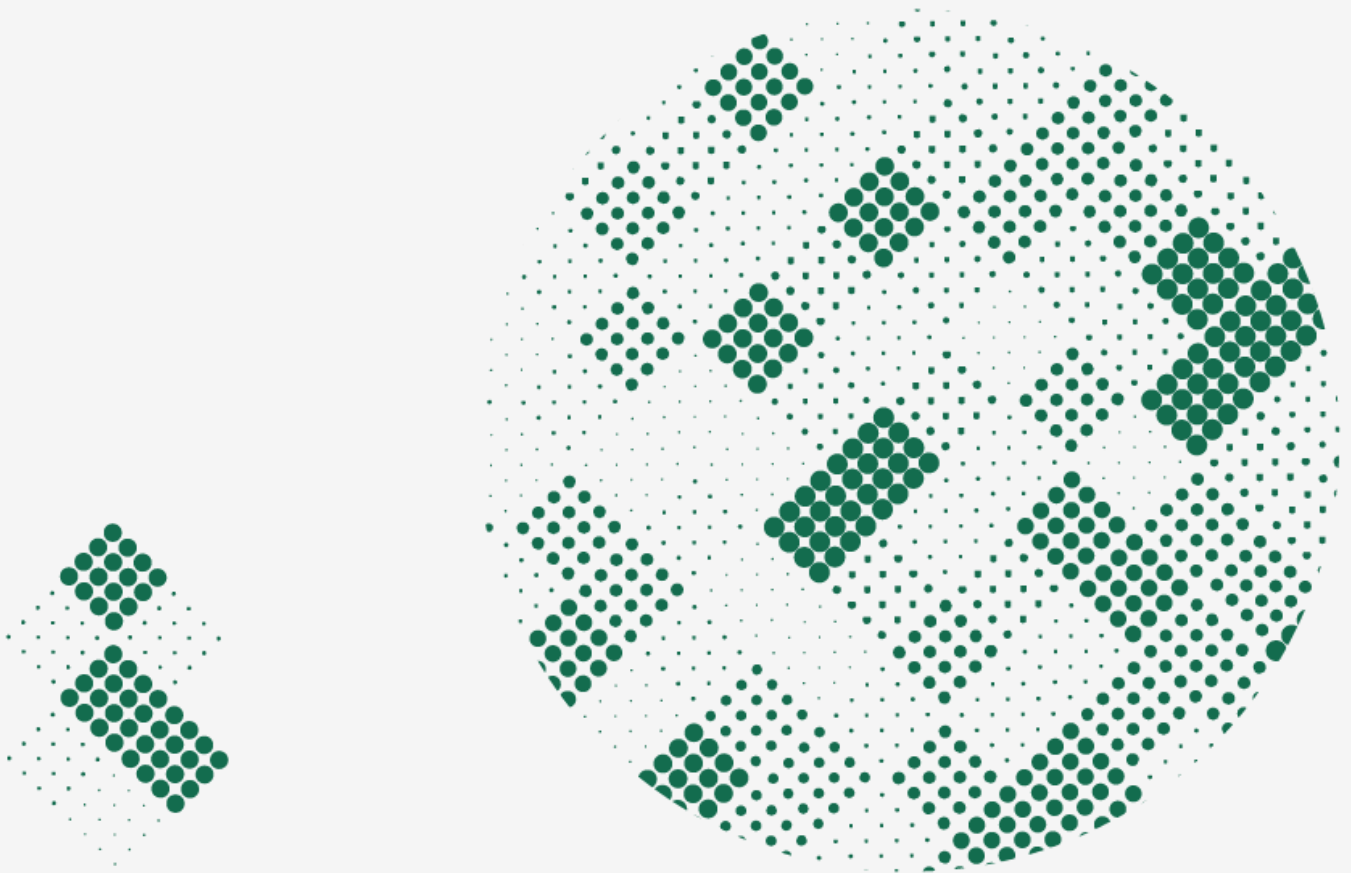




RESPONSIBLE
RESEARCH AND
INNOVATION IN
TERRITORIES

Deliverable 5.3

Vision for Responsible Policymaking



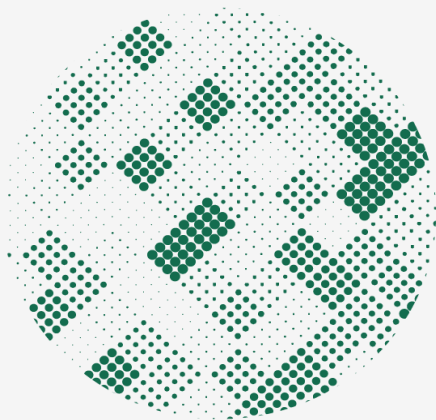
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P8	MUNICIPALITY OF THALWIL	GEMEINDE THALWIL	THA
P9	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF SABADELL CITY COUNCIL	PROMOCIO ECONOMICA DE SABADELL	PES SL



Contents

Contents	3
List of acronyms / abbreviations used in this document	3
RRI-LEADERS in a nutshell.....	4
Vision for Responsible Territorial Policymaking.....	5

List of acronyms / abbreviations used in this document

- RRI - Responsible Research and Innovation
- AIRR – Anticipation, Inclusiveness, Reflexivity, Responsiveness
- R&I – Research and innovation



RRI-LEADERS in a nutshell

The objectives of RRI-LEADERS project were twofold: to support the adoption of responsible research and innovation principles within territorial policymaking in selected policy areas through innovative, inclusive, and responsive multi-actor approach to the development of policies; and to provide an evolutionary perspective on the future of responsible research and innovation in territorial policymaking.

RRI-LEADERS explored the relevance of responsible research and innovation to territorial policymaking in the fields of energy transition in the Region of Western Macedonia (Greece) and the Municipality of Thalwil (Switzerland), youth employment and entrepreneurship, sustainable urban development, support to innovation and digital transition in the city of Sofia (Bulgaria), as well as active ageing and smart specialisation in the city of Sabadell (Spain). RRI-LEADERS employed an innovative, multi-actor co-creation approach, including desk research and policy review, in-depth stakeholder interviews, stakeholder workshops and focus-group discussions, a three-round expert-based Delphi survey, world-café events, citizen review panels, all of which aimed to explore the application of responsible research and innovation within territorial policymaking of the selected policy areas.

