



poiesis
TRUST IN SCIENCE

D3.1: Protocol for participatory research actions with institutional stakeholders

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ABSTRACT:	This deliverable describes the research design, structure and organisation, sampling and recruitment strategies for the focus group and the open deliberative roundtables with institutional stakeholders of the POIESIS project.
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1 Introduction

Societal trust in science is presumed to relate to research integrity practices, yet there is little evidence for it. For example, we do not know whether scientists' integrity practices (or lack thereof) will lead to trust/mistrust in science, whether citizens' involvement in research will impact public trust in science, or whether and how chains of mediation of scientific information will lead to public trust/mistrust in science and scientists.

The overarching goal of POIESIS is to systematically develop a knowledge base about trust in science and examine how, and to what extent, societal trust in science is affected by the aligning of research practices with principles of research integrity and by the participation of citizens and stakeholders in research.

POIESIS will pursue its overarching objective by answering the following four main research questions:

- RQ1: How can the nature and scale of public trust and mistrust in science be characterised and which are the factors that affect the relationship?
- RQ2: To what extent and how does the alignment of research practices with principles of research integrity (or, conversely, scientific misconduct, questionable research practices, poor or absent science communication, and/or misinformation) impact public trust in science?
- RQ3: To what extent and how does the integration of citizens and societal stakeholders in research practices (or, conversely, lack of co-creation and open science practices) impact public trust in science?
- RQ4: To what extent and how can institutions provide policies and procedures that enable researchers to act in ways that are conducive to public trust in science?

These main research questions will be addressed in four substantive work packages.

1.1 About WP3

WP3 is primarily designed to address RQ4: *To what extent and how can institutions provide policies and procedures that enable researchers to act in ways that are conducive to public trust in science?*

In order to provide useful and robust answers to RQ4, the overall objective of WP3 is to carry out participatory research activities involving institutional stakeholders to co-construct knowledge and policy recommendations about the ways in which institutions can help create fertile conditions for responsible research practices.

With regard to WPs positioning, while both WP3 and WP2 use participatory research activities, WP3 differs from WP2 in its emphasis on the institutional dimension with respect to both the nature of the participants and its general objectives. The main objective of WP3 is to advance our knowledge

of the institutions' ability to influence public trust in science. And to do so, using participatory research tools, it targets a more delimited population than the one studied in WP2. The nature of these participatory activities as well as the population studied are presented below.

All partners participate in the development of this task through the implementation of participatory activities in their respective countries.

RQ4 will be addressed in WP3 through answering four sub-questions which can be considered as the product of an analytical breakdown of the initial general research question (see section 2.2). These sub-questions will be explored through the collection of empirical data with two participatory research formats: focus groups and deliberative roundtables (see description below). WP3 will be informed by WP1 and WP2, which will bring a general but also delimited vision on specific cases regarding the state of attitudes and representations related to research integrity and societal integration in science. WP1 will provide a synthesis of the main indicators concerning the current state of public trust in science and social integration characteristic of each national partner. WP2 will highlight the variations in public confidence in science from the fields of Covid-19 and climate change, but also their judgement of how these crises have been handled by institutions. These data will form the informational background on the basis of which WP3 will be implemented.

1.2. Goal of WP3

WP3's collective effort will produce 21 focus groups (3 per national partner) and 7 deliberative roundtables (1 per national partner) focusing on the ways in which institutions can help create fertile conditions for responsible research practices.

The approach chosen in WP3 brings together researchers and institutional stakeholders. Knowing that WP3 seeks to articulate the notions of "institution", "trust", "research integrity" and "social integration", minimum two sets of institutional actors should be solicited:

- Institutional actors related to research integrity: leaders and managers in research performing organisations (RPOs) and research funding organisations (RFOs), editors of peer-reviewed journals and members of the committees on publication ethics, research integrity officers, R&I policy makers, etc.
- Institutional actors related to social integration: open science policy advisers, communication and outreach officers in research performing organisations and research funding organisations, press officers, etc.

