



Annex 6. Public Engagement Action Plan

Annex to the E1.3.1 TWIST Common
STrategy for mutual learning and
capitalisation of RIS3 results

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List of de acronyms and abbreviations

- DG** - Directorate General
- EU** - European Union
- PE** - Public Engagement
- R&I** - Research and Innovation
- RRI** - Responsible Research and Innovation
- SWaFS** - Science with and for the society





1. Introduction

The Transnational Water Innovation Strategy (TWIST) has framed the project and its goals within the European strategic and policy context and has set a strategic framework to execute the defined objectives.

The defined vision for the TWIST strategy is:

“A territory that is resilient to market and climate changes, that stimulates economic growth and environmental protection by being anchored in innovation and stakeholders engagement”

In order to accomplish the defined vision, a mission and four strategic objectives have been set as showed on figure 1.1.

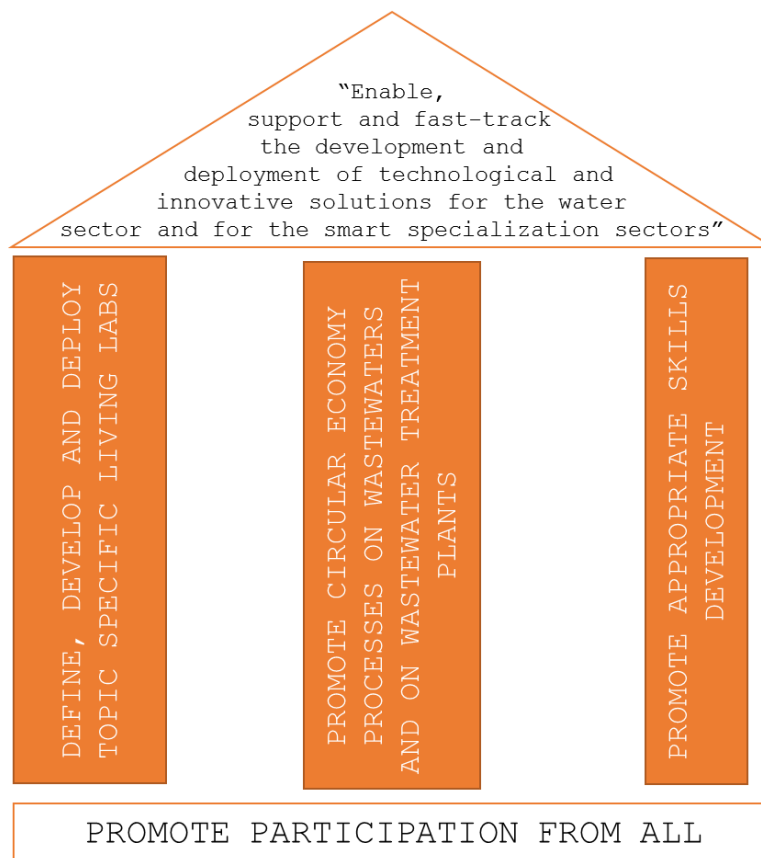


Figure 1.1 - TWIST Mission and Strategic Objectives



It is therefore aimed for the strategy to become an engine for innovation of the water sector within the TWIST regions using as leverage the Research and Innovation Smart Specialization Strategies (RIS3).

This Action Plan will define the steps to promote participation from all through public engagement processes, further developing the established in the TWIST Strategy, more precisely its Strategic Objective 4.

Participation and engagement is key on European policies and aim the involvement of all agents of the quadruple helix in the decision-making, priorities' definition and objectives setting in a view of co-creation, co-responsibilisation and ownership of all participants in the development of the economic fabric and of environmental sustainability.

Through the creation of a governance structure and by using both top-down and bottom-up approaches, collaborative ecosystems can be created and become the drivers for fit-for-purpose decisions and actions. ICTs are a key factor for assuring bottom-up participation of civil society and will contribute toward social inclusion.

The quadruple helix model allows to move towards the 'open innovation' concept considering "all stakeholders as active players in jointly creating and experimenting in the new ways of doing things and creating new services and products" (DCNCT, 2015).

