



Public Engagement Innovations  
for Horizon 2020

## Final plan for using the knowledge, D6.3

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# The PE2020 Project

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## The PE2020 project

PE2020 project identified, analysed and refined innovative public engagement (PE) tools and instruments for dynamic governance in the field of Science in Society (SiS). PE2020 analysed the PE tools and instruments through a systemic and contextual perspective, and contributed to the potential and transferability of new governance innovations. PE2020 created new knowledge of the status quo and trends in the field of public engagement in science, refined innovative PE tools and instruments and proposed new ones.

The project did this by (1) further developing a conceptual model that provides a systemic perspective of the dynamics of public and stakeholder engagement; (2) creating an updated inventory of current and prospective European PE innovations; (3) context-tailoring and piloting best practice PE processes related to the grand challenges of the Horizon 2020 and (4) developing an accessible net-based PE design toolkit that helps identify, evaluate and successfully transfer innovative PE practices among European countries.

New tools and instruments for public and societal engagement are necessary to boost the quality, capacity and legitimacy of European STI governance, and to address the looming problems related to the grand societal challenges of European societies and the Horizon 2020. In order to ensure practical relevance, the project worked through intensive co-operation between researchers and science policy actors. PE2020 aimed at expanding the capacity of European and national science policy actors to integrate better societal engagement by providing an easy access to new PE tools and instruments, to be included in the requirements and implementation of research in Horizon 2020 and beyond.

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## Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Life after the project.....	1
2.1.	Academic articles.....	1
2.2.	Book on Conceptual model of PE .....	2
2.3.	Continuity through pilot initiatives.....	2
2.4.	Seminar, conference presentations and academic visits .....	3
2.5.	Collaboration with Institute for Deliberative Democracy, European Science Foundation and other permanent institutions.....	3
2.6.	Website of the PE2020 continues to exist.....	4
2.7.	Through the participants of the policy conference .....	4
3	Hand-over of the PE2020 Toolkit .....	5
4	Guidelines for the implementation of future PE transfer projects .....	5
5	Suggestions about future research efforts.....	8

# 1 Introduction

The aim of the PE2020 project was to identify, analyse and refine innovative public engagement (PE) tools and instruments for dynamic governance in the field of Science in Society (SiS).

The objective of the sixth work package of the PE2020 project (WP6) “Management” was to provide the necessary management services to the project and to provide the best possible conditions for the research activities in PE2020. The fourth task of the work package 6 was the preparation of the final plan for using the knowledge gained during the PE2020 projects duration. As defined in the project plan, the final plan for using the knowledge addresses the *hand-over of the web-based “PE2020 toolkit”, guidelines for the European Commission for the implementation of future PE transfer projects and suggestions about future research efforts focused on societal engagement* based on the research results and experiences of the PE2020 project.

This report is the Final plan for using the knowledge and therefore the final deliverable of the work package 6 and of the whole project. The final plan consists of following chapters: next, the report describes how the dissemination activities carried out during the project bear fruit also after its finalisation. The third chapter describes the hand-over of the PE2020 Toolkit and how it can be used in other projects. The fourth chapter describes the guidelines and recommendations for the EC for the implementation of PE in future projects and what aspects should to be considered. The final chapter presents suggestions for future research efforts drawing lessons based on an actual project to be implemented, which continues the collaboration of the key PE2020 project partners and will utilise the PE2020 toolkit in its activities.

## 2 Life after the project

### 2.1. Academic articles

As many EU projects, PE2020 has collected an extensive data basis that has been used in various analyses and that will continue to provide materials for further academic studies, to be reported in different academic arenas , including conferences, proceedings, peer reviewed articles, book sections and books. This data include, in particular, a) the Inventory of PE procedures and practices in 37 European countries (D1.1), b) the Catalogue of 50 PE case descriptions (D1.2), c) ‘footprint analysis’ of 38 innovative PE cases (D2.2), and d) the Report of the seven PE pilot cases on Societal Challenges. Furthermore, the Public Engagement Toolkit (D4.2) that can be found on the PE2020 website (<https://toolkit.pe2020.eu>), consist of close to 400 pages of reviews of both contemporary and classical literature on the themes of science in society, which can provide a basis for further academic studies and discussion.

