

# Participation in the context of NSDS processes

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## Sustainable development and participation

- Since Rio 1992 – participation fundamental prerequisite for achieving SD
- Broad consensus on the need of participation in SD – no SD process without participation
- SD issues concern everybody and everybody is needed for their achievement

## Participation – a definition

*Participation refers to the inclusion of public stakeholders, i.e. all or a selection of those actors and institutions (e.g. citizens, civil society organisations/NGOs, business representatives, social partners, sub-national authorities, etc) that are affected by the results of policy- and decision-making processes.*

## Participation – key element in SD strategy processes

- Agenda 21: NSDS “should be developed through the widest possible participation”
- Participation is addressed by several policy guiding principles in the renewed EU SDS
- Participatory tools and mechanisms in NSDS processes of all EU Member States

## Participation – key element of SD governance

- Exchange of information, knowledge, interests
- Engagement and commitment of stakeholder groups
- Better and more informed decisions when different interests are included early on
- Increasing acceptance of results (“ownership”)
- Better coordination of responsibilities and more effective implementation

## Different participatory mechanisms:

- ***Ad-hoc forms*** – organised once for a specific purpose, like e.g.
  - internet consultations,
  - workshops,
  - conferences,
  - round tables
- ***Institutionalised forms*** – established for regular participation, like e.g.
  - partnerships,
  - committees,
  - advisory groups,
  - NCSD

## Participation at different stages in policy-making:

Participatory mechanisms can be applied in

- **Preparation** of policies, strategies, etc,
- **Implementation** stage, and
- **Review** mechanisms

Preparation phase:

→ *broader objectives and issues of SD strategies*

Implementation/review phase:

→ *more focused on specific strategy objectives & outcomes/outputs of strategy processes*

# Stakeholder involvement & different political levels



## Stakeholder involvement:

Depending on scope and objectives of participation, different stakeholder groups are involved:



# Stakeholder involvement & different political levels



## Different political levels:

NSDS refers to national level – however, participatory arrangements in related processes on sub-national levels (e.g. regional round tables, LA21 initiatives):

National level:

→ *Participation is often restricted to traditional stakeholder groups & “classic” participatory mechanisms (e.g. NCSD, round tables)*

Sub-national levels:

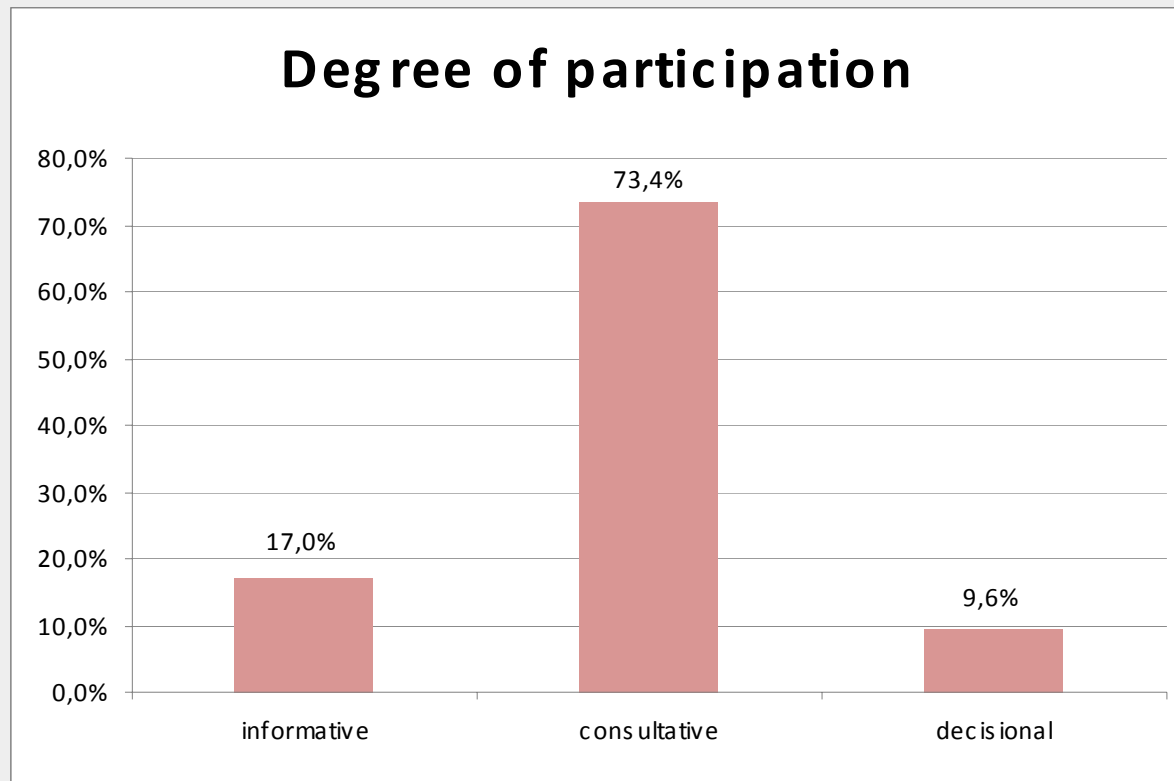
→ *Participation is often more interactive and innovative (e.g. direct dialogues, citizens conferences), plus stakeholders have direct regional/local concern*

