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Inclusive  
Science and  
European  
Democracies

Second  
**PRESS  
RELEASE**

ISEED Main Results:  
Midway Through



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**ISEED**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Press Release**  
**ISEED Main Results: Midway Through**

ISEED Inclusive Science and European Democracies is funded by the EU Horizon 2020 programme to investigate what lessons we can learn from approaches to engage people in citizen science to help make European democracies more inclusive and to better engage people in knowledge-based deliberation. What follows are our updates and news from each of the Work Packages (WP) -or sub-projects- in ISEED.

**WP2**  
**From participation to deliberation:**  
**Towards a new model of "public sphere" for knowledge societies**

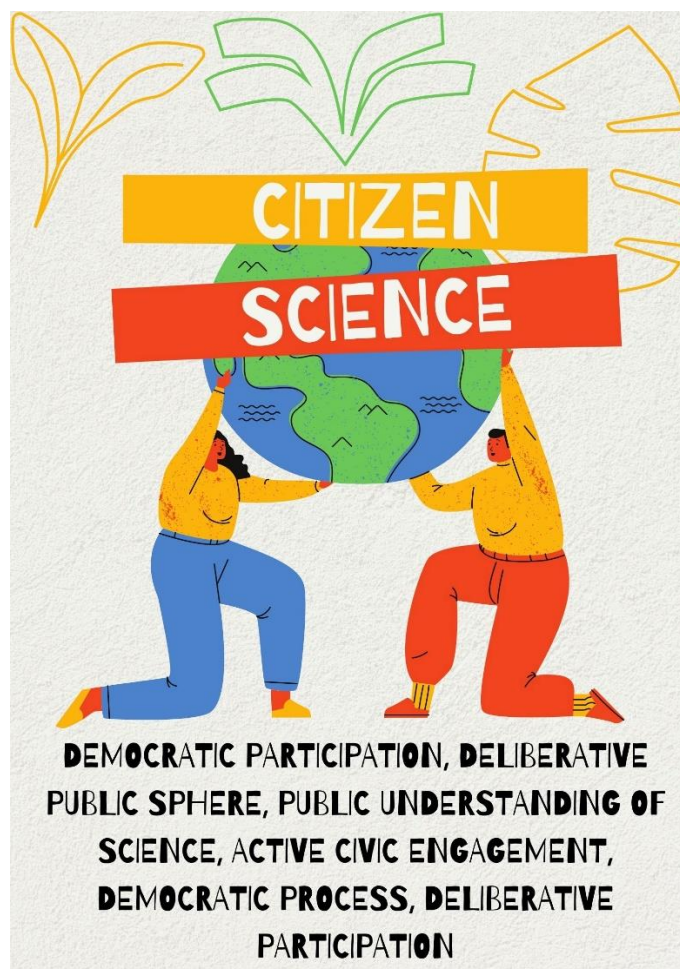


Figure WP2.1: Citizen Science WP2's Press Release Illustration

In WP2 we are questioning existing forms of citizen participation in science and their limitations. We have actively embarked on a conceptual and empirical investigation on how these forms of participation might enlighten aspects of citizen participation in public debate.

Our concern can be summarised in two related questions:

1. When and to what extent are democratic participation and active civic engagement likely to occur in a community, and in what types of communities?

2. What theoretical model of a ‘deliberative’ public sphere can fulfill the needs of communities to engage in democratic process?

We started answering these questions by constructing the framework for a survey on individual motivation to participate in deliberative democratic processes. We are further designing the survey to single out characteristics and conditions that could be relevant to a model of the public sphere that promotes deliberative participation.

To create a suitable preliminary backdrop, we have reviewed a variety of concepts of citizen science programmes and concepts, and a number of models and concepts of the public sphere, with a particular focus on the participative and deliberative aspect in both domains. We are further making good progress towards constructing an experiment addressing the conditions under which citizens become willing and motivated to take part in science-related activities. And we started reflecting, in the first of a series of three discussion papers, on what it means for lay scientists to "understand" specific knowledge products, supporting the view that public understandings of science depend to a large extent on the specific characteristics and nature of the science-related issues, and the different contexts and circumstances these emerge in.