According to RRI-LEADERS, stakeholders in responsible territorial policymaking are all relevant actors who have a stake in the territorial policies under scrutiny – the Quadruple Helix stakeholders (local and regional authorities, municipal councils and regional development councils, local community representatives, businesses, civil society organisations, academic institutions, research centres and individual citizens).

Website of RRI-LEADERS: www.rri-leaders.eu

Vision for Responsible Territorial Policymaking

The Vision for Responsible Territorial Policymaking has been developed by the RRI-LEADERS consortium based on the experiences of four European territories with integrating Responsible Research and Innovation principles into territorial policymaking in selected policy areas. The Vision proposes a pathway towards transformative changes in territories to help them meet the challenges of sustainable development.

The RRI-LEADERS consortium envisions responsible territorial policymaking in the following way:

To achieve sustainable development¹ and enhance resilience² at territorial level in times of rapid changes and high uncertainty, territorial policymaking needs to incorporate all relevant scientific, technological, innovative, economic, and environmental aspects of territorial development, but must not stop there. Responsible territorial policymaking entails also consideration of different societal and ethical issues. It addresses the needs and expectations of society and citizens, corresponds with the societal values, and builds upon the combined knowledge of all territorial stakeholders.

The RRI-LEADERS Vision for Responsible Territorial Policymaking incorporates the main principles of the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) approach into the policymaking process, thus making it anticipatory, inclusive, reflexive and responsive, and well suited to administer a sustainable and resilient territorial policy development clearly focused on the societal needs.