# Degree and breadth of participation



## Degree of participation:

One can distinguish between informative, consultative and decisional participation:

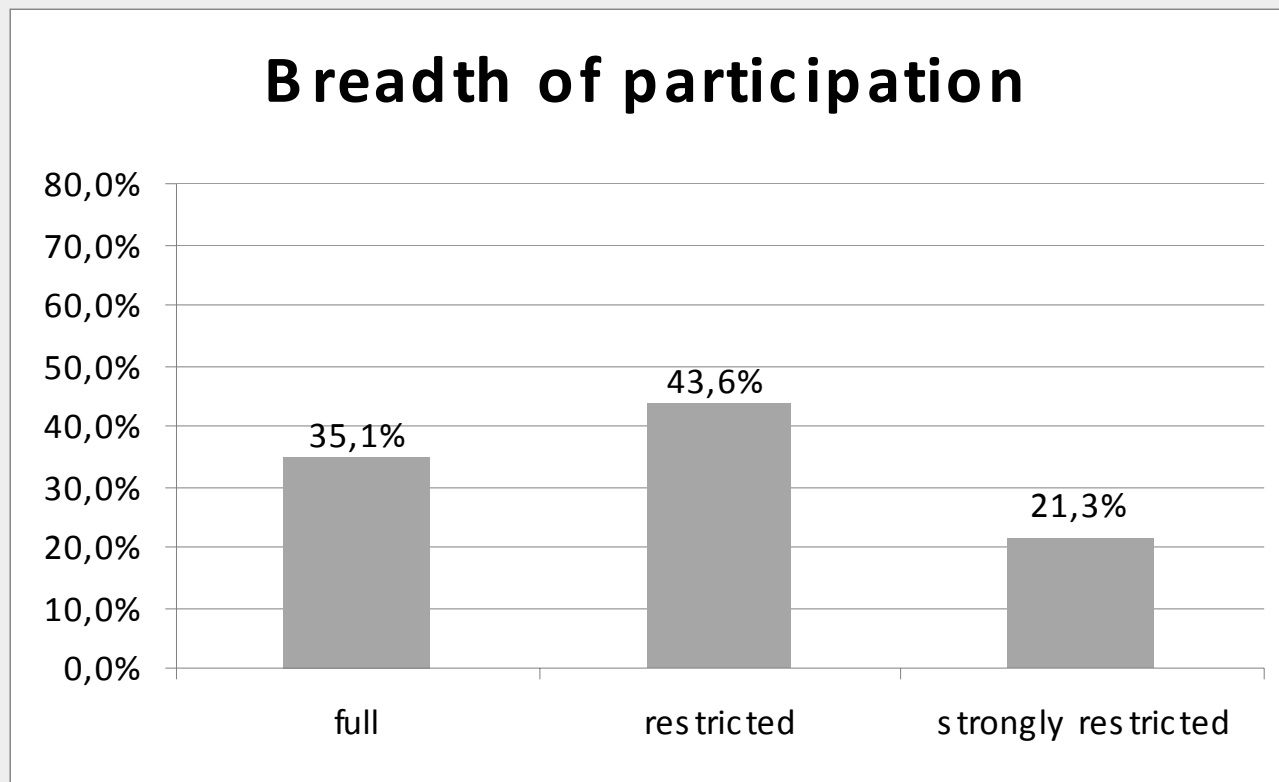


# Degree and breadth of participation



## Breadth of participation:

Refers to full, restricted and strongly restricted forms of participation:



## What makes a participatory mechanism successful?

- Objectives, principles and concept are clearly defined and communicated
- Involvement of those stakeholder groups that are affected by policy- and decision-making process
- Adequate resources for participants (e.g. information, budget, time, etc)
- Results are used in the further NSDS process (strategy document, implementation, review, etc)
- *To be amended and completed...*

**Thank you for your attention!**

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