Each member of these two sets embodies in its own way various institutional dimensions of science and technology and can therefore be considered as an institutional stakeholder, and potentially a POIESIS Co-Investigator.

The participatory dimension of the research is developed at the level of each national partner: each POIESIS National Partner (PNP) will identify three institutional stakeholders that will be trained to become POIESIS co-investigators (PCIs). Each pair of PNP-PCI will have the objective of setting up and conducting a focus group, i.e. 3 focus group per country, and a total of 21 focus groups.

Once the focus groups are completed, the research team formed by the PNP and the three PCIs will aim to set up a deliberative roundtable by selecting a number of the focus group participants but also adding other participants if necessary. Each national research team will set up one institutional deliberative roundtable per country, i.e. a total of 7 roundtables for the whole project. For more details about the roundtables, see section 3 below.

1.3. About this deliverable

This research protocol focuses particularly on research design, sampling and recruitment strategies employed for the focus group study and the deliberative roundtables. In addition, it outlines the data collection, strategies for analysis and ethical considerations related to the empirical activities.

2. Stage 1: Focus groups

The following sections describe the elements related to the organisation of the 21 focus groups planned in POIESIS. This task will be coordinated by CNRS.

2.1. Focus group as a qualitative method

Within the range of qualitative methodological tools available in social sciences, the use of focus groups occupies a clearly distinct space from that of individual interviews.

Where individual interviews often focus on accounts of personal experiences and individual lifeworlds, focus group rests on a collective dynamic which allows to function on a basis of association of ideas, spontaneous reactions, with the aim of collecting rapidly a type of data which could not emerge without the group (Stewart, D, Shamdasani P., 2015; Hennink M., 2014).

The focus group technique offers several methodological values. Without seeking to be exhaustive, it is useful to stress four distinct points: a) the group discussions can provide a wealth of information that can help researchers formulate hypotheses and refine research questions (exploratory research); b) the group discussions can provide rich and detailed data that can be used to gain a deeper understanding of people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (data collection); c) As focus groups are interactive and dynamic, the group discussion can lead to a more nuanced and complex understanding of the topic being discussed (interaction); d) the group discussion can provide participants with an opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences with others. This can lead to a greater sense of investment in the research process and a more positive attitude towards the research (engagement).

The number of participants in a focus group discussion can vary depending on the research objectives, the complexity of the topic, and the time and resources available. Having too few participants may limit the diversity of perspectives and experiences, while having too many participants can make it difficult to manage the group dynamics and ensure that everyone has a chance to participate. Given the nature of the participants — institutional stakeholders — and the need to give them enough time to develop an exchange dynamic, groups between 6 to 8 people will be favoured.

Sociologist of science Robert Merton (Merton, Kendall, 1946; Crothers, Sabetta, eds, 2022) is frequently credited for introducing focus groups within the social sciences, especially for the study of attitudes and opinions, since then this tool has experienced an increasing success, including for the study of research integrity.

The influential studies of Martinson et al. (2005; 2006) on scientists' misconducts were systematically empirically based on qualitative material collected in focus groups. More recently, one can cite the articles produced within the context of the European funded project Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity (SOPs4RI, <https://sops4ri.eu/>) that also rely extensively on this method to capture the variety of issues and experiences related to research integrity (see for example Mejlgaard et al. 2020; Labib et al., 2021; Sorensen et al., 2021).

2.2. Aims and objective

WP3 aims to explore how various institutional stakeholders perceive research integrity and social integration but also how institutions perceive the influence of both dimensions on trust and more generally the public image of science and technology. WP3 will enable us to characterise the relationship between the stakeholders selected and the public image science. But, more importantly, it will allow us to identify what are, according to them, the research integrity and social integration specific areas and topics which require urgent action at the institutional level.