Key messages stemming from RRI-LEADERS experience

The key messages presented below summarise the experience of four European territories, the Region of Western Macedonia in Greece, the city of Sabadell in Spain, the Municipality of Thalwil in Switzerland and the city of Sofia in Bulgaria, with integrating Responsible Research and Innovation principles into territorial policymaking in important policy areas. The key messages provide the foundation for conceptualising the principles of the responsible territorial policymaking.

- Responsible and sustainable territorial policymaking means **co-creation, co-implementation, and joint responsibility of all stakeholders** involved in the process: policymakers, academia, business, and civil society (also known as the Quadruple Helix). Local actors have the necessary knowledge about the local dynamics, history, public expectations, and specific and often complex relationships on the territorial level. This is why they should all be involved in territorial policymaking to **ensure a fair, beneficial, and applicable outcome**.

¹ Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

² The capacity to withstand or recover quickly from difficulties/shocks/crises.

- **Territorial authorities** are expected to **lead the creation of synergies and cooperation** between all stakeholder groups, and to **create the necessary conditions** for achieving inclusive, sustainable, and resilient policymaking processes and results. Participatory and deliberative practices can greatly enhance the knowledge-based democratic governance.
- **Territorial authorities** need to **promote the culture of public engagement** in the policymaking process. When such culture is lacking or is underdeveloped, dedicated effort needs to be made to cultivate it. Involving citizens in policy development greatly enhances their motivation to actively participate during the process of implementing policies, which has a positive impact on territorial development. Particular attention needs to be given to the younger generations who are the future decision-makers. This may be facilitated through the utilisation of digital technologies.
- **Territorial policy strategies** will be most effective if developed on the basis of **in-depth studies of the needs of the local economy and the local community** (evidence-based approach). To this end, territorial authorities should enhance **collaboration between public bodies and research and innovation actors**, and fully utilise the potential contribution of science and innovation.
- Responsible territorial policymaking has to be **responsive**. In today's rapidly transforming world, new knowledge is constantly being accumulated and the initial policy direction may quickly become inappropriate in the light of new perspectives. Policymakers need to be able to respond accordingly **when the circumstances change and new challenges arise**. Responsiveness entails a **reflection about societal circumstances** – the outcomes of this reflection should be used to reassess policies, rethink practices and (re)adjust initiatives.
- **Resilience** of a territory can be described as its capacity to overcome societal challenges. It can be **enhanced by reinforcing anticipation**, which is the cornerstone for responsible governance, since it allows the creation of proactive rather than reactive strategies.
- **Strong and responsible leadership** is a mixture of **boldness and humbleness** – the confidence to plan and implement the transformation, and readiness to rethink and change the course should new circumstances emerge.

Principles of Responsible Territorial Policymaking (RTP)

RTP supports the attainment of the long-term EU policies and contributes to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

RTP supports EU's long-term policies such as becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050; ensuring biodiversity protection; empowering people through the digital transition; creating a more attractive investment environment and growth that creates quality jobs, especially for young people and small businesses; supporting gender equality; reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion; and enhancing the rule of law. Some of the most prominent policies and instruments that aim to achieve

these long-term goals include the European Green Deal³, the Fit for 55 package for a green transition⁴, the Territorial Agenda 2030⁵, the New Leipzig Charter – The transformative power of cities for the common good⁶, the Just Transition Fund⁷, the Digital Europe Programme,⁸ the Recovery and Resilience Facility⁹ and others.

RTP promotes awareness of sustainability issues arising from research and innovation projects and of sustainability goals and initiatives more generally (such as the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)). This is particularly important in the context of public outreach, communication and dissemination activities. The political and institutional commitment of local governments to achieve sustainable development is a key factor for change on the country, EU, and global levels as well.

