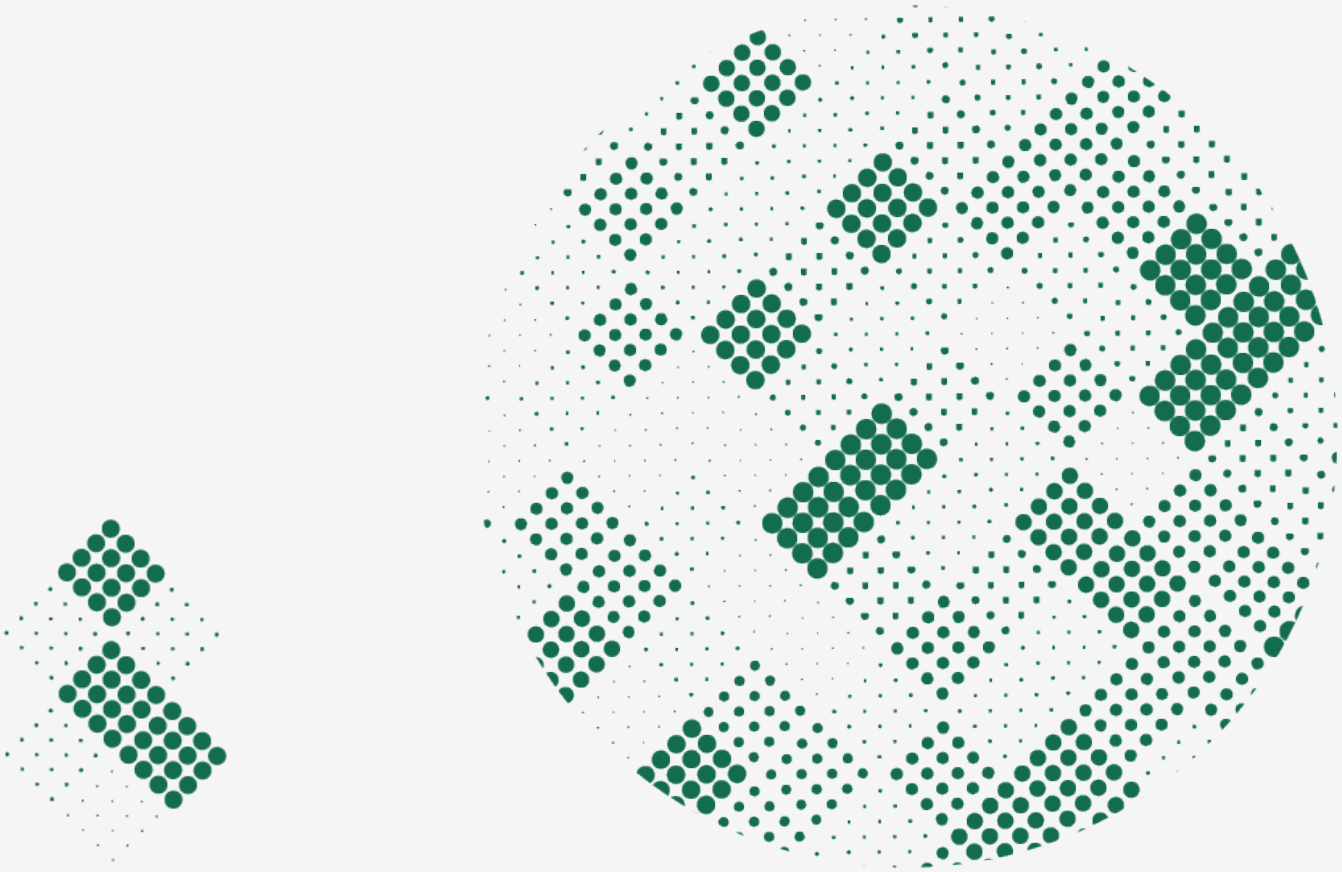
RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN TERRITORIES

RRI LEADERS

Task 5.3

1st Policy Learning Workshop Findings



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FIRST POLICY LEARNING WORKSHOP FINDINGS

The main aim of the first Policy Learning Workshop (PLW) has been to gather participants from the 4 participating territories of the RRI-LEADERS project to investigate distinct mechanisms for the embedment of RRI-AIRR principles in the territorial policy-making processes through active discussion and brainstorming. The objectives were to learn about the RRI-AIRR experiences of the stakeholders from the other territories, the RRI-AIRR good practices and how they can be capitalized in each participating territory, and the transformative potential of RRI-AIRR for each one of the presented practices. The opportunities for integrating RRI-AIRR in territorial policies, and the benefits of such integration and the actions/measures on how to integrate RRI-AIRR in territorial policies were discussed as well. Moreover, opportunities for future collaboration amongst territorial stakeholders through brainstorming were also sought.