This aim can be translated into the following research questions that will contribute to structure the moderator guide of the focus groups:

- RQ4-1. How do institutional stakeholders perceive, globally and locally, the level of public trust in science and technology and its implications?
- RQ4-2. How do institutional stakeholders perceive the culture of research integrity and social integration in their own institutional and national environment?
- RQ4-3. To what extent do institutional stakeholders consider that responsible research practices and social integration could be fostered by conducive institutional governance arrangements and policy environments?
- RQ4-4. What kind of institutional governance arrangements and policy environments should be considered as key priorities?

The data collected through the focus groups will allow us to investigate at the institutional level:

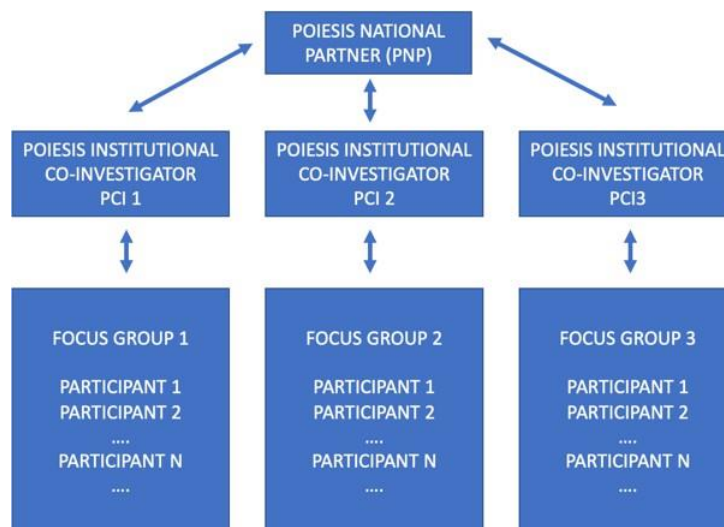
- perceptions of public trust, research integrity and social integration
- concerns, hopes and expectations towards research integrity and social integration
- procedures and policies translating research integrity and social integration into communicational or organisational processes
- expectations about the impact of these procedures and policies.

2.3. Format and settings

21 focus groups with a total of approximately 150 participants will be carried out during WP3 in the POIESIS project.

As shown in figure 1, each PNP is responsible for the organisation of 3 focus groups in collaboration with 3 institutional stakeholders acting as PCIs.

Figure 1. Focus groups and institutional stakeholders



The 21 focus groups will take place in the respective partner countries Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The day of the week and timing should be chosen by each partner according to what would work best in their context. A moderator guide is typically designed for a group discussion of 2 hours max.

For all national focus groups, the following set of actions need to be carried out:

1. Selection: Each PNP-PCI pair will prepare a list of institutional stakeholders to be contacted. This selection process will be done with the support from WP4.

2. Recruitment: Each PNP-PCI pair will invite participants to the focus group discussion and provide them with relevant information such as the time, date, and location. The WP3 coordinator will provide a brief booklet concerning the study etc. to be used as a resource in the recruitment phase (please see specification below).
3. Providing resources: the WP3 coordinator will prepare a generic version of the guide and send it to each national partner. Each PNP-PCI pair will be responsible for adapting to the national context to a degree to be collectively defined. The WP 3 coordinator will also provide a shared version of the focus group invitation, information letter to participants, data information sheet to participants and an informed consent form.
4. Discussion: when conducting the discussion, the PCI should introduce the discussion and encourage all participants to contribute.
5. Record and transcript: record the discussion using audio equipment. All records should be transcribed in the national language and translated into English.
6. Analyse: Analyse the data collected to identify key themes and patterns. A report template will be provided by the WP3 coordinator.

2.3.1 Recruitment strategy

The conduct of WP3 focus groups raises two recruitment challenges, firstly the identification, selection and training of co-investigators, and secondly the identification and selection of focus group participants.