Territories and their chosen policy areas

The four territories in the RRI-LEADERS project have focused on the following policy areas:

- **Region of Western Macedonia, Greece:** Strengthen policy-making systems involving different modes of territorial governance of the post-coal transition strategy; Develop a methodology aiming to a smooth and innovative transition from the coal value chain towards an alternative development ‘paradigm’; Develop a stakeholder engagement strategy within the course of the post-coal transition road map.
- **Sofia Municipality, Bulgaria:** Sustainable urban development; Support to innovation; Digital transition and new skills; Youth employment and entrepreneurship.
- **Municipality of Thalwil, Switzerland:** Energy transition, focused on reducing the use of fossil fuels and hence the greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing the total energy consumption in the territory of the municipality.
- **City of Sabadell, Catalonia, Spain:** Make the territorial innovation ecosystem more inclusive and better aligned with societal challenges, while respecting and promoting sustainability.

³ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/green-deal/fit-for-55-the-eu-plan-for-a-green-transition/>

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/brochures/2021/territorial-agenda-2030-a-future-for-all-places

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2020/12/12-08-2020-new-leipzig-charter-the-transformative-power-of-cities-for-the-common-good

⁷ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/just-transition-fund_en

⁸ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/digital-programme>

⁹ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

RTP is future-oriented

Future-oriented policies serve as means towards building preferred futures. They are reflexive and anticipatory, i.e., able to critically assess the past and current developments, and contemplate the possibility of circumstances that may arise in the future. Future-oriented policy frameworks should therefore be based on multiple interpretations, enabling the application of policies within a wide range of contexts.

This can only be feasible in a policy environment that enables and encourages participation of individuals and groups affected by the respective policies through co-creation of plausible pathways towards the future. Such an approach will (i) enhance the public acceptance and ownership of policies, (ii) contribute to the formation of a shared vision about preferred futures, and (iii) outline the most reasonable pathways towards meeting the identified policy objectives and goals.

Anticipatory policymaking is essential for establishing long-term priorities and developing strategic plans. It is at the same time a necessity and an opportunity for understanding and addressing future challenges. Anticipation involves systematic thinking about known, likely, plausible, and possible implications of policies and actions. It is also linked to other aspects of Responsible Territorial Policymaking, such as forward-looking leadership, which is considered an important political instrument for the active involvement of citizens in political processes at an early stage as it promotes exchange between politics, business, and civil society and ensures transparency and accountability. Foresight studies and technology assessment are the best-known anticipatory **approaches** to support long-term policymaking at different levels of governance.

Strategic planning of energy transition in Thalwil

Anticipation appears to be the most firmly embedded RTP principle according to evidence, gathered in the four territories participating in RRI-LEADERS. In the Municipality of Thalwil, anticipatory policymaking has been structurally embedded into the energy transition at various levels. Advisory political and expert commissions (“Environment Commission” and “Sustainability Expert Commission”) have been set up and are regularly consulting the Municipal Council. Further examples of the structural embedding of anticipation are different important documents, such as the Kommunale Richtplan. Such strategic plans are formulated at the cantonal, regional, and communal planning levels and are binding for the authorities. This obliges the spatial planning authorities at all levels to take into account the specifications of the strategic plans (their own and those of the higher levels) in an appropriate manner and to coordinate them with each other. Strategic plans discuss both guidelines and measures based on future scenarios, taking into consideration the growing population and the development of new technologies. The strategic municipal documents typically cover timeframes of 10-15 years, purposefully preventing legislative disruptions (four-year-terms). In general, the practice in Thalwil shows that the forward-looking leadership is an important political instrument for involving the entire population and other stakeholders from industry/trade and civil society organisations in the energy transition.

RTP is reflexive, responsive and adaptable

Reflexivity is an important aspect of self-assessment in policymaking. It means to critically scrutinise one's own activities, commitments, and assumptions, and to be aware of the limits of one's own knowledge. It also implies a reflection about societal circumstances and use the outcomes of this reflection to reassess policies, rethink practices and (re)adjust initiatives. Reflexivity can be additionally driven by digitalisation, as digital tools could update the internal administrative procedures for self-assessment through the introduction of standardised protocols for monitoring and evaluation.

