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DELIVERABLE 3.3

Goals and Responsibility for Structural Change

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EU 1.5° LIFESTYLES PROJECT SUMMARY

POLICIES AND TOOLS FOR MAINSTREAMING 1.5° LIFESTYLES

The four-year project (2021-2025) EU 1.5° Lifestyles is part of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program. It involves researchers, practitioners as well as advisory board members from Finland, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Germany.

The project's main aim is to foster the mainstreaming of lifestyles in accordance with the aspirational 1.5° climate target and to facilitate transformations sought by the Paris Agreement and the EU Green Deal. For this purpose, the project develops guidance for policy makers, intermediary actors and individuals based on scientific evidence on how lifestyle choices affect individual carbon footprints, and how political, economic, and social contexts enable or constrain shifts to sustainable lifestyles options.

The uniqueness of the project approach is that it recognises the importance of political acceptance for change, demonstrates potential contributions of individuals and households, and clearly articulates where limited agency by households needs intervention from policy and requires structural changes. In doing so, the EU 1.5 Lifestyles connects analyses of lifestyle perspectives at the household level in the four realms of nutrition, mobility, housing, and leisure with inquiries into relevant political, technological, economic and social structures at various levels of governance.

To mainstream 1.5 degrees lifestyles, the project develops practical recommendations, which can be integrated into everyday life as well as into EU and national policies. Along the way, the project provides stakeholders at national and EU levels with:

- a quantification of climate and health impacts on shifting lifestyles in the EU and within three G20 countries (Indonesia, South Africa, Mexico);
- an overview on potentials for and barriers to change at the household level, including options for transitioning to 1.5 degrees lifestyles as well as associated potential risks and opportunities;
- an assessment of structural barriers and enablers for systemic transformations necessary for 1.5 degrees lifestyles;
- assessments of scenarios for economic and welfare systems, and business models compatible with 1.5 degrees lifestyles.

To co-produce outputs and involve target group members, several stakeholder workshops are held, and instructive communication materials are disseminated, including concrete guidance for both citizens and decision-makers on transitioning to 1.5 degrees lifestyles.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To fulfil the goals of the **Paris Agreement** and stop the catastrophic and permanent trespassing of planetary boundaries, a rapid, drastic, and unprecedented shift of lifestyles is necessary. The lifestyles that households adopt depend not only on decisions that citizens make in their day-to-day lives, but also, and primarily, on the political, economic, technological, and societal structures in which they are entrenched. This report aims to further analyse and contribute to **our understanding of the structural changes necessary** to foster 1.5° lifestyles, including responsibility for these changes. Also to be understood as a **reflection of the persisting and worsening crisis**, the following three questions have guided and framed the research undertaken for this report:

- Firstly, we seek to further **deepen our understanding of why deteriorating environmental and social conditions have not led to significant changes to existing ways of life.**
- Secondly, we **are further expanding our insights into the key structural enablers to address sustained unsustainability**, with the specific aim to **delineate comprehensive political and policy strategies towards change.**
- Thirdly, we seek to discuss the issue of **responsibility for driving such transformation**, including **forging actor coalitions and alliances that could be capable of instigating transformations** towards 1.5° lifestyles.

Our previous research as described in Deliverables 3.1 (D3.1) and 3.2 (D3.2) has highlighted the necessity for change in **seven key structural barriers and enablers** and analysed which crucial **steps** can lead to structural change in different consumption areas. While D3.1 was based on a large literature review, a Delphi-ranking method and 22 expert interviews, D3.2 collated findings from co-creative Stakeholder Thinking Labs (STL1) in the five case countries Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Spain, and Sweden with diverse groups of actors, by employing a backcasting method designed around our Climate Puzzles. Insights from D3.1 and D3.2 suggest that upscaling 1.5° lifestyles for effective climate mitigation requires **a much broader political effort**. Such action must remove numerous structural barriers and provide decisive ideational and financial support for the already existing enablers, while also fostering **future social innovations** imaginative and impactful enough to decarbonise society at its very roots.

This report now builds on the findings from the first two deliverables to develop **strategies and actor coalitions for change in six policy options** across our five case countries, focusing on different aspects of the key structural barriers. In an additional round of Stakeholder Thinking Labs (STL2) in all case countries and on the EU-level (EU STL), we conducted collaborative discussions and activities aimed at generating insights, understanding, and knowledge on the relevant political and policy strategies. The **Stakeholder Thinking Lab at the European level** (EU STL) provided a platform to discuss narratives and responsibilities for change in the European political landscape and focused on overcoming the economic growth paradigm, vested interests and the power of hegemonic narratives, highlighting the importance of actor coalitions and narratives for change. The second round of **Stakeholder Thinking Labs in the case countries** (STL2) delved deeper into the question of local actor-coalitions and narratives for change, focusing on structural change, carrying out dialogues on six key policy options: Reducing meat consumption, reducing aviation, introducing an upper limit to residential floor

space, reducing ownership and use of cars, working time reduction, and regulations for sufficiency-oriented business models.

The results of the EU STL allow us to **identify existing and potential future actor networks and coalitions** for a joint challenge to the growth paradigm and highlight the frequent struggle to integrate environmental and social equity-oriented actors. They reveal that **current networks are not diverse enough for meaningful change**. Shared narratives play a crucial role in building coalitions and bringing together different social groups, wherever they emphasise shared values, goals, and experiences that foster a sense of unity and solidarity. Three **narratives are key** to establishing successful actor coalitions, according to our findings: (1) Our individual lives will become better through transformation. (2) Together, we will become a fairer, safer, and more democratic society through transformation. (3) Our economies, companies, and employees will benefit from the transformation.

The **STL2 results from our five case countries** support and extend our previous research with respect to relevant deep-seated barriers and further underscore the inadequacy and inconsistency of existing **politico-economic and societal frameworks** that prevent a structural deconstruction of carbon-intensive lifestyles and counteract the externalisation of environmental and social costs. In all case countries, the **insufficient provision of accessible alternatives**, such as high-quality railway infrastructure and shared living spaces, was identified as responsible for slowing down a shift to sustainable lifestyles. In this context, stakeholders observed a **“responsibility ping-pong”** between governmental and business actors, leading to and interacting with **infrastructural and organisational lock-ins**. In addition, stakeholders emphasised that current narratives of what makes a good life and the common conviction that state interests are congruent with economic interests and served best by economic growth as **broader cultural and discursive barriers** to change.

As strategies for overcoming these barriers, the STL2 results pinpoint the urgent need for ensuring inclusive and accessible sustainability options for all, and addressing the social justice aspects of sustainability both in their discursive and economic dimensions. Stakeholders also highlighted the building of **broad, inclusive coalitions across sectors and governance levels** as critical for effective sustainability policies, with **facilitating and mediating entities**, such as housing associations playing key roles. They further voiced the hope that such coalitions alongside the influential roles of **media** and **influencers** would help ensure **corporate responsibility**. In this context, also involving **social justice advocates** like unions and leveraging **grassroots movements** to challenge incumbent structures, along with education and communication efforts led by **teachers and scientists**, was seen as pivotal for fostering public awareness and understanding of political responsibilities and implementation channels. Finally, all STLs expressed a need for a **broad societal dialogue and participation** in pursuit of the sustainability transformation. The STL findings underscore this importance of societal dialogue with respect to the development of shared visions of societal goals and especially sustainable living, but also as a means to challenge the influence of actors vested in the unsustainable status quo.

Based on the STLs at the EU and national level, then, we are able to identify three **overarching leverage points for change**. First, our results underscore the imperative of the explicit and

visible pursuit of **eco-social justice**. Stakeholders in all countries consistently stressed that social, economic, and climate policies are frequently viewed as in conflict with each other. A more holistic approach would integrate social and ecological sustainability concerns, through financial means as well as common narratives, and create a broader range of sustainable options with and for a diverse set of actors, including marginalised and vulnerable groups. In this context, considering the social inequity of the distribution of costs and benefits of inaction is also worth highlighting. In line with the necessary focus on eco-social justice, secondly, stakeholders viewed the creation of **diverse and inclusive political coalitions and alliances** as key to promoting structural change and societal consensus. Currently, coalitions tend not to be sufficiently diverse. Both alliances between ecological and social, but also between science, civil society, and sustainability-oriented companies and business associations and media actors are needed. In this context, also including actors that are frequently excluded from policy discussion is central for redefining the entrenched roles of actors within and beyond the policy arena, for improving the accessibility and effectiveness of policies. Thirdly, our results also underline a need for a **fundamental democratisation of democracy** that allows overcoming the entrenched role of vested interests and political polarisation. As crucial steps, all STLs underscored the importance of broad societal dialogue and deemed it essential for enabling shared responsibility. Such a democratic culture is expected to contribute to the dismantling of unnecessary antagonisms and to the creation of conditions allowing today's democratic societies to break through the current glass ceiling to transformation.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES D3.3

The seven key objectives of Deliverable 3.3 as set out in the Grant Agreement, are to:

- 1) **Compile and synthesise insights from Stakeholder Thinking Labs** at national and European levels, to further develop understanding of structural change requirements for 1.5° lifestyles;
- 2) **Analyse and articulate the goals and responsibilities** of various stakeholders in driving and implementing necessary structural changes for achieving 1.5° lifestyle pathways across five case countries, EU, and globally;
- 3) Integrate and compare **country-specific findings** from the Stakeholder Thinking Labs, to outline structural goals and responsibilities towards 1.5° lifestyle implementation pathways;
- 4) **Provide a systematic examination of macro-level elements and influence factors** that hinder the transition to 1.5° lifestyles, filling a gap in previous research;
- 5) **Investigate how political, economic, societal, and technological structures interact with (un)sustainable lifestyles in key consumption areas**, including mobility, housing, nutrition, and leisure;
- 6) Focus on four crucial structural contexts – political, economic, technological, and societal structures – to **identify enablers and barriers for shifts towards 1.5° lifestyles**;
- 7) Provide the **basis and initial inputs for the development of guidelines for political strategies and communication on structural change**, laying the groundwork for further refinement in subsequent project phases and integrating findings with results from other work packages.

In this report we focus on addressing these seven key objectives, through the lens of three overarching research questions, to understanding the dynamics of structural barriers to 1.5° lifestyles and responsibility for change:

- *Firstly, we explore the factors that contribute to the phenomenon of “**sustained unsustainability**”, seeking to explain why deteriorating environmental and social conditions have not prompted significant changes to existing ways of life.*
- *Secondly, we focus on **delineating potential political and policy strategies**, including forging actor coalitions and alliances that could be capable of instigating transformations towards 1.5° lifestyles.*
- *Finally, we seek to discuss the issue of **responsibility for driving such transformation**, including discussions around the **web of actors** involved in shaping socio-political landscapes.*

1. INTRODUCTION

“Global warming, reaching 1.5°C in the near-term, would cause unavoidable increases in multiple climate hazards and present multiple risks to ecosystems and humans (very high confidence). The level of risk will depend on concurrent near-term trends in vulnerability, exposure, level of socioeconomic development and adaptation (high confidence). Near-term actions that limit global warming to close to 1.5°C would substantially reduce projected losses and damages related to climate change in human systems and ecosystems, compared to higher warming levels, but cannot eliminate them all (very high confidence)(...). There is a rapidly narrowing window of opportunity to enable climate resilient development (...) pathways are progressively constrained by every increment of warming, in particular beyond 1.5°C (...) and the ways in which development trajectories are shaped by equity, and social and climate justice. (very high confidence).”

(IPCC, 2022 13, 29)

The IPCC report (2022) underscores the biggest challenge of the 21st century: addressing the intertwined environmental, social, and economic crises. Urgent transformations to “1.5°C lifestyles” are needed: Ways of life that prioritise climate-friendly practices and ensure the long-term preservation of a global climate that supports a high quality of life, while staying within (or as close as possible to) the ~1.5°C warming limit and other planetary boundaries (Steffen et al., 2015; Richardson et al., 2023). The approach of the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project to “1.5° lifestyles” (Hirth et al., 2023, Newell et al., 2021), as well as other approaches such as “solidary modes of living” (Brand & Wissen, 2017), or “climate-friendly living” (Aigner et al., 2023), share a common awareness that societal transformations towards sustainable pathways should focus not primarily on individual behaviour change, but on the frameworks in which everyday life takes place - the structures in which behaviour is embedded (Hirth et al., 2023; Kreinin et al., forthcoming).

The frameworks within which daily lives take place in European countries are currently largely unsustainable and incompatible with enabling citizens to live 1.5° lifestyles. Recent scientific research challenges the claim that expansionary European economies can simply be greened, pointing out the system's reliance on growth, unequal resource transfers, promotion of consumerism and other structural barriers to change (IPCC, 2022; Keil & Kreinin, 2022; Vogel & Hickel, 2023; Dorninger et al., 2021; Kreinin et al., forthcoming; Eversberg et al., 2022; Petschow et al., 2018).

Research by Stephanie Cap et al. (2024) from the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project also shows that technological change alone is not enough to limit global warming to the Paris Agreement level of 1.5°C: The evolution of household footprints in 2030 and 2050, with a special focus on the EU27 countries, shows that while technological change can reduce emissions, lifestyle changes and demand reduction are critical to stay within or as close to 1.5°C as possible. This is depicted below in Figure 1. These results underscore the urgency for a paradigm shift in household lifestyles to achieve climate change mitigation goals outlined in the Paris Agreement amongst

EU Member States.

