



# Public Engagement Innovations for Horizon 2020

## Presentations at an international workshop D.1.3

### **Authors**

Niels Mejlgaard  
Tine Ravn

### **Contributors**

Yasushi Ikebe  
Saulė Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė  
Naoyuki Mikami  
Mikko Rask  
Ekou Yagi

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## The PE2020 Project

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### Project consortium:

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 UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI	UH	University of Helsinki, Finland
 AARHUS UNIVERSITET	AU	University of Aarhus, Denmark
 IBS	VU IBS	Vilnius University International Business School, Lithuania
 LSC	LSC	Laboratorio di Scienze della Cittadinanza, Italy

Contact information: Niels Mejlgaard, AU, nm@ps.au.dk

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Project co-ordinator: Mikko Rask, University of Helsinki

E-mail: mikko.rask@helsinki.fi

Project website: www.PE2020.eu



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## The PE2020 project

PE2020 will identify, analyse and refine innovative public engagement (PE) tools and instruments for dynamic governance in the field of Science in Society (SiS). PE2020 analyses the PE tools and instruments through a systemic and contextual perspective, and contributes to the potential and transferability of new governance innovations. PE2020 will create new knowledge of the status quo and trends in the field of public engagement in science, refine innovative PE tools and instruments, and propose new ones.

The project will do 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 solve the looming problems related to the grand societal challenges of the Horizon 2020. In order to ensure practical relevance, the project will work through intensive co-operation between researchers and science policy actors. PE2020 will expand 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

<b>THE PE2020 PROJECT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2 PRESENTATIONS AT THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3 DISCUSSION POINTS RAISED AT THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4 APPENDIX</b>	<b>9</b>



## 1 Introduction

Work package 1 of the PE2020 project is divided into four main tasks. First, it designs and implements a collection of existing examples of public engagement activities in Europe and beyond, classifies these, and present the inventory as the first deliverable. Second, it selects 50 innovative cases from the inventory for further analyses, collects detailed data on these cases by means of survey methodology, and presents the case descriptions in a catalogue of innovative PE activities as the second deliverable. Third, it shares the results of the empirical investigations with a forum of international colleagues in order to discuss and enrich the work. And it finally destills the main results of WP1 in a summary report.

This report is the third deliverable relating to the third task in WP1. In May 2014, a special session at the Public Communication of Science and Technology Conference in Brazil was devoted to the PE2020 project. The workshop provided a forum for discussing the progress of the project in general and the developments and research strategy of WP1 specifically. The workshop was well-attended, and provided a useful context for debate around the concept of innovativeness in public engagement, as well as for discussions around the work conducted in WP1.

The workshop proceedings that follow below are organised in three parts. A summary of the three presentations at the workshop is presented in chapter 2. In chapter 3, the main discussion points that emerged during the workshop are presented. Finally, links to the two full papers that were submitted to the workshop are provided in the appendix to the report.

## 2 Presentations at the workshop

The workshop included three presentations, two of which were accompanied by full papers (links to papers provided in Appendix).

The first presentation was by Mikko Rask, co-authored with Saulė Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė. It provided an overall description of the PE2020 project including the project structure, research strategy, key concepts, objectives, and expected impacts. It moved on to explain the concept and components of the ‘participatory performance model’, developed in Rask et al (2012) building on the MASIS database, which constitutes a starting point for the PE2020 project. Adapting this background model to the PE2020 project framing entails a shift in focus from public engagement activities at the analytical level of countries to the level of research programmes and projects. The presentation discussed the consequences of this re-orientation and proposed a number of factors contributing to participatory performance at the level of research programmes. These would include:

- A participatory culture supportive of PE
- Acknowledgement, through the programme logic model, of the role of PE in various stages
- A programme logic model designed to be collaborative, flexible, and reflexive



- Mutually beneficial partnerships contributing to fair and competent participation of citizens