Some of the possible approaches to induce reflexivity are multidisciplinary collaboration and training, ethical assessments, institutional codes of conduct.

RRI Audits in the four territories

A good example of using **reflexivity** to improve the policymaking practice on the territorial level were the RRI Audits performed in all four territories involved in the RRI-LEADERS project. The audits first examined how RRI keys and AIRR dimensions are (or are not) reflected in the territorial policy documents, strategies, and action plans, and how RRI-AIRR approach is understood and practiced (or not) by the relevant territorial stakeholders. Based on the findings of this analysis, the territorial stakeholders were categorised as follows: (i) stakeholders with high levels of interest in relation to RRI; (ii) stakeholders with high levels of experience in RRI, (iii) stakeholders with high levels of power, and (iv) stakeholders with high levels of influence on RRI in practice. The next step was the SWOT analysis, which identified possibilities for integrating RRI-AIRR approach in the corresponding territorial policy areas, including the potential benefits and negative aspects of such integration. The outcomes of the analysis were consulted and verified with stakeholders on several co-creation events. The resulting RRI Audit Reports provided a launching point for mainstreaming RRI-AIRR approach in the relevant policy goals and objectives, implementation routines, and municipal/regional strategies. They laid the foundation for understanding how territorial actors might benefit from the adoption of the RRI-AIRR approach in the chosen policy areas.

Responsiveness is the capacity to change the shape or direction of one's action in order to meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders and the society, especially in cases when new knowledge, perspectives, views and norms emerge during the process. This is very important since many policymakers have the tendency to maintain the chartered course. However, in today's rapidly transforming world, new knowledge is constantly being accumulated and the initial direction may quickly become inappropriate in the light of new perspectives.

Responsiveness can be enhanced through open access and other mechanisms of transparency, and embedded in cultures, discourses and structures that promote and support the participation of citizens in the processes of decision- and policymaking, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Revision of the spatial plan for Western Macedonia

An example from the Region of Western Macedonia shows how responsiveness can help the territorial authorities to address the shortcomings or faults in the planned policies. The energy transition in the Region of Western Macedonia foresees the shift from the locally-based lignite power plants to renewable energy and other environment-friendly energy sources. However, this process has caused considerable discontent among the local population, especially regarding the issue of the land use. In response to this resistance regarding the installation of RES facilities near residential areas (among other reasons), in 2021 the Regional Authority of Western Macedonia proposed a revision of the spatial plan for Western Macedonia (in force since 2003) according to the results of a conducted foresight study. The revised spatial plan clearly defines the land usage criteria and designates areas for industry, RES installations, business, tourism, agriculture and farming. It also identifies the conditions, at the level of spatial planning, for a fair and equitable development transition, which is currently implemented under the framework of the Just Transition Development Programme.

RTP means co-creation, co-implementation, and joint responsibility of all stakeholders, involved in the process

Co-creation is a form of social innovation, which has gained recognition as an approach that can reform the public sector agenda setting. It enables the implementation of a collaborative, multi-stage, multi-actor policy development process. The RRI-LEADERS project results show that co-creation processes are an exceptionally important feature of responsible territorial policymaking, as they guarantee that the policies reflect the specific characteristics of the respective territory and take into account the needs and values of society. This also includes the aspects that are most commonly neglected by policymakers or misunderstood by stakeholders. Co-creation approaches also enable the responsible territorial policymaking to facilitate innovation, thereby shaping a more cohesive and well-informed society, but also sensitising the territorial administration to the emerging issues and helping it to create and adapt policies accordingly.