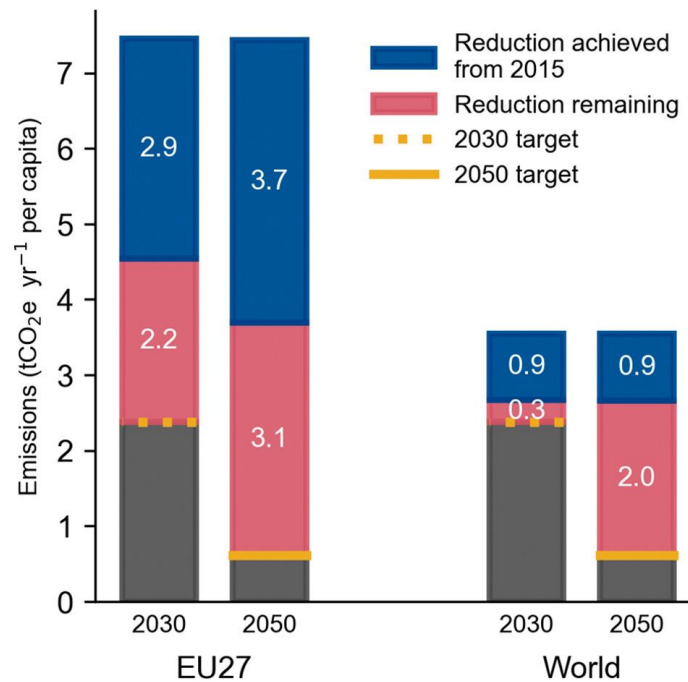


Figure 1: Total household footprint reductions achieved from 2015 through background system changes and emissions reduction remaining in 2030 and 2050 to be compatible with a 1.5°C target, global and EU27 average. (Cap et al., 2024).

In the transition to new economic and social systems that enable 1.5° lifestyles, societies face the challenge of overcoming various **networks of material, institutional and psychological infrastructures** (Hirth et al., 2023) that rely on and reinforce current "imperial lifestyles" - or unsustainable ways of living based on externalising social and environmental costs (Brand & Wissen, 2021; Eversberg, 2020). While policy and research propose steps for fair and socially beneficial emissions reductions, implementation has so far remained a problem, however. There exists a curious conundrum at the heart of environmental governance - both at the European level and amongst Member States: Despite increasing discussions around sustainability, there seem to be little real effort on the part of societies to become more sustainable, or to give up highly unsustainable ways of life (Blühdorn, 2022).

Against this background, the present report examines relevant dynamics in the European Union, in particular in **five European case study countries: Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Spain and Sweden**, exploring especially dynamics relating to (the diffusion of) responsibility and readiness for fundamental change in the quest for socio-ecological transformation towards enabling 1.5° lifestyles.

This report at hand, "Deliverable 3.3 - Goals and responsibility for structural change" is the culmination of efforts and previous work in the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project. It builds especially on "Deliverable 3.1 - First assessment of structural barriers and enablers", and "Deliverable 3.2 - Stakeholder perspectives on structural change," which focused on the first case country *Stakeholder Thinking Labs* (STL1). **Stakeholder Thinking Labs** are interactive, co-creative participatory workshops and a key part of the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project. Thinking Labs are designed to engage different stakeholders, including experts, NGOs and policymakers - or, in the case of *Citizen Thinking Labs*, citizens - in collaborative discussions and activities aimed at

generating insights, understanding, and knowledge on a particular topic or issue (Vadovics et al., forthcoming; Kreinin et al., forthcoming). These labs involve the exchange of and co-creation of ideas, perspectives and potential solutions by the participants (Vadovics et al., forthcoming).

The empirical research in this **report is based on two experimental Stakeholder Thinking Labs (STL)**: the “EU STL”, with a focus on European policy transformation, and the decentralised second case country STLs, or “STL2s”, which focused on structural change in the five case countries. The report aims to further analyse and contribute to our understanding of the structural changes necessary to foster 1.5° lifestyles, including responsibility for these changes. We focus on addressing three key questions to understanding the dynamics of structural barriers to 1.5° lifestyles and responsibility for change:

- Firstly, we explore the factors that contribute to the phenomenon of “sustained unsustainability”, seeking to **explain why deteriorating environmental and social conditions have not prompted significant changes to existing ways of life.**
- Secondly, we **identify key structural enablers to address sustained unsustainability**, with the aim to **delineate possible political and policy strategies, including concrete policy measures.**
- Thirdly, we seek to discuss the issue of **responsibility for driving such transformation**, including **forging actor coalitions and alliances that could be capable of instigating transformations** towards 1.5° lifestyles.

Next, section 2 will provide a brief overview of the conceptual framework and previous work which underlie the work in this report. In section 3, we will elaborate on the methods used in the EU STL and STL2s. In section 4, we will provide core findings and discuss these in more detail in section 5, where we also provide tentative conclusions and a brief outlook.

2. FRAMEWORK AND BACKGROUND

In the following, we will present the framework and previous work on which this Deliverable (3.3) builds, including the research in previous Deliverables (3.1 and 3.2)¹. Thereafter, we will provide further insights and background for our analysis into goals and responsibility for change, including through a reflection on recent literature about the phenomenon of sustained unsustainability and the glass ceiling to transformation hindering far reaching changes in dominant modes of production and consumption. These phenomena are related to questions of responsibility for change and how it is allocated.

2.1 HOW STRUCTURES ENABLE OR HINDER 1.5° LIFESTYLES – RESEARCH OUTCOMES FROM D3.1 AND D3.2

How do we understand structures? Why are they important? How can we categorise them?

We have previously argued that to deliver on the Paris Agreement and achieve an urgent, radical, and unprecedented transformation of lifestyles, a narrow focus on individual responsibility and change is insufficient, leading to ineffective governance strategies (Deliverable 3.1). This is because what lifestyles are adopted does not only depend on individual choices made by households in everyday life, but also and predominantly on political, economic, technological, and social structures in which households are embedded (Hirth et al., 2023). Drawing on critical social sciences, we have focused on analysing lifestyles in the context of the structural factors that shape the individual space for agency and choice with regard to sustainable consumption practices.

In this way, we have adopted a broader understanding of “lifestyles” than other approaches (Deliverable 3.1, Deliverable 3.2). For example, Brand and Wissen argue that the concept of “lifestyles” merely refers to individualised “moment(s) of freedom of choice” and suggest to use the term “mode of living” to signify societally structured ways of consuming (Brand & Wissen, 2021, 56), importantly, we use the term “lifestyles” to refer to ways of living as well as individual lifestyle choices within a set of societal structures.

In existing academic discussions, the diversity of relevant structures includes values and normative societal foundations, economic superstructures, policies and regulations, infrastructures, and the (non-)availability of appliances and technologies (Fuchs et al., 2021; Hirth et al., 2023). Since households have limited or no influence on these structures, transforming demand towards sustainable consumption also requires a comprehensive understanding of what the relevant structures are, the power relations that shape them and actors’ responsibilities to shift the norms and means of production and consumption towards systems that enable – or rather: assure – the mainstreaming of 1.5° lifestyles (Deliverable 3.1).

¹ Deliverable 3.1 “First assessment of structural barriers and enablers” (8th July 2022), and Deliverable 3.2 “Stakeholder Perspectives on Structural Change” (31st March 2023) are two confidential reports submitted to the European Commission only. In this chapter we highlight key outcomes from these deliverables, on which the work at hand was largely based.

As we have argued elsewhere (Deliverable 3.1, 3.2, Hirth et al., 2023), this already points to an ambiguity in our understanding of structures. While the common understanding of structures is rather static and they are primarily conceived as “order”, academic definitions go further and focus on the relations between structure and agency (e.g. Hayward & Lukes, 2008; Powell, 2013). While structures essentially limit agency and order behaviour, they do not fully determine actions. Structures can rather be understood as an outcome of a sum of actions over time, both in society and economy as well as material structures of the built lifeworld (Hayward & Lukes, 2008; Hirth et al., 2023). The power that characterises structures then lies in and unfolds through these structurally defined modes of action and their consistent repetition. Thus, structures specify a corridor for behaviour but are likewise influenced by agency which opens up scope for political interventions (Hayward & Lukes, 2008).

This is important to keep in mind when looking at the influence of structures on shifts to 1.5° lifestyles. We assume that structural categories such as social and economic conditions, legal situations, infrastructures and technologies influence and enable lifestyles and consumption practices and thus drive overconsumption in the Global North. In view of this plethora of structures, one could assume that actors' hands are tied. To avoid overestimating the influence of structures or of agency, therefore, it is important to consider their interdependence: all structures are generated through agency, all agential action stems from the operation of structures (Powell, 2013; Deliverable 3.1).

This raises the question of the extent of influence different structures have on a shift towards sustainable lifestyles. To that end, we developed a systematisation of structures that allows us to consider them according to different analytical categories (Deliverable 3.1). In our project, we started categorising structures according to the context, e.g. political, economic, technological, and societal, in which they mainly operate and influence how individuals relate to each other and to the material world. We also differentiated between **ideational and material structures** (e.g. Fuchs et al., 2019; Deliverable 3.1; Hirth et al., 2023). The ideational side comprises intangible factors like norms, values and narratives and their attribution of meaning to actions and actors (Fuchs et al., 2019). Regarding sustainable consumption, this could be ideas of well-being and prosperity or what is considered as “normal” production and consumption behaviour. On the material side, there are tangible factors such as technological or financial aspects, including financial resources of individuals but also corporate control over markets, for instance.

Furthermore, we developed a differentiation between deep and shallow factors to enable a more nuanced understanding of transformative change towards 1.5° lifestyles (Hirth et al., 2023; Deliverable 3.1).² In this conceptualisation, **shallow structures** are quite specific and can be addressed and changed by influential actors within current power relations. **Deep structures**, in contrast, are woven into the societal fabric in a broader and less discernible way, which makes it difficult to challenge them. However, it should not be assumed that changing deep factors is impossible nor that working toward changes in shallow factors is not

² It should be noted that these differentiations are analytical instruments that allow the generation of a more nuanced understanding. In reality, lines are blurred. For instance, political and economic structures tend to be closely intertwined. Similarly, most structures have both an ideational and a material dimension, which vary in dominance. Likewise, the depth or shallowness of structures is more of a continuum than a binary choice.

worthwhile.

To better understand the role of structures in shifting to 1.5° lifestyles, we further categorised them as either **barriers** or **enablers**. Combined with the former distinction, this resulted in four categories of structures depending on their extent and kind of influence on adopting 1.5° lifestyles. In this categorisation, we often juxtaposed the current state and hopes for future change, thus noting that barriers, if turned around, can become enablers (and vice versa). Still, considering both the hindering and enabling perspectives helps to arrive at a fuller understanding of the role of structural forces with respect to a shift to 1.5° lifestyles. Shallow structural barriers, then, are easily identifiable and directly impact behaviour, typically relating to immediate, tangible aspects. Examples include inadequate policies, pricing gaps and deficient technological infrastructures, which all impede sustainable living (Hirth et al., 2023). In contrast, deep structural barriers are ingrained in societies and wield a more extensive influence, typically linked to societal norms, values, and power dynamics. They usually are less visible, such as entrenched power imbalances, commitment to growth paradigms, and societal acceptance of high-consumption lifestyles (Hirth et al., 2023; Deliverable 3.1).

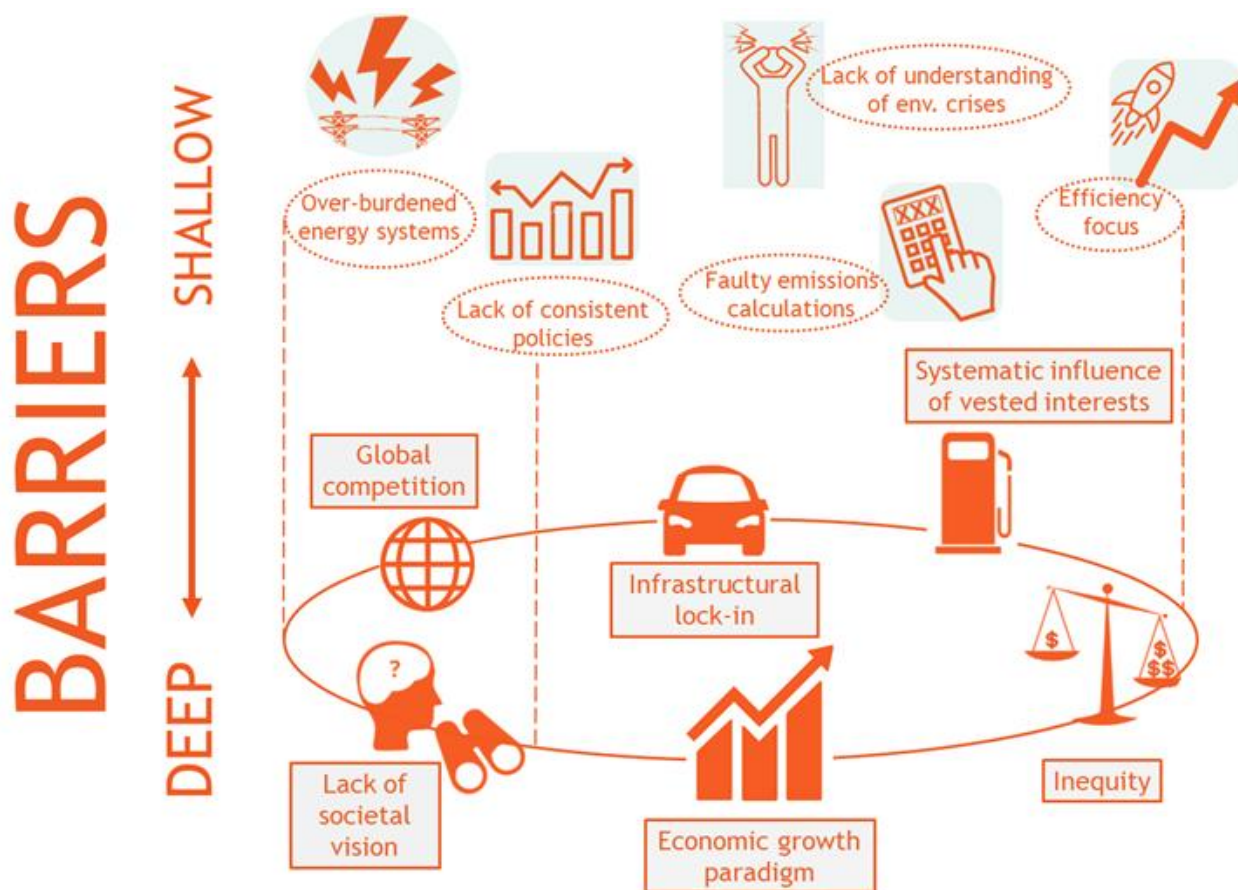


Figure 2: Deep and shallow barriers (Deliverable 3.1).

