

Reset

Deliberative Polls

A new instrument to help politics in controversial choices and improve the participation of citizens to public life. It is the Deliberative Poll. James Fishkin from Stanford University created it, and after several applications throughout the world it finally reached Italy. It was a success. Regione Lazio asked a representative sample of the population to get informed and discuss topics such as health care and investments from the ethical bond. The result: at the end of the discussion, they knew much more about both issues, their opinion changed, becoming more competent and the approval for the event was so high that they said they would do it again.

*Press Conference
Rome, January 8th 2007 - 11.00 a.m.
Fnsi – Sala “Azzurra” – I floor
Corso Vittorio Emanuele, 349*

Rome, January 8th 2007 – They are more informed about health care, ethical finance, environment, mobility and schools, but also very satisfied of their participation and ready to do it again. They are the 119 citizens involved in the first Deliberative Poll that took place in Italy last december 3rd, in Regione Lazio. The initiative, that made the citizens the main active characters of public opinion for one day, turned out to be very successful. The method used, Deliberative Polling®, created by James Fishkin from Stanford University is strengthened by ten years of experience in different contexts (from US presidential elections to the European referenda, to local policies and controversial matters of national relevance). Deliberative Polling® reached Italy thanks to the initiative of Piero Marrazzo, president of Regione Lazio and Luigi Nieri, regional council treasurer, and in cooperation with *Reset* magazine, edited by Giancarlo Bosetti, and Ispo (Institute for the Studies of Public Opinion), directed by Renato Mannheimer.

After an ordinary poll on a representative sample, the citizens were invited to spend an entire day in the building of Regione Lazio; they debated, asked questions to the experts, listened to the answers and, finally, answered again to the questions of the ordinary poll but with a new competence, as the results show.

After a day of deliberation, in fact, the 85% of the sample declared a clearer idea about the issues addressed; this greater knowledge resulted in a change of opinion between the first and the last poll (for example, people that agreed on “converting hospital beds in resources in order to improve the efficiency of the structures” went from 45 to 62%). Among the

questions there were some trying to identify the citizens' level of information; at the end of the deliberative day, the correct answers were a lot more than at the beginning, particularly the 90% (in the face of an original 75%) answered that the health-care is the main item of expense in the regional budget, and those who knew the number of the exceeding hospital beds in comparison with the agreement between the State and Regions went from 7% to 58%. At the same time, with regard to the ethical finance, the 59% (vs. an initial 29%) answered correctly about the features of the ethical bond.

The liking of the initiative shown by the participants was very high. They judged the experience extremely precious, and the 82% of them said to be available to participate again to similar events.

Participants to the press conference for the presentation of the results of the first deliberative poll in Italy:

Giuliano Amato, Minister of Interior

Giancarlo Bosetti, Reset editor-in-chief

Renato Mannheimer, University of Bicocca, Milan

Piero Marrazzo, President of Regione Lazio

Luigi Nieri, Regione Lazio Council Treasurer

Invitees to discuss the deliberative poll

Linda Lanzillotta, Minister of Regional Affairs; **Ricardo Franco Levi**, Undersecretary of the Premiership;

Franco Bassanini, **Sergio Bellucci**, **Angelo Bonelli**, **Daniele Capezzone**, **Alessandro Curzi**, **Angelo Maria Petroni**, **Stefano Rodotà**

Deliberative Polling® is a registered trademark of James Fishkin. Any funds from the trademark are used entirely to support research.

For further information:

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