Traffic Light

Enables a fast overview of the prevailing opinion in large groups where participants illustrate their level of advocacy through a green, yellow, or red card.

Information
Ideation
Consultation
Co-Decision

<15 people
15-30 people
30-100 people
100-250 people
> 250 people

Preparation:
½ - 1 day for setting
the exercise right
Implementation:
5-10min / ½ day
Follow-up:
½-2 days
for documentation, if needed

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Resources for a short workshop

At least one person for preparation, moderation and documentation

The Method: What is it, when to use it and what outcome to expect

Traffic Light is a quick method that uses colored signs om green, orange, and red, to either provide a visual overview of which opinions, feedback or sentiment are present, or to assess the distribution and severity of certain aspects of public places across an mapped area.

This technique can be used as a stand-alone or as a sub-method within a larger process. It can be useful to understand either the different levels of acceptance on a question or issue within a group, or in combination with maps, e.g. to demonstrate different levels of public safety, natural resources, accidents, or children-friendliness across a neighborhood or city.

The Traffic Light logic accesses a situation quickly, precisely and effectively with clear results and provide a great basis for further analysis or action.

The Process: How to conduct it in an in-person setting or online using a PC/laptop with video option

The method offers two options:

1. Quick evaluation of opinions and sentiments within a group: Each participant receives three (virtual) cards: One in red (= I disagree/I am against), one in yellow/orange (= I am undecided), one in green (= I agree/ I am in favor). The facilitator introduces the question/topic/issue which is up for voting, provides background information on it and room for clarification. The facilitator gives the audience 1-3min silent time to find their vote and asks the participants to vote all at the same time.

2. Assessment of mapped areas: The facilitator provides a (virtual) map of the area that is up for analysis. Participants together label locations of the area with (virtual) pin, using the traffic light logic according to their topic of analysis, e.g. red pins for major problem(s) or no availability, yellow/orange for minor problem(s) or limited availability, green for no problem(s) or perfect availability. The labelling can be done ad-hoc, asking participants for their experiences out memory, or after problems and issues have been collected in a joint Transect Walk.

Blended participation

The event can easily be conducted virtually and in person at the same time if the facilities allow. If the questions are not too complex, the voting can be done via a simple USSD phone. This would increase outreach, and not all participants have to come from the same area / country / group..

Digital communication

Digital invites can be sent to the participants, (also for the face to face session). The results should be documented and can also be shared via e-mail. The topics should be introduced prior to the event via digital communication so that participants can think about their opinion in advance.

Good to know

- Stickers, pins or markers may do, too
- Traffic Light signs should be big enough to be seen in the room of choice
- Consider mixing and integrating into other participation methods, e.g. mapping, voting
- Read further:
  - https://www.reflectionaction.org/tools_and_methods/65/?from=ov