The second presentation, given by Naoyuki Mikami and co-authored with Ekou Yagi and Yasushi Ikebe took the workshop into a specific national setting and towards discussions of particular examples of innovative PE activities, by targeting trends and new approaches of public engagement in Japan. Three particular arenas for public engagement were highlighted in the presentation. First, the national discussion following the Fukushima nuclear accident was described, with a particular emphasis on the use of deliberative polling as a means for including public opinion and engaging citizens in the debate around risks related to nuclear energy and responses to the catastrophe at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. The presentation pointed towards lack of tradition and culture around public engagement as well as changing power structures as the main explanations that the deliberative elements of the national discussion had limited overall impact on the resulting national strategy. Second, the authors discussed the extent to which Japanese involvement in the World Wide Views on Global Warming project might be instrumental in mitigating non-inclusive culture in the area of science and technology by developing a national network of public dialogues on issues related to science and technology with science centers as major hubs. The major lessons learned from the World Wide Views experience suggested that the challenges facing Japanese PE could be overcome by bridging the gap between policy agendas and the realities and problem perceptions of citizens, by summarizing and visualizing more clearly the voices of participants in PE activities and by creating high quality communicative practices and briefing materials on the basis of the dialogical activities. Third, a particular format for PE, recently developed in Japan, was presented. The 'Sankaku Table' is a particular tool that aims at creating a fixed structure for dialogue that requires limited preparation and prior technical knowledge by the participants, but, according to the authors, could be an easily transferable ice-breaker for public inclusion across techno-scientific domains.

The third presentation, by Niels Mejlgaard and co-authored with Tine Ravn, aimed at starting the discussion about the identification and presentation of innovative PE initiatives, which is carried out in WP1 of the PE2020 project. It presented the overall objectives of PE2020 and of WP1 specifically, and moved on to discuss the strategy and data sources for the development of an inventory of PE initiatives and present the inventory, i.e. the raw list of PE initiatives identified for the purposes of Task 1.1 in the project. It outlined the multiple coder exercise that was performed by consortium members as a means for categorizing the compilation of initiatives, including the classificatory schemes from earlier studies on which the PE2020 builds and elaborates. Finally, the presentation characterized the envisaged strategy for selection of 50 particularly innovative PE cases, which would constitute the main empirical component of Task 1.2 and the related deliverable 1.2, including the nomination procedure and the criteria that would guide the selection process, and the approach to data collection and case presentation in the catalogue of innovative PE activities in Europe and beyond.

Following the third presentation, the participants at the workshop were invited to comment on the plans for WP1 and offer reflections on the notion of innovativeness in the context of public engagement activities. The major discussion points are highlighted in chapter 3 below.



### 3 Discussion points raised at the workshop

The discussion with participants at the workshop revolved around two overall issues, namely the development of the catalogue of innovative PE initiatives and the notion of ‘innovativeness’ itself in the context of public engagement with science and technology.

With regard to the development of the catalogue, the following points were raised:

- The major challenge with regard to developing a user-friendly catalogue of PE initiatives is ensuring an intuitively comprehensible and transparent way of organising the contents. The typology of PE, which was developed by the consortium as part of organising the inventory (D1.1) was in general considered an adequate and useful classificatory scheme.
- The selection, and implicit de-selection, of cases from the inventory for inclusion in the list of 50 cases for further analyses and enriched description is not straightforward. On the one hand, pre-defining 50 cases as particularly innovative constrains any open-ended, explorative study into the very notion of innovativeness, and would require a very well-developed and robust *a priori* concept of innovativeness. On the other hand, random selection of 50 cases from the universe defined by the inventory would potentially capture a vast share of ‘conventional’ activities holding limited information about the notion of innovativeness. The strategy suggested by the project consortium, involving nomination of cases based on a set of provisional criteria of innovativeness, leading, expectedly, to a fairly large share of interesting PE initiatives among the 50 cases while allowing a fairly explorative analytical approach was in general considered feasible.

