and video views, was published on the 3rd November 2022. It is a post that also shares a link to an article on the MCCA's official website about the selection process for participants in the assembly. Both of these two posts were published while the assembly was taking place. Furthermore, as you can see in Figure 8, there are 5 major peaks in content that was posted on Facebook, which coincide with the 5 sessions of the assembly. What is interesting about all of these observations, is that these trends are in contrast to the coverage of the assembly in digital media, where there was significantly more content published both before and after the assembly and very little published while it was ongoing. On Facebook, the communication strategy, although carried out on a small scale, was most effective during the 5 sessions of the assembly, yet it failed to reach the same levels of activity after the end of the deliberation stage. It is also worth noting that the final post made on Facebook was published on the 30th March 2023, hence public engagement with the Assembly on this channel is largely limited to this period.

Figure 8. Facebook posts, engagement and reach over time. Source: *Vivir del Cuento Comunicació Social Media Report*.



Overall, the impact of the MCCA's Facebook content was much more limited compared with other social media platforms, and further data would be needed to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the assembly's Instagram, X and YouTube accounts. However, what was successful about the social media campaign is that it produced content and engagement at a time when digital media coverage was lacking, namely while

the assembly was taking place, which is arguable one of the most effective moments to share information and spread awareness of the MCCA to the general public.