In total 29 participants were present at the workshop. The participating territories were represented in the meeting by members of both the territorial as well as the methodological partners, and the quadruple helix stakeholders (policymakers, business, research/academia, and civil society). Four good practices were presented in the PLW, one per each participating territory (the region of Western Macedonia – Greece, and municipalities of Sofia – Bulgaria, Thalwil – Switzerland and Sabadell – Spain). Two keynote speakers presented and analyzed two key subjects regarding RRI-AIRR implementation of the development policies.

First Keynote Presentation – "Innovation and Regions"

Keynote speaker Claire Nauwelaers, an advisor of the RRI-LEADERS project and a senior policy expert, opened the event with a talk on the regional innovation scheme and its latest developments. She noted that the current regional innovation practices face three challenges. The first one is about the fact that innovation should address not only productivity gaps but also societal challenges in the move towards smart sustainable inclusive societies. The second challenge revolves around the regions' "innovation mobilisers" and the attention needed to territories in national innovation policies. A targeted focus on innovation in regional development policies is demanded in order to boost regional development. The third challenge is about the adoption of a broader concept of innovation, which would give a chance to regions that are not technologically frontier. The final challenge raises the question on how to organize complementarity/synergies between policies at various levels of government, and leads to a debate about how effective are innovation policies, specifically the ones that are developed by and for the regions.

The presentation then moved onto the actual rationale behind the regional innovation policy. A crucial finding is that geographical proximity is a key element in Regional Innovation Systems (RIS) regarding the reduction of the information gap, due to its tacit dimension. This element can effectively capitalize on localized knowledge spillovers, lower transaction costs, social capital, and strengthening of the innovation system. Indivisibilities also pose a crucial element in implying economies of scale and different levels of intervention of activities with different degree of indivisibility. Moreover, there is empirical evidence on national disparities and uneven geography of innovation at a pan-European level, a finding that stresses the need for differentiated approaches.

Another key issue is the effectiveness of the current Smart Specialization Strategies (S3) that are being implemented at a local level. The presentation highlighted three major obstacles regarding the successful implementation of national innovation policies. First, the noticeable fragmentation of public investments for innovation, which leads to less efficient investments. Second, interregional cross-border innovation policies between countries are not well founded due to weak strategic approaches. A major issue that needs to be addressed is the focus prioritization of the regions, investigating how the regions select the appropriate focus domains. The third obstacle is the magnitude of multi-level governance implying the issue that emerges in multiple levels of government including local, regional, state, national and many other organisations with interests in policy decisions and outcomes. There are actions at different levels of governance that need to be properly aligned meaning the relationship of different state levels and interaction with different types of actors must be well defined. The most effective implementation of the stakeholder engagement poses a matter that needs to be handled by policy makers into the direction of how the stakeholders can be motivated to engage themselves into the implementation of the S3. Furthermore, the presenter stated the need of the implementation of an integrated policy of combining several different individual policies to a central direction. On that specific matter, the significance of any existing or future data and indicators towards the direction of the formation of robust regional policies, is apparent.

A holistic policy response regarding regional innovation strategies should precisely include specific policy actions for each one of the aforementioned challenges. The reaction to the fragmentation/duplication of public investments for innovation should primarily focus on the concentration on key areas of regional strength to ensure leverage. The criteria for this action include the entrance of businesses in new markets which increases the future potential of the region (cross sectors), the formation of a distinctive economic potential in region, and the implementation of distinctive education and research potential or linkages to external RRI sources. Furthermore, a criterion is considered the fostering of an innovation ecosystem that promotes the structural linkages and synergies amongst organizations and bodies and the political endorsement of the current regional challenges, placing them at the top of the local policy focus. Effective implementation of borderless innovation policies includes the development of “hidden” forms of innovation, beyond R&D-driven innovation, which should be stimulated through mixes of instruments from various policy areas: education, S&T, environment, infrastructure, etc. Moreover, the field of application of borderless innovation policies need to allow implementation of innovation beyond the administrative borders. So, cross-border collaborations in policies need to be called for, to target functional areas that RIS are not targeting. By this way, the necessary complementarities are going to be ensured between policies and instruments at various levels. Other typical obstacles regarding the promotion of RIS, are the general lack of external attractiveness, the lack of local workforce skills and the capital shortages of policymakers, public local organizations and bodies and businesses and the lack of a synergic culture in the region amongst all stakeholders.