About the Co-Investigators

Regarding the co-investigators, each partner has to identify three individuals in its national environment who belong to the two sets of institutional actors already described:

- Institutional actors related to research integrity: leaders and managers in research performing organisations and research funding organisations, editors of peer-reviewed journals and members of the committee on publication ethics, research integrity officers, R&I policy makers, etc.;
- Institutional actors related to social integration: open science policy advisers, communication and outreach officers in research performing organisations and research funding organisations, press officers, etc.

To ensure the best selection of institutional stakeholders, partners will work with the WP leader to secure compliance according to several criteria: age, gender, type of institutional functions, degree of experience, degree of public exposure, geographical location, etc. If, for practical reasons, certain criteria cannot be met on a national level, it will be the responsibility of the WP leader to ensure - at the overall project level - that this discrepancy will be compensated for in terms of the general sample- and recruitment strategy of the study

When contacting the institutional stakeholders, it will be essential to provide a brief booklet describing the objectives of POIESIS but also the expectations associated with participation in the project, including the training time needed to turn people into co-investigators, the time needed for

the organisation of the focus group, but also the use of their institutional network to select focus group participants. To the extent that a pre-existing professional network is mobilised during the research process, it will be necessary to be familiar with the situation of PCIs within their network, but also to discuss the nature of the links with each of the selected participants. It will be necessary to avoid any situations of conflicts of interest. These discussions may allow to modify, if necessary, the choices of participants.

Since the personal investment required of the co-investigators is significant, it is important to anticipate a form of symbolic and material compensation, which could take the form of a small gift but also of covering travel expenses to participate in or attend other phases of the project.

About the Participants.

Regarding the focus group participants, we will use a *purposeful sample design*. Participants will be selected primarily through the institutional network of the PCIs in collaboration with the PNP. Both the PNP and the PCI will work to ensure that a number of criteria are met in the composition of the participants groups.

Although the question of group composition will depend on local and contextual variables, one should keep in mind the arguments in favour of homogeneity as well as heterogeneity.

As emphasised by Hennink (2014), when one uses the focus group methodology « homogeneity is desired because participants are more likely to share their opinions and experiences with others who they perceive are similar to them ». Among the other benefits to be expected from this priority given to homogeneity, individuals are more likely to have a common language and understanding of institutional-specific terminology, jargon, and concepts. This can facilitate more efficient and effective communication during the session. Participants with the same professional background may also have deeper insights into specific issues, challenges, or opportunities relevant to their institutional field. This can potentially lead to more productive discussions.

But diversity might also be important, as it can bring new perspectives or new framing of well-known issues. Diversity in professional backgrounds can also lead to better decision-making — and this point is particularly important for WP3. When people from different professions come together, they may approach problems from different angles and use different decision-making frameworks. This can help the group identify potential biases and blind spots in their decision-making process, and ultimately make more informed decisions.

To take these different arguments into account, each PNP will work with their PCIs to set up three groups: 2 out of the 3 groups will prioritise common professional background for most participants (with possible outsiders and an intra-diversity of age, gender and status), and 1 out the 3 groups will prioritise diversity in terms of professional background. Regarding the two groups prioritising homogeneity, attention should be paid to select different professional backgrounds across the two groups.

As the WP leader has a global view of the task, it will be his responsibility to ensure that a deviation from these criteria can be balanced or corrected with the other focus groups.

As with PCIs, participants will receive an information letter introducing the focus group study and will be asked to complete an informed consent form prior to the focus group interview. They will also be provided with information about any potential risks or benefits from participation, and how data will be used and safe-guarded.

2.3.2 Before the Focus Group

Before the focus group can take place, a number of activities need to be carried out, including the preparation of the moderator guide and the training of the PCIs.

About the moderator guide

Prior to the focus groups, the task of the coordinator will be first to prepare the draft version of a moderator guide to be later adapted to each national situation in collaboration with the local PNP and PCIs.