A dozen of academic articles were prepared during the life span of the PE2020 project, some of them still under the review process. The completed and articles-in-process are described in the Final Progress report (D6.1). In addition, other papers have been planned to be published by the research consortium, in particular, elaborating aspects of ‘dynamic governance capacities’, evaluation of PE activities and new means of PE, such as the ‘societal interaction plans’ that were piloted and analysed in the PE2020 project.

## 2.2. Book on Conceptual model of PE

Deliverable D2.2, the conceptual model of PE, contributed to theory building and empirical study of innovative PE processes. Encouraged by the advisors of the PE2020, the consortium decided to submit a book manuscript, based on a revised version of D2.2, to Routledge, a highly reputed publishing company, under peer review. The book manuscript is called *Innovative Public Engagement - Tools for Dynamic and Responsible Governance of Research and Innovation*. The decision of the publication is expected to be take place in the spring 2017.

The manuscript provides an overview of innovative public engagement activities carried out recently in Europe and in the U.S. Building on a comparative study of 38 PE innovations, the manuscript answers to the following research question:

- What are the characteristics and trends of innovative PE processes?
- What different epistemic, pragmatic and normative functions does innovative PE play in the context of research and innovation activity?
- What makes PE successful and how can it be measured?
- What are the obstacles for successful PE?

The results are based on the unique global data base consisting in total of 256 innovative PE cases that were systematically collected and analysed in the PE2020 project, by applying a novel method of ‘impact footprinting’. The results contribute to a conceptual framework that helps to conceptualise PE as activity that develops new capacities for dynamic and responsible governance of research and innovation. The book is highly useful both for researchers, practitioners and policy makers interested in PE, as it provides both theoretical generalisations on the dynamics of PE, suggestion for an evaluation framework, and clear empirical examples and illustrations on how PE works in practice.

## 2.3. Continuity through pilot initiatives

It has been one of the objectives of the PE2020 project to collect cases of innovative PE, not only to study them, but more pragmatically, to provide examples and inspiration for organisations to initiate or continue apply PE in their daily businesses. Such examples are now easily available, not only through published deliverables, but more importantly, through the webtool (<https://toolkit.pe2020.eu>) that was tested to be user friendly for researchers and practitioners interested in PE.

Seven ‘pilots’ of innovative PE were arranged in the context of the project, in order to boost the process of adapting new PE practices and to study the contextual factors that either support or hinder such endeavor. We are happy to observe, that some of the ‘target organisations’ to our PE pilots, in particular Future Earth Finland, BONUS, and the Academy of Finland, have continued to apply new PE processes even after the end of formal collaborations. For example, Future Earth Finland has continued to use the ‘living lab’ and ‘townhall meeting’ concepts in the process of designing their research agendas for global change research and has disseminated the ideas of co-creation further in the international Future Earth network. Another example are the ‘societal interaction plans’ that the Academy of Finland introduced as part of their novel programme on strategic research: such plans will continue to be requested from all researchers applying funding from this funding programme, and there is discussion about the possibility of piloting a similar concept in future EC research framework programmes.

The 'piloting approach' has proved to be an effective way of developing new PE practices and facilitating transitions needed for developing more dynamic governance cultures. Stimulated by the PE2020 project, some additional piloting processes will continue in the near future. In Finland, such processes include e.g. piloting of a series of nationwide deliberation processes by the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra and Demos Helsinki, where the coordinator of the PE2020 is among the advisors and evaluators. Another example is the Finnish Institute for Deliberative Democracy that support piloting of participatory budgeting processes in Finnish municipalities, in the evaluation of which the PE2020 framework is planned to be applied. Yet another example is the EU-funded FIT4RRI project, where two of the PE2020 partners are involved, and which will apply the piloting concept, this time involving national research funding and performing institutions.

#### **2.4. Seminar, conference presentations and academic visits**

The topic of PE is topical at the moment in various part of Europe. There is both high academic and practical interest in learning about cutting edge practices and lessons of their practical application. The PE2020 consortium members will be actively contributing to such discussions by visiting and giving talks in different arenas. Past seminars and conference presentations were reported in Deliverable 5.2 'Publications'. The consortium members will continue to give talks and presentations in different academic arenas in the near future. For example, the coordinator of PE2020 will make a scholarly visit to the University of Uppsala on February 2017, to present the findings and discuss collaboration with local nanotechnology researchers. The main results of the project will be presented, in March 2017, in Toronto, Canada, in the ISPIIM Innovation Forum.