The prime expected benefit from cross-border cooperation in innovation is the increased diversity level. That implies a wider pool of actors enhancing the changes to build relevant synergies for innovation. Furthermore, the detection of new diversification paths for local businesses and the local economy in total is also an expected impact that may drastically enhance RIS. The “density” dimension may be also strengthened through the expected higher regional attractiveness which is due to happen through factors such as “knowledge hub” branding.

Concluding the regional innovation aspect of the first PLW, the overall challenge for the implementation of S3 at a local level is for the policy makers to translate the current broad strategies into efficient and integrated policy mixes of several elements. The actions that need to be taken include policymakers' resistance to the implementation of long-term investments that are only able to give back in the long term (returns beyond 4-year legislature…), the genuine prioritization of proposed investments that includes the coping with lobbies and vested interests and the effective implementation of cross-border policies. Also, there is the need for more robust, systematic, and systemic policy evaluations. Regarding these aspects, the major characteristics of transformative innovation policies should include adequate levels of directionality, implying a clear articulation of outcome ("mission"), the implementation of multidisciplinarity, the continuous experimentation and learning (new policy intelligence) by both policy makers and various stakeholders, the societal engagement and co-creation that should incorporate problem-owners and the promotion of the "agents of change" transformation regarding every single stakeholder participating in the S3.

First Good Practice of the Region of Western Macedonia – "Innovation Zone"

The title of the first Good Practice regarding the region of Western Macedonia is the "Innovation of Western Macedonia", presented by Prof. Pantelis Aggelidis. The main content of the Good Practice was the ongoing initiation of the Innovation Zone being built in the region of Western Macedonia, a project that includes the experiences gained from the Innovation Zone of Central Macedonia located in Thessaloniki, Greece. (Alexandria Innovation Zone – AIZ) The main RRI keys that are implemented through the Good Practices in total are Public Engagement, Open Access, Gender, Science Education and Ethics. Likewise, the main AIRR dimensions that are being implemented are Anticipation, Inclusiveness, Reflexivity and Responsiveness. In detail, in the innovation zone that is being built fully includes the helix of society as an equal stakeholder since the innovation zone should be open to citizens, students, consumers that wish to be financially activated as entrepreneurs in the innovation zone or gather scientific information from the scientific practices that are going to be implemented by the member organizations. That characteristic initiates the direct integration of the RRI keys of Open Access, Gender, Science Education and Ethics, while the region can capitalize on the increased level of unemployment rates, scientific research, and financial development.

Moreover, the financial entities that are participating in the AIZ project are national bank groups, insurance companies, real estate investment trusts, pensions funds, financial and scientific foundations, sovereign funds and venture capital investment funds. All of the above participated as either direct investors or funders showing significant levels of both public and private engagement in the project and this model is going to be implemented in the Western Macedonia Innovation Zone. Specifically, regarding public engagement, public participants will come from all segments of public administration, including EU, National government, regional government and local government (municipalities) since they have all been involved in the licensing part. Moreover, the rents of the main public areas of the Zone which are going to be paid through multi-year contracts secure steady public income at both national and local level, while taxation will secure public income flows at a national level. That shows an adequate level of responsiveness of the policymakers regarding the admittance of stakeholders in the project, accrued from all societal segments, avoiding possible objections on the project and securing financial benefits for all. Regarding the participating enterprises, they are from all types of business schemes, which are SMEs, start-ups, large corporations, and spin-offs. This is a sign of inclusiveness since the legislator incudes all business types and also a sign of reflexivity, since the Zone has been designed to cover the infrastructure needs and legal particularities of most types of entrepreneurial

activities, fostering and promoting innovation at the maximum level that way. Furthermore, taking into consideration the already implemented practice from AIZ, the job vacancies that are going to be promoted in the Western Macedonia Zone will be mainly related to the ICT sector. There will be a special care to create and promote job places for women, like in AIZ project, where there has been a 20% increase in the female job places in the last 5 years. Regarding the differences between the already implemented AIZ and the Innovation Zone of Western Macedonia, it was pointed out that the circumstances in the latter are much different since the area is much less populous and the region of Western Macedonia is not included in the European Innovation Map. However, the policy makers are focused on exploiting the regional scientific, intellectual and know-how forces in order to create a sustainable eco-system directly adjusted the local needs. Moreover, practices from other energy-transition regions regarding the operational and strategic targets of the innovation zone, will be also implemented.