The guide should be seen as a set of themes and indicators operationalised into main start – and sub-questions and probes that provide information relevant to the overall issues around which WP3 is structured.

The first version of the guide will be constructed in a progression from general to specific. It will be composed solely of open-ended questions associated with a pre-established set of instructions and stimuli. Neutral terms will be favoured for the formulation of the questions. Each section of the guide will address one topic or one objective.

POIESIS partners already have advanced experience in the methodology focus groups and have for example used exercises such as ranking exercises (Ravn, Sorensen, 2021). A specific collective work session for the preparation of the guide will be organised online with the different PNPs to enrich the moderator guide.

Before sending the final draft version of moderator guide to the PNP-PCIs, it will be tested with a small group of individuals to ensure that the questions are clear and relevant.

Training

Another key moment before conducting the focus groups is the training of PCIs. The aim of these training sessions will be to make PCIs clearly understand the POIESIS research design, but more particularly the value and methodology of focus groups.

The training groups will be formed at the level of the national partners, and when possible, at the European level. It will be up to the WP3 leader to ensure the possibility of mutualising training sessions. The training will be conducted, depending on the availability of the participants, online or on site, either by expert consultants in the field of research methods or by social science colleagues with advanced practice in qualitative methods. These trainers, consultants or colleagues, may be

members of the project's partner institutions and they will receive some form of material compensation.

Each training session will be held over half a day. The first will be devoted to defining the general principles of focus groups and the production of the moderator guide, the second to putting into practice the moderation of focus groups. The moderator guide developed during the first session, or between the two sessions, will be useful to prepare the institutional actors for moderator role.

Once trained, the facilitators should be more familiar with the different techniques for facilitating the dynamic of focus group discussions.

2.3.3 During the Focus Group

A focus group coordination team typically consists of a moderator and note-taker. The PCI will have the role of the moderator and the PNP the role of note-taker.

The first 15 minutes of the discussion will be devoted to introducing the subject in a synthetic way and to lay down the terms and conditions of the collective discussion. This first part will also be used for a quick introduction of the participants.

Once the general presentation has been made and a relaxed atmosphere has been achieved, it will be possible to open the discussion with a simple, general, projective opening question.

From there it will be possible to build on the general structure of the moderator guide adapted to the national context, allowing participants to move away from it if necessary. However, the co-facilitators will need to ensure that all the planned topics are covered in some way.

It is possible to allocate an average time for each section of the guide (for ex. 20 minutes per section) and it will be up to the team to check that the time allocated to the session is respected. But of course, if an unexpected but very relevant development occurs, it is preferable to let it develop rather than interrupting it to resume the moderator guide. The guide will be designed as a semi-structured guide: it should help to structure the discussions and assist with time management, but it should not be followed too mechanically.

An audio recording of the focus group will be made, complementing the notes of the note-taker.

2.3.4 After the Focus Group

At the end of each session, a quick exchange session will take place between the PCI and the PNP to collect the moderator's feedback. It will also be possible to organise a debriefing with the participants.

Based on the notes taken during the session, but also the post-focus-group discussion, a short session report of maximum one page will be written by the PNP that will highlight the important points of the focus group. It may also mention any difficulties encountered.

The end of the session should not be the end of the exchange with the participants. Not only may some of these participants be asked to participate in the deliberative roundtable (stage 2, see below), but they should all be given the opportunity to access follow-up information on the progress of the project and its main results. This will build on efforts from WP4's initiatives regarding stakeholder engagement (see D4.1)

The data collected will be stored on a secure server according to the principles described in the project's Data Management Plan (D5.2).

2.4. Data Analysis

All discussions in the 21 focus groups will be recorded, transcribed and translated into English by the national teams. Translation will be assisted by translation software and checked by the responsible researcher for errors/sense. The translation into English will allow for country comparison, which is one of the goals of the POIESIS project.

Data coding will be done through computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS/NVivo) by each partner. We will favour the use of software that allows for collaborative coding work online (for ex. Nvivo).