Spatial planning and management authorities at relevant level also have a role to play especially as using spatial and environmental planning and policy-making as tools to boost the potential of the natural environment in providing water treatment, storage, buffer and recreational solutions. This can be done e.g. through improvement on green infrastructures or stricter/adequate land use constraints and would allow multiple benefits including better performance on climate change adaptation and on maintenance and operation costs.



2. Responsible Research and innovation

Over the last decades, EU has been promoting significant changes in the ways that the public and other stakeholders are involved in policy making across all domains, including R&D activities. The role of citizens and stakeholders in science is changing it is now expected for them, and they expect to, influence decisions in research activities.

Understanding this paradigm change and the relevance of the participation of the public, the concept of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) has emerged in the beginning of the century, stemmed from the Science in Society programmes of DG Research within the European Commission.

“Responsible Research and Innovation is an approach that anticipates and assesses potential implications and societal expectations with regard to research and innovation, with the aim to foster the design of inclusive and sustainable research and innovation”¹

RRI has gained policy relevance in the EU over the last decade especially in the context of the programme “science with and for the society” (SWAfS), in the context of the Horizon 2020 strategy.

SWAfS programme became instrumental to address the societal challenges tackled by Horizon 2020 building capacities and developing innovative ways of bridging the gap between science and society.

RRI and its approach seeks to focus research and the products of innovation to achieve benefits in the social and environmental realms. It allows all societal actors (researchers, citizens, policymakers, business, third sector organisations, etc.) to work together in the R&I processes since the incept, aligning its outcomes with the values of society. RRI is an umbrella that links the following aspects of the relationship R&I and society:

1. public engagement;
2. open access;
3. gender equality;

¹<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/node/766#Article>



4. science education;
5. ethics, and
6. governance.

The present document will focus on the first aspect, Public Engagement (PE), a key element of RRI. PE involves different types of processes, where there is a distinct role for citizens and stakeholder groups to contribute to research and innovation activities.

Promoting PE gives more weight to people and stakeholders when defining research needs, priorities and on the implementation of R&I activities.

PE is characterised by involving a high number and variety of actors from policy makers, to education and research communities, Business and Industry and civil society organization (see figure 2.1).

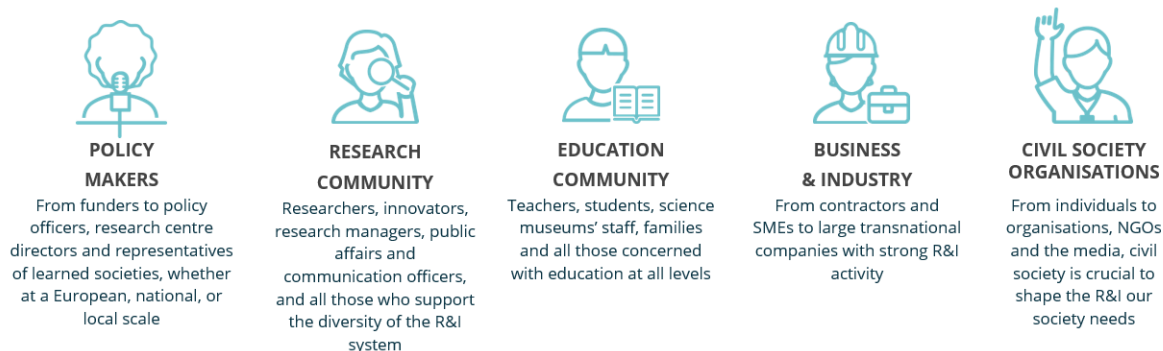


Figure 2.1 - Public Engagement actors²

Rask et al. (2016) developed a conceptual framework of PE, where innovativeness, participatory performance and dynamic governance where key, having identified, analysed and refined innovative PE tools and instruments for dynamic and responsible governance of R&I.

The authors found that together with influencing R&I, PE has impacts on the environment, society and politics. Those impact can be dived in three areas:

²<https://www.rri-tools.eu/about-rri>



- substantive- *e.g.* new knowledge and ideas;
- practical - *e.g.* new products, practices, skills, social acceptance
- and normative - *e.g.* democratization and empowerment

Table 2.1 shows the identified impacts in science and technologies.

