

The **Certified Citizen Consultation** tool polls among participants, who choose among alternatives, thanks to a variety of polling modalities; Certified Consultation is suitable when the opinion of a large number of people must be heard.

It should be noted that, from a technical standpoint, this tool is essentially a voting tool. Hence, we refer hereafter to “votes,” “voters,” etc.

However this tool was designed and included in the deliberative platform to poll a set of participants (not necessarily all citizens but those participating in the deliberative process) for their preference among alternatives that emerged in previous deliberation.

The Certified Consultation tool supplies a set of polling modalities:

- **plurality voting**: voters can choose only one alternative,
- **approval voting**: voters may vote for as many of the alternatives as they wish,
- **cumulative voting**: every voter has a fixed number of points to distribute among the alternatives or to assign to a single option,
- **Borda count**: voters are able to rank N alternatives by preference, assigning the first N points, the second N-1, and so forth.

A voter may always abstain, the online equivalent of voting a blank ballot. A consultation may include one or more propositions, each with its own polling modality. The start and end dates determine the duration of consultation. Outside this time frame, propositions and results may be read but no voting is allowed.

Unlike most polling tools now available in the web, openDCN **Certified Citizen Consultation** uses solutions developed for online voting [created within a previous EU-funded project] to carry

out certified
consultations, i.e., consultations that afford the following features
:

- **democracy**: only eligible voters can participate,
- **uniqueness**: no one can cast more than one vote,
- **secrecy**: also known as privacy or anonymity - votes must remain secret and anonymous,
- **accuracy**: a voter's vote cannot be altered, duplicated or removed, without detection.

The consultation tool's architecture essentially consists of three dedicated servers:

- **Registrar**: which manages eligible voters' authentication,
- **Forwarder**: which receives encrypted votes and dissociates votes from voters,
- **Collector**: which gathers votes

We recommend locating the Registrar and the Collector on different hosts, managed by different (public) bodies committed to guaranteeing the fairness of the consultation. It would thus be possible to re-associate votes with voters only if the two bodies agree to violate *secrecy*
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