

# Modalities of public participation in the vision- setting for transformative research and innovation policies: In-depth cases studies analysis

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# Rethinking science governance

Long-lasting ideas at the core of an **elitist governance of science**:

- “Freedom of inquiry”
- Knowledge advancement ultimately benefits the society

The **illusion of a science isolated from society**:

- Science may reflect societal values
- Emergence of scientific and technological controversies

**New paradigm of Research and Innovation Policy**:

- Orientation towards the achievement of ambitious and well-defined missions often linked to Sustainable Development Goals
- Science *for* society and *with* society



# R&I for citizens and with citizens

Definition of **public participation** in policymaking:

- Engagement of a wide spectrum of social actors including civil society organisations and lay people in their capacity as citizens
- Not restricted to government-sponsored initiatives

In the 1990s and early 2000s, **participatory technology assessment** for improving societal acceptability

**Paradox of mission-oriented R&I:**

- New impetus to further citizen engagement
- Restricted practices due to policymakers' reluctance and lack of experience



# Our research and methodology

The objective is to **contribute to a better understanding of how the public can participate in setting the visions for transformative policies**

In-depth analysis of **multiple case studies**:

- A better understanding of the context and the “human factors”
- More compelling and robust findings

Who is the participating “**public**”?



Selection among **valuable examples** of categories of citizen engagement in vision-setting

How does it interact with **experts**?



What are the **formats** of public participation?



Desk research



17 interviews



# Our case studies

## CLEAN LONDON AIR



**Objective:** Reduce air pollution and protect the health of the population in Greater London

**Public participation:** For the introduction of Ultra Low Emission Zones, the City of London organised multi-stakeholder deliberations and then consultation via surveys and the like

## 3<sup>rd</sup> INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION



**Objective:** Accelerate a systemic shift in Luxembourg economy and society towards sustainable development

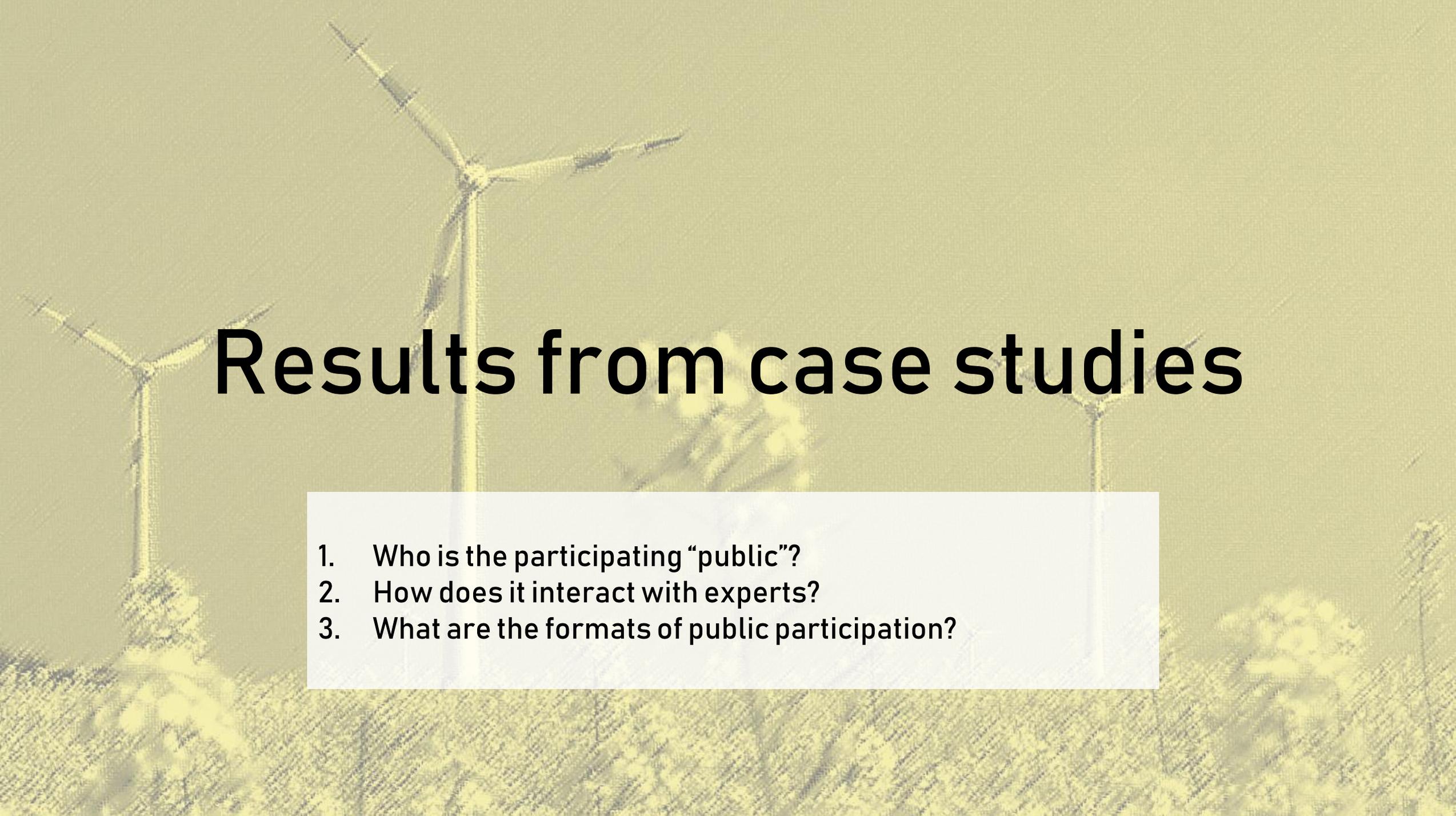
**Public participation:** The Government of Luxembourg organised multi-stakeholder thematic working group to help the appointed expert team complete the Strategic Study

## ENERGIEWENDE



**Objective:** Ensure the stable supply of energy economically viable and environmentally friendly

**Public participation:** First, grassroots movements protesting mainly against nuclear power plants, then, diverse government-sponsored public participation schemes



# Results from case studies

1. Who is the participating “public”?
2. How does it interact with experts?
3. What are the formats of public participation?