**WP3**  
**Our proposal for citizen engagement in politics:**  
**Bring in parliamentarism!**

*Is it possible to increase the inclusion and involvement of people in public policy-related processes and problem-solving on complex science-related questions?*

According to our latest study in WP3, this is indeed possible. We have identified and classified 64 participatory and deliberative tools and practices that support such engagement (See Figure 1). These tools/practices can be distinguished in relation to what purpose they have (e.g. inform-consult-deliberate), which social actors they involve (e.g. citizen-expert-policy-makers) and what role the citizen has (e.g. passive-intermediate-active).

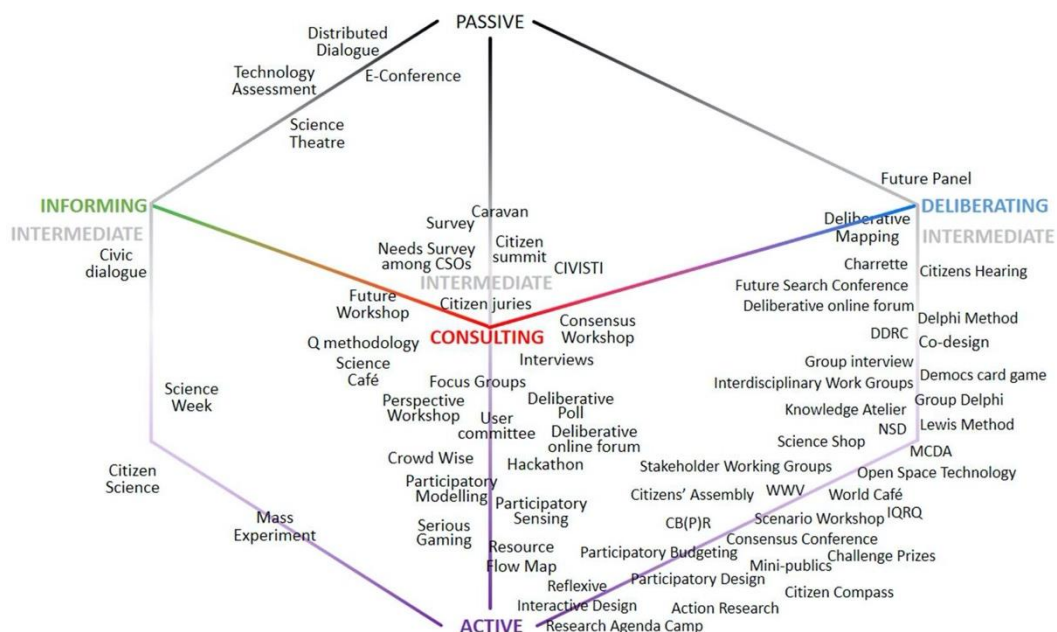


Figure WP3.1: Main results of the mapping - Graphic transposition on two categorization criteria: purpose and role of the citizen

*Is the implementation of these tools sufficient to guarantee the effective inclusion of citizens in the*

### *public sphere and democratic choices?*

No, these tools/practices, although studied with specific purposes and processes, are just tools. To deepen the knowledge of the practical use of these tools, we interviewed 50 experts from European countries. The survey revealed a complex landscape with many variables (See figure 2). Namely, the geopolitical, cultural and historical context (e.g. ex-socialist bloc or neoliberal tradition), and the dynamics of power among social actors appear to be crucial factors in shaping the use of engagement tools.

The combination of political system, infrastructures and funds proves to be a crucial factor of success once it comes to citizen engagement, because these shape different articulations of democratic process. In this context, trust and openness constitute crucial components. In fact, it is essential that participants in civic engagement processes feel recognized and listened to and, in the meanwhile, it is necessary for those who manage the processes to approach them with open minds and active listening. Finally, the elements that characterize the participation path (e.g., aim, direction of influence and role of technology) should be balanced in relation to the topic, while hybrid solutions can be considered.