#### **2.5. Collaboration with Institute for Deliberative Democracy, European Science Foundation and other permanent institutions**

The Finnish Institute for Deliberative Democracy (DDI) has been following the activities of the PE2020 through its coordinator being the co-founder and current member of the board at that institute. Some of the ideas have been already adopted in the Institute's activities, including e.g. collaboration in arranging the yearly R&D days of the institute, where one member of the PE2020 Scientific Advisory Board, Edward Andersson, was invited.

The institute will continue to support competence building and evaluation of PE practices in the future, which will be greatly supported by the research findings of the PE2020 in those respects. While DDI is among the key institutions in Finland, it is to note, that the PE2020 project has been in close collaboration with many other institutions, both nationally and internationally. Those networks continue to be active in the business of developing better PE practices. Examples in Finland include Demos Helsinki, Kaskas media consulting, Prime minister's office, the Academy of Finland, Bonus, Future Earth, National Institute of Health, University of Helsinki and Demola.

One of the most promising spin-offs from the PE2020 is the piloting activity with Demola, a global innovation platform for students in higher educational institutions. Resulting from a meeting with one of the SAB members of PE2020, Prof. Markku Mattila, Demola chairs and the coordinator of PE2020, the feasibility of Demola activity will be piloted in the Helsinki capital region in Finland. The piloting process is now in full

speed, with some 60 students involved, and with the expectation of scaling up this process to hundreds of students, in the autumn 2017.

International connections have also proved vital. The European Science Foundations, in particular, will be promoting the PE2020 webtool in their website. Further discussion will hopefully follow with ESF and other international actors such as the European Committee of the Regions, who granted the premises for the final policy conference of the PE2020, and the European Commission SwafS unit, who will continue to build institutions and capacities of PE and RRI in the European Research Area.

## **2.6. Website of the PE2020 continues to exist**

Both the PE2020 website ([www.pe2020.eu/](http://www.pe2020.eu/)) and the separate site, where the Public Engagement Toolkit (<https://toolkit.pe2020.eu>) can be found, will continue to be supported and available for the next three years. This is possible, as the University of Helsinki has done a three year long contract with Seravo, who is the web service provider. The Danish Board of Technology that helped to build the webtool, will be available in helping maintaining the webtool.

Efforts have been made to disseminate the webtool extensively, and to link it to sister projects (e.g. CASI, CIMULACT, RRI Tools, Engage2020) and to other institutions, such as partners' own universities and the European Science Foundations. The support of the EC's SwafS team will be essential in order to make this webtool known and available for future PE and RRI projects.

## **2.7. Through the participants of the policy conference**

Information about the exploitable knowledge and its use of the PE2020 project was collected in the final policy conference *Public Engagement for Research, Practice and Policy*, held in Brussels, on November 16th–17th, 2016. In the conference, participants were asked how they might use the received information.

Information and increasing knowledge about public engagement was seen very useful in participants' work. Project results and tools will be exploited in academic research (in research projects and PhD studies) as well as in the teaching activities of the conference participants. Policy conference gave examples of good practices and information about what is going on in the field of public engagement and responsible research innovations.

PE2020 tools were seen useful and worth testing in various organisations. Participants will disseminate information to national stakeholders for new project ideas. Project inspired to get involved in practical activities of citizen engagement in policy making in many innovative fields, especially in social innovation and sustainable innovation.

PE2020 gave inspiration to promote public engagement and RRI more broadly in institutions' projects, especially in formulating programmes and evaluating projects. Participants felt that the work of the PE2020 project will continue. Most of all, PE2020 encouraged to develop new research ideas about public engagement and citizen participation. Moreover, it gave practical information and new contacts for interaction with other people and projects.

