

STRUCTURE

Home

- The Project
- About us
- Focus Groups (che quindi includes Methodology, Moderators Working Group, Focus Groups, Analysis, Evaluation)
- Outcomes
- Public Events

Poi, sulla destra apriamo due bottoni/canali nuovi

- Press
- Researchers

[HOME](#)

[Video: the trailer as it is](#)

The VOICES project

WHAT VOICES is a groundbreaking consultation, using the opinions of 1000 people from across 27 EU countries to shape the future of European research.

[read more...](#)

WHY According to the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation, European research must do more to adapt to the needs of citizens.

HOW To this end, VOICES devised a specialised yet flexible methodology, using **100 three-hour** focus groups in order to engage citizens and gather their opinions and ideas about research and innovation in 2013. The consultations were run by science centres and museums, as the natural interface between science and society, and coordinated by Ecsite, the European Network of Science Centres and Museums.

EU research: making your VOICES heard

“Urban waste as a resource” was the chosen topic for VOICES. The result is 27 EU country reports **and an overall EU report** detailing 1000 citizens’ hopes, fears, concerns and ideas on the theme of urban waste. These analyses confirmed a number of the EU’s current research priorities, but also proposed a range of new ways to adjust and strengthen the European research agenda.

The VOICES reports were therefore used to draw up a number of research calls for the EU’s Horizon 2020 funding programme. But the project outcomes and the VOICES consultation methodology can be applied much more widely, to bring the voices of citizens and stakeholders into research.

(fine della home. Appena abbiamo pronto lo scribing, mettiamo quello in apertura e spostiamo il trailer, ma per ora lasciamo così)

The Project

Image : Sketch

Introduce a 'skip to key findings' (un'ancora) (è possibile? L'idea è di permettere a chi vuole di andare direttamente giù nella pagina, visto che I testi alla fine sono piuttosto lunghi...)

[Download the VOICES brochure here.](#) (il link alla brochure, in pdf che ti manderò, va messo sulle parole **VOICES brochure e non su here**)

The [VOICES](#) consultation process gathered opinions and ideas about urban waste from citizens across the EU. It used science centres and museums as powerful spaces for public engagement. The results were fed back to policymakers in order to influence the direction of EU research policy.

Why VOICES?

At the heart of the VOICES project is the idea of Responsible Research and Innovation ([RRI](#)). This means that while designing the research and innovation process, we have to consider **ethical aspects** and **the needs of citizens**. Research should be ready to adjust its shape to ensure it fits society's requirements.

How can I use VOICES?

The results of the VOICES consultation directly affected the European Commission's [Horizon 2020](#) calls for research funding. As such, VOICES is a model for incorporating citizens' voices into RRI. But the project outcomes can also be used by other stakeholders on a local and national, as well as European level, for example:

- **Industry** can make use of the results to look into gaps in the market for new innovations;
- **Researchers** can use VOICES results to align their research with the principles of RRI;
- **Educators** can use project outcomes to give a national and European perspective to classroom discussions on current science topics;
- **Universities** can use VOICES as a model for citizen participation.

VOICES in numbers

- 1.270.000 words translated
- 1.000 European citizens
- 557 EU municipalities
- 350 ideas
- 300 hours of consultation
- 100 focus groups
- 33 locations
- 27 EU countries

- 22 external experts
- 8 research directions

VOICES methodology

VOICES consulted citizens using a renowned method - focus groups - in a unique way:

- **Diversity:** never before had focus groups in all 27 EU member states been used to influence EU policy, with citizens selected from a representative range of backgrounds
- **Structure:** the VOICES focus groups are composed of four exercises, which engage the participants on the relevant topics, drawing out collective opinions and ideas in a carefully facilitated face-to-face process.
- **Flexibility:** the VOICES methodology can be adapted for use at national and local levels, and with a range of policy topics.

The VOICES focus groups lasted 3 hours, with 10 participants in each, and were led by trained moderators following a semi-structured script, completed by an introduction and evaluation. The four exercises consisted of: drawing household waste streams; identifying barriers and concerns related to waste management issues; elaborating solutions and ideas for achieving a “zero waste society”; and attributing priority to the group’s ideas.