On the other side, shallow structural enablers like legislative measures, financial incentives, and sustainability criteria can facilitate 1.5° Lifestyles. Shallow enablers that are most commonly considered as mitigation measures tend to be economistic, mostly growth promoting, technocratic, and focus on actions and responsibility of individuals rather than collectively achieved systemic change. Although they can be effective in their totality, it seems unlikely that compliance with the 1.5° target is achievable through them alone, while their implementation

distracts from a fundamental systemic transformation (Hirth et al., 2023). Deep structural enablers, in contrast, would involve fundamental shifts in societal norms, economic value systems, and politico-economic power structures (Hirth et al., 2023).

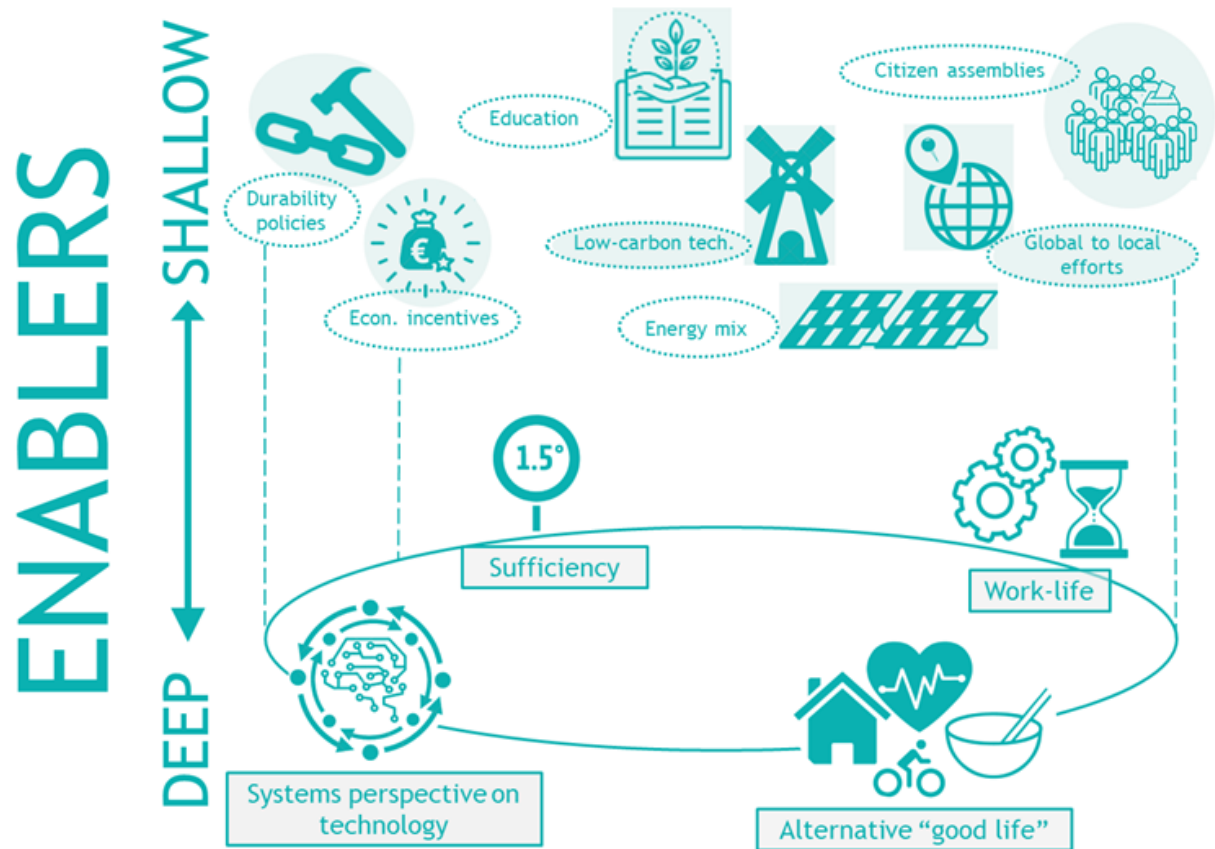


Figure 3: Deep and shallow enablers (Deliverable 3.1).

What are the most impactful structures when it comes to a 1.5° lifestyle transformation?

Deliverable 3.1, "First assessment of structural barriers and enablers", included a detailed overview of structural barriers derived on the basis of a literature review, a Delphi-ranking method, as well as expert interviews. By collating the results from these different methods, we developed a list of seven key structures needed to be overcome or strengthened for 1.5° lifestyles, as visible in Figure 4, below (Deliverable 3.1).

7 MOST IMPACTFUL STRUCTURES ENABLING 1.5° LIFESTYLES



1. Overcoming the economic growth paradigm institutionalised in social relations, political priorities and valuations (creating acceptance for some industries and technologies to vanish or shrink and controlling this transformation)

2. Creating consistent, predictable, integrated policies; where necessary, considering bans/strong disincentives on extremely polluting goods/services and advertising (private jets/space travel, frequent flying, multiple home ownership, SUVs); do not focus on behaviour of individuals alone for lifestyle change



3. Overcoming the systematic influence of vested interests, including fossil-fuel incumbency (backed by powerful political actors/national geopolitical interests and underlying business models), retail corporations (especially in food sector), private media

4. Giving economic incentives and internalising environmental costs in prices (eco-social taxation/subsidies, e.g. lower tax on labour, higher tax on emissions/energy use); (reliable regulation for) private investment in sustainable solutions



5. Strengthening alternative narratives and measurements of (individual and collective) wellbeing and a good life

6. Overcoming inequity in resources, resource use and power



7. Integrating information and skills about sustainable lifestyles in school curricula and **education**

Figure 4: Seven Key Structures for 1.5° lifestyles.

The first three structures identified – the economic growth paradigm, inequities in resource access, usage, and power, along with the entrenched influence of vested interests – particularly elucidate why, despite escalating ecological and social pressures, a shift towards 1.5° lifestyle societies has not yet achieved the required momentum. The economic growth paradigm, deeply embedded in social interactions, political priorities, and valuations, emerges as the most consequential barrier. Experts assert that transforming the economic framework is pivotal, far outweighing superficial technological solutions. However, such a transformation necessitates addressing deep-rooted inequalities across various scales and rectifying imbalanced relations between the Global North and South. These systemic changes, deemed essential by experts, pose significant challenges to existing power dynamics, suggesting that more radical lifestyle changes will require confronting vested interests from sectors like private media, retail (notably in the food industry), and the fossil fuel industry, which enjoy

robust support from powerful political figures and business models.

The remaining four structures encompass economic incentives and the internalisation of environmental costs into pricing, the development of consistent policies, educational reforms, and the promotion of alternative narratives of well-being and the good life. While these structures could also be framed as barriers, they serve especially effectively as catalysts that facilitate the structural transformations needed for a 1.5° shift. Implementing economic incentives and reflecting environmental costs in pricing might involve eco-social tax reforms and subsidies, such as reducing labour taxes or increasing taxes on emissions and energy consumption, alongside private investments in sustainable solutions supported by regulatory frameworks. Crafting consistent, predictable, and holistic policies could entail imposing bans and disincentives on highly polluting goods and services, including frequent flying and owning multiple homes, while avoiding an exclusive emphasis on individual behavioural change. Educational reforms should aim to embed knowledge and skills for sustainable living within school, training, and educational programs. Crucially, a successful transition also depends on reinforcing alternative narratives and metrics for individual and collective well-being, offering a vision of the good life beyond material consumption.

The exploration of structural barriers and enablers in Deliverable 3.1 highlighted that especially deep structures underlying and shaping current lifestyles require more attention in the political debate. Compared to more shallow, specific structures, such as concrete policies, these structures are broader, less discernible, and difficult to change within current power relations (Hirth et al., 2023). Yet, they are extremely impactful. Indeed, the analysis presented in Deliverable 3.1 showed that current measures of climate governance and mitigation will fail if deeper structures are not addressed. Changing these structures requires similarly deep interventions and is likely not possible without political and societal conflict.

Initial analysis of actor responsibilities for transforming towards enabling 1.5° lifestyles

Using the 22 expert interviews gathered in the initial part of considering how to overcome structural barriers to enabling 1.5° lifestyles, Deliverable 3.1 includes an initial consideration of actor responsibilities and influence maps. These focused on Structure #1, “The economic growth paradigm”, Structure #2, “Lack of policies” and Structure #3, “Vested interests”. The aim of the exercise was to make an initial attempt to approximate and compare the role of different structures and to visualise the relevant relations (Deliverable 3.1).

The figures were compiled by help of the expert interviews (Interview IDs are included in the descriptive bubbles of the figures for reference). The data from the expert interviews was then analysed with respect to statements about power relations or actor responsibilities. The identified actors as well as the context in which these actors are relevant was then put in relation to that structure, indicating that the named actors have a non-negligible influence. The strength of the arrows used to signal the difference in perceived levels of influence.

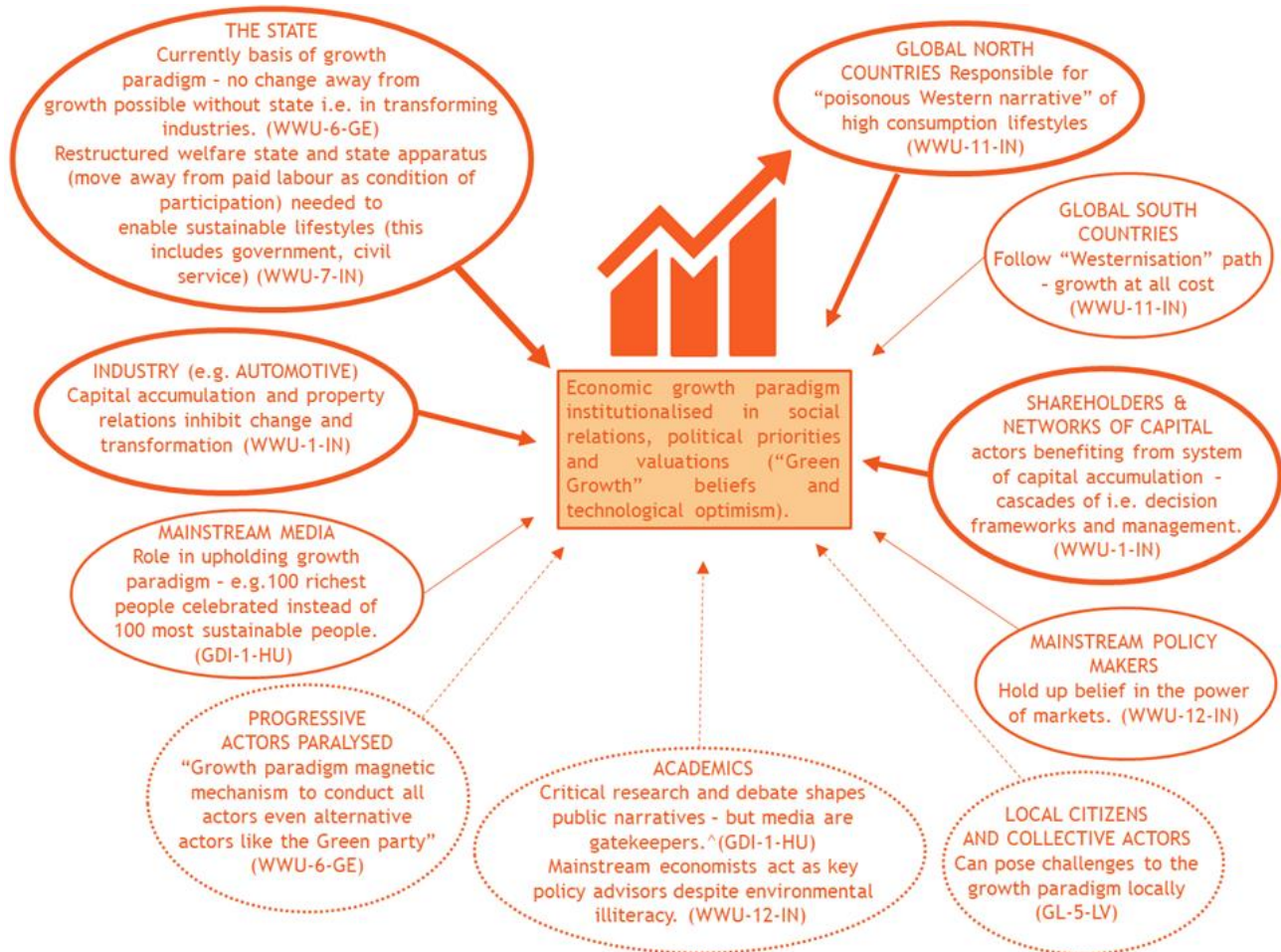


Figure 5: Actors influence on the structure of the economic growth paradigm (Deliverable 3.1).