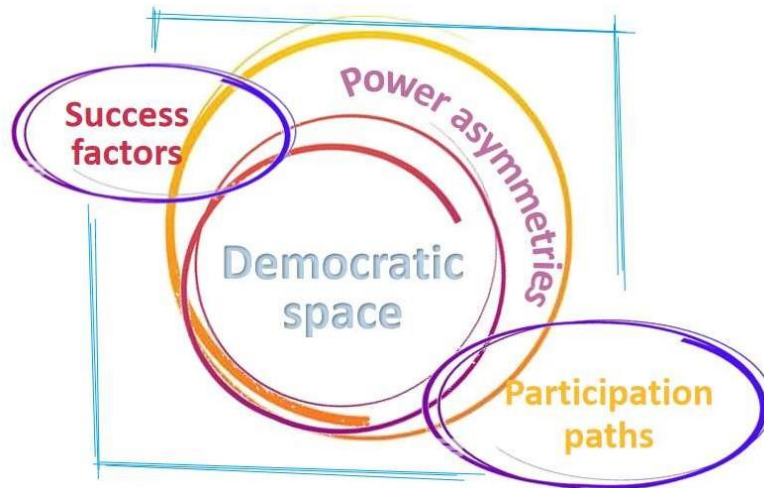


Figure WP3.2: Main results of the interviews

To improve and disseminate the use of participatory and deliberative tools/practices, the next step is to create a typology of them. Based on ISEED's research in WP3, we suggest paying attention to five dimensions: Context (democratic space and factual conditions, also online/offline environment); Power relationships (who is involved and what role they play); Skills and knowledge needed to apply tools; Topic of engagement; and Purpose of engagement.

## **WP4 Understanding and upgrading citizen science practices**

Here we study the effects of diverse grassroots knowledge production practices on individual participants, the community as well as policy makers.

In France, Mosaic together with two local municipalities: Libourne and Melesse launched a participatory science program to gather input from citizens on the introduction of a new local policy – black corridor which involves turning off public lights in the night. The experiment's data collection is now concluded but you can see the platform by going to <https://www.spot-libourne.org> and <https://www.spot-melesse.org>.

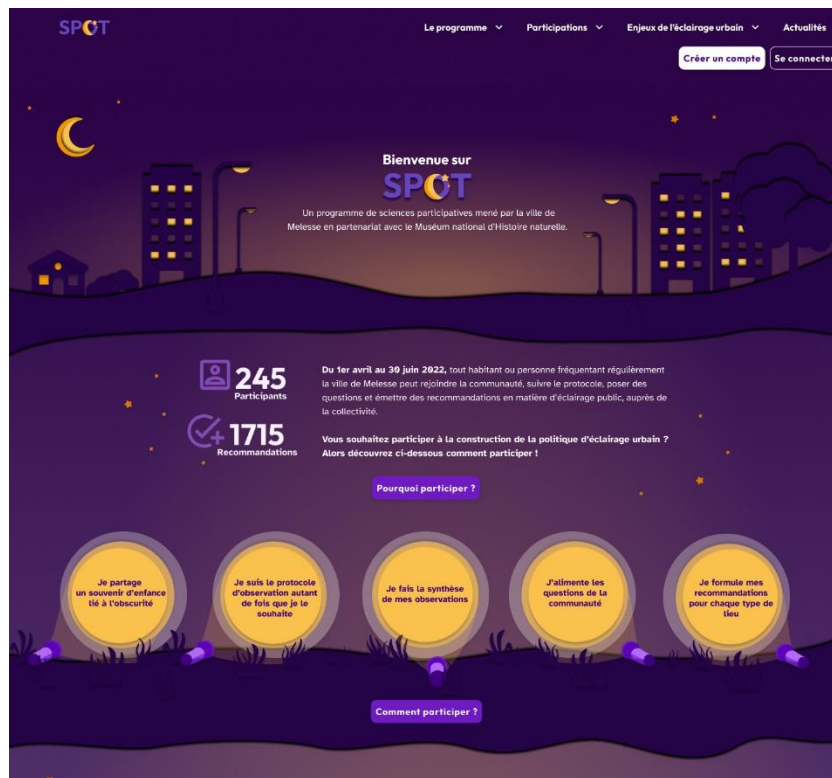


Figure WP4.1: Homepage of the SPOT platform

Inhabitants of any of two municipalities were encouraged to log in and share their experience, feelings, and thoughts on the darkness in their city on the platform from April 1st to June 30th, 2022. The experiment will inform policy makers, and scientists on what extent citizen science projects foster effective deliberative practices in local policy decisions. Citizens on the other hand will learn about the attitudes of others toward darkness and have a chance to discuss their point of views.