Find out more about the methodology here. ([link sulla parola methodology alla pagina ‘focus group’](#))

Find out more about the people involved here. ([link sulla parola people alla pagina ‘about us’](#))

Key Findings

VOICES took as its subject matter the topic of urban waste as a resource, and the concept of a “zero waste society”.

Fitting with the aims of RRI, key findings of the project can be grouped into two key categories.

1. VOICES validates the EU’s current priorities of research and policies on urban waste

- Citizens want less packaging, and more efficient packaging materials. They want to see 100% biodegradable packaging, and plastics that can be fully recycled without loss of quality.
- They want it to be easier to recycle and reuse products.

- They want manufacturers to be regulated more heavily, taking responsibility for the lifespan and recycling of their products, and ending planned obsolescence.
- More recycling points are needed at convenient locations.
- They want incineration plants to be used as much as possible to produce heat and energy.

2. VOICES also proposes new ways to strengthen current research

- European citizens feel convenience in the household is crucial. This is a part of waste management often neglected by research. There is a clear need for devices to facilitate sorting and compacting in the home (“smart bins”), or technology which allows waste to be used as a resource in the household.
- Citizens want to feel the benefit of waste separation. This can be done by making incentives, deposit systems and reward schemes more widespread.
- Education and communication are crucial. Citizens are largely unaware of what happens to their waste, and would feel more engaged in the process if knowledge was more widespread.
- Technology can be a motivation to recycle in itself. Citizens feel that systems using chips, electronic tags and apps can help to empower people in the recycling process.

See the full Project Outcomes here. ([link sulla parola Project Outcomes alla pagina relativa](#))

About us

THE PROJECT COORDINATOR

Ecsite – the European network of science centres and museums
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THE VOICES TEAM @ECSITE

Project Coordinator: Marzia Mazzonetto, Senior Project Manager
Catherine Franche, Executive Director
Luisa Marino, **Junior Project Manager**

ACADEMIC TEAM (Athena Institute, VU University Amsterdam)

Project Scientific Coordinator: Prof. Dr. Jacqueline E.W. Broerse (M.Sc.)
Research team: Dr. Frank Kupper (M.Sc., M.A.); Dr. Janneke E. Elberse (M.Sc., M.A.); Lia van der Ham (M.Sc.); Barbara M. Tielemans (M.Sc.); Wanda S. Konijn (M.Sc.); Anna van Luijn (M.Sc.); Fiona Budge (M.Sc.); Tirza de Lange (M.Sc.); Durwin H.J. Lynch (M.Sc.); Marzia Mazzonetto (MAS); Willemijn M. den Oudendam (M.Sc.); Inge Schalkers (M.Sc.); Samuel J.C. Schrevel (M.Sc.); Dr. ir. Rianne Hoopman (M.Sc.); Samuel Ho (M.Sc.); Sarah Cummings (M.Sc.); Rylan Coury (B.Sc.)

COMMUNICATION TEAM

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Elisabetta Tola, Francesca Conti, Marco Boscolo, Marco Montanari, Nicola Nosengo, Angela Simone, Teresa Burzigotti, Gianluca Costantini, Lorenzo Deverini

VOICES PROJECT OFFICER @EC

Dionysia Lagiou, Principal Administrator - Policy Officer, DG Research & Innovation, B6
Ethics and Gender, European Commission

COLLABORATORS:

Andrea Bandelli, independent advisor on science communication initiatives
Michael Creek, consultant on European projects

VOICES THIRD PARTIES

- ★ ScienceCenter-Netzwerk, Austria
- ★ Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Belgium
- ★ Techmania Science Center, Czech Republic
- ★ Experimentarium, Denmark
- ★ Science Centre AHHAA, Estonia
- ★ Heureka - The Finnish Science Centre, Finland
- ★ Universcience, France
- ★ CCSTI Grenoble, France