A particular aspect of continuity is the Committee of the Region, in the premises of which the conference was organized. As the President of the Committee of the Region stated in his opening speech, the Committee is from its part interested in supporting better involvement of citizens in the municipalities of the EU, and it is just a matter of time when such opportunities will be explored in collaboration with the PE2020 actors and the President's office (one concrete opportunity is the yearly R&I day of the Finnish Institute of Deliberative Democracy, where participatory budgeting will be explored: this theme might be of interested to the Committee of the Region as well).

### 3 Hand-over of the PE2020 Toolkit

The PE2020 toolkit or the 'Toolkit on public engagement with science' was technically prepared by the Danish Board of Technology Foundation (DBT), based on a sub-contracting agreement between the PE2020 and DBT. The substance of the toolkit, naturally, was fully prepared by the PE2020 consortium.

As defined in the agreement, DBT delivered the webtool as fully functioning to the PE2020 consortium. In addition, DBT established contacts to at least 5 other owners of websites of relevance to RRI and public engagement in STI activities and created links to these projects. Some of these projects include Res-Agora, Engage2020, RRI-Tools, Fosteropenscience.eu, PACITA, the TA Portal and CASI. In addition, the contract requested the service provider to make google optimisation of the website, which includes e.g. inserting links to social media, YouTube videos etc. as well as making use of google adds to make users aware of the tool, but also to make Google give the site a higher search ranking.

It is in the interest of the PE2020 consortium partners to promote the webtool, as it is among the main channels of distributing the results of the research carried out in the project. More pragmatically, University of Helsinki will continue to maintain the webtool and the website available to users for the next three years.

### 4 Guidelines for the implementation of future PE transfer projects

The evidence produced by the PE2020 project shows that innovative public engagement has truly versatile impacts. These are not limited to Research & Innovation (R&I) activities only, but include positive effects on the working environment, politics and individuals. It is not merely an additional task that takes time but gives little in return. Instead, our evidence shows that innovative public engagement produces new resources:

- **Practical goods**, such as changes in attitudes and ways of understanding issues
- **New capacities**, such as professional skills, methods and platforms of collaboration
- **Mobilisation of human resources** for addressing scientific and societal challenges, such as public awareness, social acceptance, political commitment and research funding

Promoting PE means giving more weight to the interests of citizens and societal stakeholders outside the scientific community. Engagement with societal stakeholders and the public allows them to influence the definition of current and future research needs. Simultaneously, it makes the

societal relevance of research more visible to researchers. Engagement provides actors outside academia access to the production process of scientific knowledge and hence the possibility to utilize the knowledge already during the process itself. Critical reflection is created through active and continuous interaction.

As a result of a changing environment, which places active involvement with societal stakeholders at the core, the researchers have responded with creativity. The funding programmes have provided the applicants with ground rules but left them much room for creative, out-of-the-box solutions for how to engage in practice publicly. The space for creative thinking and open testing can be seen as a prerogative for the positive attitude of researchers to prosper and be turned into functioning working methods.

A major contributing factor of **successful PE is a process that encourages commitment from researchers and partners alike**. Initial workshops enable researchers to examine critically who their central partners could be and what type of societal impact they strive for with the project. Joint workshops are a channel and tool to engage with stakeholders and partners from the very start of the project. It is crucial that the consortia – consisting of researchers and stakeholders – create a joint commitment to a shared cause, and identify goals that they can all commit to. This allows space for scientific, practitioner and ‘field’ expertise and joint creativity to flourish within the project, while supporting openness to using new methods.

A clear characteristic of innovative PE is that it involves a relatively high – but manageable – variety of actors. **Successful PE rests on combining and utilizing knowledge across sectors and types of institutions**. Researchers in charge of PE activities often have a background that consists of experience from several types of employers and tasks. They combine their professional skills and networks creatively, making use of the trust accumulated by long-term cooperation. Civil society organisations ranging from expert NGOs to interest groups and industrial ones are increasingly represented. In addition to a strong third sector involvement, we also found a ‘fourth sector’, which is composed actors or groups whose foundational logic is not in the representation of established interests. Instead, their social cooperation functions through hybrid networking, and utilize the skills of e.g. field experts or randomly selected participants.

