



# #INNOVATION

## Open, Social, and Responsible Innovation (OSRI)

A Policy Learning Platform event

Wednesday 27 November 2019

Transforma Evere; Brussels, Belgium

**Summary.** The thematic workshop explored the concepts of open, social, and responsible innovation and their respective challenges. It attracted 34 participants and was organised back-to-back with the Policy Learning Platform SME Competitiveness workshop in 'mastering the digital transformation of business support'. High-level speakers from the **European Network of Living Labs, Rhine-Waal University**, and **Sitra** along with leading regions shared their experiences in promoting open, social, and responsible innovation.



# Highlights

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Research and innovation are associated with the process of **'creative destruction'** that can lead to social instabilities (unemployment, poverty, social exclusion) and global challenges (climate change, energy efficiency, pollution). Modern economic growth must go together with societal progress. Open, Social, and Responsible Innovation (OSRI) can be a way to reconcile these two factors, **bringing together economic growth and desirable societal outcomes**.

The workshop explored the concepts of open, social, and responsible innovation in order to provide insights on potential ways to apply those concepts into the regional innovation policy frameworks with practical policy tools. Some highlights and key messages from the workshop are:

## Open Innovation

- Some of the main challenges to promote open innovation are to **engage end-users and diverse stakeholders in co-creation processes**.
- It is important to **bring and connect different stakeholders together** through **platforms, formal and informal networks** and **physical spaces** to promote **face-to-face interactions** while having evidence-based methodologies that facilitate the process (space, time, community, and process). Events such as festivals can serve as catalysts of this process.
- **Living labs** are open innovation tools to **engage end-users in the innovation process**. They can focus on different **technology readiness levels (TRLs)**.
- **Resources for moderation and facilitation** tasks are required to ensure the **flow and continuity** of open innovation processes. At the same time, enthusiasm and commitment need to go together with the assets of patience and discipline.
- **Storytelling** is key. Policymakers must have **inspirational and relatable** communication strategies.

## Social Innovation

- Some of the main challenges to promote social innovation lie in the difficulties to **reach all groups of civil society** and to **identify the key issues** to break down into **social needs**.
- The right skills and teams dedicated to social innovation within public administration play a key role in finding the **right ways and tools to engage** stakeholders (tune-in into the mindset, speak the language, and do not patronise). **Patience, listening and serious consideration** of raised concerns ('walk the talk') can be of help when reaching out to those who have become cynical about policy-making processes.
- Social innovation requires **creative approaches** that are risky for politicians and policymakers but as emphasised by Riina Pulkkinen from SITRA, this experimental approach should be pursued, **'failure is acceptable, incompetence is not'**.
- Social and open innovation are concepts often subject to confusion. Both concepts are defined by the European Commission in the [Thematic Guidance for desk officers in Research and Innovation](#).

## Responsible Innovation

- Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is a **new and emerging concept** that requires awareness raising (importance to diffuse the concept in policy briefs, news, and articles).



- **Ethical evaluations** are ways to operationalise the concept. However, it is important to determine objective criteria (**clear risk assessment and clear guidelines to evaluate**) that are evidence-based.
- Responsible innovation requires **reflexivity** (asking the why we do and the we do not do). **Foresight exercises** are a responsible tool to map emerging regional risks and societal challenges.
- Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) stakeholders have signed the '**Pathways Declaration**' to put RRI at the centre of next European framework programme, **Horizon Europe**.

A common challenge in open, social, and responsible innovation is **public engagement**, namely civil society, end-users, and certain categories of persons (young males, lower education levels...). **Gaining trust and talking the language** are fundamental. Some policy tools, such as '**Open Innovation Platforms**', offer a path forward to find synergies across the concepts of open, social, and responsible innovation. In sum, open, social, and responsible innovation deal with complex issues and require specific skillsets.

## Good practices

Three good practices on **open, social, and responsible innovation** were featured during the workshop. The Interreg Europe projects that were featured are:

For **open innovation**, **Francesca Gleria**, Autonomous Province of Trento (Italy), from the Interreg Europe project **OSIRIS**, presented the good practice on **Open Data Trentino increasing data culture in the innovation ecosystem for a data driven economy**. The good practice features **co-creation between end-users, namely citizens, as well as solution providers (SMEs) and the client (public administration)**, for the development of a Chatbot through the programme 'Open Data Hackabot'. As proven in Trento, Open data encourages open innovation as it facilitates the access to external knowledge.

For **social innovation**, **Jorge Prado Casal**, Galician Healthcare Service (Spain), from the Interreg Europe project **TITTAN**, presented the good practice **E-Saude-Social Attitudes towards Innovation**, an e-health platform to better deliver health services to patients and to improve communications between patients and healthcare professionals thus answering a **regional policy challenge** (rapidly ageing population) and **addressing social needs** (demand for high-quality healthcare services).

For **responsible innovation**, **Tiina Ramstedt-Sen**, Council of Tampere Region (Finland), from the Interreg Europe project **MARIE**, presented the policy change on **Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI)**. AI is a disruptive innovation, with high risks of safety and ethics and remarkable influences on society. The Regional Council introduced new criteria for selecting AI projects funded by the ERDF Operational Programme addressing the following responsible dimensions: **ethics, engagement, openness/transparency, and safety/reliability**.



### Policy Change – Responsible Artificial Intelligence

**Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI)** is a **policy change**, which resulted in the opening of a call for projects in AI with the funding instrument 'Sustainable growth and jobs 2014 - 2020 – Finland's structural funds programme', that was inspired by exchanges among **MARIE** partners. The good practice **Broadening the Scope of Impact**, owned by Science Foundation Ireland, that focuses on the evaluation of RRI criteria and guidelines, was the main source of inspiration for this policy change. The exchanges among **MARIE** partners were key in structuring the policy change with regard to the **technical execution of the evaluation tool** to select AI projects.



## Next steps

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Open, social, and responsible innovation are complex concepts that require an **experimental approach** from regional governments, involving active management and coordination. Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform [Good Practices database](#) offers a wealth of information to find innovation policy solutions to such complex policy challenges.



### Future Policy Learning Platform activities

Several follow-up activities were discussed with the participants:

- Regions that face policy challenges in operationalising open, social, and responsible innovation policy tools can consider applying for a [Peer Review](#) supported by the Policy Learning Platform. The objective of the peer review is to enable policymakers to receive hands-on feedback and advice from peers on a **selected policy challenge to tackle**. Peer reviews target managing authorities of structural funds programmes and local and regional public authorities from all European regions (EU-28, Norway and Switzerland).
- A Policy Learning Platform webinar on **mission-oriented innovation policies** will be organised in February (date tbc). Stay tuned on the [event page of the Policy Learning Platform](#) for future announcements regarding this webinar.

### Other useful materials

- Interreg Europe [Good Practices database](#) and respective projects webpages
- Interreg Europe **story** on [when responsible innovation meets S3](#)
- Interreg Europe **policy brief** on [Industry 4.0](#)
- [Sign up](#) to our **Policy Digest** in Research and Innovation.

For more information related to the workshop and the presentations, please visit the [conclusions page](#), where you will find photos, attendees list, and all presentations.

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