



Hear the Citizens

Public engagement – Finnish Experience

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Tallinn

Ministry of Finance - Finland

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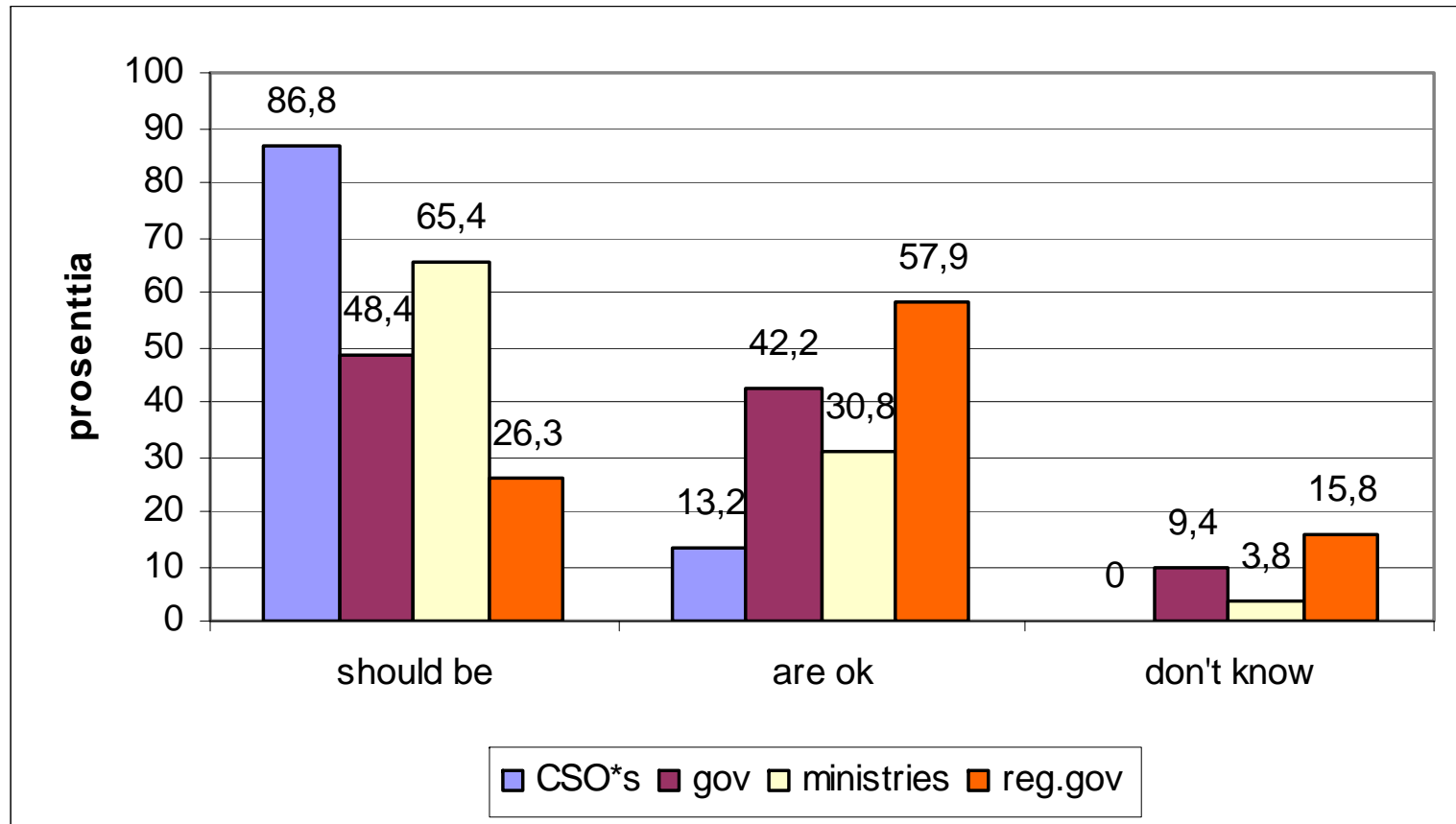


Hear the Citizens

- Enhancing consultation and participation in policy making in central government
- Hear the Citizens I – planning
- Hear the Citizens II – implementation
- Hear the Citizens III – commitment and reporting