- ★Deutsches Museum, Germany
- ★Universum® Bremen, Germany
- ★Hellenic Physical Society, Greece
- ★Palace of Miracles - Budapest Science Center Foundation, Hungary
- ★Science Gallery, Ireland
- ★Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia 'Leonardo da Vinci', Italy
- ★Fondazione IDIS - Città della Scienza, Italy
- ★Science Center "Z(in)oo", Latvia
- ★Lithuanian Sea Museum, Lithuania
- ★Science Center NEMO, Netherlands
- ★Copernicus Science Center, Poland
- ★Innovation Centre Mill of Knowledge, Poland
- ★Pavilion of Knowledge - Ciência Viva, Portugal
- ★Ustanova Hisa eksperimentov, Slovenia
- ★CosmoCaixa, Fundacio "la Caixa", Spain
- ★Parque de las Ciencias of Granada, Spain
- ★Tekniska Museet – Teknorama, Sweden
- ★The Natural History Museum, London, UK
- ★Centre for Life, UK
- ★formicablu srl, Italy

Advisory Group

The VOICES Focus Group approach was validated by the VOICES Advisory Group, composed of 10 experts in public participation, RRI, urban waste/ environment issues, social innovation, governance, qualitative methodologies in social research and the science museum field.

The Advisory group convened to fine-tune the methodology, agree on its definitive format and confirm the socio-demographic profiles for the citizens panels of the focus groups used by the recruitment agencies.

Experts of the Advisory Group include:

- **Anabela Carvalho**, Department Of Communication Sciences, University of Minho, Portugal
- **Erik Kraak**, Managing Director, PQR - Partners in Quality Research, The Netherlands
- **Fiona D. Wollensack**, Senior Consultant, IFOK GmbH Brussels, Belgium
- **Florian Part**, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Institute of Waste Management (BOKU), Vienna
- **Janjoost Jullens**, Advisor, Instituut Maatschappelijke Innovatie (Institute for Social Innovation, IMI), The Netherlands
- **Julia Nowicka**, Head of the Evaluation and Analysis Department, Copernicus Science Center, Copernicus Science Centre, Warsaw, Poland
- **Maarten Goorhuis**, Senior Policy Expert of The Royal Dutch NVRD (waste management association), The Netherlands

- **Roberto Caggiano**, Consultant in waste and wastewater management, Rome, Italy
- **Steve Robinson**, Managing Director, Strategic Consulting LTD, UK
- **Vanya Veras**, Secretary General, Municipal Waste Europe, Brussels, Belgium
- **Matthias Rapf**, Universität Stuttgart- Institute of Sanitary Engineering, Water Quality and Waste Management Group Resources Management and Industrial Wastes (RIK), Germany
- **Joerg Hanewinkel**, Managing Director, Neovis (independent consulting and engineering service provider), Germany
- **Mario Grosso**, PhD, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Consolidation group

The main task of the Consolidation Group is to assess the citizen outcomes of the focus groups held all across Europe on the topic 'Urban Waste'. The aim is to provide the European Commission with advice and expertise on different fields in order to transform citizens' ideas (previously rated by the VOICES Advisory Board) into priorities for the next work programme on 'Urban Waste'.

[Aggiungi immagine consolidation_group1 dal drive](#)

The two-day Consolidation meeting took place at the European Commission in Brussels on 12-13 June 2013. The composition of the Group was diverse. Participants were selected from research and academia, business/industry/ SMEs, public authorities, civil society and non-government organisations, and other key stakeholders.

[Aggiungi immagine consolidation_group2 dal drive](#)

Experts of the Consolidation Group include:

Filippo Addarii, Euclid Network

Yorg Aerts, OVAM Public Waste Agency for Flanders

Filipe Alves, Cooperativa para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável

Hali Healy, King's College London

Corina Hebestreit, Euromines

Floriana La Marca, Sapienza University of Rome

Leida Rijnhout, ANPED

Aurela Shtiza, IMA-Europe - Industrial Minerals Association

Joan Marc Simon, No Burn (GAIA and ZERO WASTE)

Evaluators

An independent evaluation assessed the quality of the project and the participatory processes providing suggestions for improvements in the future.