The conference Public Engagement for Research, Practice and Policy was held on 16-17 Nov. 2016 in Brussels, at the premises of the European Committee of the Regions. The purpose of the conference was to discuss best practices of public engagement (PE), and to identify common European priorities on how to stimulate societal engagement for sustainable innovation. The conference discussed how new forms of PE could to support responsible research and innovation (RRI) in the European research area. In particular, following questions were asked: How to ensure effective societal engagement in the design and implementation of new research projects and programmes? How to improve the incentives of research agencies to advance PE? How to develop new capacities needed in a transition toward more responsive culture of science in society?

The presentations and discussions brought forth the idea of a rapidly changing research landscape. They revealed some worrisome trends, such as the spread of anti-scientific tendencies in national

political discourses, cuts in European research budgets, and global socio-environmental challenges. It was recognised that there are increasing interests for reorienting research towards strategic, interdisciplinary applied research, applying academic criteria in research evaluation, and co-designing research processes with citizens and users of knowledge. The discussions led to a conclusion that in a situation where the research landscape is transforming intensively, the better alternative is a **conscious transition rather than an ungoverned drift**.

The EU has a strong commitment for public engagement through its RRI policies. National funding agencies are revising their funding schemes. Universities, governmental funding agencies, and foundations increasingly support challenge driven research. Internet and social media applications makes it possible for ordinary citizens to adopt roles as ‘citizen scientists’, hackers, and environmental activists. All these trends have contributed to the emergence of the so called ‘fourth sector’, i.e. actors and groups of actors whose foundational logic is not in the representation of established interests, but rather in participation to social cooperation processes through ‘hybrid networks’. The fourth sector is becoming more pronounced in the field of R&I, and it can be governed through PE processes. PE is thus no more a matter of whether but rather a matter of how and **the fourth sector should be seen as an important future actor**.

In order to facilitate the change of the research and innovation landscape, it is necessary to **show to different stakeholders the benefits of PE**. Likewise, there is a need for **moving from the focus on individual PE events to broader structural issues**, where separate PE processes are better linked and embedded in the established structures of R&I policy, such as national research funding agencies and their research programmes. Gender policies and Social Corporate Responsibility (including its ISO standards) serve as positive analogies of the change ahead. Institutional transformation could be supported by changing funding criteria, introducing stronger policies, establishing new institutions and developing capacities that support PE becoming a part of dynamic and responsible governance of research and innovation.

New models of public engagement are continuously being developed, such as combination of face-to-face events with web-based deliberations. A real challenge for the research community is to **find ways to combine high-quality science with PE**. Citizen science and crowdsourcing are two examples where top level research has successfully met with involvement of citizens and civil society actors. Additional ideas can be gathered from the research community by requesting them to **develop plans for societal interaction**, not only dissemination. European research and innovation could also benefit from new, self-sustaining models of PE, based on mutually beneficial collaboration across institutional domains such as research, science communication, policy, innovation activity. In addition, stronger business models underlying PE activities (e.g. PE as new type of innovation platforms) would be beneficial. **New models can best be introduced through piloting taking place in real contexts** and enabling deeper learning.

As the research of PE2020 has suggested, innovative public engagement can effectively contribute to the three guiding principles of the EU’s RRI policy: Open Innovation, Open Science and Open to the World. Recent changes and turbulences in the European policy landscape suggest that public engagement is not only about harmonious co-design of research. It is also about publics and

stakeholders challenging research and research institutions. This calls for the **inclusion of fourth O, namely, 'Openness to conflicts'**, which means better sensitizing of the public administration to the openings from the civil society.

Overall, the conference exchange confirmed the urgent **need for making PE the core of a broader strategy** aimed at providing science and innovation with a more robust and reliable societal basis. This entails finding the way for rapidly embedding PE in the relevant current practices of European research institutions activating appropriate institutional change processes through specific action plans and measures. However, it is misleading to think that, once research institutions will be open to public participation, this latter will automatically occur. To favour participation, there is also the need to **make public engagement a current social practice**, which people are able to understand, support and practically experience.

PE is therefore to be embedded also in society, which is possible only by creating the social and institutional spaces both within and outside research institutions, where the actual exercise of citizenship in science and innovation may become real.