The views of administration and CSO's of the necessity to improve consultation



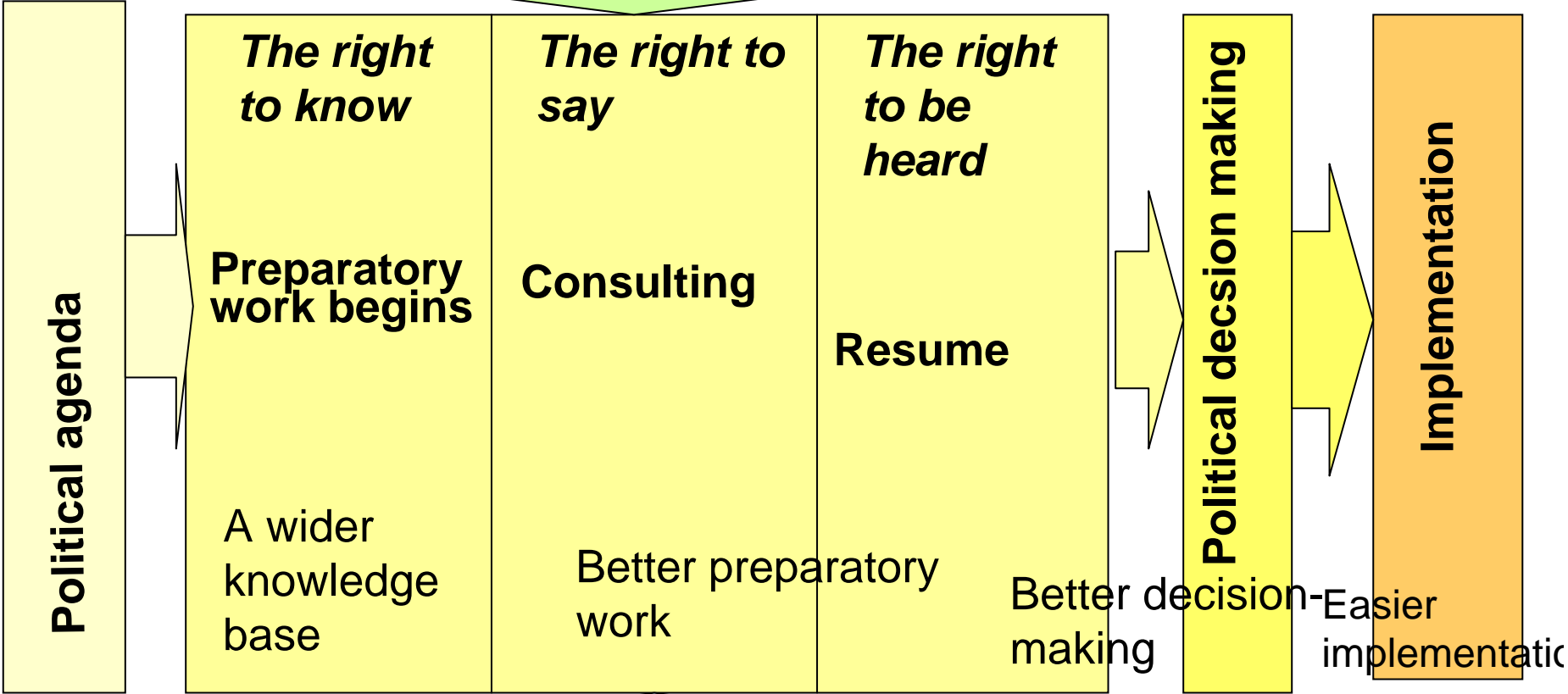


OECD principles –principles behind Finnish reforms

- Commitment
- Rights
- Clarity
- Time
- Objectivity
- Resources
- Co-ordination
- Accountability
- Evaluation
- Active citizenship



Hearing Citizens in Ministries



Preparatory work in ministries



Implementing – Hear the Citizens

- Strategies of ministries
- Guidelines for Civil Servants
- Training for civil servants in consultation and participation
- Handbook and declaration
- Evaluation
- Reporting

Hear the Citizens - Guidelines for Civil Servants

Remember consultation in each project-proportion it according to the significance of the project

Make sure that all parties involved are consulted and that all those interested can send comments

Reserve enough time for the consultation

Make a resume - bring out also those comments, that did not lead to changes

Evaluate how well you succeeded

Planning

Project

Decision-making

Use language that is simple and unambiguous

Inform about every phase and make sure that the project is in the project register (www.hare.vn.fi)



Developing the consultation code

- Project group with ministries and CSO*s
- Consulting CSO*s
- Open discussion to all citizens at www.otakantaa.fi
- A new version now available that also municipalities can use



Implementing the code

- Pilot ministries
- www-pages
- one-pager
- handbook
- e-learning
- information, information, information



Whom to consult

- Consultation should be sufficiently extensive
- The number of consultees cannot be limited due to time constraints or other such reasons.
- At least all interest groups who will be directly affected by an issue under preparation should be consulted.
- Also regional representation should be considered in consultation.
- When consulting citizen organisations with many member or local sub-organisations it should be mentioned, if wished, that also these organisations have a say on the issue in question.



Consultation methods

- meetings
- otakantaa + other e-tools
- written consultations
- working group member ships, advisory committees
- barometers
- continuous dialogue
- workshops
- public hearings



How to make the most of consultations?

- The hardest task is after the consultation
- This is the weak point in Finland as well
- This is also a task that has to be learned -> requires expertise
- Emphasis on training
- Combining different consultation methods
- Continuous dialogue helps
- Quality check – evaluation and reporting



Civic Participation Policy Programme

- Horizontal Policy Programmes a new tool in the Finnish Government – key priorities of the Gov
- Civil Participation Policy Programme is one and has 18 projects that are under the following four areas
 - The Democratic Structures and Methods
 - Citizen Participation
 - The Functioning of Civil Society
 - Active Citizenship
- The Programme will also look at efficient and appropriate administration of democratic issues in the Government



Civic Participation Policy Programme