Second Good Practice of the Territory of Sofia – "Creating a long-term vision for the city: the policymaker perspective"

The title of the second Good Practice regarding the territory of Sofia, Bulgaria is "Creating a long-term vision for the city: the policymaker perspective" presented by Policy Expert at Sofia Municipal Council, Ms Veronika Manova. The main content of the Practice was the presentation of the "Vision for Sofia 2050" project, a state-funded development project, that focuses on the development of the region at a municipal level. It is about the development of Sofia Municipality until 2050, an example of a successful multi-stakeholder approach to policymaking, which is based on research and science, with the active engagement of over 10,000 citizens. The organization responsible for implementing the project is the municipal company 'Sofiaplan', which is implementing the spatial and strategic planning for sustainable development in Sofia. The project is being materialized under the framework of the 'Program for Sofia' development plan which is the new Integrated Municipal Development Plan 2021-2027. The project was initially planned with a focus on coping with problems that were pre-existing and implement a systemic approach based on data and the involvement of wide range of stakeholders. External experts from different backgrounds have coordinated and public tender procedures that can complement existing data from as many sources as possible, were initiated. Furthermore, the methodology (of collecting the data) in the initial part of the project was also put under review, in order to create simple but effective processes that are able to collect multiple and crucial data types.

The Good Practice was implemented by a stakeholder group with high levels of influence on RRI/AIRR approach in practice. The project was initiated and adopted by Sofia Municipal Council. On the fieldwork implementation, research and consultations that took place in the first stage of the project (2017-2018), many data forms from different stakeholder types (academia, businesses, etc) were processed, in order to complete the final version of the project in 2019. This was then submitted to municipal council in 2021 and was officially adopted. The project has been designed and implemented by a multidisciplinary team of Sofiaplan: architects, urban planners, ecologists, economists, programmers, lawyers, sociologists and communication specialists. A Monitoring Committee was also initiated in order to record the implementation of the project targets and act as shadow experts giving crucial information on the expert team when needed.

Regarding the integration of the RRI/AIRR approach to the project, the RRI keys of Public Engagement, Open Access, Gender, Science Education and Ethics have been integrated at different stages of the project. Specifically, public engagement has been present at all stages since cooperation with municipal bodies,

researchers and universities, NGOs, industry and business organizations has been fully implemented, indicating that all societal segments have equally participated. Open access has also been integrated since over 400 meetings with experts & citizens were held, where problem analysis, goal setting, and formulation of actions & measures for implementation, has been actively promoted. Social media, direct e-mails, and online surveys in 24 city districts were held, ensuring the proper comprehension of the projects' targets by the wider public. At the same time, other communication actions such as outdoor advertising/billboards, presenting the Vision & inviting citizens to take part were also held. Reflexivity and responsiveness to the various stakeholders' needs was applied as well, through the active public consultations that were held in order to uncover the wider needs of specific helix segments, specifically regarding various infrastructures that were being built according to the project's framework. An initial finding of the project at the first stage of implementation, was that Gender is not fully met with the present infrastructures of the city since women stated that they have less easy access to infrastructure. This finding was included in the work planning of the project in order to reach a point where women will be fully satisfied with the current situation regarding access to infrastructure as well as other project objectives.

Science education/research has also been fully integrated at various stages of the project. 50 experts from various scientific fields have been selected through public procurement to contribute to the Vision "Hackathon for Sofia ", a 2-day event with more than 60 participants that was held in Sofia Tech Park. In that event, 15 projects were presented that were developed, using data collected by the project's initiative. Anticipation has been implemented since forward-looking scenarios were used as key elements of Sofiaplan's work and the Vision initiative. Evaluation/reflection is still performed through regular meetings to discuss problems, brainstorm ideas and plan activities to improve the working process, showing an adequate level of responsiveness that way. In that process, periodic public presentations of the work in progress are taking place. 20 thematic meetings, attended by 178 participants (50 from the administration, 52 NGOs, 40 from business, 33 independent experts) have already been completed so far. Another indication of responsiveness is the constant addressing of all relevant issues in the city development. Concluding the RRI/AIRR integration on the "Vision for Sofia 2050" project, small grants (250.000 Euros) of Sofia Municipality in 2020-2021 project, to support NGOs have been provided, promoting the digital adaptation and organizational sustainability in the Community development. 500 applications were received, and 31 innovative projects were selected, showing adequate levels of reflexivity in adopting innovation needs.