Figure 5, above, illustrates how actors, ranging from global powers to local communities, influence the perpetuation or questioning of the economic growth model. Dominant Global North countries promote growth-oriented, carbon-heavy consumption, echoed by less wealthy Global South nations striving for rapid growth. The state, specific industries, shareholders, and capital holders also contribute significantly to upholding the growth imperative. Mainstream media and policymakers serve as conduits for growth promotion, while ostensibly progressive entities can still be swayed by growth-centric ideology. Although academics and grassroots movements may offer alternative perspectives, their impact is often limited, hindered by media gatekeeping and the influence of mainstream economic thought on policy advice.

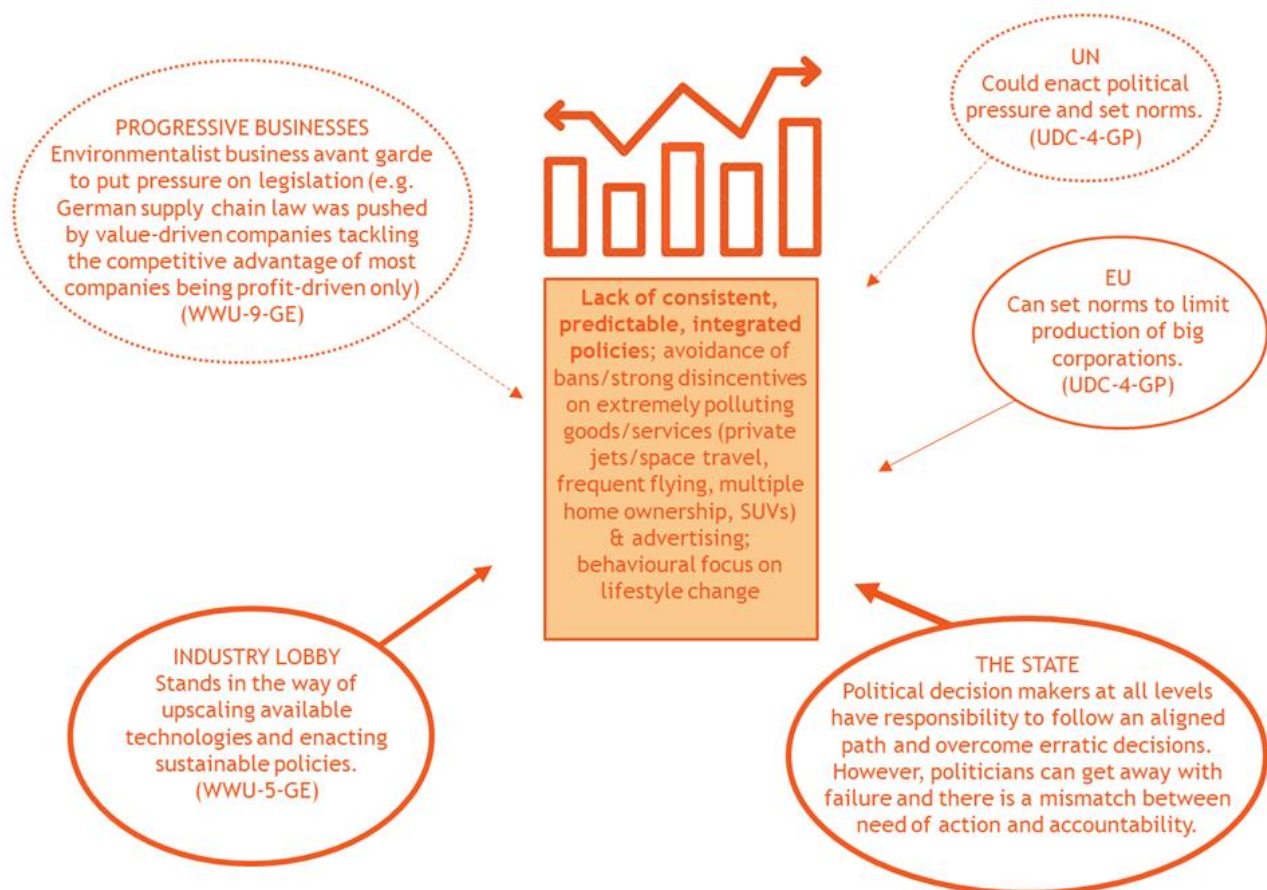


Figure 6: Actor influence on the lack of consistent policies (Deliverable 3.1).

Figure 6 highlights the absence of consistent policies, leading to a reluctance to implement bans or strong disincentives in today's political climate, instead focusing on behavioural lifestyle changes. The state and current governments wield significant influence over policies, but they may be swayed by industry lobbyists maintaining the status quo. Supranational bodies like the EU and the UN shape norms, but their organisational complexity may dilute their impact compared to national policymakers. Despite industry resistance, progressive businesses, especially when united, can exert pressure on the state to enact more favourable policies, such as those supporting values-driven companies.

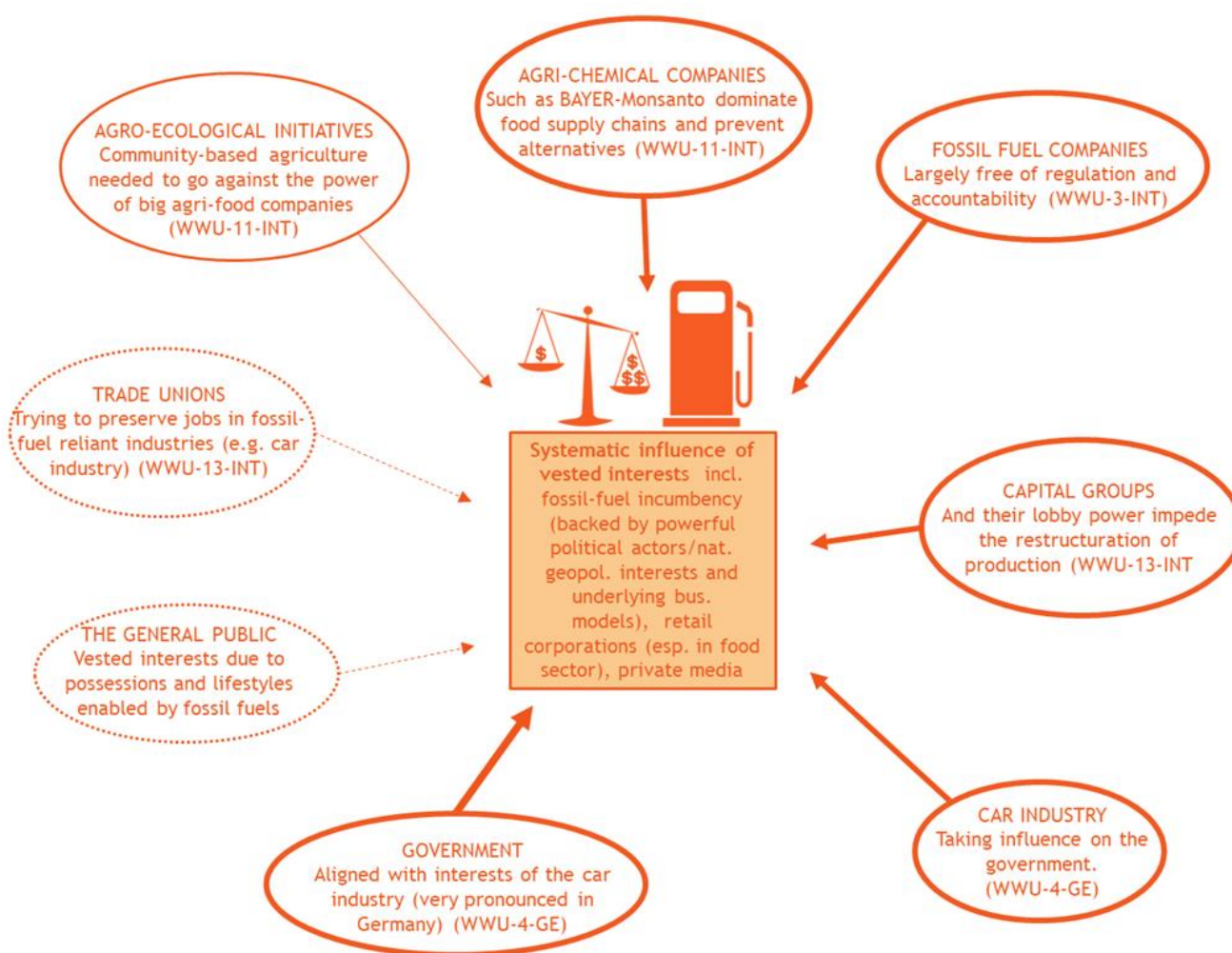


Figure 7: Actor influence on the systematic influence of vested interests (Deliverable 3.1).

Figure 7 illustrates the significant influence of vested interests, including governments, large companies, capital groups and sectors such as the car industry. While some actors, such as the general public, have vested interests through lifestyles dependent on fossil fuels, their influence tends to be diffuse. Trade unions, while potentially progressive, often prioritise the preservation of jobs in the fossil fuel industry, in line with the interests of sectors such as the car industry. In addition, agro-ecological initiatives in agriculture and food are challenging the practices of large agro-chemical companies, although these companies tend to have greater resources to pursue their own interests.

What is needed to overcome the seven most impactful structures in different consumption areas?

As a next step in the analysis, the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project carried out the first of two rounds of Stakeholder Thinking Labs (STL1) in the project's five case countries Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Spain, and Sweden with diverse groups of actors, to co-create pathways towards overcoming the seven key structural barriers and enhancing the structural enablers. The aim was to jointly derive concrete steps towards a world in which 1.5° lifestyles are structurally possible and facilitated.

The STL1 labs were designed around the Climate Puzzle and the backcasting method, in order

to elicit original and out-of-the-box thinking on how to overcome or strengthen deep societal structures, which have inhibited action on the multiple environmental crises until now (Köves, 2015; Deliverable 3.2; Kreinin et. al., forthcoming).

The stakeholders interestingly came up with similar themes and steps in STL1s. These consisted largely of either strong policy “sticks” in form of bans or taxes for unwanted behaviours or outcomes, and policy “carrots” for good behaviour as well as better public funding for basic services. This shows, perhaps, that such strong interventions are more acceptable among stakeholders than typically considered in the political realm, where they would be met with doubts regarding the feasibility of their adoption and implementation, if suggested. The stakeholders overall noted that specific steps often referred to overcoming several structures at the same time. For example, developing more alternative and communal forms of housing relates to several structures. Such communal forms of housing enable lifestyles beyond the growth orientation. However, they also contribute to changing narratives of a good life and may help to reduce inequities (Deliverable 3.2).

Interestingly, there were also country differences between the steps suggested by the stakeholders, likely due to the different mix of business and policymakers present in the labs in the different case countries as well as wider cultural and political differences. Interestingly, the Swedish stakeholders suggested some of the most out of the box and far-reaching steps. Spanish stakeholders included more market-focused steps, possibly due to the large contingent of business representatives. Steps by Hungarian stakeholders were often focused on issues of political implementation and governance, while steps from Latvian stakeholders focused more on the municipality level, again perhaps due to the particular background of the stakeholders (Deliverable 3.2).

Although the participants suggested many different steps and policy tools, the discussions struggled with developing strategies for implementing these in practice. The steps that participants came up with in the four consumption fields across the five case countries also underline the difficulty of bridging the space between individual (household) actions and broad/deep societal structures. Further, it became clear that steps might also contradict each other, for example 15-minute settlements might not be compatible with green spaces for everybody (Deliverable 3.2).

Regarding structure #1, “Overcoming the economic growth paradigm”, interventions targeted changes in production patterns, resource allocation, taxation, consumption habits, and narratives. The steps were divided into two categories: making degrowth options more attractive or growth-intensive options more costly, and addressing beliefs that alternatives to growth-based modes of social organisation are impossible.

For “Creating consistent policies”, structure #2, stakeholders considered how to overcome a narrow, silo-focus in policy-making, and – seeing consumption across multiple fields as a whole – highlighted a need for integrated systems thinking across these fields. At the same time, planning and public policy that considers multiple needs at the same time (housing, mobility, nutrition, leisure) can ensure a more sustainable and fair meeting of needs across consumption fields in a holistic way. Most steps focused on specific policies, taxes, bans, or subsidies, while 30 pertained to governance, democracy, indexes, measurement, and

monitoring. The 142 steps varied across consumption fields, with some cross-cutting policy steps like the 15-minute city.

For structure #3, "Overcoming systematic influence of vested interests", stakeholders suggested steps to counter private companies' influence in the governance of consumption. Steps included influencing public narratives through campaigns, ad bans, and regulations on lobbying. Stakeholders also proposed policies on governance, civil society, and countervailing advocacy groups to balance the influence of vested interests. Overall strategies included limiting regulations and making connections between vested interests and policy-makers more transparent. Environmental NGOs were identified as key actors to oppose those opposing 1.5° lifestyles.

Stakeholders developed steps for the "Internalisation of eco-social costs in prices", structure #4, suggesting making emission-intensive food expensive (a more general proposal), as well as a tax on square metres per person to reduce housing emissions (a concrete measure).

