Public Engagement for Research, Practice and Policy
Exploring Policy Options for Responsible Research, Sustainability and Innovation
Brussels, November 16-17 2016

What should be done to support PE in R&I activities?

Luciano d'Andrea
LSC, Rome

Objectives of the presentation

- Proposing an **interpretation on the present development stage of public engagement** (PE) with science and innovation as it emerges from the experience PE2020 Project

- Proposing some possible **action lines** on how to promote PE (hence the – perhaps – too ambitious title of this presentation "What should be done to support PE in R&I activities?")

Sources

- An in-depth analysis of 38 innovative PE initiatives
- An in-depth analysis of 18 guidance-like documents (toolkits, guidelines, resources tools, etc.) on PE in S&I
- A large literature review made for developing the PE2020 Toolkit on PE
- Seven pilot projects on PE carried out under PE2020
- The debate internal to PE2020 consortium, also involving external actors and "sister projects"

An interpretation on the present development stage of PE

What is at stake with PE in S&I (I)

- Science is suffering the **same crisis that all the institutions of modernity** (e.g., religions, politics, States, trade unions, and economic authorities) are suffering in the shift toward the so-called post-modern society (risk society, knowledge society, knowledge society, or whatever)

- This shift is modifying the relationships between **social structures** and **individual actors**

- In **modern society**, social structures (social norms, behavioural models, social roles, values, etc.) and institutions were strong enough to exert a certain control over individuals and groups (in terms of behaviours, expectations, cultural orientations, worldviews, etc.) (Individuals' alignment to social structures)

- In **post-modern society**, structures and institutions are weakening while the **autonomy of individuals** (e.g. to make their own choice, to shape their own identity, to develop their own worldview, etc.) is increasing (Alignment of social structures to individuals)

What is at stake with PE in S&I (II) Modern society

SOCIAL STRUCTURES
(norms, standard behavioural patterns, dominant values, etc.)