# Rationales for public participation

**Collect information** and value judgements to assess the long-term vision of societal actors, to understand their expectation, and to set objectives

**Positive effect on implementation:** less contested and quickly implemented policy decisions

However, scope of consultation within limits, without possibility to radically change nor interrupt policies agreed by the policymakers



# Citizens, CSOs and other actors

Societal and socio-economic actors commonly involved in policymaking

- Churches, trade unions, community and accessibility groups, etc.
- Economic stakeholders: companies and business organizations
- Civil society organizations (difficult to distinguish from citizens)



Who are instead the citizens (so-called “common people” or laypeople)

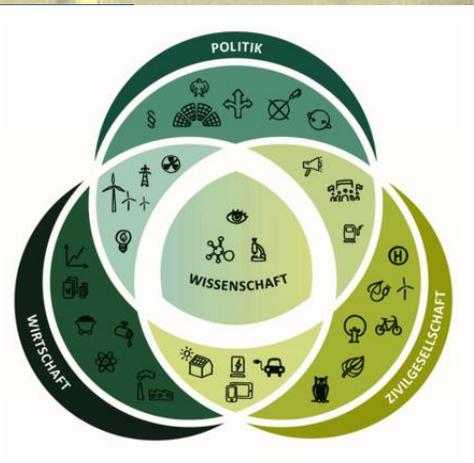
1. Broad category of citizens living in a territory (“pure public”)
2. Somehow affected by the policy (“affected public”) and/or participating, with hands-on experience
3. Individuals “involved” in the implementation of the policy

**Difficult to distinguish between ‘pure’ and ‘affected/involved’ public: levels of ‘affectedness’ vary**

# Interactions with the experts

**Experts** hold cutting-edge knowledge, experience and expertise to support policymakers in defining suitable, relevant and feasible policy responses (solutions) to the identified societal challenges (public needs, publicly recognised problems).

**Bring their (scientific, technological or legal) expertise and knowledge** to frame and guide public discussions, and help participants to make informed value judgments



**Interact with citizens and CSOs without providing guidance,** but to formulate solutions

**Collect and employ non-scientific inputs from citizens and other stakeholders,** which leads to “*citizens-based expertise*”

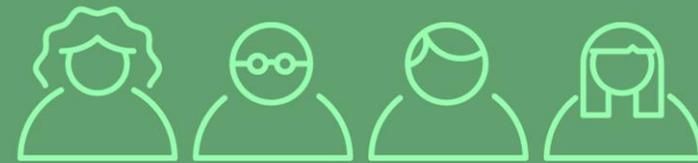
# Mechanisms: Workshops

**Workshops:** different socioeconomic actors, composition not accidental but carefully assembled.

Working groups: fixed and varied composition; regular meetings, periodical updates; reporting to policymakers

Ad hoc workshops: crucial moments in the policy design/development

Regular workshops: embedded in the policymaking, maintained in implementation



Time and cost  
effective

Guarantee  
transdisciplinary

Display diverging  
and different stakes

Difficult  
arrangement

Dodgy management

Risk of  
fragmentation

Risk of overlooking  
important issues

“Personality factor”

# Mechanisms: Citizens juries

**Citizens juries:** citizens, not based on their affiliation with any stakeholder, but as 'pure' and/or 'affected' public; selected according to criteria identified by policymakers.



Restrict the audience of the consultation to groups of individuals particularly relevant to solve the societal challenge

Not to be considered a true participatory mechanisms as it does not open the consultation to all groups of individuals willing to participate

# Mechanisms: online consultations

**Online consultations:** surveys and/or questionnaires implemented on platforms accessible to multiple respondents; not a stand-alone mechanism, but integrated into a wider consultation/deliberation strategy



Efficient manner to collect inputs from a variety of sources

Useful to reorient and/or set new policy objectives (in case of high turnout)

Lack of interactivity between participants and experts and/or policymakers

Decisionmakers might weight the responses of subgroups

# Good practices

## Organisational

- Language: understandable to the audience; technicalities must be simplified
- Facilitators, moderators: knowledgeable, neutral
- Policy options: not restricted to very few

## Policymakers

- (promoters)
- Commitment to public participation: over the entire policy cycle; transparent

## Participants (public)

- Diversity: diverse and varied, to give sort of representation of societal stakes
- Structured consultation: (workshops) per type of participant

## Timing

- After the decision, to assess acceptancy of the policy, or change it
- Crucial moments, to solve deadlocks and/or conduct ex-ante impact assessment
- Regularly, to update the scenario building

# Discussion and Conclusion

1. Policymakers' strategies behind public participation
2. Need for paradigmatic changes

# Strategies behind public participation

## Strategy of legitimisation

**Objectives:** Increase the societal acceptance of the policy decisions and the decision-making process

## Strategy of elicitation

**Objectives:** Extract from the public information and knowledge to support the decision-making process

**Policymakers keep control over the policymaking process**

# Transition towards deliberative democracy

Deliberation consists of **dialogues for knowledge sharing** in which participants are ready to revise their preferences to achieve a common goal

## Implications of deliberative democracy:

- For policymakers: Create space for open discussions between different stakeholder types
- For participants: Replace confrontation of view with exchange of information

Sustainable Development Goals, because of their complexity, requires **deliberative mechanisms in vision-setting** for research and innovation policy



# Thank you for your attention!

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