ESEC overview

The Economic, Social and Environmental Council (ESEC) is a constitutional consultative assembly. It is an essential cog in our democracy. It advises the Government and the Parliament and participates in the development and evaluation of public policies in its fields of competence.

The ESEC is a democratic expression of civil society in action. Its work is based on listening, dialogue and the search for a demanding consensus to respond to the challenges of today and tomorrow and to inform public decision-making.

It represents key economic, social and environmental fields, promoting cooperation between different socio-professional interest groups and ensuring they are part of the process of shaping and reviewing public policy. More than 80 organizations are represented in the ESEC.

Mission statement

The Council's four main roles involve:

Inform public authorities allow the voice of the citizens to be heard : The ESEC advises the Government and the Parliament in the development of economic, social and environmental policy.

Evaluate public policies the missions of the ESEC: The ESEC contributes to the evaluation of public economic, social and environmental policies

Allow the voice of the citizens to be heard: The ESEC facilitates the expression of the voice of individual citizens in order to enrich its work.

Interact with the regions: The ESEC promotes dialogue and cooperation with its regional (CESER), European and foreign counterparts.

Citizen Participation

Since 2021, the ESEC is a crossroads of citizen participation because it takes an important place in the works wich are realized in the institution.

Citizen participation is based on a simple observation: all citizens are affected by public policy, regardless of the area in which it is applied.

For citizen participation to have a real impact on the purpose of a public policy, it is not simply a matter of organising a discussion group where everyone says what they think. Citizen participation requires method and rigour in the construction of mechanisms for deliberation between citizens. This deliberation allows the points of view of each person to be confronted, and this makes it possible to find ways of moving towards proposed solutions to the problems raised.

At the ESEC, citizen participation feeds into the opinions that will be submitted to Parliament and the Government, and which will give impetus to new public policies. This enables two types of expertise - that of the councillors representing civil society organisations, and that of the citizens welcomed to the ESEC - to talk to each other, to respond to each other, and ultimately to work together to improve public policies.

The ESEC involves the public in its work:

By involving them in working groups

By allowing them to submit a citizens' initiative petition to the ESEC

By asking them to respond to online consultations open to all

By organising citizens' conventions (such as the one on climate change (2019-2020) or the one on the end of life (2022-2023).

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