INDIVIDUALS
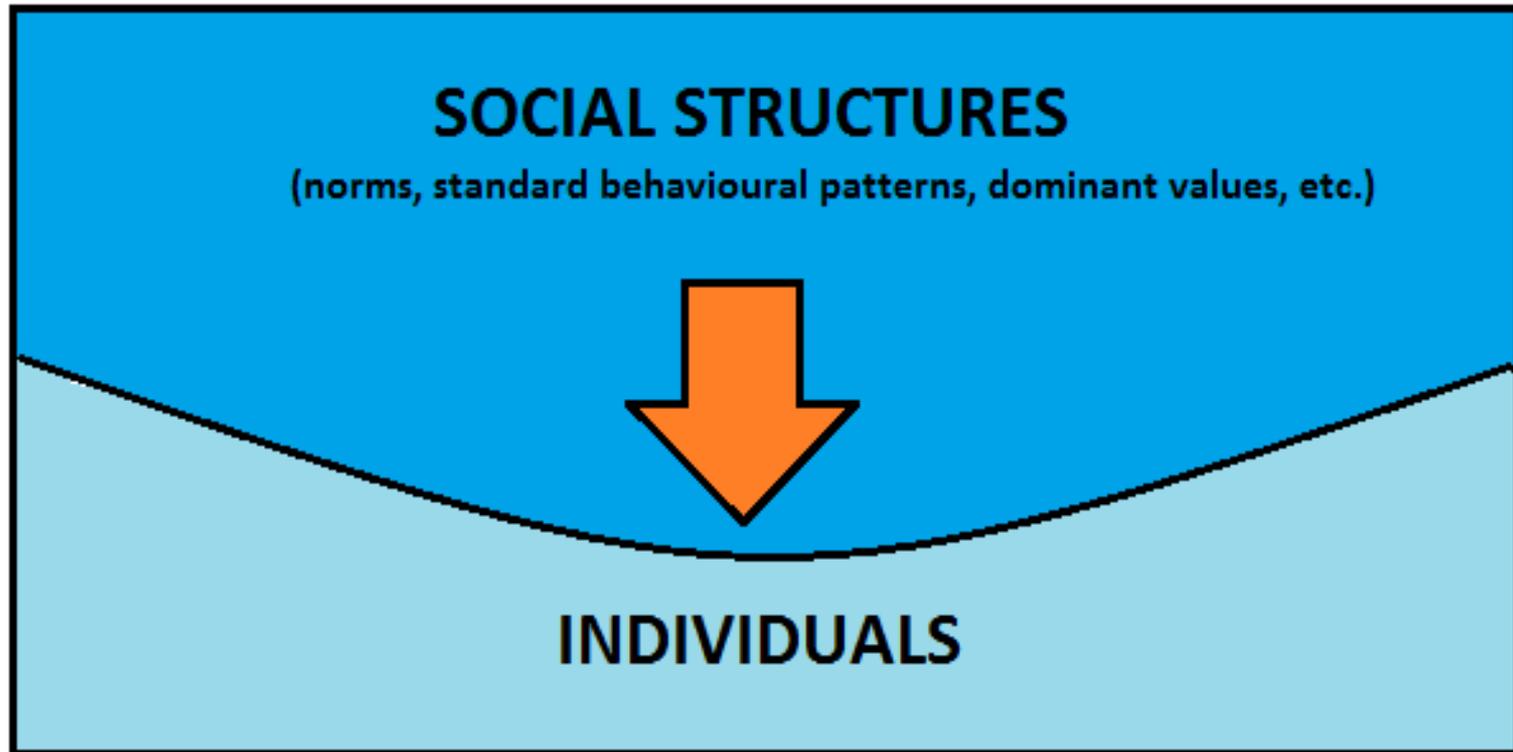
What is at stake with PE in S&I (III) Post-modern society
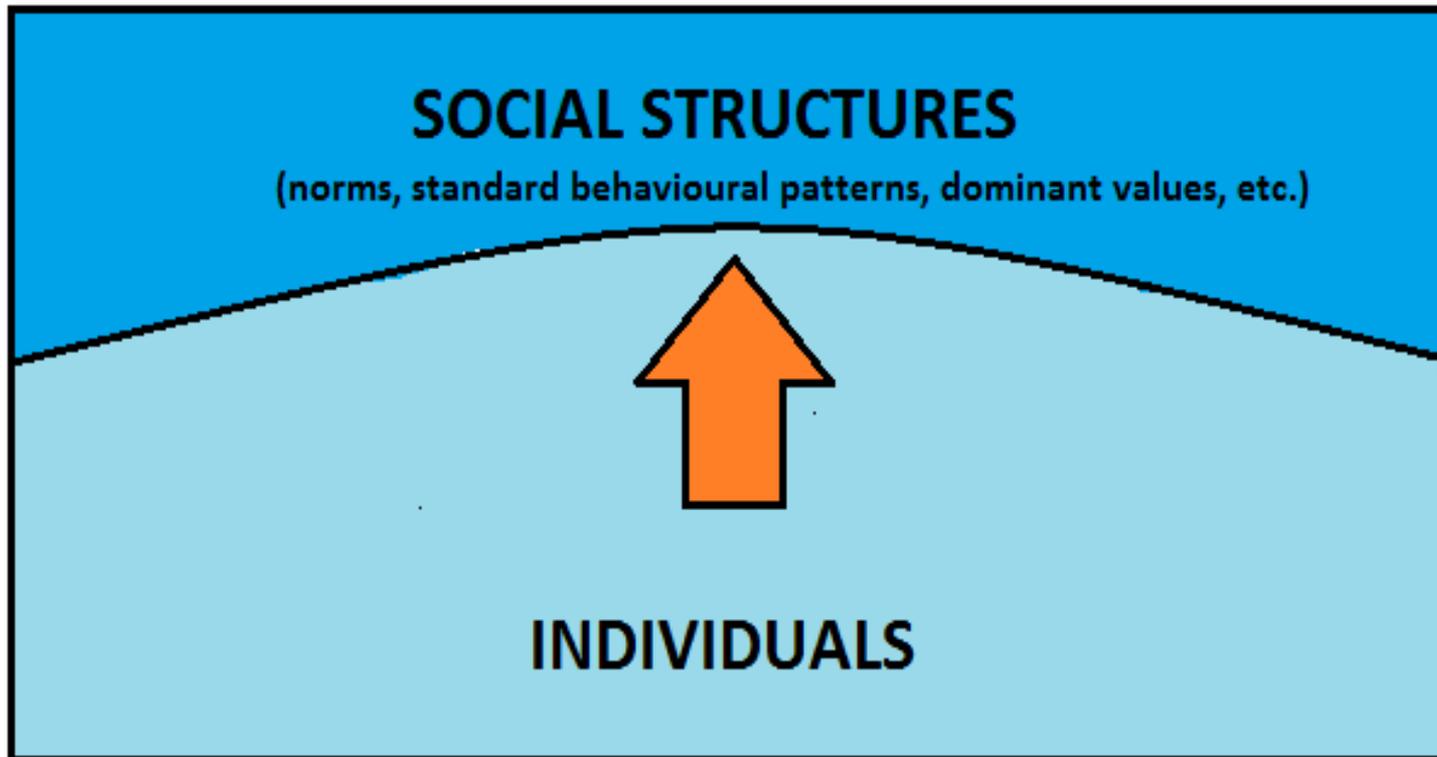
What is at stake with PE in S&I (II)

