



Registration

If you would like to participate, please register **by February 24, 2026**, using the following QR code or the following link:



Link: <https://uni-w.de/msges>

Important:
Registering does not guarantee your participation!
After the registration deadline, we will compile the Citizens' Assembly from all registrations received and then contact you again.

When registering, you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire about yourself. We need this information to organize the registration process and to generate a composition of participants that is as close as possible to the average of the total population in Frechen.

What is it about?

50 randomly selected residents of Frechen will discuss issues relating to the future of energy production and develop measures and proposals on how citizens can be involved in the changes in former coal-mining regions through citizen energy projects. They will contribute their own personal experiences and perspectives. The term "citizen energy" refers to projects in which citizens either own sustainable energy plants themselves or actively participate in their production and/or use.

How does it work?

If you decide to participate and receive final confirmation from us, you will meet with 49 other people at Frechen Town Hall on three consecutive days (from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day). You will listen to presentations by experts and discuss specific issues relating to community energy in small groups. Together, you will develop proposals that will ultimately be recorded in a citizen report.

THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

Why were you selected?

The Citizens' Assembly is intended to represent a random cross-section of the population in Frechen. For this reason, the city of Frechen randomly selected people aged 16 and over from the population register and wrote to them. You are one of these people.

What are the requirements for participation?

By receiving this invitation, you have fulfilled all the requirements – you were selected by lot! There are no further requirements. You do not need any prior knowledge of the topics covered by the citizens' assembly to participate. You do not need to inform yourself in advance or prepare in any other way. We are interested in your personal views and your experience and knowledge from your everyday life in Frechen and the surrounding area. All the necessary information will be provided to you and the other participants during the event. Please note that this invitation is valid for you personally and is not transferable to other people.

Who sent this invitation?

We are the *Institute for Democracy and Participation Research (IDPF)* at the University of Wuppertal. The IDPF has been in existence since 1975 and has many years of experience in organizing, implementing, analyzing, and scientifically evaluating citizen participation formats such as the Citizens' Assembly in Frechen. We are currently conducting the research project "BE:ST – Citizen Energy: Structural Strengthening & Participation" in collaboration with the *Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment, and Energy (Wuppertal Institute)*, the *Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW)*, and the *Research Institute for Sustainability (RIFS)*. It is against this backdrop that the Citizens' Assembly in Frechen is taking place.¹ During the event, we will provide you with insights into our research findings to date, which we would like to supplement with the perspectives of the Frechen population gathered at the Citizens' Assembly. We would be delighted if you could support us by participating!

What will happen with the results?

The measures and recommendations you develop together will be incorporated into the research project "BE:ST." They will be incorporated as the opinion of citizens into the *energy research networks* of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE)².

Why Frechen?

Frechen was selected for the "BE:ST" research project as the municipality for the implementation of the Citizens' Assembly and is representative of the many cities and municipalities in regions undergoing structural change, such as the Rhineland mining area. Mr. Kai Uwe Tietz, Mayor of Frechen, is the patron of the Citizens' Assembly. The event is accompanied and supported by the city of Frechen. However, the results are expressly aimed at the federal level and not at the city of Frechen itself.

I would love to participate, but...

The Frechen Citizens' Assembly will take place on three consecutive days from Wednesday to Friday (22 to 24

¹ Further information on the IDPF and the BE:ST research project can be found at: <https://idpf.uni-wuppertal.de>

² Further information on the research networks can be found here: <https://www.forschungsnetzwerke-energie.de/forschungsnetzwerke-energie>

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April 2026). This poses challenges for many of you who have other commitments during this time and, for example, have to go to work. Nevertheless, we would love to have you there! For this reason, you have the option of applying for educational leave for the event in accordance with the Employee Further Training Act (AWbG NRW) and thus being released from work by your employer. This means you will not have to use any of your normal vacation days or forego any part of your salary. If there are other reasons that make it difficult for you to participate, please do not hesitate to contact us! We will do our best to find a solution together with you.

Will I incur any costs for participating?

No, there are no costs for you. Free refreshments will be provided during the event. At the end of the Citizens' Assembly, each participant will receive a lump sum expense allowance of €100. You do not need to submit any receipts or similar documents for this. However, we do need your contact details in order to pay out the expense allowance, which must be submitted to the university administration. Your data will not be passed on to third parties. In addition, at the end of the event, we will raffle off a total of eight BestChoice vouchers worth six times 50 and two times 100 euros among all participants. If you participate and win, you will receive the voucher in addition to the expense allowance.

Special features

In addition to the input presentations by experts, the Citizens' Assembly also offers you the opportunity to use an innovative AI expert system to learn about the topics covered. This tool was developed specifically by the University of Wuppertal and tailored to the needs of the Citizens' Assembly. As a participant in the event, you will test the AI system and give us feedback on its use. In doing so, you will help to advance university research in this area.

Important information about educational leave

You can apply for educational leave for the event in accordance with AWbG NRW. This means that you will be released from work for the duration of the Citizens' Assembly without having your vacation days or part of your salary reduced. To be granted educational leave, you must submit **your application to your employer at least 6 weeks before the event**. This deadline can still be met after we give our final confirmation in early March, and we will then provide you with the necessary documents. However, it may be advantageous to inform your employer now that you would like to apply for educational leave if you receive final confirmation.

Data protection

By registering, you agree that we may store and process your data for the purposes of the Citizens' Assembly and that we may contact you for the registration process and the implementation of the event. Your data will be deleted after the project is completed, unless you give us your express consent during the event to contact you for further research.

THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

Questions / Contact

If you have any questions about the Citizens' Assembly itself or your participation, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Contact person:

Kyra Erfkamp
Phone: 0202 / 439 4793
Email: erfkamp@uni-wuppertal.de

Key data on the Citizens' Assembly:

April 22–24, 2026
9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Frechen Town Hall

Further information:



<https://uni-w.de/au3p8>