The WP leader will add to the moderator guide initially provided to the PNP with a coding guide designed to be adopted across all national contexts.

The coding guide developed before the first focus group will integrate two related dimensions: on the one hand, the main themes and topics likely to be the outcomes of the interactions in the group, and on the other hand, the type of interactions that can lead to the formation of a consensus or, on the opposite, to the acknowledgement of dissensus.

Insofar as the coding work will be carried out on the transcripts of the focus groups translated into English, the use of a collaborative coding platform by all partners will allow access to all the transcripts as well as to the coding process. A work session will be organised to develop a comparative analysis of coding practices and to ensure a good understanding of the classifications used for the analysis.

Each partner will conduct the analysis of the content of their focus group with the general objective to write a detailed country report on the main findings. The WP leader will integrate all these national reports into one final deliverable. This final document will be an opportunity to highlight the similarities but also the differences according to the institutional actors enrolled in the research process, as well as the national contexts.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

We do not expect any potentially critical ethical implications of the research results with regard to human dignity and integrity, or privacy of the participants.

There is a limited risk of discovering sensitive information related to institutional handling and management of research integrity. In the consent form, participants will agree to maintain the confidentiality of the information discussed.

The informed consent form will clearly state that the participants give their consent to participate by signing the form. Prior to the focus group, participants will receive an information letter detailing the objectives of the project and information regarding methodologies and voluntariness, etc. Participants will also receive a data information sheet concerning the processing of personal data etc.

Prior to the implementation of the focus group study, an ethical approval will be obtained by the institutional research ethics committee of the WP3 coordinator. Participants will be informed about this ethical approval.

3. Stage 2: Deliberative roundtables

The following sections describe the elements of the deliberative roundtables. This task will be coordinated by CNRS.

3.1 Decompartmentalising debates

If the setting up of the focus groups is designed to ensure a balance between homogeneity and inter and intra diversity of the participants, the second stage of WP3 aims to decompartmentalise the collective discussions and to bring together different stakeholders, regardless of their institutional functions, affiliations, or experiences.

The deliberative format adopted for this WP3 second stage, emphasises the revisability of institutional stakeholders' preferences: it should provide an opportunity to gather a diversity of institutional stakeholders with the general objective to produce “reasonable, well-informed opinions in which participants are willing to revise preferences in light of discussions, new information, claims made by fellow participants” (Fagotto and Fung, 2014)

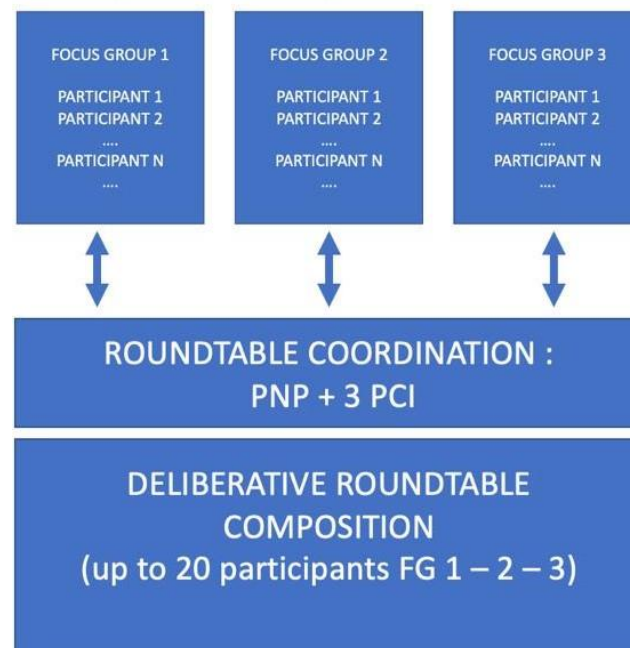
More precisely, the deliberative nature of the roundtable refers to different dimensions:

- Solid informational background: asked to make a decision or to reach a consensus regarding institutional arrangements or procedures to improve research integrity, social integration or public trust in science, institutional participants should be in the situation to make informed choices, i.e. based on robust information.

