

DELPHI METHOD

Introduction

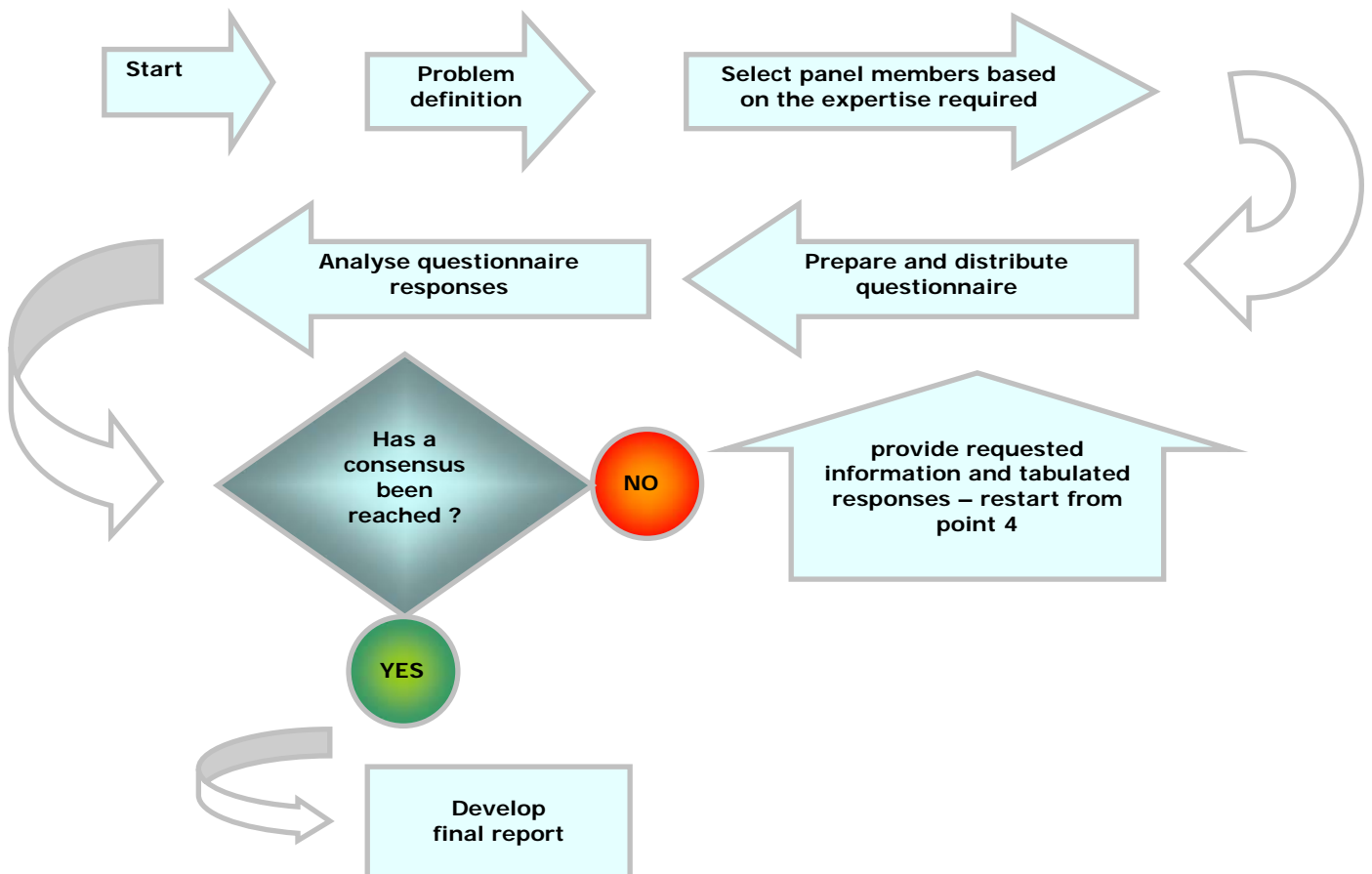
In the project Regional Key Competencies, partners have done research on the different consultation processes that exist in order to define which are a region's key competencies. In our search, we came across different methods, among which the Delphi method, which was used in the FASIL project in Liege (see 'example'). We did not choose to use this tool in this project, but we feel it is an interesting method that deserves a place on this web site.

Description

The Delphi method is well known method used for forecasting. A panel of carefully selected experts is asked to reply to a series of questionnaires. The goal is to reach consensus about an opinion or view. The experts don't have to meet face to face; questionnaires can easily be completed via e-mail or other ways. After each round of questioning, the experts receive feedback: the anonymous answers provided by the other experts. Then they are asked to revise their answers in the light of the other replies. This process is repeated until the number of answers has sufficiently decreased in order to determine the final answers via the median scores.

Anonymity is an important factor in the process; it helps to avoid the so called "bandwagon effect" (the observation that people often do (or believe) things because many other people do (or believe) the same) or the "halo effect" (when a person's perception of another is influenced by their appearance) and it allows experts to express freely their opinions.

Flow chart: (source: Ryerson University, Canada)



Example

The Delphi method was used in the **FASIL project**, « Forcer l'Avenir par la Société de l'Information en région de Liège - Breakthrough to the future with the information society in the Liege region », a project which intends to ensure that the Liege region takes full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Information Society through a strategic approach and a programme of actions. The first phase of the project was from March 1997 to November 1998, the second phase from the beginning of 2000 till March 2002.

For detailed information, please read the excerpt from the FASIL project in the word document "Delphi Method FASIL". The full report can be found in the 3 word documents.

You can also visit the FASIL web site:

<http://www.liegeonline.be/tic/fasil/indexfasilen.php?show=enindex.html>

Final report: <http://www.liegeonline.be/fasil/rapport.html>

Further reading

Wikipedia : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphi_method

Turoff Murray and Linstone Harold; *The Delphi Method: Techniques and Applications*, 618 p., 2002 : <http://www.is.njit.edu/pubs/delphibook/>