Table 2.1 - Impacts of public engagement in science and technology (adapted from Rask et al. 2016)

Substantive	Practical	Normative
Scientific measurement and data	new products and services	expression of citizens' opinions of R&I
New scientific knowledge	methodological development and demonstration	building consensus of R&I
Problem solving knowledge	new educational contents and practices	confirmation of existing R&I policies
Research and publication	professional skills and networks	more responsible R&I
University theses	new solutions to societal challenges	
Academic debates	large-scale experimentation	
Knowledge transfer	fund raising for R&I	
New research areas	conceptualisation	

As seen from the table above PE can positively impact on the TWIST strategy and its objectives, being the reason why PE was established as a cross-cutting strategic objective.

The same study has identified that the key element for a successful PE process is involving the right people with right methods and goals, being measured by the 'footprint' that it leaves on research, innovation and society.



Summing up the findings, the authors state that a “better involvement of actors occurs when the ‘right people’ are gathered together to address the ‘right issues’ through the ‘right PE tools and methods’, which can contribute to a better quality of research and R&I governance”.

When developing PE activities, it is important to choose methods and techniques that are likely to meet its purpose, that are suitable for the targeted population, and are developed in a time span and cost adequate to project/research activity to which public engagement will inform.

Below, there are some methods that can be chosen.

- Website - developing a website can be a low-cost and inclusive method to engage with the public;
- Social media - allow a wide, high and fast dissemination and participation;
- Presentations - it requires a venue, but allows a face-to-face interaction, as such has as benefit to educate audiences on the project/research activity;
- Posters and displays - can be used to raise awareness or to promote the project and encourage participation;
- Events and pop-up events- going to, or promote an event, will allow to interact with experts;
- Consultation - involves an active listening of the public’s views and concerns. It can be developed in two ways, face-to-face or online:
 - Face-to-face:
 - Panels and user groups;
 - Lunch meetings;
 - Workshops;
 - Online:
 - Surveys;
 - Questionnaires;
 - Questions and open answers;

There are plenty other methods available for carrying out PE activities that are thoroughly developed and explained in free online publications and tools.



The Engage 2020 project funded by the European Commission (DG Research) looking at research, innovation and related activities provides a thorough description of a wealth of PE methods and techniques. Those can be found in the deliverable D3.2 Public Engagement Methods and Tools³ (link below). It can also be explored in the interactive online tool - Action Catalogue (<http://actioncatalogue.eu/>), which supports PE agents to better select the activity to be carried out taking into account:

1. the levels of application of the method/tool;
2. the societal groups involved in the application of the method/tool;
3. the level of public involvement;
4. Grand Societal Challenge addressed.

The free of charge publication 'Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner's manual'⁴, developed by Elliot et al. (2006) provides an in-depth description of 13 participatory methods, and brief overview of 50 methods and techniques. The link for the publication can be found at this page footnote.

Depending on the chosen method, the specific steps to be carried out will vary. For this reason a detail enumeration of actions wouldn't be suitable. Nonetheless, there are few common steps in the preparation of a public engagement activity:

A1 - Define the purpose and objectives of the engagement activity;

A2 - Determine the scope of the PE activity, *i.e.* the subjects to be addressed;

A3 - Define the actors to be involved at the activity. For this action it is important to understand each main actor characteristics as it will influence their contributions to the PE activity;

A4 - Set realistic PE timeframes and PE activities schedules;

A5 - Choose the methods that best fit the goals, audience, purpose and available budget;

³<http://engage2020.eu/media/D3-2-Public-Engagement-Methods-and-Tools-3.pdf>

⁴https://www.livingknowledge.org/fileadmin/Dateien-Living-Knowledge/Dokumente_Dateien/Toolbox/LK_A_Participatory_Methods.pdf



A6 - make the necessary arrangements for the activity, to be carried out, *i.e.* send invitations/promote ahead the PE activity; book a venue (if needed), gather the material resources to carry out the activity (whiteboards, projectors, pen&paper, *etc.*);

A7 - Carry out the PE as planned;

A8 - Work and analyse the gathered information;

A9 - Produce a report with the results, justifying the selected options;

A10 - Disseminate the report to all participants and general public if suitable.