- Priority to interaction and open dialogue: the various priorities and choices made about how to improve research integrity, social integration and public trust should be reached through public discussions
- Various methods and inputs — infographics, expert reports, video or audio clips, ranking exercises, scenarios, etc. — should be used by the coordination team to let the participants express their views without self-censorship and encourage discussion between the participants.

The development of the roundtables benefits from the earlier focus groups stage in different ways. First of all, by taking up and exploring the main themes that will appear in the focus groups. Second, it benefits from the point of view of the selection of participants in the roundtable, which corresponds to a selection within the focus group participants (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Deliberative roundtables



As an extension of the focus groups stage, the deliberative roundtables will allow to address a range of issues through the input of selected experts but also the methodical use of scenarios to stimulate participants to make choices and decisions:

- what are the main policies and institutional procedures experienced or known by the participants to act on public trust given to science?
- facing a given scenario (characterised in terms of trust, research integrity and social integration) which procedures or decisions could be consider enabling researchers to act in ways that are more conducive to public trust in science?

- facing a given scenario, and to the extent that the different decisions considered are not necessarily mutually exclusive, which one should be considered as a priority and what could be its possible immediate or long-term consequences?

The aim of the roundtables will be to investigate how face-to-face interaction between institutional stakeholders belonging to different professional environments could influence the kinds of discussion that take place and the kind of decisions that could be made.

It can be expected that diversity among the deliberative roundtables participants may contribute to generate an original type of qualitative data regarding the representations of public trust, social integration and research integrity; the concerns, hopes and expectations towards research integrity and social integration; the procedures and policies translating research integrity and social integration into communicational or organisational processes, and/or the expectations about the impact of these procedures and policies.

3.2. Steps, format and settings

Once the objectives of the deliberative roundtable are described, the organisation of the event involves several procedural steps.

The WP3 leader will be responsible for developing a detailed agenda that outlines the topics to be discussed, the schedule for the event, and any materials or resources that participants will need. A dedicated working group within POIESIS will be organised to settle the details.

Each PNP will identify a facilitator who can guide the discussion and keep the conversation focused and productive. He/she will also find a suitable venue that can accommodate the number of participants and provide the necessary resources, such as audio-visual equipment, seating, and catering. As soon as these logistical details have been worked out, it will be possible to send out invitations to the participants previously identified.

During the roundtable, the PNP will ensure that all participants have an opportunity to share their perspectives and that the discussion remains focused and productive. He/she will be responsible for documenting the proceedings of the roundtable, including any decisions or recommendations that were made. A brief follow-up with the participants should be organised to thank them for their participation, provide any additional information or resources that may be needed, and to solicit feedback on the event.

In each of the seven countries, a half a day long deliberative roundtable workshop will be organised, hence a total of 7 deliberative roundtable workshops attended by a selection of up to 20 individuals each.

The coordination team in charge of setting up the roundtable will be composed of the PNP and the three PCIs who have already been working during stage 1 of WP3. This coordination team will have the task of selecting among the focus group participants those to be invited for the roundtable. Insofar as 2 out of 3 focus group corresponds to a distinct professional group, it will be important to

make sure to make institutional diversity visible within the roundtable. In addition to the nature of the institutional activity, it will be important to pay attention to a set of criteria to ensure a sufficient level of diversity for the roundtables, in particular with regard to age, gender or professional experience.

PCIs will be considered as being by default participants in the roundtable. The coordination group will also have the possibility to invite external experts. Inviting an expert to a deliberative roundtable can help to ensure that the deliberation is well-informed and productive. An expert's presence can help to lend credibility to the deliberation and the outcomes that result from it. This can be important as the deliberative process is intended to inform policy decisions or other important institutional actions.