- **Effects of this crisis on science as social institution**: distrust; loss of authority, unity, autonomy and social status of science; demands for transparency and accountability. Paradoxically, science is now **technically stronger** and **socially weaker** than it was in the past

- **Reactions** to the crisis of science can be found in **different changes** affecting science (political steering, problem-oriented approach, interdisciplinarity, expanding demands to turn scientific research results into marketable products, bureaucratisation, etc.) overall leading to an involvement of an enlarged number of players (e.g., political leaders, research funders, venture capitalists, CSOs, local authorities, etc.)

What is at stake with PE in S&I (III)

- **Different interpretive models** (e.g., Mode1/mode2; Post-academic science, post-normal science, Triple/Quadruple Helix, etc.) have been developed to account for these changes.

- **PE is to be framed in this context.** It has nothing to do with **communicating science. It has to do with the management** of these enlarging networks of social relationships surrounding and cross-cutting science which are of pivotal importance for its own development.

A favourable context and some critical issues

The present state of PE in S&I is characterised by:

- The presence of a **favourable context** for its development; and

- Some **critical issues**

A favourable context (I)

1. **The presence of a bottom-up movement for PE**

- There is a bottom-up pro-PE movement in Europe, involving a high number of non-profit organisations, volunteers, individual researchers and research leaders.

- Non-profit organisations play an important role as promoters of PE (14 out of the 38 innovative PE initiatives analysed were promoted by NGOs)

A favourable context (II)

2. The EC commitment on PE

- From the beginning of this century onward (see for example the Report delivered by the European Research Advisory Board on "Science and Society. An agenda for a responsive and responsible European Science in FP7" in 2005) the interest of EU on PE progressively increased

- 13 out of the 38 innovative PE initiatives analysed under PE2020 were promoted under EC-funded projects

- Now PE is part of the RRI-Open Science strategy underlying Horizon 2020

A favourable context (III)

3. The increasing diffusion of PE initiatives

- An increased (even though unevenly) diffusion of PE initiatives in S&I is reported by the scientific literature in Europe

- In specific contexts (US, Canada, UK), PE is increasingly supported by national governments through specific policies

A favourable context (IV)

4. The consolidation of PE-related knowledge

- Since 2000, a number of guidance-like documents have been developed on PE (around 30 have been collected under PE2020), both of a general scope and specialised on specific aspects (e.g., evaluation of PE initiatives, PE on the web, etc.)

- PE is increasingly a subject for researchers and scientific journals

- A community of practitioners, researchers and experts on PE with S&I is developing and consolidating

Critical issues (I)

1. Lack of an institutional anchorage of PE

- PE still plays a secondary role (if any) in research institutions.

- There are some factors hindering such an institutional anchorage, e.g.
  - The marginal role recognised to PE in the life of the research institutions
  - The lack of recognition of PE activities in terms of scientific rewards and career advancement
  - The tendency of managers and leaders not to support (or even to hinder) those who promote or participate in PE initiatives
  - The widespread perception of researchers not to have time to devote to PE activities
  - The presence of negative stereotypes on PE

Critical issues (II)

2. Limits of the dominant view of PE

- PE is still understood in terms of isolated events and not as a function of research institutions

- PE is still predominantly viewed as an advanced form of science communication while its links with policy making, decision making process and research process are overlooked or ignored at all

- Standardised PE practices are still lacking; there is a proliferation of names for similar PE tools

Critical issues (III)

3. The presence of obstacles to PE still to be addressed

- **Managerial obstacles** (difficulties to get participants to cooperate; time constraints; lack of funding and other resources, etc.)
- **Cultural obstacles** (passivity of the involved people; indifference of scientists towards PE, etc.)
- **Technical obstacles** (lack of skills; lack of experience in bringing together different kinds of stakeholders, etc.)
- **Political obstacles** (limited engagement of leaderships and research managers; limited capacities of PE initiatives to change existing power relationships, etc.)

