

**INTERREG EUROPE**  
**DIALOG Project**  
**Dialog for Innovation and LOcal Growth**



**OPERATIONAL PLAN AND TOOLS FOR STAKEHOLDER SURVEY**

**BY**  
**PROVINCIA AUTONOMA DI TRENTO WITH THE SUPPORT OF SCIENTIFIC GROUP**

**17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH VERSION**

## SUMMARY

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>1. Introduction.....</b>                  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>2. Objective of the field survey.....</b> | <b>4</b> |
| <b>3. Field survey phases.....</b>           | <b>5</b> |
| <b>4. Activity time schedule.....</b>        | <b>6</b> |

### 1 INTRODUCTION

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This document describes the Operational Plan of the stakeholder survey, as foreseen by the Dialog project. The latter is co-financed by the Interreg Europe and its partnership is composed by:

- ❑ Autonomous Province of Trento as lead partner (Italy);
- ❑ Lower Saxon Ministry for Federal and European Affairs and Regional Development (Germany);
- ❑ Chamber of Commerce and Industry Vratsa (Bulgaria);
- ❑ ESF Flanders (Belgium);
- ❑ Ticino Canton - Education, culture and sports Department VET Division (Switzerland);
- ❑ Junta de Comunidades of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain).

Before illustrating the Operational plan of the survey, some fundamental elements of the Dialog project and the results of the activities carried out in the first phase will be recalled.

The project aims at strengthening the efficacy and sustainability of innovative policies for regional competitiveness through the creation of a network model, negotiation and exchange that can involve local stakeholder. The latter should be involved not only in the planning phase but in all implementation phases of local policies.

The Dialog project intends to involve stakeholders (singles, groups or social parts representing sectors and interests) because their involvement may have a positive impact on the development and implementation of innovative social projects.

During the first phase a study has been carried out in order to identify -according to common and shared criteria, good practices that involved, in the areas interested by the Dialog project, more or less wide networks in the establishment and/or implementation of policies or interventions. The aim was to improve the efficacy of such policies or intervention through a large participation of stakeholders in all phases.

At the same time, the analysis of the existing literature allowed to set up a 'framework of reference'. The good practice research raises a series of key issues like for instance: what are the best ways to organize stakeholder engagement? What forms can stakeholder involvement take? How can stakeholder involvement be encouraged and supported?

The good practices identified were peer reviewed and then were analyzed with a benchmark study. The latter took also into consideration the elements brought out by the analysis of the literature of reference. The first phase results have been summarized in a dedicated Report ( *Synthesis Working Document on best practices benchmarking* ) . For insights see the Report. However in this document, we want to highlight some relevant aspects that emerged by the literature and best practice analysis.

The first aspect raises from the literature analysis and refers to the stakeholder involvement in the different phases of a social innovation project (identification of the project idea, operational planning, implementation). This can develop according to a spectrum (see table 1) ranging from Information to consultation and then to involvement till collaboration.

Table 1: Spectrum of stakeholder participation

| <b>Inform</b>  | <b>Consult</b>   | <b>Involve</b>  | <b>Collaborate</b>  |
|--|--|---|---|
| To provide the stakeholder with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem alternatives opportunities and or solutions | To obtain stakeholder feedbacks on analysis alternatives and/or decision | To work directly with the stakeholder throughout the process to ensure that stakeholder concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered | To partner with the stakeholder in each aspect of decision including development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution |

↘ **Information** is the fundamental of all further steps of stakeholder involvement in the project definition and implementation process. Anyhow, it refers to a first step that provides one-sided information to stakeholders from the proposing subject, without their active interaction, only occasionally and with no necessary consequences.

↘ **Consultation** is a participatory form to obtain stakeholder feedbacks on a specific topic or analysis of a particular policy. Within consultation, information on analysis of a decision and/or policy is provided, and comments, suggestions and feedbacks are requested. The initiative and topics are the prerogative of the policy authority while consultation can refer to all decision progress steps, in particular drafting, monitoring and revision. Stakeholders' consultation from the board members and technicians to elaborate and revise interventions is the most popular method keeping anyway the expert and profane knowledge separate. For this reason the involvement of the beneficiaries will be moderate and the role of a possible facilitator coincides more with the researcher one who collects information on population. In this case board members and technicians continue to have the responsibility for decision-making.