[\(Take off the pictures of the two evaluators\)](#)

The VOICES evaluators are:

Richard Watermeyer

Richard Watermeyer, holds a Ph.D in sociology from Cardiff University's internationally esteemed, School of Social Sciences, and has research interests located at the interface of science and technology studies and the sociology of education. In both areas he is widely published but has special expertise in investigating innovative approaches to 'upstream' engagement and dialogue and interactive and experiential pedagogy. He has written about the expert/public interface in a number of formal and informal educational contexts including science museums/centres; science communication companies and the like.

Through the academic consultancy PIER logistics Ltd, Dr Watermeyer has led a number of UK Government and Government agency evaluations, most frequently in conjunction with Sciencewise.

Gene Rowe

Gene Rowe is a cognitive/social psychologist whose PhD (from Bristol Business School) concerned group forecasting processes. His subsequent work has focused on human judgment and decision making, especially in the 'food' context, and in particular on food risk perception/ management/ communication, as well as on public engagement processes (in science and technology decision making) and the evaluation of these. He has been successful at attaining and managing a variety of national and international projects.

Gene Rowe founded the GRE (Gene Rowe Evaluations) in 2010. The company focuses on conducting primary academic research, desk analysis, and evaluations of public and stakeholder engagement processes.

Lasciamo l'intervista a richard watermeyer

Focus groups



The VOICES focus group approach

In the VOICES project, a total of **100 focus groups** were held, each of them with around 10 citizens. In most EU member states, three focus groups were conducted, all in one location, in most cases one science centre belonging to the Ecsite network. All member states with a population of above 25 million had two sets of three focus groups, each in two different locations.

Interview with Robert Firmhofer, Director, Copernicus Science Centre, Warsaw, Poland.

(controllare che la qualifica di firmhofer sia quella qui sopra, che è corretta)

About the methodology

As a **qualitative research method**, focus groups are increasingly used in political and social sciences, and can be defined as "a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment".

An important advantage of focus groups in comparison to other research methods is that participants can respond to and **build on the views** expressed by the other participants. Because of this interaction, focus groups generate a **large variety of opinions and ideas** which provide insightful information, while maintaining a specific focus during the discussion.

The method provides the opportunity to gain in-depth insight into ideas, values, wishes and concerns of participants and stimulates **shared creative thinking**. A specific characteristic of the focus group method is that it seeks understanding of a research topic from a particular perspective; in the case of the VOICES project, the perspective of European citizens.

[VOICES methodology](#) - Download as PDF

Moderators working group

One moderator from each of the 33 locations holding VOICES focus groups attended the VOICES working group session in Brussels from 6th to 8th March 2013.

During the intensive course, moderators became familiar with the VOICES methodology and practiced the exercises foreseen in the script.

[Voices practicalities](#) - download in .pdf.

Each moderator received a copy of the [Moderators manual](#).

The training focused on specificities of the VOICES focus group script as well as on refining important competencies of the moderators' role, including interpersonal communication, process management and understanding of the topic addressed.

Voices approach to urban waste - video presentation by Frank Kupper, Senior Researcher, Athena Institute, VU University Amsterdam

(attenzione che la qualifica di Kupper e della Broerse erano sbagliate, vanno sostituite con queste che sono corrette)

Focus Group organisations - video presentation by Marzia Mazzonetto, Senior Project Officer, Ecsite

Role of Moderators - interview with Jacqueline Broerse, Athena Institute, VU University Amsterdam

Selection of focus group participants

Participants were selected by local recruitment agencies, according to predefined selection criteria. **Selection criteria** were applied in order to obtain diversity in focus group participants, and to represent society at large.

General selection criteria with respect to demographic information included sex, education and employment. The focus groups were stratified by age using the following categories: 18 to 35 years of age, 36 to 50 years of age and 50+.

Other criteria addressed elements relevant to the **VOICES project's specific topic**, including: participants from urban and non-urban areas, diversity of types of municipality and diversity of housing situation. These selection criteria were applied in all EU member states.

Focus Group structure

The focus groups lasted 3 hours and followed a [semi-structured script](#) consisting of an introduction, four main exercises and an evaluation part. Each focus group was led by a moderator, who was in charge of stimulating and guiding the discussion. The moderator's role was also to maintain the focus of the discussion by ensuring that key themes were covered, while managing group dynamics.

