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RESEARCH NOTIFICATION

Democracy Emerging from Viewpoints – Interaction Dynamics and Significance of Deliberative Citizens’ Panels (DENIM) and invitation to participate in research

- 1. You are invited to participate in the DENIM project, which examines how the viewpoints of citizens selected to participate in a citizens’ panel are formed through everyday interactions before the panel, how different views are negotiated and transformed into a shared statement during panel discussions, and how the resulting panel recommendations are engaged and addressed in local political decision-making.**

The DENIM project introduces a new perspective to research on participatory democracy by focusing on grassroots communication and interaction. The project specifically examines the operation of citizen panels and their significance for democratic participation. The study is conducted in cooperation with the City of Jyväskylä, and you are invited to participate because you have been invited to take part in a resident panel planned by the City of Jyväskylä for autumn 2026. Participation in the DENIM research project is voluntary and does not affect your opportunity to participate in the resident panel organized by the City of Jyväskylä.

This research notification describes the study and participation in it. Information on the processing of your personal data is provided in the appendix.

The participants in the study are individuals who have been invited to and participate in the City of Jyväskylä resident panel. The exact number of participants has not been determined in advance but will depend on the number of individuals participating in the resident panel.

Research data will be collected in three phases. In the first phase, diary data will be collected, including follow-up interviews. In the second phase, observational data will be gathered from the resident panel, consisting of audio recordings of the panel and observation notes. In the third phase, decision-making and statement documents will be collected, including the city council’s response to the panel’s public statement as well as recordings and minutes from relevant city council meetings.

2. Voluntariness

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, discontinue your participation, or withdraw the consent you have given at any time during the study without providing a reason. No negative consequences will result from doing so.

If you discontinue your participation or withdraw your consent, personal data, samples, and other information collected from you up to that point may still be used as part of the research data when this is necessary to ensure the validity of the research results.

3. Progress of the study

The study examines how participants' views are formed in everyday discussions before the resident panel, how these views develop into shared positions during panel discussions, and how those positions are taken into account in decision-making. The research proceeds in three phases: before the panel, during the panel, and after the panel. The study is based on the understanding of communication as a process through which meanings are jointly constructed in interaction. The research is qualitative and uses methods such as interviews and diary methods to understand participants' experiences and views. At the same time, we observe interaction during the panel discussions themselves in order to understand how recommendations are developed and through what kinds of interactional processes they emerge during panel discussions. This provides information on how participation is constructed in practice and how residents' views can influence decision-making.

The data collection methods used in the research project are:

- **Diary method:** The diary period begins in late July and continues for two weeks until the resident panel starts. During this period, participants make short daily diary entries about everyday interaction situations in which their views on the panel topic are formed.
- **Observation of resident panel discussions by the research team:** This includes audio recording of the resident panel discussions and the preparation of observation notes.
- **Follow-up interviews supporting the diary method:** the interviews will be conducted at the end of September/beginning of October, after the resident panel has concluded. The follow-up interview supports participants in reflecting on the entire resident panel process.
- **Collection of public digital materials:** This includes decision-making and statement documents, such as the city council's response to the panel's public statement, as well as recordings and minutes from relevant city council meetings.

4. Possible benefits from the study

The research will produce both theoretical and practical knowledge about the interactional processes of democratic participation and deliberation. It will deepen understanding of how people's views are formed in everyday discussions, how they evolve and solidify in panel discussions, and how they connect to political decision-making. At the same time, the research will provide concrete, empirically grounded information to support the planning and implementation of citizen panels and contribute to the development of high-quality democratic processes both locally and more broadly.

5. Possible risks, harm, and inconvenience caused by the study as well as preparing for these

Participation in the study is not expected to cause any risks, harm or inconvenience.

6. Study-related costs and compensations to the subject as well as research funding

No rewards will be paid for participation in the study.

7. Informing about research results and research outcomes

The project will result in scientific publications, theses, conference and seminar presentations, lectures, and facilitation models based on empirical research, which will support the use of local participatory democracy in political decision-making. Information collected in the study will be treated confidentially. Your identity will not be disclosed to anyone outside the research team,

nor will it be identifiable from the research results or from examples used in publications and teaching materials.

8. Insurance coverage for research subjects

The University of Jyväskylä has insurances for its activities and research subjects. In the case of research conducted remotely, the insurance of the University of Jyväskylä compensates only for damage that is directly related to the assigned research task and that has occurred during the actual guided research task. The insurance does not cover accidents that occur during breaks. The insurances of the University of Jyväskylä are not valid in the case of research conducted remotely if a research subject's home municipality is not in Finland. The set of insurance includes a malpractice insurance, an operational liability insurance, and an optional insurance against accidents. During the research activities, the subjects are covered by the insurance for accidents, damages and injuries inflicted by an external cause. The accident insurance is valid during measurements and on trips integrally connected to them.

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