Concerning the notion of innovativeness in PE, several points were discussed at the workshop:

- Referring back to both the presentation by Rask, targeting the difference between assessing PE activities at national level and those implemented at the level of research programme and project level, and by Mikami, highlighting the relevance of diverse national policy landscapes for PE, participants raised the point that innovativeness in PE might require flexibility as a precondition for transferability. In PE, one size does not fit all, and fixed formats often suffer from a lack of sensitivity towards the context in which they are installed. PE mechanisms should maintain a degree of flexibility, or even fragility, in order to remain dynamic and allow for adaptation to the particular context in which they are applied.
- Issues related to hybridization were discussed extensively by the participants at the workshop. One point related to PE mechanisms and stressed the importance of achieving continuous progression in the formats for PE by combining elements from different PE mechanisms. This discussion echoed previous collective reflections in the PE2020 consortium that have tended to emphasize hybridization as a significant component of innovation in PE. The deliberate mixing of various formats in order to tailor PE activities to the specific demands and expectations in a given contexts



was considered an important point of attention for the development of a concept of innovativeness in PE.

- Another point related to what might be called hybridization regarding the end goals of engagement activities. A crude, or simplistic, history of the field from the 1980s onwards could emphasize a number of paradigmatic shifts in the perceived purposes of activities at the intersection of citizens and scientists: from science dissemination aimed at increasing science literacy among citizens, over science communication aimed at invoking positive attitudes towards science, to dialogical engagement activities aimed at increasing mutual trust, co-construction of knowledge, or achieving better decisions about science and technology. The workshop raised the point that these aims should not necessarily be considered conflictual, rather they are all legitimate concerns related to the interaction of science and citizens. Hybridization in the sense of combining and moving beyond these isolated goals was stressed by the workshop participants. One particular notion of ‘critical science literacy’, which re-emerged several times at the conference in general, indicated this hybridization by suggesting that the aim of transferring knowledge of science might be combined in fruitful ways with aims of invoking critical reflexion about the developments in science and technology, or that building capacity for dealing with science in the public sphere is not only about acquiring text book knowledge of science but also about cultivating a critical attitude towards that knowledge. ‘Adequate’ or ‘appropriate’ knowledge was suggested as other notions that would bridge the aim of disseminating ‘technical’ information about science and the objectives of providing opportunities for citizen participation in identifying the kinds of knowledges needed in light of societal challenges and citizen concerns.
- Finally a brief discussion centered around the growing European focus on Responsible Research and Innovation, and the overall emphasis on ‘challenge-driven’ research in Horizon 2020. The workshop discussed the role that PE might have in the context of research oriented towards societal challenges, mainly stimulated by the specific interest that the PE2020 project has in this issue.

The discussions thus in several ways offered valuable lessons for WP1 and for the PE2020 project as a whole. The workshop provided new insights about the multiple dimensions of innovativeness in PE. In addition to general conceptual discussions on these dimensions, the workshop resulted in a new case study (Soap box science) that was later included in the catalogue of innovative PE cases in the PE2020 project. The workshop experience emphasized that a critical examination of PE processes is an interesting topic to be discussed in the field of science communication studies, and the PCST conference can be a relevant forum for presenting the results of the PE2020 project also in forthcoming conferences



## 4 Appendix

Two papers were submitted to the workshop. Both papers have been published in the conference proceedings.

Saule Maciukaite-Zviniene & Mikko Rask (2014). *Participatory Performance in Research Program Context* can be accessed here:

[http://www.pcst-2014.org/pcst\\_proceedings/artigos/saule\\_maciukaitezviniene\\_mikko\\_rask\\_panel.pdf](http://www.pcst-2014.org/pcst_proceedings/artigos/saule_maciukaitezviniene_mikko_rask_panel.pdf)

Naoyuki MIKAMI, Ekou YAGI & Yasushi IKEBE (2014). *Recent Trends and New Approaches of Public Engagement in Japan* can be accessed here:

[http://www.pcst-2014.org/pcst\\_proceedings/artigos/naoyuki\\_mikami\\_ekou\\_yagi\\_yasushi\\_ikebe\\_panel.pdf](http://www.pcst-2014.org/pcst_proceedings/artigos/naoyuki_mikami_ekou_yagi_yasushi_ikebe_panel.pdf)