Interview with Luca Simeone, Project Manager, Città della Scienza

In order to capture the data generated during the process, **audio and/or video recordings** were made of all focus groups. A note taker was also required to be present for the entire duration of the focus groups, in order to record additional data and to assist the moderator.

All **visual data** generated by the participants, for example, individual drawings or collective mind maps, were collected at the end of each focus group and photographed.

Participants' reactions to focus groups

Ideas, suggestions and interest expressed during VOICES focus groups. Interview to Luisa Marino, Project manager, ECSITE

(va corretta la qualifica di Luisa Marino, che era sbagliata)

Analysis

After each focus group, a **summary report** was written by the moderators based on the note taker's notes and the information on the flip charts. A draft of this summary report was sent to the focus group participants who were asked to comment on it.

Moderators collected any feedback and included it in the final version of the summary report as an annex.

The audio recording of each focus group was transcribed word-for-word and translated into English for analysis.

The **translated transcripts** were coded and analysed using MaxQDA, a programme for **qualitative data analysis**.

For the analysis of the data, both structured analysis as well as open coding were used. Structured analysis was carried out by using a predesigned coding sheet based on preliminary research.

This type of analysis allows for all relevant outcomes to be extracted from the raw data. Open coding runs parallel to the structured analysis and allows for insights unforeseen by preliminary research to emerge.

The summary reports of the individual focus groups were used to validate and complement the analysis.

See VOICES Outcomes for the results and analyses in full. [\(qui va inserito il link alla pagina Outcomes sulle parole VOICES Outcomes\)](#)

Validation, Consolidation and Evaluation

VOICES benefitted from a great deal of expert input, including:

- The VOICES Focus Group approach was validated by the VOICES Advisory Group, composed of 10 experts in public participation, RRI, urban waste/environment issues, social innovation, governance, qualitative methodologies in social research and the science museum field.
- A Consolidation Group, from research and academia, business/industry/SMEs, public authorities, civil society and non-government organisations, and other key stakeholders, who assessed the outcomes of the focus groups and provided the European Commission with advice and expertise in order to transform citizens' ideas into priorities for the 2014 work programme on 'Urban Waste'.
- A full independent evaluation assessed the quality of the project and the participatory processes providing suggestions for improvements in the future;

[For more details on the external experts involved, see the About Us page. \(inserire link sulle parole 'about us' alla relativa pagina\)](#)

Outcomes

(quando l'avremo inseriamo una still frame from scribing focusing on key results.)

VOICES Final Report (inserire link al report quando sarà disponibile nella cartella condivisa su dropbox)

VOICES Country Reports

(qui è dobbiamo inserire una tabella con tre colonne: paese, istituzione, download al pdf)

VOICES key findings

VOICES took as its subject matter the topic of urban waste as a resource, and the concept of a “zero waste society”.

Fitting with the aims of RRI, key findings of the project can be grouped into two key categories.

1. VOICES validates the EU’s current priorities of research and policies on urban waste

- Citizens want less packaging, and more efficient packaging materials. They want to see 100% biodegradable packaging, and plastics that can be fully recycled without loss of quality.
- They want it to be easier to recycle and reuse products.
- They want manufacturers to be regulated more heavily, taking responsibility for the lifespan and recycling of their products, and ending planned obsolescence.
- More recycling points are needed at convenient locations.
- They want incineration plants to be used as much as possible to produce heat and energy.

2. VOICES also proposes new ways to strengthen current research

- European citizens feel convenience in the household is crucial. This is a part of waste management often neglected by research. There is a clear need for devices to facilitate sorting and compacting in the home (“smart bins”), or technology which allows waste to be used as a resource in the household.
- Citizens want to feel the benefit of waste separation. This can be done by making incentives, deposit systems and reward schemes more widespread.
- Education and communication are crucial. Citizens are largely unaware of what happens to their waste, and would feel more engaged in the process if knowledge was more widespread.
- Technology can be a motivation to recycle in itself. Citizens feel that systems using chips, electronic tags and apps can help to empower people in the recycling process.