3.3. Stimuli materials

The materials that will be used for the events will be informed by the results of the focus groups, targeting specifically relevant aspects of integrity, social integration and public trust for institutional stakeholders.

The same stimuli materials — infographics, expert reports, video or audio clips, ranking exercises, scenarios, etc. — will be used in the different countries, yet, some local adaptations might be considered, if needed. The materials will be prepared and discussed by all partners, assembled by CNRS and reviewed by all.

Each roundtable should be structured around a series of scenarios involving potential policies and procedures to be chosen that should enable researchers to act in ways that are more conducive to public trust in science. Scenarios that can help to illustrate the complexity of the issue and the various factors that contribute to trust or distrust in science and stimulate the deliberative process. In order to best incorporate the outcomes of WP2, these scenarios will be directly related to the Covid-19 crisis and the climate change research.

For each scenario, participants will be asked to imagine and explore the possibilities offered by different policies and procedures and to choose between them. Participants may be asked to imagine counterfactual situations resulting from no decisions or poor decisions.

Unlike the focus groups, in which the PNPs act as facilitator, in the deliberative roundtable the PNPs should act as observers, recording the discussion but not actively leading or moderating it. Instead, the workshops will be moderated by a professional facilitator solicited for the event.

3.4. Program

The typical deliberative roundtable will be held over half a day. The program will be composed approximately as follows:

Time	Activity	Mode
1pm	Welcome to the deliberative roundtable POIESIS presentation and how the deliberative roundtable will work	Plenary (20 max)
1:30pm	Session 1 - Scenario 1 – About Covid-19 Issues selected on the basis of focus group analysis	Mixed group (groups of 4-5 person max)
2:15pm	Collective review of outputs from session 1	Plenary
3:pm	break	
3:30pm	Session 2 - Scenario 2 – About Climate change research Topic: Issues selected on the basis of focus group analysis	Mixed group
4:15pm	Collective review of outputs from session 2	Plenary
5pm	Reflections on session 1 and 2 by an expert witness	Plenary
6pm	Closing event (dinner)	

3.5. Data Analysis

All discussions in the 7 roundtables (plenary and mixed groups sessions) will be recorded, transcribed and translated into English by the national teams. Translation will be assisted by translation software and checked by the responsible researcher for errors/sense. The translation into English will allow for country comparison, which is one of the goals of the POIESIS project.

Data coding will be done through computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS/NVivo) by each partner. We will favour the use of software that allow collaborative coding work online (for ex. Nvivo®).

Just like for the focus group, the coding guide developed before the first roundtable will integrate two related dimensions: on the one hand, the main decisions and procedures likely to be the outcomes of the interactions of the roundtable participants, and on the other hand, the type of interactions that can lead to the revision of a former preference or, on the opposite, to the preservation of pre-existing opinions.

The WP3 coordinator will provide to the PNP a coding guide designed to be adopted across all national contexts. Using this transversal coding guide, each partner will be able to conduct the analysis of the content of their roundtable and write a detailed report on the main findings. Just as for the focus groups, the WP leader will integrate all these national reports into one final across-case analysis and deliverable. This final document will be an opportunity to highlight the similarities but also the differences according to the institutional actors enrolled in the research process, as well as the national contexts.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

We do not expect any potentially critical ethical implications of the research results with regard to human dignity and integrity, or privacy of the participants.

There is a limited risk of discovering sensitive information related to institutional handling and management of research integrity. In the consent form, participants will agree to maintain the confidentiality of the information discussed.

The informed consent form will clearly state that the participants give their consent to participate by signing the form. Prior to the roundtable, participants will receive an information letter detailing the objectives of the project and information regarding methodologies, voluntariness, processing of personal data etc.

Prior to the implementation of the deliberative roundtable, an ethical approval will be obtained by the institutional research ethics committee of the WP3 coordinator. Participants will be informed about this ethical approval.

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