### Recommendations

- PE can produce new kind of evidence base for policy making.
- Better functioning PE practices can best be supported through strong policies, including new funding criteria, evaluation standards and activity targets.
- Citizen science projects and challenge oriented strategic research processes should be further explored, because they can support high-quality research.
- Best PE practices, including societal interaction plans, should be piloted under the forthcoming FP9 funding scheme.
- PE can support socially responsible research. This development should be institutionalized through brokerage institutions, competence centres and linking of new PE/ RRI schemes with existing research and funding structures.

## 5 Suggestions about future research efforts

Developing a culture of dynamic and responsible research and innovation governance is far from a finished project. The field is full of activities, experiments and ideas worth further clarification. We end up this report by suggesting a list of seven research questions, both academic and practical, that in our view would deserve further attention (see D2.2):

- We found that U.S. and European PE cases in our sample emphasized different virtues: while U.S. partners are more interested in building civic capacities through PE processes, European counterparts are more focused on the policy impacts PE. **Are there really such cultural differences between U.S. and European PE activities, or is this merely a coincidence due to the small size of our sample?**
- Funders of PE are interested in evaluating the economic impacts of PE, which is a fair demand considering the increasing volume of public expenditure in this field. At the same time, however, our

experience is that none of the innovative PE cases studied directly aimed at creating financial revenues, and if they did so, this happened indirectly. To tackle this issue, we propose the following research question: **To what extent is it reasonable to model and evaluate the economic impacts of public engagement?** – The ‘footprints’ of the 38 PE cases could provide a starting point for such evaluation.

- We found that three quarters of the PE cases studied involved the ‘fourth sector’ by including e.g. randomly selected citizens or other unorganised entities such as individual philanthropist and hybrid networks under formation. In this study we identified four different sub-categories of fourth sector actors, including hybrid experts, randomly selected participants, life world experts and ‘field experts’. To better understand the challenges related to the participation of the fourth sector we suggest the following research question: **What kinds of sub-groups belong to the fourth sector and how does their involvement impact responsible governance of R&I?**
- We evidenced that ‘upstream engagement’ is an increasingly supported approach among innovative PE processes, especially in anticipatory projects. Upstream engagement aims to open up decision processes at an early stage of agenda setting and planning. Tuscan Law No. 69/07 is perhaps the most extreme example of upstream engagement, as this is basically a scheme for supporting public deliberation on any issues that are proposed by the inhabitants of the Tuscan region; and if the issues are evaluated relevant by a competent authority, public engagement procedures become financially and organizationally supported by the authority. To better understand the potential of upstream for the governance of R&I, we suggest the following research question: **What are the alternative models of upstream engagement that could be applicable for the governance of R&I? What are their main limitations?**
- Creation of continuity was suggested to be an important capacity that is needed both to balance dynamic governance and sustain dynamism in the long run. We identified both spatial, temporal and institutional dimensions of continuity, and reflected that the recent discussion on deliberative systems and less recent systemic turn in innovation studies both back up the notions of institutional embedding and creation of continuities between separate PE activities. As the arguments for continuity seems strong but the means to reach it unclear, we propose a study of the following question: **What is the essence of the capacity to create continuity? How can such capacities be developed in the context of PE activities?**
- One of the surprises we encountered was the highly limited contribution of PE to the production of scientific knowledge. At the same time we acknowledge that citizen science and science shop activities have been highly successful in this area, and that they will most likely expand in the near future. What raises our curiosity is the following question: **Is there an untapped potential in co-creation of knowledge through public engagement? What could be the best means to support co-creation of scientific knowledge in future PE processes?**
- The world of public activism is vibrant, and as our only case of this category, *Let’s do it!* suggests, there is a high potential in it in accomplishing the tasks that we can expect from most successful PE process. By using our own definitions of successful PE, we can clearly see that *Let’s do it!* has imprinted a big impact footprint in society, politics and environment; it has worked upon noble and widely justified goals, and from the point of the view of public policy, it has been extremely efficient, as the need for public subsidizing has been minimal. At the same time public activism causes a dilemma for public policy makers: **What are the rationales, options and threats of harnessing public activism to serve dynamic and responsible R&I?**

Some of these questions can be banal for a social or political scientist who may have worked on these topics for years perhaps. For us these questions are just a sample of some of the most intriguing dilemmas of public engagement. The era of public engagement in research and innovation has just begun, major questions still remain in the air.