↘ **Involvement** makes stakeholders actively participate in the project decisions and implies that their concerns are consistently understood and considered. In this case, as for the consultation phase, there is a two-way relationship and a regular exchange of points of view during all project phases is expected. Technicians draft an intervention proposal and beneficiaries shall discuss and correct it. Through this process, technicians can revise the proposal according to the suggestions collected. The stakeholders' influence depends on the capacity of the facilitator to let the participants' requests arise and on the willingness of the technicians and of those who are responsible for promoting the process to listen to them. Technicians decide how and to what extent the profane knowledge can be integrated into the project. The decision-making power is extended partly to the beneficiaries/users, but promoters are those who control the process and possibly decide to follow up what the community proposed.

↘ **Collaboration** is achieved when stakeholders become responsible for shared tasks in each decision progress milestone, starting from the planning draft, to elaboration, decision until the project implementation. This represents the highest level of participation that can intervene in all decision process phases and intervention implementation.

The second aspect raises from the good practice analysis. It refers to the identification of some relevant elements for an effective stakeholder involvement. They can be summarized as follows:

- ❑ intervention sectors and their definition;
- ❑ intervention / project phase;
- ❑ stakeholder identification criteria;
- ❑ tools and methodology carried out;

- relation/interaction type.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE FIELD SURVEY

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Upon conclusion of the first research phase briefly described above, the DIALOG project foresees a field survey among the stakeholders. This is aimed at identifying instruments and methods that stakeholders perceive as efficient for their involvement in policies and/or projects activation. Furthermore, the survey will facilitate the Action plan implementation by each partner, as planned in the second Dialog project phase.

## 3. FIELD SURVEY PHASES

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The field survey will be carried out in four phases:

### ➤ PHASE 1 – SHARING OF THE SURVEY TOOLS AMONG THE PARTNERS

The Province of Trento, as lead partner, will present to the Dialog partners the results of the benchmarking analysis and of the operational plan along with the related tools (questionnaires) defined by the scientific group. The latter will help carry out a field survey among the stakeholders aiming at identifying the most appropriate instruments and methods to involve stakeholders in policies and/or projects activation.

In particular, two questionnaires have been drafted:

- 1) The first questionnaire (Annex A) addresses each Dialog partner staff in charge of the Action plan definition and implementation, planned in the second part of the Dialog project.
- 2) The second questionnaire (Annex B) addresses stakeholders that can be involved in the Action plan definition/implementation.

Both questionnaires have 3 sections with mainly closed questions (single or multiple answers). Some 'open' questions aim at enhancing qualitative aspects or suggestions from the interviewed persons. In order to compare the results obtained by the questionnaires, some questions of section B and C are the same.

In details for both questionnaires:

- The first section (A) defines the profiles of the interviewed persons (for example, personal data, role/function, eventual experience in participatory processes) and aims at obtaining useful information for further analysis of collected data
- The second section (B), even though with partly different purposes and questions, bases on the participatory process and analysis the following aspects:
  - ✓ relation between the participatory process phases and the stakeholder involvement level (spectrum)
  - ✓ criteria in the stakeholder individuation and mapping process;
  - ✓ relevant elements for the participatory process plan;
  - ✓ efficacy in the different intervention/project phases, type of methods, tools, techniquesin  
relation with the different stakeholder involvement levels.
- The third section (C) aims at analysing which methods and tools stakeholder consider as efficient in the different phases (Planning and Implementation) of the participatory process.

As already mentioned, some questions in both questionnaires are the same and this will allow to analyse and compare different points of view from the interviewed persons.

An online platform will be developed by the Province of Trento. Once ready questionnaires will be uploaded (stakeholder questionnaire -annex B should be translated into your national language) and can be filled in by you as project partners and by stakeholders.  
Instructions on how to use and access the platform at a later stage.