Critical issues (IV)

4. The risk of marginalising PE within H2020

Excellence Science

- **European Research Council**
  Frontier research by the best individual teams (ERA)

- **Future and Emerging Technologies**
  Collaborative research to open new fields of innovation

- **Marie Sklodowska Curie Actions**
  Opportunities for training and carrer development

- **Research Infrastructures (Including e-infrastructure)**
  Ensuring access to world-class facilities

Industrial Leadership

Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies

- **ICT**

- **Nanotechnologies materials, biotechnologies, manifacturing**

- **Space**

- **Access to risk finance**
  Leveraging private finance and venture capital for research and innovation

- **Innovation in SMEs**
  Fostering all forms of innovationin all types of SMEs

Societal Challange

- Health, demographic change and wellbeing

- Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research, and the bio-economy

- Secure, clean and efficient energy

- Smart, green and integrated transport

- Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials

- Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative, reflective societies

- Secure Societies

European Institute of Innovation and Technologies (EIT)

Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

Science with and for society

Joint Research Center (JRC)

Euratom

Fast Track to Innovation

Critical issues (IV)

4. The risk of marginalising PE within H2020

Critical issues (IV)

4. The risk of marginalising PE within H2020
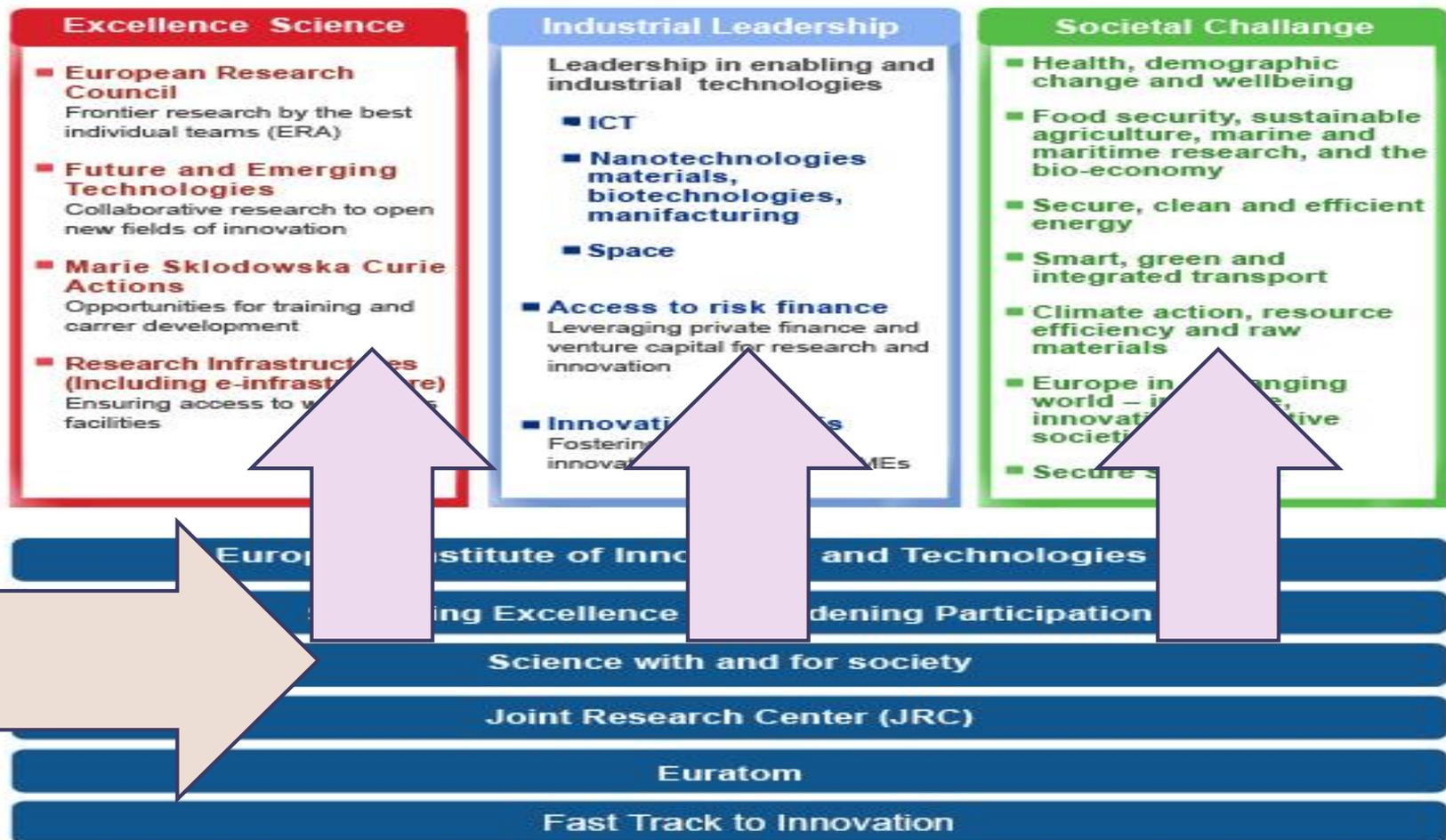
Critical issues (IV)

4. The risk of marginalising PE within H2020
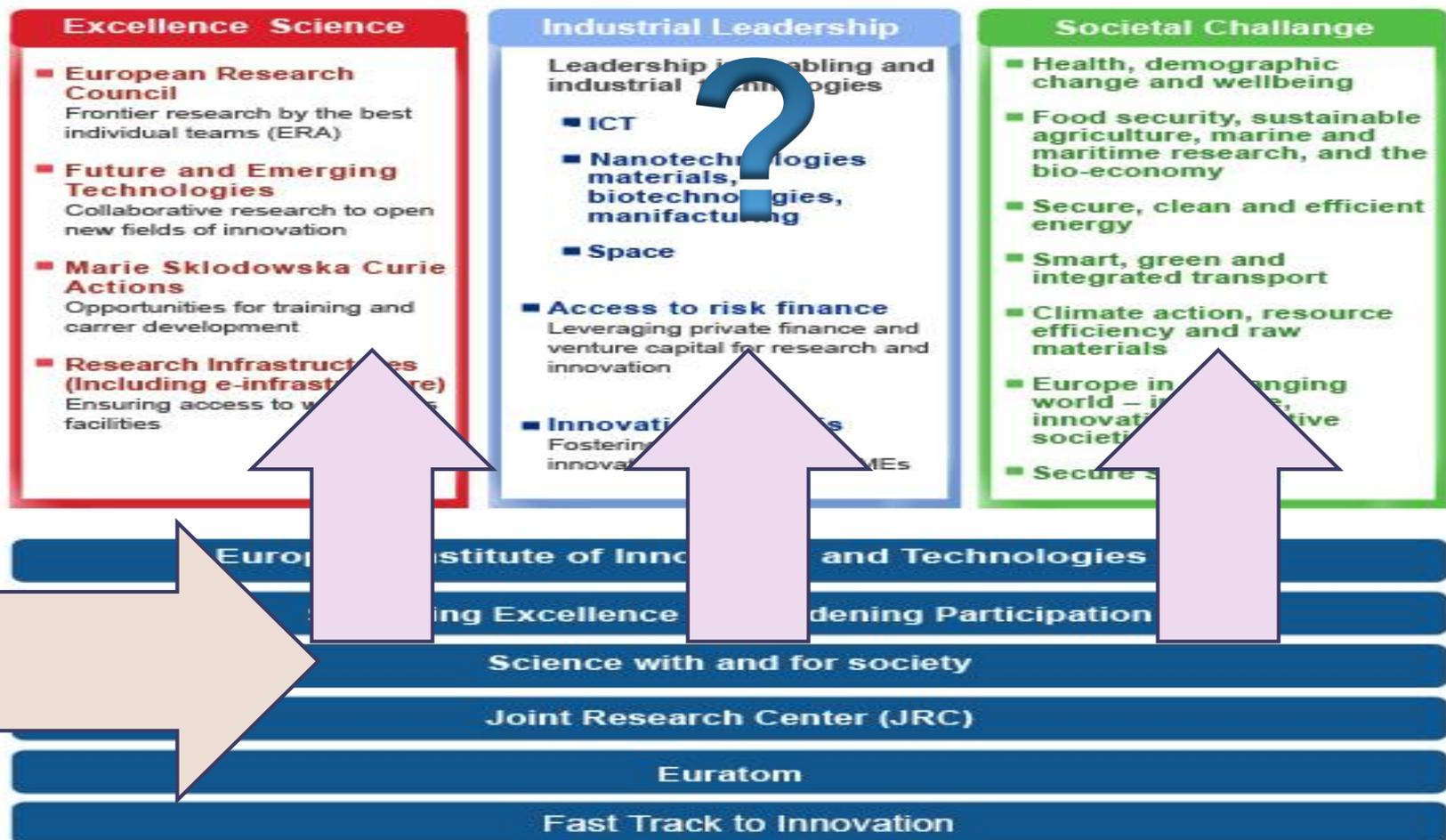
A recap