For "Alternative narratives and measurements of a good life", structure #5, stakeholders suggested steps such as new alternative story time, comics, films, and videos. Daily press conferences were suggested to create urgency around climate heating, while working time reduction was considered a key policy to allow for engagement with environmental concerns and show positive welfare effects of a low-consumption 1.5° lifestyle.

Stakeholders developed steps for "Overcoming inequity in resources, resource use and power," structure #6, including addressing wealth and access inequities within societies and between Global North and South. In this context, stakeholders targeted knowledge and information sharing, access to space, leisure and mobility services, modernization, and affordable food.

"Regarding structure #7, "Integrating information and skills in education", stakeholders proposed measures for sustainability education and suggested interventions to enable critical thinking and skills-adaptation, address gaps in sustainable education provisioning, build a common culture of sustainability, and identify enabling factors. Reforming school curricula and establishing lifelong learning institutions were seen as necessary with respect to all consumption fields. Stakeholders also emphasised the need for coherent policies to support education efforts, linking structure #7 with structure #2 (Deliverable 3.2).

Deep and self-reinforcing barriers currently prevent mainstreaming 1.5° lifestyles

The knowledge and insights gained as part of Deliverable 3.1 and 3.2 suggest that upscaling 1.5° lifestyles for effective climate mitigation requires a much more concerted regulative effort powerful enough to

- 1) remove numerous structural barriers, especially deep ideational and material ones, which, if unaddressed, impede changes at the necessary scale,
- 2) provide decisive ideological and financial support for the already existing enablers, in the form alternative narratives, measurements of societal success, practices, and technologies that would enable 1.5° lifestyles if they were elicited from the societal niches, but also
- 3) enact future social innovations (with or without technology) imaginative and impactful enough to decarbonise society at its very roots (Deliverable 3.1, 3.2).

Our research has highlighted that there is broad agreement amongst the experts and stakeholders that the economic growth paradigm and associated narratives of green growth as well as technological fixes are at the centre of structural barriers. These are deeply embedded in the politico-economic organisation of society, its social relations, political priorities and actors' valuations. The dominance of these structures exacerbates the lack of understanding for the severity of the crisis and for societal visions of low-carbon lifestyles, but also favours efficiency improvements over sufficiency approaches: These structures also impede the adoption of alternative measures of well-being and work-life balance that are essential for reducing carbon-intensive consumption. In addition, inappropriate policies, heavily influenced by actors with vested interests in the current organisation of society, perpetuate carbon-intensive practices.

Overcoming these barriers is inextricably linked to addressing inequalities, both within societies and between the global North and South. A just transition and ensuring equitable access to resources and energy to meet basic needs while staying within planetary limits is also needed to gain societal approval for wider changes. For this, also promoting narratives that highlight the social benefits of a transition to sustainable lifestyles is needed. Achieving any 1.5° lifestyle transformation will require challenging existing structures of privilege and power, also in considering responsibility for change (Deliverable 3.1, 3.2; Hirth et al., 2023).

In the following section, we will delve into pivotal research in the social science literature concerning the responsibility for instigating change to provide the conceptual basis for the key findings of Deliverable D3.3 presented in Chapter 4.

2.2 SUSTAINED UNSUSTAINABILITY, THE GLASS CEILING TO TRANSFORMATION AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGE

In the context of deepening ecological crises, **responsibility** for driving change towards enabling 1.5° lifestyles is a critical issue. One could assume that, in face of the aggravating ecological crises, sustainability may be emerging as a new state imperative. Citizens' increasing awareness of environmental degradation and social injustices could lead to demands for dedicated state action.

The concept of the "glass ceiling" (Hausknost, 2017; 2020) contradicts this assumption, as it highlights the dilemma modern democratic states are facing. As modern welfare states, they are responsible for reconciling and maintaining economic growth and material well-being of their citizens. Therefore, lifestyles with high levels of consumption, and thus material throughput, are inextricably linked to notions of wellbeing and personal development and continue to legitimise and stabilise modern societies (Blühdorn, 2019; Buch-Hansen, 2018). Yet, these overconsumptive lifestyles are the root cause for structural unsustainability (Wiedmann et al., 2020). They are interlinked with material, technological, institutional and mental infrastructures that are both dependent on and reproducing the externalisation of their social and environmental costs (Lessenich, 2019). This constellation of unsustainable lifestyles and their embeddedness in infrastructures in the high-income countries of the Global North has been described as "imperial mode of living" (Brand & Wissen, 2017). As these lifestyles are regarded as norm of well-being, a socio-ecological transformation aiming at sufficiency and economic degrowth for absolute reductions in resource consumption would deeply question hegemonic ideas of a good life and oppose the state's functional requirements of securing accumulation and material prosperity (Hausknost, 2020).

Dealing with this dilemma is further impeded by a structural separation between a public sphere and a private economic sphere in capitalist societies - the latter, however, accounts for the majority of societal environmental impact through production processes, technical progress and individual as well as industrial consumption (Pichler et al., 2018). This very separation delegitimises democratic-decision making concerning the private sphere and its unsustainable structures and leaves it to individual choice (op.cit.). Consequently, more transformative and radical approaches have been sidelined by weak sustainability measures fostering marginal changes but stabilising the growth paradigm by negating the inconsistency of growth and sustainability - a situation of "sustained unsustainability" (Blühdorn, 2022).

To move past the glass ceiling of transformation and sustained unsustainability, a strong increase in public support for a sustainability imperative that challenges the growth imperative in democratic discourse would be needed. It further implies the combination of deliberative and agonistic elements of politics. "Deliberation embodies ideals of reasoned problem solving; agonism is a form of competition or oppositional clash in which participants seek to win or gain advantage in power struggle" (Chambers, 2024: 84). This apparently stark contrast has recently often been smoothed out, acknowledging political disagreement as a constitutive part of democratic politics and of deliberation. As Machin puts it, "[d]isagreement in environmental politics allows alternative futures to be imagined, articulated, negotiated, and demanded, and it prevents the foreclosure of political questions around climate change"

(2023, 849), while Mouffe underlines that only political discord allows to reconfigure prevailing power structures (2005, 21). These considerations suggest that breaking the glass ceiling of transformation is possible if systemic, society-wide deliberation, such as suggested by Mansbridge et al. (2012), consciously addresses and works with political disagreement instead of concealing it through a superficial consensus-orientation. As pointed out above, however, such trends are not in sight, and how to get there remains unclear since establishing framework conditions for sustainable modes of life require state action which has to be demanded from the state and democratically legitimised.

This leads to the question who is responsible to bring about change. As the state is under pressure to sustain economic growth, well-being and satisfaction of its citizens as well as life-supporting environmental conditions all at the same time, it shifts responsibility for sustaining them away. The notion of “organised irresponsibility” (Beck, 1986; 1988) focuses on the systemic causes for the disparity between communicated commitments to sustainability and the absence of dedicated and effective action. In modern societies, threats are managed (and externalised) by economic and bureaucratic institutions and hence increasingly perceived as non-existent (Beck, 1986; 1988; Kreinin et al., forthcoming2). These structures treat human-nature interactions and interrelations as separate entities, although to face the challenges of the Anthropocene a holistic consideration of their complexity is needed (Gumbert, 2022). Yet, the belief in the redeeming virtue of coordinating responsibility among actors is problematic, as shifting responsibility between state institutions, business sector, social movements and individuals as consumers (or the international sphere) causes a collective evasion of responsibility (Drews, 2018; Gumbert, 2022; Kreinin et al., forthcoming2).

Part of this process is the shift of responsibility from states to their citizens under neoliberal governance, so called “responsibilisation” (Mustalahti & Agrawal, 2020; Pyysiäinen & Guilfoyle, 2017; Soneryd & Ugglå, 2015). Since the end of the 20th century, a new paradigm of responsibility, the preventive paradigm of the neoliberal, has emerged, where responsibility for social and environmental problems is ascribed to individuals while the role of the state increasingly lies in helping citizens to be self-responsible individuals, instead of taking direct action (Peeters, 2019). Even though individuals have little control over the systemic outcomes of environmental crises, they are held responsible by the (consumption) choices they make (Maniates, 2001). Yet, framing social change as led by demand does not take into account the structures that create demand and restrict choice – it consequently limits the probability of taking up effective measures to tackle complex problems. Such tendencies might be addressed through a new culture of political discourse that includes calls for agonistic and disruptive politics alongside systemic deliberation (Machin 2023, 861).

Together, these different views on responsibility provide a more complicated picture when it comes to “mainstreaming 1.5° lifestyles”, or in other words to achieving the framework conditions that enable 1.5°-aligned everyday lives.

2.3 THE ROLE OF HEGEMONIC NARRATIVES

In the effort for achieving a transformative shift towards 1.5°C lifestyles, narratives, particularly those centred around redefining the concept of the Good Life, emerged as pivotal tools for instigating profound societal change – a lack of societally accepted, 1.5° lifestyles-aligned narratives of the “good life” is considered as one of the seven most important key structural barriers to change (Deliverable 3.1, 3.2). Narratives, while invisible ideational structures, are key to shaping perceptions, values, and aspirations essential for consumption behaviour and sustainable living (Hirth et al., 2023; Fuchs et al., 2021). For this end, identifying narratives for change played a particular role during the EU STL. Hindering impacts of hegemonic narratives were also addressed in the second round of STLs. In the following, we will therefore briefly explain the difference between narratives and stories, and how they intertwine to shape our understanding of the world around us – and possibilities for change, as is visible in Figure 8, below:

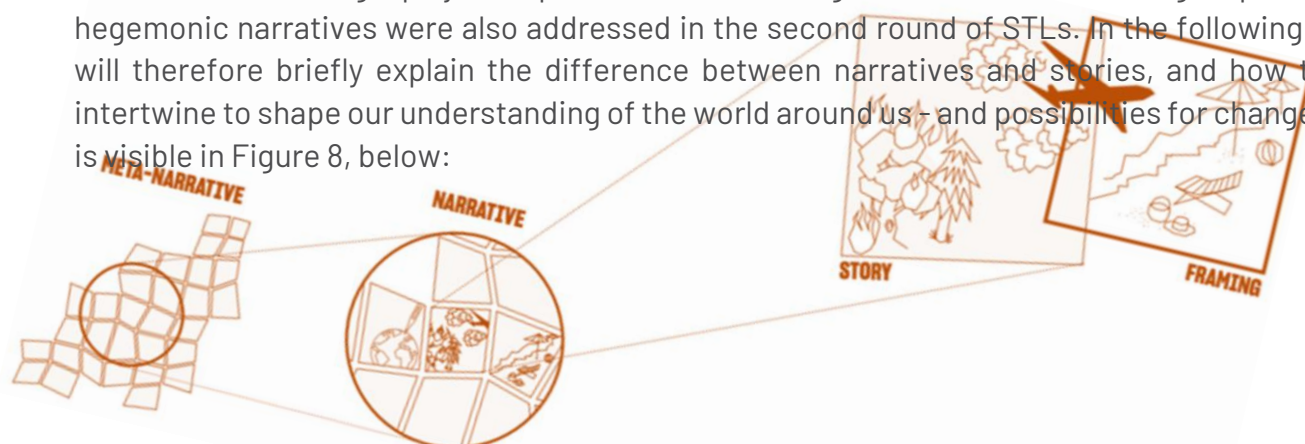


Figure 8: Reframing Aviation: (Meta)Narrative, Story and Framing (Grebenjak et al., 2022).

Narratives encompass ideas, systems of beliefs, values and interpretations and weave together seemingly disparate elements into cohesive frameworks of meaning that shape our understanding of the world. Unlike stories, which have a clear beginning, middle and end, narratives are fluid and dynamic, constantly evolving in response to changing contexts and perspectives. In the realm of social and political discourse, narratives are not merely passive constructs, but active agents of persuasion and power. They operate at a visceral level, resonating with deep values and emotions (Grebenjak et al., 2022). By lending meaning to given social orders and political decisions, they serve as structures of legitimation (Hermwille, 2016).

Stories, by contrast, offer concrete manifestations of narrative themes, providing context, texture and emotional resonance. Through characters, conflicts and resolutions, stories distil complex narratives into digestible forms that invite empathy, reflection and engagement (Grebenjak et al., 2022). The relationship between narratives and stories is symbiotic, each informing the other. Stories breathe life into narratives, infusing them with humanity, empathy and relevance. Conversely, narratives provide a framework for interpreting and contextualising individual stories, giving them meaning and significance (Chlopczyk, 2019).

The most important and deeply rooted narratives can be described as meta-narratives. An example for that is the meta-narrative of progress – the widespread belief in the inexorable march of human civilization towards enlightenment and prosperity. Rooted in notions of technological innovation and economic growth, this narrative underpins modern societies, shaping policies, behaviours and aspirations. Despite mounting evidence of its limitations and contradictions, the narrative of progress persists, perpetuated through cultural norms and institutional structures (Grebenjak et al., 2022).

Framing, another essential concept in regard to narratives, involves the selective presentation of information within interpretive frameworks. Thereby, communicators shape perceptions, influence attitudes and guide behaviour. Whether through language, imagery or metaphor, framing operates at a subconscious level, activating cognitive patterns and emotional associations that shape our understanding of reality. However, framing is not a neutral endeavour; it reflects underlying power dynamics, privileging certain perspectives while marginalising others. In contexts of social and political struggle, framing becomes a battleground where competing narratives vie for dominance, often reinforcing existing hierarchies of privilege and oppression (Reinsborough & Canning, 2017).