↳ **PHASE 2 - SETUP AND CONDUCTION OF FIELD SURVEY BY EACH PROJECT PARTNER :**

This second phase aims at setting up all conditions for a positive field survey. Each partner should meet local stakeholders that could be involved in the Action plan implementation. During the meeting they have to:

- present and share the results of the first project phase
- illustrate goals, contents and questionnaire and how the field survey will be conducted

The meeting intends to enhance the active stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the Dialog project and to create appropriate conditions for their large and heartfelt participation in the field survey proposed.

As mentioned before, the field survey should involve the greater number of stakeholders that may participate later in the Action plan implementation. The survey should involve a total of 125 stakeholders. (an average of 25 each partner).

↳ **PHASE 3- INFORMATION COLLECTION**

The platform has two 'accesses', namely for the project/intervention promoters and for involved stakeholders, even though with different roles, in the Action plan experimentation by each Dialog partner. The latter will support the interviewed persons with the filling in and /or clarification and information.

The collected data will be used for research purposes only and will be processed and analysed anonymously in compliance with the privacy policy (General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR n. 2016/679).

The survey will be carried out from 15 March to 15 May 2021.

↳ **PHASE 4- INFORMATION PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS**

At the end of the survey each Dialog Partner will verify and check the collected data and related database. Information obtained by open questions will be analysed by each partner and then post-codified.

The results will be discussed among partners and synthesised in specific survey reports drafted by each Dialog partner. On the basis of benchmarking analysis and the six survey reports, the Lead partner, supported by the scientific group prepares the provisional drafting of the models on the participatory method to be tested in the action plans planned for the second phase of the Dialog project.





Upon starting of the data survey, the Province of Trento, as lead partner and with the scientific group support, will draft and shared with the partner a document containing a structure (summary, tables, graphics) and layout. Each partner will use it for their survey report. The document will be used as a manual for the data processing so that a 'transversal' discussion and comparison about the partners' results will be possible.

**4. ACTIVITY TIME SCHEDULE**

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The time schedule of the activities planned is the following:

| Legend   |
|--|
| Meeting on benchmarking analysis results and on the tools developed for survey |
| Interview lists; Local meeting with stakeholders                               |

|  |
|--|
|  Report Processing Guide                              |
|  Data Analysis and synthetic report on field survey 1 |
| Data Analysis and synthetic report on field survey 1   |
|  Drafts models on the participatory method            |
|  Meeting on draft model                               |

| Activities / Products   | 2021 |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|   | Feb  | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul |
| ↳ Preparation of detection tools by the Lead Partner  |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| ↳ Presentation, to the Project Partners, of the benchmarking analysis results and presentation of the tools developed for the subsequent field survey   |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| ↳ Drafting, by each Project Partners, of interview lists and presentation to local stakeholders   |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| ↳ Lead partner, with the contribution of the scientific group, provides partners with the document containing the structure (index, tables and graphical representations) and the format on which each partner will build their survey report |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| ↳ <b>Field survey 1</b>   |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| □ Completion of the questionnaire addressed to the staff of each Project Partner who could be involved in defining/implementing the Action Plan   |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| □ Each partner process data and makes a synthetic report on the results of the survey and shipping data and report to the Lead Partner  |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| ↳ <b>Field survey 2</b>   |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| □ Completion of the questionnaire addressed to local stakeholders who may be involved in the definition/implementation of the Action Plan   |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| □ Each partner process data and makes a synthetic report on the results of the survey and shipping data and report to the Lead Partner  |      |     |     |     |     |     |

| Activities / Products   | 2021 |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|   | Feb  | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul |
| <b>↘ Model on participatory method</b>  |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lead partner, with the contribution of the scientific group, drafts models on the participatory method |      |     |     |     |     |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation, discussion and approval by all partner of the drafts model on participatory method       |      |     |     |     |     | →   |

**See in attachment:**

- Project partner questionnaire (annex A)
- Stakeholder questionnaire (annex B)