Using VOICES outcomes

VOICES outcomes are intended to be used by many types of stakeholders, for a range of purposes.

- **Policy:** *VOICES shows the determination of the European Commission to give European citizens the opportunity to have their say on societal challenges in the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020.* ” Gilles Laroche, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission

- **Education and Outreach:** *“VOICES provides science centres an opportunity to learn the visitors’ needs. Through this kind of consultation project we can much better understand the needs of our visitors and much better develop ways to address them.”* Robert Firmhofer, Director, Copernicus Science Centre, Warsaw, Poland

Public events



VOICES was publicly presented, for the first time, during the **ECSITE Annual conference**, that took place in Gothenburg, Sweden, on June 6-8 2013 with 1058 participants. The Conference is the most prominent meeting of science communication professionals in Europe.

VOICES was discussed during the event **Citizen participation in policy making**, on Thursday 6th June. The panel was chaired by Andrea Bandelli, Science communication advisor, Amsterdam, Netherlands, and was composed of:

Gilles Laroche, Head of Unit "Ethics and Gender", European Commission - Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Brussels, Belgium
Jacqueline Broerse, Professor of Innovation and Communication, Athena Institute, VU University Amsterdam

Marzia Mazzonetto, Senior Project Manager, Ecsite, Brussels, Belgium

Richard Watermeyer, Research Fellow, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK

VOICES Public events

Six of the VOICES Third Parties are hosting and organising public events based on the results of the consultations held in all 27 EU countries on the topic "Urban Waste".

The model for these events is the **Maker Faire** which in the last 5 years has become a vibrant meeting and exchange place for all kinds of people involved in innovation, technology, creativity and participation.

The first event took place in Dublin, on July 27th 2013, at the Science Gallery for the [Dublin Mini Maker Faire](#).

(qui ti passo l'iframe del video che caricheremo, al momento non ce l'ho: ma abbiamo un bel video di dublino da caricare)

The other events around Europe taking place in Autumn 2013 capitalise on the topic and on the results of the citizens' consultations.

These events will contribute to the [European Year of the Citizens 2013](#) with a format that encourages and highlights citizens' contributions to science, technology and innovation.

Next events:

(qui inserisci la tabella che ti ho mandato - lista degli eventi)

Full description of all events in .pdf (metti il link su 'full description' al pdf che c'è in drive)

Press

Project brochure - PDF available to download here.

(trovi il flyer in pdf nel drive condiviso)

Press release

(I will receive it in the next few days teniamoci pronti a caricarlo)

Press release #1: Science centres and museums voice citizens' concerns on waste to the EU (PDF EN) *add other language versions*

Images

Download the VOICES press images here. Please credit all images to www.voicesforinnovation.eu

(Il link da inserire sulle parole VOICES press images è questo: <http://bit.ly/19j4pmU>)

Videos

See the VOICES videos on [Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/voicesforinnovation).

Set the link to all videos (questo al momento non lo possiamo fare, quindi non attiviamolo finché non li ho sistemati tutti per bene)

Events

See the Public Events section for details of events near you.

Qui vorrei fare una mappa, devo solo avere un minuto per farla dignitosa. Per il momento mettiamo una tabella o una lista, ok? ho preparato una tabella che trovi sempre nel drive condiviso

Contact

For all press information please contact

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Organise a consultation

How can I use VOICES?

The results of the VOICES consultation directly affected the European Commission's [Horizon 2020](#) calls for research funding. As such, VOICES is a model for incorporating citizens' voices into RRI. But the project outcomes can also be used by other stakeholders on a local and national, as well as European level, for example:

- **Industry** can make use of the results to look into gaps in the market for new innovations;
- **Researchers** can use VOICES results to align their research with the principles of RRI;

- **Educators** can use project outcomes to give a national and European perspective to classroom discussions on current science topics;
- **Universities** can use VOICES as a model for citizen participation.

For practical information on how to implement a consultation like VOICES, download the following documents:

[VOICES methodology](#) - Download as PDF

[VOICES practicalities](#) - Download as PDF

[Moderators manual](#) - Download as PDF