A FAVOURABLE CONTEXT
1. The presence of a bottom-up movement for PE
2. The EC commitment on PE
3. The increasing diffusion of PE initiatives
4. The consolidation of PE-related knowledge

CRITICAL ISSUES
1. Lack of institutional anchorage
2. Limits of the dominant view of PE
3. The presence of obstacle to PE to be addressed
4. The risk of marginalising PE within H2020

Six action lines

1. Awareness raising on the crisis of science as social institution and the role of PE

- There is an underestimation of the role PE may play for supporting science and scientific development

- Promoting **policies** aimed at **raising the awareness** of managers, policy makers and researchers about science as "**a social object at risk**" is therefore of pivotal importance

2. Connecting PE to science governance and process

- There is the need to stop with PE exercises and pilot projects where there is nothing at stake (no real decision to take, no research process to support, etc.)

- This also means **promoting PE only connected to** the **policy cycle** and the **research process** (citizen science) so as also to learn when PE is useful and when it is not

3. Embedding PE in research institutions

- PE can no longer be viewed as an event to be organised, but as a process to be developed over the time

- Hence the need of structurally embedding PE in research institutions so as to make it a business-as-usual practice

- **Self-tailored action plans** should be then promoted within research institutions in order to make this embedment actually possible

4. Diffusing PE all over H2020

- Thanks to the RRI approach, PE is now recognised as one of the main cross-cutting issues within Horizon 2020.