Third Good Practice of the Territory of Thalwil – "District Heating Network Zentrum"

The title of the third Good Practice of the Territory of Thalwil is "District Heating Network Zentrum", presented by Mr. Jan Adams, member of the Municipality of Thalwil and Head of Gas Water Thalwil company. The main content of the practice was the presentation of the innovative District Heating Network of the city of Thalwil. The project is about the district heating and cooling network with lake water as the main heat source (total renewable energy 90%) for a specific area of the city of Thalwil. The project is about the long-term planning in a multi-actor public-private partnership. The whole project started over 10 years ago, paving the way for district heating networks. The strategic document behind the project is the city's municipal energy plan and the main motive for promoting such a project is the federal boundary conditions which are focused on renewable energy technologies. The project agreement constitutes a highly flexible public-private partnership, which contains a contract between Water Thalwil (public organization) and E360° (private utility) with an option for the municipality to become the main investors of the project. That gives the reflexivity of the

involved public authorities to assess the project at any stage, from both the possible investor as well as the controlling authority site, while they gain from the renewable energy supply at the same time.

The main RRI keys that are integrated in the Good Practice is public engagement, open access, ethics and science education. Informing people about the district heating network at an early stage (planning security) can be considered a strong initiative of public engagement as well as open access. Project's implementation includes distinct open access activities such as project description on webpage or public engagement activities such as public information events, information letters to all households within network perimeter and intense 1 to 1 information to any individual that may be interested in. The ethics key has also been integrated, considering the constant sustainability assessment in analyzing costs and benefits for the people of Thalwil. Distinct AIRR dimensions have also been included as core pillars in the project's planned policy and effects' framework. Municipal energy planning has been applied in the initial stages of the project to reveal the key energy requirements of the region and adjust the project's influence on the specified local needs. In that framework, long strategic development contributed to the anticipation dimension of the project's contribution on covering specific energy needs. Furthermore, the project's development strategy and cooperation policy foresaw the inclusion of all quadruple helix actors on board, developing win-win strategies for every part, showing an adequate level of inclusiveness that way. Moreover, a long-term feasibility study and sustainability assessment was implemented. This was done by initiating in-depth evaluation of the project at the initial stages where the planned costs and benefits for the society were considered, showing high levels of anticipation on the policy makers' side. In total, the project can be considered a fully effective RRI-AIRR paradigm, regarding the level of implementation of specific RRI keys / AIRR dimensions, without excluding the application of other important keys / dimensions, which have also been integrated at lower but adequate levels.

Fourth Good Practice of the Territory of Sabadell and Catalonia – "Female Entrepreneurs weaving Sabadell"

The title of the fourth and last Good Practice of the Territory of Sabadell and Catalonia is **"**Female Entrepreneurs weaving Sabadell", presented by Ms. Jovita Ponce, Secretary and Co-Founder of "Emprenedores Teixint Sabadell" and CEO Pocions de la Jovita. The Good Practice is about the creation of a female entrepreneurship association. The motivations for joining the Association are multiple, such as networking, visibility and promotion of their business in this focus area. The members of the association come from different backgrounds, such as health, communication, housing, art and tourism. Although there are many associations and organizations in the Sabadell area that promote women's entrepreneurship, they are not capable of fully representing the actual situation in the entrepreneurial sector. That is the main reason, for creating this association. The association, consisting only of women, was created in 2020, after ten months of previous work, in order to fill the gap of female entrepreneurship in the region. The motivation of entrepreneurs to join the Association is both the result of motherhood and the vision of providing products and services based on their own values. Their age ranges from 25 to 60 years old. In 2020 it was staffed by 25 members and by 2022 the members increased to 41.