In regard to consumption, dominant hegemonic narratives contribute to the normalisation of unsustainable behaviours. Cultural, economic and social contexts shape dominant narratives in different countries and regions resulting in different manifestations of specific, history and context-dependent structural barriers to change. However, there are overarching patterns reflected in shared narrative elements. This can be illustrated by existing hegemonic stories, e.g. around car-based mobility in the EU (CSS, 2024): These stories and related images are centred around individual, mostly male, car owners and depict sleek, powerful cars speeding along open roads or luxury vehicles, drawing on notions of freedom, adventure, convenience, success, status and wealth. Manifested in car use, these values and ideas are compromised by traffic congestion and related frustration caused by limited road capacity as well as by conflicts arising between personal freedom and collective well-being, suggesting that restrictions on car use impede individual autonomy. Consequently, government regulations or environmental activists perceived to limit car usage are portrayed as villains. Often, stories hint at a future of increased convenience and luxury through advancements in automotive technology, such as self-driving cars or electric vehicles. This is connected to a deep belief that technological progress will eventually solve environmental and congestion problems associated with car dependency. There are also mostly implicit assumptions about car culture being superior or more desirable compared to alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling, or public transit. Overall, the underlying assumption is that car ownership is essential for personal mobility and societal progress, perpetuating the notion that economic growth relies on increased car usage.

In the following section, we will delve into the methods used in the EU STL and the STL2 labs. We will return to the topic of narratives and the story-based strategy in the Discussion section, where new European “narratives of the good life” will be the focus of discussion.

3. METHODS

The methodology used for this study is based on a multi-step process, employing different co-creative “Thinking Labs”. Thinking Labs, as explained in the previous section, are a participatory workshop or interactive session, designed to engage different stakeholders, including experts, NGOs and policymakers, in collaborative discussions and activities aimed at generating insights, understanding and knowledge on a particular topic or issue. These labs involve the co-creation of ideas, perspectives and potential solutions among participants, fostering dialogue and the exchange of different viewpoints (Vadovics et al., forthcoming).

This report builds on previous work in the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project, especially on Deliverables 3.1 and 3.2, as discussed in the preceding Introduction and Framework sections. Figure 9 below shows a graphic representation of the cumulative multi-step methodological approach.

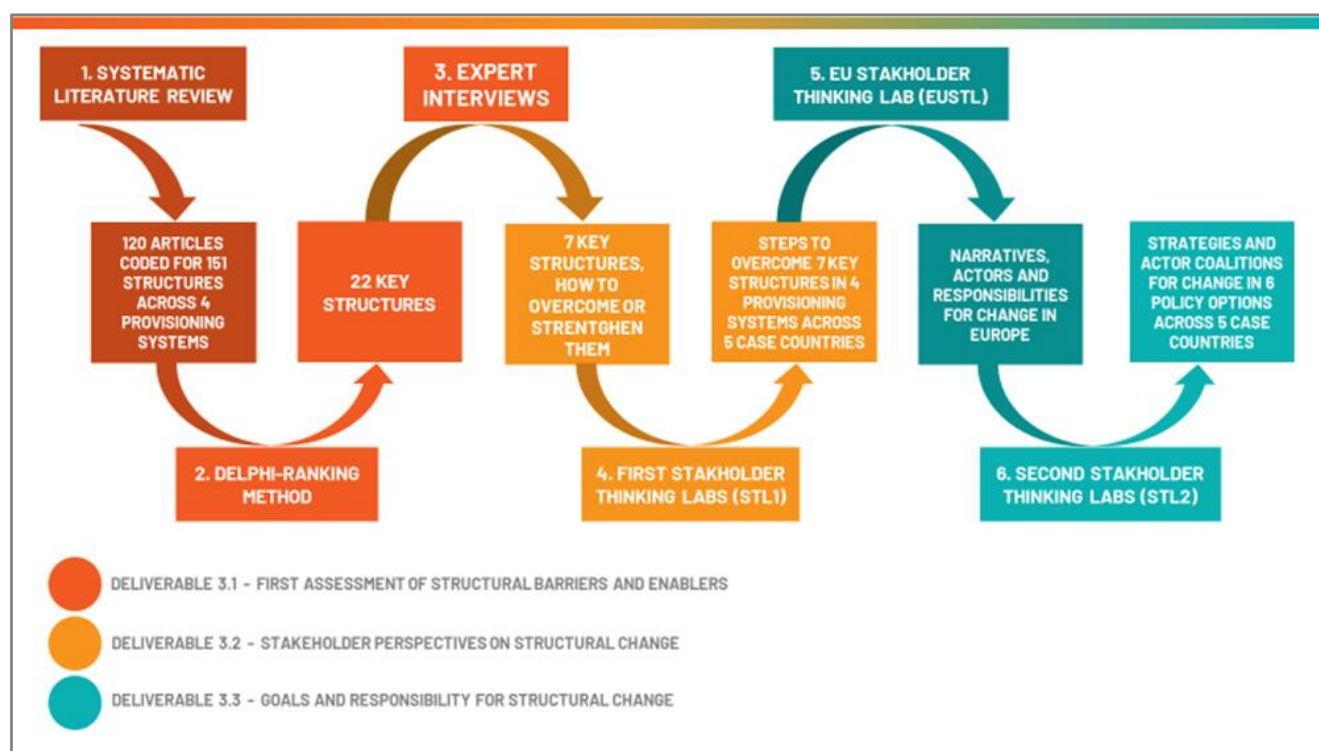


Figure 9: Graphic representation of the multi-step methodology employed in Deliverable 3.1, 3.2 and Deliverable 3.3 (the report at hand)

As Figure 9 above shows, this report builds on a large systematic literature review, a Delphi-ranking process, expert interviews, and the first Stakeholder Thinking Lab (with participants in five EU case countries) which employed backcasting to consider how to overcome key barriers in four provisioning systems.

The “Stakeholder Thinking Lab” (STL) designs used in this report (Steps 5 and 6 in Figure 9) were tailored to specific objectives and different levels of engagement:

1. **EU STL:** The Stakeholder Thinking Lab conducted at the European level (Step 5 in Figure 9) provided a platform for extensive dialogue and collaboration between different stakeholders active for transformation in Brussels, focusing more broadly on narratives and responsibilities for change in the European political landscape.

2. **STL2:** The second round of Stakeholder Thinking Labs in the case countries (Step 6 in Figure 9) delved deeper into specific research questions relevant to structural change, carrying out dialogues³ between stakeholders from different backgrounds on six selected topics (reducing meat consumption, reducing travel flights, introducing an upper limit to residential floor space, reducing ownership and use of cars, work time reduction, and regulations for sustainable/sufficiency-oriented business models).

STLs are innovative workshops designed to bring together a diverse range of local stakeholders to address and solve pressing challenges hindering transformational change (Kreinin et al., forthcoming; Lehner et al., forthcoming; Vadovics et al., forthcoming). By fostering collaborative exploration and co-creative activities, these experimental labs aim to harness the collective wisdom and expertise of participants, including community members, policymakers, academics, industry representatives, and civil society leaders. Through interactive exercises and facilitated discussions, STLs encourage participants to share their perspectives, insights, and experiences related to the challenges under consideration. The collaborative exchange of ideas not only deepens understanding but also generates innovative solutions and strategies. Thus, STLs represent dynamic platforms for experimentation and learning, and co-creation.

Next, we provide a more detailed overview of the methodologies used in the labs, starting with the EU STL and then focusing on STL2. We outline the frameworks, processes and considerations that guided the design, implementation and analysis of these initiatives. The methodological approaches underpinning these efforts contextualise the subsequent discussions and findings presented in Deliverable 3.3.

3.1 EU STAKEHOLDER THINKING LAB (EU STL)

The EU Stakeholder Thinking Lab (EU STL) was a one-off event held in Brussels on September 15th, 2023. The Thinking Lab adopted co-creative methods tailored to gather insights from European stakeholders. It began with hands-on power and actor mapping in the EU context, followed by a focus on political narrative building, as a way to build political and policy strategies. This approach aimed to understand the dynamics influencing a 1.5° transformation agenda in the European Union.

The EU STL was used to gain insights on deep material and ideational structural change towards a 1.5° transformation at the EU level. The event consisted of three parts: In the first part, participants assessed the attitudes of relevant actors towards post-growth transformations and their influence and resources. In the second part, participants co-created policy narratives towards a 1.5° transformation. In the third part, as a synthesis, (story-based) political strategies were developed towards such a 1.5° transformation.

³ While we aimed for a discussion between three stakeholders, sometimes only two were present due to short notice cancellations caused by health problems, while in a few cases more than three experts participated.



In the face of rising climate-sceptic ideologies in Europe (Blühdorn, 2022), the aim was to consider practical political strategies that prioritise shared material security and confront dominant narratives in the key sustainability fields of mobility, nutrition and work.

Background and framing

As Figure 9 showed, the EU STL built on previous work and outcomes in the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project. One of the key outcomes of Deliverable 3.1 and 3.2 were the seven key structural barriers to a 1.5° lifestyle transformation. The majority of interviewed European experts agreed that the “economic growth paradigm” presents the biggest and most important obstacle to transformative change towards enabling 1.5° lifestyles (Deliverable 3.1; Kreinin et al., forthcoming). Both Deliverable 3.1 and 3.2 further highlighted that the “economic growth paradigm” is also held up and strengthened by many other overarching structures, including actors of “vested interests” benefiting from the status quo (structure #3) as well as hegemonic unsustainable narratives of a good life and a lack of 1.5°-lifestyle aligned societal narratives (structure #5), which also act as a barrier to enabling deeper policy changes (structures #2 and #4).

The focal point of the EU STL was thus on overcoming current *sustained unsustainability* linked to three key structures that demand our attention and scrutiny in the EU policy-field:



THE ECONOMIC GROWTH PARADIGM: Emphasising continuous expansion as a measure of success, the prevailing economic growth paradigm is central to the challenge. This paradigm, deeply ingrained in our societal structures, has contributed to a disregard for environmental considerations and social equity in the pursuit of financial interest.



VESTED INTERESTS: Powerful entities with a stake in maintaining the status quo actively resist shifts toward sustainable practices and a wider structural transformation, influencing policy and politics, and perpetuating environmental degradation and social inequality.



THE POWER OF HEGEMONIC NARRATIVES: The influence of hegemonic narratives that shape societal perceptions and norms, further complicates our path to sustainability. Perpetuated by those in positions of power, narratives can reinforce unsustainable practices and hinder the adoption of alternative ways of life.

The thinking lab method was used to explore the shared knowledge and expertise of those in the EU-policy field active for change, to think about how “the economic growth paradigm” (structure #1) could be challenged via different actor coalitions for change, and which vested interests would be against transformation (structure #3), as well as which policy narratives at the European level could help challenge hegemonic narratives (#5) - with the end goal of enabling policy transformation (structures #2 and #4) via gaining democratic legitimacy for more transformative policies.

It is important to note that while the EU STL analysed and discussed existing hegemonic narratives and stories around mobility, nutrition and work, and their transformation, we recognise that narratives or narrative changes alone will not change the material realities of citizens, the deep material structures that shape our everyday lives (Hirth et al., 2022). On the other hand, without changing underlying narratives and narrative belief systems - and ideational structures - it will also not be possible to change material realities and material structures. Currently both ideational and material structures promote unsustainability in mobility, nutrition and work. Discussing narratives alone or telling a story about sustainable mobility is not enough to change mobility habits where a lack of infrastructure forces citizens into car-dependency and creates fear around any challenges to car mobility (since this would leave citizens without being able to meet their mobility needs). At the same time, in order to bring about wider changes to material infrastructure, such as improved public transport, we first need broadly shared narratives and public support for new infrastructure developments, and new policy narratives about the benefits of shared mobility (Keil & Kreinin, 2022).

Achieving a broad democratic consensus needed for transformative change currently faces myriad challenges—from escalating crises and defensiveness to entrenched vested interests resistant to change. The growing chasm within societies is not only evident in ideological differences but also manifests in the broader context of political affiliations and social values (Blühdorn, 2022). At the same time, a concerted effort to discredit and obstruct climate initiatives has created a challenging environment for those advocating for sustainable practices and policies. Green agendas, particularly at the EU level, have encountered mistrust when framed within existing neoliberal frameworks, leading to a resurgence of climate scepticism. Although conventional approaches to social-economic crises centred on economic growth have become counterproductive, exacerbating both environmental and social crises, these still continue to dominate policy discussions and are currently a non-negotiable state imperative (Hausknot, 2020; Kreinin et al., forthcoming2).

Participant Recruitment and Selection

Participants for the EU STL were selected based on their expertise and involvement in EU institutions (EU Commission and EU Parliament), Brussels-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and social movements advocating for change and, in general, their relation to and expertise on potentials for and challenges to the sustainability transformation at the European level.

Table 1: Participants' backgrounds for the EU STL.