Another crucial element of co-creation is **inclusiveness**. It is a practice or policy of giving voice to a wide range of societal actors, among them also non-organised and non-institutionalised citizens (including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as women, minorities, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, the young and the elderly, people living in isolated rural areas or belonging to other minority groups). Involving these actors in co-creation processes in a wide range of policy areas enriches policymaking, as it helps the policymakers to take into consideration all societal needs and views, and integrate these perspectives into the policy design.

Sofia's New Cultural Strategy

In June 2023, the Sofia Municipal Council adopted the new 10-year strategy for the development of culture in Sofia. The document entitled “Culture and Arts – New Energy for Sustainable Development of Sofia 2023-2033” is a forward-looking plan that foresees the integration of RRI-AIRR principles into cultural practices and collaborations. These principles are reflected in the vision, goals, and objectives of the strategy. The process of policy agenda setting, and formulation was highly inclusive. It included discussions with stakeholders from the cultural and creative sector (14 discussions), public discussions with residents and visitors of the city (8 discussions), and interviews and an online survey (1,182 respondents). Additionally, the strategy encourages more frequent reporting and updates on its implementation through two-year plans and seeks to engage society in the processes of policy design, decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation.

The importance of societal engagement has been growing in recent years as policymakers, scientists, and experts have realised the potential of non-expert knowledge in various areas. Societal participation is needed not only because members of the public have the right to influence the decisions that affect them, but the inclusion of knowledge from non-experts leads to better grounded and justified policy decisions. Also, such a multi-stakeholder approach increases the legitimacy and public acceptance of policies, which eases their implementation, thus leading to greater overall societal impact.

Strategy for Smart Specialisation of Catalonia 2030

In Sabadell, **inclusiveness** is an important aspect of the Strategy for Smart Specialisation of Catalonia 2030 (RIS3CAT 2030), which emphasises the need for Quadruple Helix participation in the governance and innovation system. The RIS3CAT includes a set of measures geared towards enhancing the participation of different stakeholders of the innovation system. For instance, RIS3CAT Communities seeks to promote knowledge assessment and transfer, the generation of highly innovative and collaborative actions among private companies and research and technology. The Technological Hubs finance R&D projects with a high technological risk, while groups in emerging technologies promote the participation of R&D agents in major European initiatives in emerging technologies such as graphene, etc.

However, policymakers have to be aware that co-creation/inclusiveness could be costly and could slow down the process or might face challenges, related to reluctance to change, lack of understanding or not in my backyard attitude.

Inclusiveness can be achieved through the use of different methods, such as citizens’ panels, focus groups, science shops, mapping, polling, expert bodies, etc.

Citizen Review Panels

During the implementation of the RRI-LEADERS project, the **Citizen Review Panel (CRP)**, a public engagement method, was developed and employed to support the responsible territorial policymaking. CRP is a one-day event on which citizens review and validate policies, policy objectives and/or policy documents. In the case of RRI-LEADERS, CRP was used to validate territorial action plans in selected policy areas. The Citizen Review Panel is divided into the following four sessions:

- 1) Acceptability of actions:** In the first session, citizens work in smaller groups to assess the acceptability of all actions in a territorial action plan/strategy based on predefined criteria. In the case of RRI-LEADERS project, the action plan for each territory was developed for a selected policy area through a local multi-stage, multi-stakeholder co-creation approach. The aim of this session is to identify which actions and aspects are most important for the citizens.
- 2) Improvement of actions:** In the second session, citizens work in groups on the actions identified in the previous session, adjusting the actions to better incorporate their concerns and values.
- 3) Writing of statement:** In the third session, each group writes a statement on whether the action plan/strategy adequately addresses the overall challenges in the policy area under scrutiny, giving the citizens an opportunity to review the action plan/strategy as a whole.
- 4) Prioritisation:** In the final session, the citizens prioritise all the original actions and the new suggested actions based on the following question: Which actions do you find to be the most important? The purpose is to provide policymakers with information on the importance ascribed to the actions by the citizens.