- However, there is a risk that PE remains confined to the "*Science with and for Society*" (SwafS) programme and therefore restricted to the community of PE experts and practitioners
- **Specific actions** should be gradually activated to **create bridges** between SwafS and the other components of Horizon 2020.

5. Supporting research on PE

- There are many prescriptive models developed in the last years on how to promote PE

- However, interpretive models on how PE actually activates change processes on policy making and research are still to be developed

- **Supporting research programmes and scientific exchanges** on "PE in the real world" (thus also observing critical factors, success factors and risks) is increasingly necessary

6. Promoting scientific citizenship through and for PE

- It is misleading to think that, once research institutions will be open to public participation this latter will automatically occur.

- To favour participation in S&I, there is the need to make such a participation a **current social practice** through the development of a "scientific citizenship" (rights, duties and responsibilities) which could be actually exercised

- **Measures and policies for promoting scientific citizenship** should be developed, also for making PE effective and creating the social and institutional spaces where the exercise of scientific citizenship may become real

A recap

1. Awareness-raising on the crisis of science as social institution
2. Connecting PE to science governance and process
3. Embedding research on PE
4. Diffusing PE all over H2020
5. Supporting research on PE
6. Promoting scientific citizenship through and for PE

The toolkit

http://pe2020.teknoprojekt.dk/

Thank you for your attention!