According to the integration of RRI Keys to the Good Practice, the most obvious key in its implementation is gender, since the purpose of the Association is to promote and visualize the role of women in entrepreneurship, where the main role is played by men. Public engagement is also integrated as a distinct

key in the organization. For example, the organization is implementing educational activities, social events and networking that enables members to exchange experiences and good practices and contacts with research and academic stakeholders. According to the AIRR approach, the association incorporates anticipation, expressed in the planning of three months and it integrates reflexivity with the organization posting events about female entrepreneurs and their needs. Finally, it integrates responsiveness, showed by the creation of new strategies based on previous findings on how to support female entrepreneurship at a maximum level. Due to its nature, the organization is capable of incorporating other RRI keys, such as the open access and the science education. Finally, it incorporates reflexivity, as it combines different factors from the territory, aiming at improving the innovation ecosystem.

Second Key-note Speaker – "TeRRItoria's Policy Recommendations: RRI through the involvement of local R&I actors

Key-note speaker Prof. George Eleftherakis is a professor in the CITY College, introduced the attendees into the field of policy recommendations regarding the involvement of RRI through local actors, included in the project 'TeRRItoria'. According to the project highlights, the project is splitting policy recommendations into two main parts: Part A called the 'recommendation' stage is further divided into the design stage, the implementation stage and the monitoring / evaluation stage. Part B called 'suggestions' consists of two sub-parts, the overall part where general suggestions are taken into considerations and the 'enhancing sustainability part', where specific directions on how to strengthen sustainability on territories is explained.

Starting from part A, the design stage should initially include the collaborative R&I agendas and inclusive engagement recommendations that address the integration of RRI principles and dimensions into the design and development stage of the regional innovation policies (addressing Entrepreneurial Discovery Process too). Regarding that part, it is crucial to engage citizens, who have been repeatedly proven to be the most hard-to-get audience. In order to do so, the territory should firstly initiate the appropriate capacity-building activities. These can be either short-term activities (e.g. single training events) and/or long-term activities (e.g. developing relevant university curricula in regional universities). Moreover, the development of collaborative R&I agendas can build on the challenge-based approach, thus ensuring that regional needs and problems are genuinely addressed. In that framework, different fields and disciplines should be represented in the consultation activities. On the stakeholder part, targeted stakeholders should be engaged from early in the design process, and a follow-up communication with them should always be pursued (if possible, to follow-up synergies as well). Following that path, makes it easier to retain or even extend the regional connections and build networks. New coalitions can be formed through various consultation meetings, events, or workshops and Regional Open Innovation Platforms (ROIPs) can particularly create an encouraging environment. Regarding that specific sector, the sample of involved actors can be widened through capitalizing on organizational mapping, capitalizing on territorial networks (strategic networking) and providing incentives to the various stakeholders in order to participate in the R&I processes. Openness and transparency are the final parts that need to be taken into consideration in the design stage. The design processes of regional R&I policies should be open and transparent to the wider public (e.g. open consultation initiatives). In this case, the public and interested stakeholders can be genuinely involved in the construction of their territory's vision, thus not allowing regional agendas to be hijacked by established interests and "experts".

The implementation stage primarily integrates the anticipation part. Regional innovation policies can enhance anticipation by realizing foresight exercises (e.g. future scenarios exercises) and forecasting, so that decision-making is based on a set of logical and anticipated assumptions. Anticipation is also enhanced, by developing anticipatory governance mechanisms, by integrating features/principles of technology assessment and by employing theories of change when setting new goals. Finally, anticipation is strengthened by consulting mission-oriented approaches. Inclusiveness of Smart Specialization Policies (S3) and other regional development policies is also enhanced by ensuring that the developed R&I agendas are truly collaborative, building on intra-regional collaboration and that the different actors' perspectives and interests are represented. When attempting to include different actors' perspectives and interests, potential conflicts may emerge. These should be always managed and turn into sources of knowledge. To manage the conflicts, the target topic must be presented as a win-win situation to all sides, or a priori initiate something that is beneficial to all sides, even for different reasons. Reflexivity of S3 and other regional policies may be fostered by self-analysis and 'self-criticism' that should be always be while designing and implementing such policies. The feedback that is received should be appreciated at all times and be accompanied by a receptive-to-change attitude. Finally, responsiveness is integrated by signifying the keeping up with the new developments. Particularly new EU / national / local policies, priorities and directions, new scientific, technological and societal trends as well as new societal/political pressures (e.g. on gender issues) should be considered for updating or re-adjusting the content of the policies.