EU STL Expert Participants' Backgrounds		
#	Background	Focus of expertise
1	Business Network	Sustainable business policy and advocacy
2	European Commission	Science and research policy
3	European Commission	Science and research policy
4	European Commission	Science and research policy
5	European Commission	Science and research policy
6	European Commission	Social Policy
7	European Parliament	Policymaker
8	NGO	Environmental policy and advocacy
9	NGO	Environmental policy and advocacy
10	NGO	Environmental policy and advocacy
11	NGO	Environmental policy and advocacy
12	NGO	Environmental policy and advocacy
13	NGO	Development policy and advocacy
14	Political Foundation	Environmental policy and political advocacy
15	Political Foundation	Social policy and political advocacy
16	Political Think Tank	Social policy
17	Research Institute	Environmental policy
18	Research Institute	Environmental policy
19	Research Institute	Environmental policy
20	Research Institute	Environmental policy
21	Trade Union Federation	Social policy and political advocacy

EU STL background and plan

The lab comprised three key components: assessing attitudes and influence, co-creating policy narratives, and developing political and policy strategies aimed at advancing a 1.5° transformation at the EU level:

1. **Assessment of Attitudes and Influence:** In the first segment, participants evaluated the attitudes of relevant actors towards post-growth transformations. Divided into three groups, they analysed these attitudes in conjunction with the resources and potential influence available to these actors concerning deep structural change towards a 1.5° transformation at the EU level using an actor-power map (Figure 10 below). As a side effect, this exercise also laid some groundwork for network-building among participants committed to advocating for sustainable economic models.
2. **Co-creation of Policy Narratives:** The second part involved collaborative efforts to generate policy narratives aimed at facilitating a 1.5° transformation. Participants leveraged their expertise and insights to craft narratives conducive to societal and political change.
3. **Development of Political and Policy Strategies:** As a synthesis of the preceding activities, participants and organisers together formulated strategies geared towards advancing a 1.5°

transformation. These strategies aimed to address challenges and capitalise on opportunities identified during the lab.

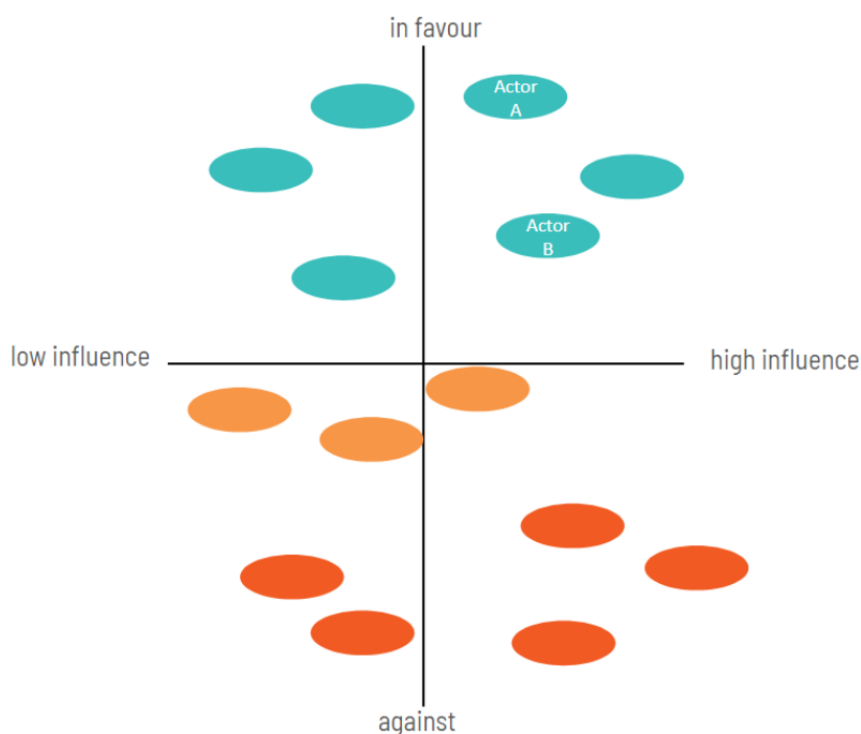


Figure 10: Simple actor and influence map exercise (based on Boyd, 2012) in the EU STL.

Data Collection and Analysis

To enable a “safe space”, the event was not audio- or video-recorded, but the posters with the power and actor mappings were collected and analysed afterwards, as were the posters from the policy co-creation section. The qualitative data obtained was analysed thematically, focusing on themes that emerged from discussions, participant contributions, and outcomes of collaborative exercises. The analysis aimed to identify insights, patterns, and key messages relevant to overcoming the growth paradigm and vested interests and to creating narratives for change, in particular. These were used as focal points for further developing political and policy strategies as part of step 3.

Narratives and frames emerging from the EU STL were analysed using narrative theory. Negative and positive narratives and frames were identified across thematic areas such as mobility, nutrition, and work. Analysis involved identifying narrative elements to avoid and those to strengthen, aligning with the objectives of promoting sustainable transformation. Specifically, three overarching narrative approaches – individualist, community, and economic – were distilled from sectoral analyses. These narratives were evaluated for their potential to engage diverse target groups and foster support for transformative change across thematic areas.

3.2 STAKEHOLDER THINKING LABS (STL2s)

The STL2s took a decentralised approach to the thinking labs working with on average three stakeholders from different professional backgrounds per meeting. In each of the five case countries, six such sessions were carried out with a total of 95 participants. This distribution facilitated both in-depth exploration within each country and cross-country comparisons.

The STL2s all focused on one of six policy options:

1. **Reduction in meat consumption** [consumption area: NUTRITION]
2. **Reduction in air travel** [consumption area: LEISURE]
3. **Upper limit for residential floor space** [consumption area: HOUSING]
4. **Reduction in car ownership in cities** [consumption area: MOBILITY]
5. **Work Time Reduction** [cross-cutting theme: WELFARE]
6. **Regulations for sustainable (sufficient) business models** [cross-cutting theme: BUSINESS MODELS]

In the context of each of these policy options, cross-cutting issues were addressed in order to deepen comprehensive insights, including:

- **Structural barriers to and enablers of change** (e.g., overcoming economic growth paradigms and hegemonic discourses, addressing vested interests, addressing rebound effects and their mitigation, implementing an eco-social welfare system)
- **Immediate steps** to take and **long-term strategies** for change
- **Actors responsible** for change (e.g., policy-makers, businesses, households, civil society actors) and relevant - established or new - **actor coalitions**, including **actor-specific barriers to and enablers** of change

The facilitators supported the collaborative exchange between the stakeholders along a rough topical outline, which is available below, in order to ensure that discussions covered all relevant aspects. This standardisation enabled meaningful comparisons of insights and findings. Each session was anticipated to last approximately 120 to 180 minutes to allow for in-depth exploration of and exchange on complex topics.

Choosing the Six Policy Options

The choice of the six policy options was influenced by the desire to cover the four key consumption domains (WP1-4), as well as their relevance for more cross-cutting and deeper structural changes (WP5).

Firstly, the four key consumption areas are cross-cutting foci in WPs 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the project, with each of the domains –nutrition, housing, leisure, and mobility– considered crucial fields for reducing individual carbon footprints. Each of the domains is represented by one core policy option identified as crucial for achieving 1.5° lifestyles. The selection of one policy option for each of the four consumption domains was based on the most “high-impact” option for keeping warming to 1.5°C in that field, based on outcomes in WP1 and the calculations for the Climate Puzzle in WP2 (Deliverable 2.1). For nutrition, the most high-impact option was reducing meat consumption; for leisure it was reducing air travel; for mobility, it was reducing (fossil fuel-based) car ownership and use. For the domain of housing, the most

high-impact options were implementing an upper limit on residential floor space or different technical solutions around changing the heat and energy source to a renewable source. Since all of the high-impact lifestyle options need to be implemented to stay below 1.5°C warming, we chose to focus on limiting residential floorspace, since this policy option requires deeper behaviour change and could be considerably more difficult to implement - thus requiring more focus in research (see also: Lehner et al. 2024). The wording and policy formulation (i.e. specifically “reducing car ownership and use in cities”) was then based on a review of the policy steps from D3.2 and STL1, as well as literature, to align the most high-impact options with specific associated reduction levels (see Annex 2 for more information).

In addition to the four policy options in the four key consumption fields, two further policy options were included, which are central to the cross-cutting structural focus of WP5 (and to some extent, WP3): working time reduction (welfare) and strong sustainability regulation for sustainable business models (business models). The choice of these policy options was based on outcomes from WP5 (Deliverable 5.2) as well as outcomes from Deliverables 3.1 and 3.2. These additional options were selected to address the broader structural changes needed in the realms of work and business, aligning with the project's goals of fostering a comprehensive shift towards sustainable and socially just lifestyles.

Specifically, the choice of “working time reduction” as one of the six policy options for STL2 was informed by findings from WP3 (Deliverable 3.2) and WP5 (Deliverable 5.2). Working time reduction is considered a high-impact “win-win” cross-cutting policy option in literature (see Deliverable 5.1 for an overview of the literature on working time reduction), and was suggested as a key policy step in the first STL1 (Deliverable 3.2) by stakeholders across the case countries. Participants in the welfare policy delphis (WP5, Deliverable 5.2) had nevertheless mixed feelings about the policy, with large variance between the case countries: Germany and Sweden finding working time reduction more feasible and desirable, while Spain, Hungary and Latvia finding the policy less feasible and desirable. While there was a disparity between STL1 and welfare delphi outcomes, the large climate impact of working time reduction suggested in the literature (Deliverable 5.1), as well as the wider structural impacts of working time reduction were key reasons for selecting the welfare policy over other welfare measures considered as part of WP5 (job guarantee, universal basic services, home renovation). Working time reduction aligns with the broader goals of the project to promote systemic lifestyle changes that can reduce carbon emissions. It represents a cross-cutting focus within WP5, addressing both the economic and social dimensions of sustainability, and offering a pathway to more equitable and sustainable living conditions.

The focus of “sufficiency-oriented business models” was also based on outcomes from WP5 (Deliverables 5.1 and 5.2) and WP3 (Deliverable 3.2). The policy of “sufficiency-oriented business models” was chosen for STL2 because it directly addresses the most important critical structural barrier identified in WP3: the growth paradigm (Deliverable 3.1). The policies explored in WP5 as part of the business model delphis, such as “choice editing” (both state-enforced and voluntary), state subsidies for low-carbon choices, overseeing company culture, higher taxes on resources and pollution, and public procurement for low-carbon products, were all important steps towards encouraging sustainable practices. However, these measures alone were deemed insufficient to achieve the radical transformation required for

1.5° lifestyles. The growth paradigm, which prioritises continuous economic expansion, was recognized as the most significant structural barrier to achieving sustainable lifestyles (Deliverable 3.1). This paradigm underpins many unsustainable practices and policies, driving consumption and production patterns that are incompatible with the ecological limits of the planet. Therefore, while the previously considered policies were valuable, they did not fully challenge the fundamental assumptions of the growth-oriented economy according to some of the participants. "Sufficiency-oriented business models" were thus chosen as a focus for STL2 because they go beyond merely encouraging or facilitating low-carbon choices within the existing economic framework. Instead, they seek to redefine the purpose and operations of businesses by prioritising environmental, social, and economic sustainability over short-term financial gains. This policy also reflects the need for a more holistic and systemic change in the business sector. This policy choice aligns with the project's overall objective of addressing deep-seated structural barriers and fostering a transition to more sustainable and equitable ways of living.

Together, these six policy options were chosen for their potential to drive significant reductions in carbon emissions across various lifestyle domains while also addressing the social and economic dimensions of sustainability. They provided a robust framework for the dialogues, allowing stakeholders to explore and discuss the pathways and implications of implementing such transformative measures.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

Case-country partners were asked to select stakeholders from different professional backgrounds and with relevant expertise on the respective dialogue's topic (policy option/objective)(see Table 1 in Annex 3 for the recommended constellations, and see Annex 5 for the professional backgrounds of all actual dialogue participants). Specifically, stakeholders came from policy, economic, civil society, or academic sectors, as the purpose of each session was to develop a multi-stakeholder perspective on the policy measure in question.

Although partners were recommended to follow this proposal for group set-ups, they were also invited to make their own informed choices, to the extent that national/local context suggested that changes to the design were desirable⁴. Additionally, reinviting suitable stakeholders who participated in the first round of STLs (D3.2) was presented as an option partners could consider.

Guiding Questions

The session structure outlined below was designed for flexible implementation, thereby leaving lots of room for case country partners to ask follow-up questions in the different areas that allow gathering more detailed answers or to increase the intensity of the exchange between the participating partners. The guiding questions provided, which were divided into

⁴ In Hungary, to better align with the specific socio-political context (such as stakeholders' keen interest in networking opportunities and the necessity for trust-building), the dialogue sessions were all held in person, on the same day - but otherwise followed the same design and methodology as described above. The in person event made it possible for the local research team to organise a shared lunch for the session participants across all 6 dialogue topics, and thus allows for additional networking and exchange of information to happen.

six sections, are presented in Annex 4.

Data Collection and Analysis

All sessions were recorded (audio and video), translated into English, and case country partners submitted the data for analysis via predefined documentation templates to the Work Package leader.⁵ The deductively driven analysis then relied on qualitative data analysis methods, supported by relevant software tools.

⁵ Partners were also encouraged to communicate insights gained to participants and the broader audience through various channels, including project-based communication platforms, workshops, and social media.

4. FINDINGS

This chapter presents the core findings of this study in relation to the EU STL and STL2. They address the research objectives and questions of this deliverable as follows:

The first research question (**RQ1**), “**How can we explain why deteriorating conditions have not led to changes in the achievement of societal consensus and structural transformation?**”, was addressed by the EU STL through its main emphasis of the constraining forces of vested interests, the economic growth paradigm and hegemonic discourses. The STL2s contributed to RQ1 in particular through its dual focus on structural and actor-specific barriers. The findings reaffirmed the relevance of the seven most influential structural barriers identified in D3.3 and D3.2, while providing greater depth and exploring selected barriers in more detail (e.g. narratives, rebound effects and vested interests) from the perspectives of relevant stakeholders in the five case countries.