The structure of the PE2020 Toolkit

THE TOOLKIT

A. Strategic framework

C.
Institutional
Anchorage

B.
Methods and
tools

D.
Societal
Anchorage
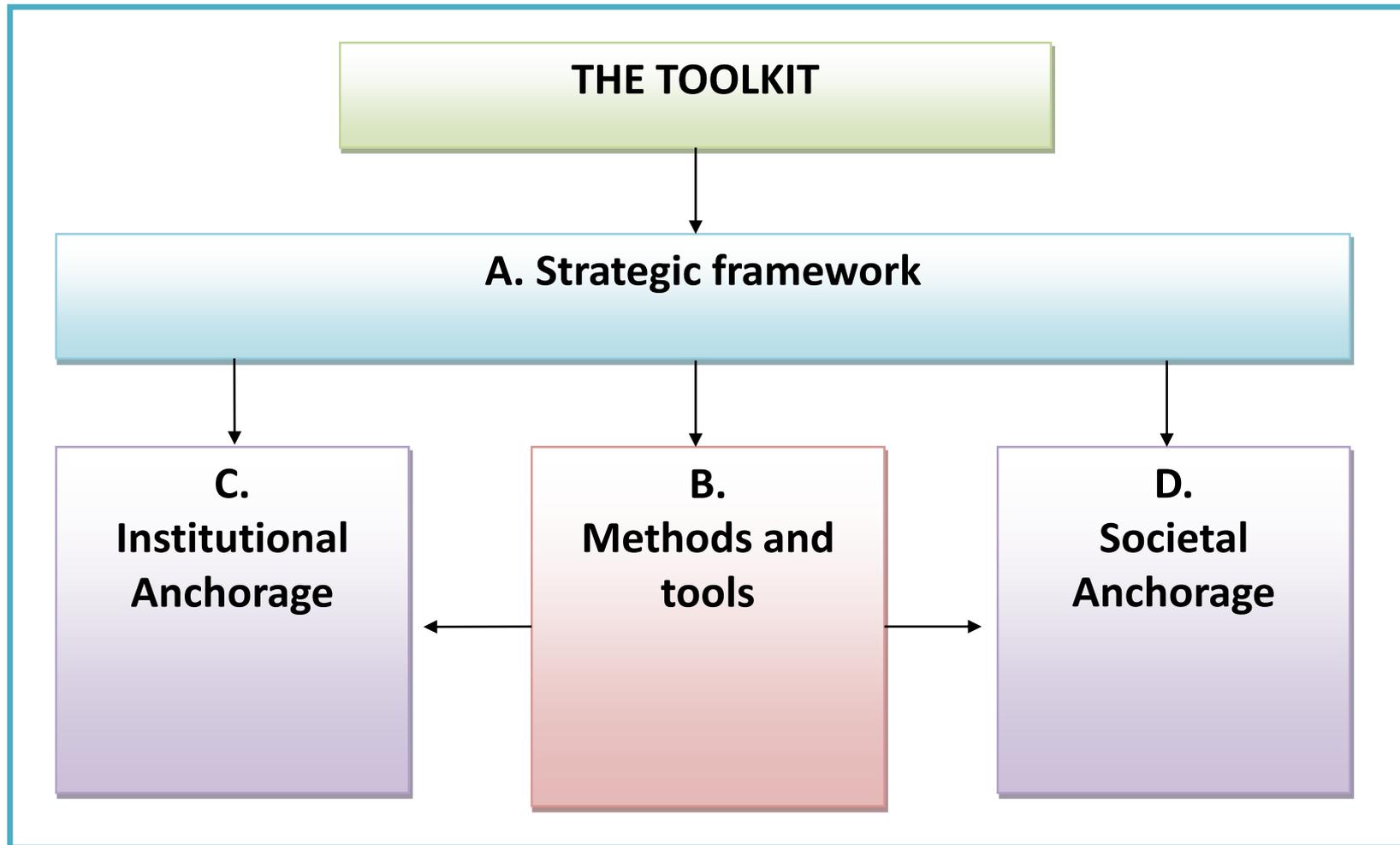
Structure of the PE2020 Toolkit

- **A. Strategic Framework**. Guidelines and resources for interpreting PE in the context of the many change processes affecting science.

- **B. Methods and tools.** Understanding the many PE approaches and mechanisms, planning and implementing PE initiatives and recognising recurrent obstacles and resistances.

- **C. Institutional anchorage**. How to permanently embed PE in the current practices of research institutions, by activating, developing and evaluating a PE-oriented action plan.

- **D. Societal anchorage**. Strategies and tools for research institutions to contribute in consolidating a scientific citizenship.