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Territories as Responsive and accountable Networks of S3 through new Forms of Open and Responsible decision-Making



## Strategic roadmap for the implementation and support of territorial RRI through Multi-stakeholder Engagement within S3 priorities - Executive Summary

This executive summary of the “Strategic roadmap for the implementation and support of territorial RRI through Multi-stakeholder Engagement within S3 priorities” aims at helping regional public administrations who wish to enable citizens’ and R&I stakeholder engagement actions in their local policymaking.

The roadmap has been developed within the framework of TRANSFORM, an EU H2020 project, committed to transforming territorial research and innovation governance and opening up regional R&I policymaking so as to better align territorial research and innovation with citizens’ views, needs, and expectations.

TRANSFORM provides regional public authorities and other interested R&I actors with inspiring examples and practical suggestions, emerging from real regional settings and experimentations, on how to implement RRI principles through sound methodologies to engage citizens and multiple stakeholders.

## METHODOLOGY

In Brussels, three partners (BE participation asbl – cluster leader -, Innoviris and UCLouvain) worked together to implement multi-stakeholder engagement processes around various types of innovations, including citizen-led ones, related to the field of circular economy. Pilot activities have involved mostly citizens, but also representatives of the private sector, public authorities, and scientific experts, through carefully facilitated participatory sessions, making use of approaches similar to focus groups. The aim of such activities has been to harness collective intelligence around innovations in the making, to better address societal needs; and to provide a deep understanding of complex (and often conflictual) ecosystems, where both private and citizens-led innovations compete over a common stream of resources and funding, by exploring common ground and shared solutions.

## EXPECTED BENEFITS

The expected benefits of TRANSFORM in Brussels are to:



- Support research funding organizations (such as innoviris) to learn from and further implement in the future participatory approaches that allow to identify potential co-benefits and adverse impacts of innovations they fund
- Make r&i governance more open, inclusive and beneficial to the common good by giving stakeholders, and citizens in particular, a role in the definition of local priorities
- Test an agile multi-stakeholder participatory process that can be adapted to various types of situations, and be used by brussels’ public agencies in the future
- Make innovators and citizens experiment, discover, and learn from the added value of collective intelligence
- Enhance mutual trust and collaboration between private and citizen-led innovations active in the same field



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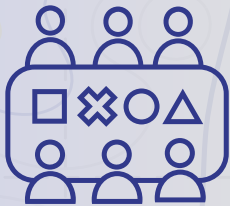
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## ACTIONS



Two types of pilots have been implemented between March 2021 and October 2022, with the aim to inspire the regional partner Innoviris to further embed participatory processes within its R&I management and funding processes. BE participation asbl, the cluster leader, has led a pilot focused on the issue of unsold food. Over one hundred individuals including citizens and civil society organisations, private companies, researchers, and representatives of local public authorities, have joined a series of **participatory workshops**. Participants have first discussed separately, by stakeholder group, the issues at stake around the current management of unsold food in the region, its environmental impacts, and various aspects of food aid initiatives. Finally, all stakeholders have been brought together to identify common ground and share ideas, but also and mostly to show public authorities the visible benefits of such processes.

Two more pilots have been conducted by UCLouvain, partially in collaboration with BE participation, focused on introducing citizen engagement processes in university-led innovations developed by students. Ideas in the making of innovative water sensors, and a newly created sustainable food, have been introduced to over fifty citizens through a **design thinking approach**. The process led to the identification of aspects that can help innovators in university programmes better address societal needs.



## IMPACT



The TRANSFORM pilots have brought together local actors to show how multi-stakeholder engagement can be key to identifying common ground and shared ideas, and provide public funders with a better understanding of potential impacts of R&I initiatives they support. Further Brussels-Capital regional authorities beyond Innoviris have expressed interest towards the pilots' methodological approach, such as the newly created special unit on participatory democracy within Brussels' public agency Perspective. Brussels Pilots have also paved the way to follow-up activities which build on the potential of participatory activities carried out. For example, a Belgian private foundation active in the field of food aid is interested in supporting further co-design and co-creation activities to advance in the unsold food field, while a future European project will exploit the TRANSFORM multi-stakeholder engagement methodology on a bigger scale within regional developments towards climate neutrality.

## KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- Multi-stakeholder engagement processes are currently lacking in the region, resulting in innovations being supported by public agencies without a general understanding of the local ecosystem and without promoting and supporting collaborations.
- Multi-stakeholder engagement can be used to manage crisis, such as the complexity of growing initiatives around unsold food, but ideally, when implemented regularly and at an early stage, it allows regional governments to support (open) innovation better oriented to local needs.
- Multi-stakeholder engagement can be implemented in an agile way, without requiring a lot of time or resources, especially when supported by public authorities. Experienced facilitators should be involved to plan and lead the process.
- Multi-stakeholder engagement generates high expectations in all participants involved. It should never be performed as an exercise in itself, and it should lead to concrete changes.



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