In the final stage regarding part A, principles of social responsibility can be integrated into the S3 impact assessment. That is so due to the fact that social responsibility attempts to ensure that there is balance between economic growth and the welfare of society and the environment. In the process of monitoring and evaluating the RRI impact, evaluation criteria for the funding of R&I projects could also assess the impact specifically related to the RRI keys (i.e. RRI-related evaluation criteria). In that case, an appropriate RRI-oriented capacity-building of the evaluators is advised to be implemented.

Regarding part B, the first sub-part is about the overall suggestions for RRI integration into regional innovation policies and S3. Regional size matters and particularly urban and rural areas follow different paths. Such regional features should always be considered when developing (RRI-driven) regional policies. Changes to regional structures, including political shifts, may create implications; and the effects of such changes on regional policies should be clearly anticipated.

The second sub-part of the 'Suggestions' phase includes suggestions for enhancing the sustainability of RRI-driven regional policies and their results. Finding an actor in charge of 'anchoring' the results is a prerequisite for promoting regional innovation policies. Official bodies are considerable allies for undertaking this role and contributing to the continuation of achieved results. Moreover, funding and follow-up activities can considerably enhance the results' sustainability. Emphasis is primarily placed on EU and national funding. Alternatives are private-public partnerships/funding, crowdfunding etc. It should be noted however, that follow-up funding is not a panacea for everything. Regional ('improvised') actions may be more effective for an effective knowledge spill-over.

Concluding remarks in the discussion phase

Concluding the project's findings, the involved actors consider RRI/AIRR approach as extremely helpful in building more effective regional policies. Amongst the RRI/AIRR keys/dimensions, the most important one is inclusiveness since it allows the society to be prepared for the upcoming public engagement events concerning also science education activities. At the same time is allows the project's stakeholders to build a framework which could further include all possible actors from the regional perspective and also identify the specific competitive advantages of the region. Finally, a gender equality plan that was built in the project's framework (under Horizon requirements) enabled Academia and other quadruple helix actors to be drastically involved, and operated as an incentive to attract various stakeholders. However, project practice indicated that other incentives are also required in order to attract various stakeholders from different actors.

Two main questions were set by prof. Lefteris Topaloglou as a trigger for dialogue in the discussion phase of the PLW. The first one is about investigating the extent and how, the incorporation of RRI principles within territorial governance and policy-making is feasible. The second question is about investigating the main components that a transformative outlook in terms of a future-oriented action plan should consist of.

(Geographical) proximity in regional innovation was particularly highlighted as a core mean to strengthen regional innovations' systems and procedures. The role of local authorities was found to be moving on the role of "orchestrators" in initiating specific requirements and initiatives regarding regional innovation. Moreover, the issue of 'whether it works or not' regarding all the presented practices was raised. In terms of implementation under a new innovative insight, better trajectories of implementing regional innovation policies in comparison to processes that do not include RRI/AIRR integration principles, were noted. Regarding the perception of RRI keys / AIRR dimensions, a specific approach was initiated as a crucial finding: that is to use and implement RRI keys/AIRR dimensions as a holistic framework that includes every single key and dimension, rather than trying to integrate them as separate entities in distinct operations. A concluding remark included the necessity of equal level of adoption of RRI keys / AIRR dimensions for every single societal segment of the quadruple helix. That was so, since this approach will disengage some specific societal segments (like the policy makers) from taking over the absolute responsibility of implementing RRI/AIRR and will equalize the burden of implementation of RRI/AIIR to every single stakeholder.

In total, the integration of RRI approach should rely among all the aforementioned aspects, also on the reflection and validation through research events such as the workshop that was conducted, enlightening different aspects of RRI logic that way. The concluding findings reveal that innovation should address not only the productivity gap but also the ongoing societal challenges. In this view, regions could function as innovation mobilisers. Furthermore, co-creation processes are necessary if institutional changes are to be implemented and enable policy makers towards responsible research and innovation strategies and practices. In this regard, a crucial need has been noted, for an agile RRI policy making that incorporates through an inclusive perspective, societal agendas and challenges. Moreover, wide public engagement and cooperation which involve the entire spectrum of stakeholders as well as long-term scenarios and inclusive programming should be implemented. The final conclusion is about the acceptance that RRI strategies should go beyond the academic sphere, towards 'borderless' innovation policies.