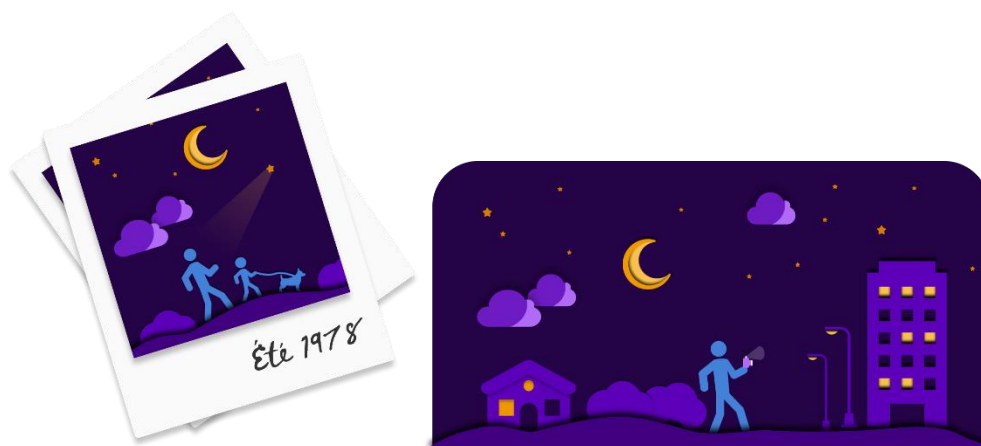


Figure WP4.2 Community and the night: How we remember nighttime and how night feels in the city now

In the meantime, in Poland, the team from Robert Zajonc Institute for Social Studies conducted interviews with representatives of non-governmental organizations that work in the field of environment protection with a special focus on limiting the felling of old trees in cities and countryside. The aim of the study is to examine the character of relations between organizations and their views on new technological innovations that would allow for a wide

collaboration with residents. Moreover, we want to diagnose the quality of relations that NGOs have with local administration and their reflections on the roles of scientific data in political decision-making.

Our team members in Uruguay's Ministry of Education are about to start the evaluation of science clubs in which kids and teenagers from local schools look for solutions to the problems that they find important. Through this study we will investigate possible links between young people's engagement with science and their attitudes towards knowledge-based decision-making, and participation in democratic deliberation. Finally, team members from the University of Dublin and the University of Exeter are studying the afterlife of data once saved in citizen observatories and data cooperatives. Specifically, ISEED engages with experienced participants in citizen science and data cooperatives and seeks to capture their understanding of norms in data management practices and principles. Moreover, awareness by the participative science community of open data repositories, how to access them, and how to effectively utilise them will be studied.

## WP6

### **From citizens and science to citizens and democracy: Scaling up and policy recommendations**

It's the main purpose of WP6 to draw systematic lessons from the deliverables produced by both the conceptual and experimental activities in the ISEED project. Also, we want to identify the potential for the project's results to inform a better understanding of deliberative and participatory democratic processes and how these can be used fruitfully in the wider picture of democratic societies and their institutions.

In order to do so we are investigating 1) how practically to implement a participatory model, 2) what methods and policy scenarios can appear most suitable to make possible for citizens to re-evaluate their involvement in public debate (currently hindered by severe loss of trust in political forms of representation) and 3) how to identify arenas of public discussion where citizens can actively participate in a deliberative and inclusive manner.

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The main objective of the multi-stakeholder panel is to advise project partners and to bring a diversity of perspectives (industry, academia, policy and civil society) to speak to ISEED

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A key activity of this WP was the constitution of the Multi Stakeholder Panel (MSP). The main objective of this panel is to advise project partners and to bring a diversity of perspectives (industry, academia, policy and civil society) to speak to ISEED work. The MSP has 11 members: Antonio Florida from the Direzione Affari Legislativi, Giuridici ed Istituzionali; Rosina Malagrida from IrsiCaixa, Rosa Arias from Fundación Ibercivis, Francisco Lupiáñez from Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Maja Lalic from Mikser, Dorte Riemenschneider from the European Citizen Science Association, Meie Van Laar from NEMO Science Museum Amsterdam, Norbert Steinhaus from the Wissenschaftsladen Bonn, Francesco Mureddu from The Lisbon Council for Economic Competitiveness and Social Renewal, Fabio Feudo from Knowledge and Innovation and Maria Hagrtdt from Vetenskap and Allmänhet V.A..

The MSP is to advise project partners during their investigations and experimentations in order to include diverse reflections, ideas, needs and suggestions and ensure that ISEED develop efficient proposals. The MSP will aid ISEED to reflect on and co-develop targeted open access outputs (e.g., a database of inspiring practices) that stimulate the integration of democratic deliberation and participation. The MSP are also to be involved in the final policy brief writing.

**ISEED maps and explores how inclusive science can support European democracies.**

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