The second (**RQ2**), “**What are policy and political strategies, relevant enablers, and immediate next steps to undermine and overcome ‘sustained unsustainability’?**” and the third research question (**RQ3**), “**Who is responsible for such a transformation and what are relevant actor coalitions and alliances?**”, were addressed by the EU STL with the same triple focus as highlighted above, but with an emphasis on how entrenched vested interests and the power of the economic growth paradigm and related discourses could be overcome by forging particular political strategies with the help of specific actor coalitions and alliances. The STL2s again had a broader focus on both structure- and actor-specific enablers, with stakeholders discussing longer and shorter term policy and political strategies, including the issue of actor responsibilities and coalition potential.

4.1 EU STL

As explained in detail above, the thinking lab method was used in the EU STL to explore the shared knowledge and expertise of actors already aligned or working in some way towards a 1.5° lifestyles transformation in the EU-policy field. Previous work in Deliverables 3.1 and 3.2 focused on the key structural barriers to a 1.5° lifestyles transformation and policy steps to overcome them on the local level, highlighting the importance of several key structures: to this end, as part of the EU STL the participants were asked to think about how “the economic growth paradigm” (structure #1) could be challenged via different actor coalitions for change, and which vested interests would be against transformation (structure #3), as well as which policy narratives at the European level could help challenge hegemonic narratives (#5) - with the overall goal of enabling policy transformation (structures #2 and #4) via gaining democratic legitimacy for more transformative policies.

Focusing on from the problem statement (Deliverable 3.1) and the local policy steps necessary (Deliverable 3.2) the EU STL was thus used to gain insights on solutions, on how to achieve deep material and ideational structural change towards a 1.5° transformation at the EU level. In the following, we will present the outcomes of (1) the stakeholder-mapping and (2) policy narrative co-creation discussions, which resulted in (3) narrative political strategies.

4.1.1 EU-level actor coalitions

Stakeholders

Mapping stakeholder attitudes and opportunities for influence

In the first part of the EU Thinking Lab participants were asked to name and assess relevant actors in the transformation to overcoming “the economic growth paradigm” - considered a key structure disabling change towards 1.5° lifestyles in terms of their attitudes and potential influence. Table 2, below, displays the collected outcomes of this exercise, with some actors appearing twice due to being categorised differently in different groups.

Actor- and power-mapping is a tool to identify who has the power and possibility to fulfil demands, analysing power dynamics to help develop political and policy strategies and narratives based on the interests of the target group (Boyd, 2012). It's important to highlight that the views expressed and the positioning of actors on the support-influence map were determined through a highly subjective group exercise. This is also reflected in the different placements of actors, with them being variously classified as either “moderately” or “strongly” supportive, or influential, by different groups. While “strongly” supportive (or, opposing) actors were those already actively and explicitly discussing postgrowth policies and challenging the growth paradigm (or, if opposing, actively promoting the growth paradigm and challenging postgrowth policies), “moderately” supportive were actors not explicitly supporting more transformative agendas, but at least internally aligned against the growth paradigm (or, if opposing, internally aligned for the growth paradigm). Similarly, the level of “influence”, while defined as “political influence” or power on the EU policy field, was left somewhat flexible and open to the interpretation of participants, who had flexibility in determining the level and scale of support as well as influence.

In addition, participants often also referred to specific individuals within organisations during the exercise. Indeed, it is clear that the perspectives reflected in the mapping are shaped by participants' individual experiences and interactions with people from these organisations, which tend to combine a diversity of staff and views themselves. It is also important to note that the exercise documents participants' views at this point in time, and future interactions may well alter them.

In a slightly more subtle way, the EU STL itself already aimed to contribute towards advancing new coalitions of actors for change, through bringing together diverse European actors at the thinking lab itself, and thus contributing to building stronger networks.

Table 2: Actor- and Power-Mapping Exercise. Stakeholders' perceived institutional influence and support/opposition towards a 1.5° transformation towards post-growth economic systems.

	SUPPORTIVE		MODERATELY SUPPORTIVE		MODERATELY OPPOSED		OPPOSED
	High influence	Mid-Low influence	High influence	Mid-Low influence	High influence	Mid-Low influence	High influence
MEDIA		Greenpeace Unearthed; The Green Fix	The Financial Times; The Guardian;		EurActiv; EU Observer; New York Times; Politico		The Economist
CIVIL SOCIETY, NGOs, THINK TANKS, BUSINESS, POLITICAL ORGS.	Beyond Growth NGO Coalition; Bruxelles Environnement; CAN Europe; Dafne (network of European donors and foundations); Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG Clima); Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENVI); Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO); Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTG); European Alliance for a Just Transition (EAJT); European Climate Foundation (ECF); European Environment Agency (EEA); European Environmental Bureau (EEB); European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU); European Foundation Centre (EFC); Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE); Fridays for Future (FFF); Global Climate Movement; Green 10; Green European Foundation (GEF); Greens/EFA - Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA); Greens/EFA; Health for Climate Directorate; Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP); Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); International Energy Agency (IEA); JRC-FORESIGHT; OECD WISE; Philea - Philanthropy Europe Association; Progressive Trade Unions; REAL Horizon Project; Soil mission; Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WeALL); Youth Climate Networks (Youth for Climate, GCE, YEE); "Youth Movements"; Cities mission.	Association négaWatt; CATAPA; Climate Action Network Europe (CAN Europe); Climate Leadership Council (CEC); Energy Cities; European Environment Agency (EEA); European Environmental Bureau (EEB); European Trade Union Institute (ETUI); EU Wellbeing Economy Coalition (IEEP AISBL); Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE); Oxfam International; Rosa Luxemburg Foundation; Training future policy Makers "inner green deal"; Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WeALL); World Inequality Lab; XR (Extinction Rebellion); ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies.	Bioeconomy YOUTH AMBASSADORS (Commission); C40; European Regions for Innovation in Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ERiAff); European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN); European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC); Eurocities; Fairtrade movement; Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA); ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability); Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Values Assessment; "The Left"; Transition Towns movement; Triodos Investment Management; Urban Agenda Partnerships.	Committee of the Regions (CoR); Greenpeace; Positive Money; World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).	"Business schools startup (incubator) ecosystems"; Cabinet of the Commission President; "Churches e.g., Laudato Si, Islamic Finance"; Clean-Tech For Europe; Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN); Environmental Defense Fund (EDF); European Central Bank (ECB); Industriegewerkschaft Metall (IG Metall); IndustriALL Global Union; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); SME United; "Social enterprise and sustainable finance ecosystems".	Business 4 Just Transition; BIOEAST; Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS);	Amazon; Business Europe; Climate Leadership Group (CLG); Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori (CISL); Copa-Cogeca; European Central Bank (ECB); Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN); European Farmers' Organisation (CPE); European People's Party (EPP); "Farmers and their allies"; "Fossil Fuel Lobby"; Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES); Renew Europe; "Traditional Trade Unions"; "Traditional economics, finance, business ecosystems".

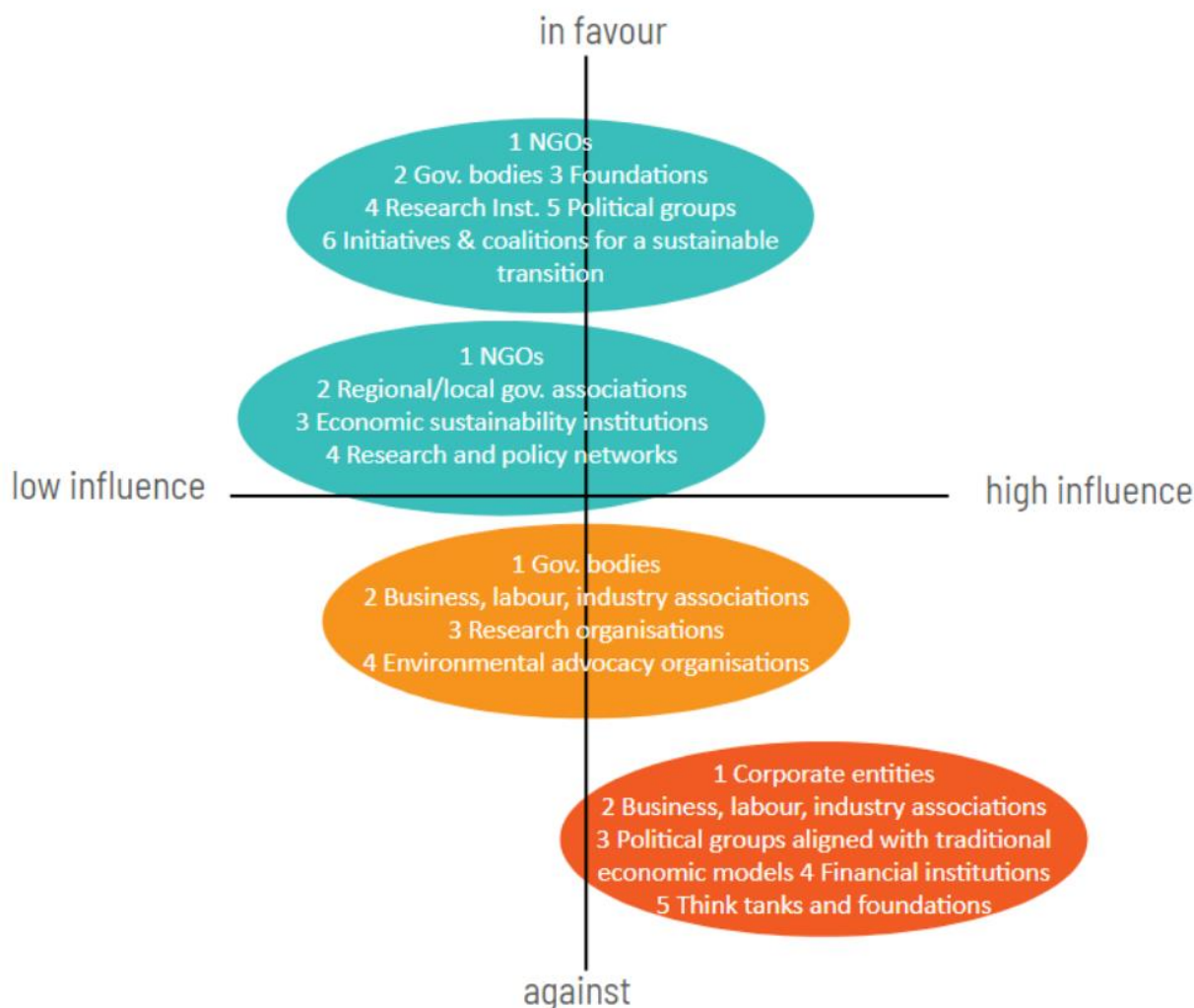


Figure 11: Grouping of actors and influence.

With this in mind, for the **strongly supportive group**, participants named: 1) non-governmental organisations, advocacy and activists groups (e.g. CAN Europe, EEB, FoEE, Green 10, FFF, XR), 2) actors within government bodies and agencies (e.g. Bruxelles Environnement, DG Clima, DG ENVI, DG DEVCO, DG RTG, EEA), 3) foundations and philanthropic organisations (e.g. Dafne, EFC, ECF, Philea), 4) academic, educational and research institutes (e.g. ETUI, IEEP, IPCC, JRC-FORESIGHT, OECD WISE), 5) political groups: (e.g. Greens/EFA), and 6) initiatives, coalitions and alliances for transitioning to a sustainable economy (e.g. European Alliance for a Just Transition (EAJT), Soil mission, WeALL, Cities mission, Health for Climate Directorate, EU Wellbeing Economy Coalition, Energy Cities).

Participants identified influential media outlets, such as the Financial Times and the Guardian, as being **moderately supportive** of the transformation, showing a shift in more progressive mainstream media narratives towards post-growth concepts in the perception of stakeholders. Actors identified as moderately supporting post-growth transformation also included: 1) some larger NGOs and advocacy groups (e.g. WWF, Greenpeace, C40, "Fairtrade movement"), 2) regional and local governmental associations (e.g. ERiAff, Eurocities, CoR,

ICLEI), as well as 3) economic and financial institutions promoting sustainability (e.g. Positive Money, Triodos Investment Management), and again 4) research and policy networks (e.g. ERRIN, IPBES).

Participants also identified actors **moderately opposing** stronger sustainability measures with varying degrees of influence. Media and news agencies opposing postgrowth transformations, according to the participants, included EurActiv, EU Observer, New York Times, and Politico, all with a high level of influence due to their wide reach and readership. Participants also identified 1) governmental and intergovernmental bodies (e.g. the Cabinet of the President of the European Commission, ECOFIN, the ECB, and the OECD), 2) business, labour and industry associations (e.g. Clean-Tech For Europe, IG Metall, IndustriALL, SME United, Business 4 Just Transition), 3) academic and research organisations (e.g. "Business school incubator ecosystems", "Social enterprise and sustainable finance ecosystems", FEPS), as well as 4) advocacy and environmental organisations (e.g. EDF and BIOEAST) as being moderately opposed to strong sustainability or postgrowth policies, with varying levels of influence depending on their outreach and support base.

The actors highlighted as **strongly opposing** post-growth policies and strong sustainability overall share a common focus on economic and business-related matters, with some aligned with traditional economic models, and others advocating for specific sectors or interests in the economic landscape (such as agriculture). The Economist was highlighted as a media publication strongly against transformation, and with high influence. Other actors included 1) corporate entities and lobby groups (e.g. Amazon, "fossil fuel lobby"), 2) business, labour and industry associations, with interests in traditional economic systems and sectors (e.g. Business Europe, Copa-Cogeca, European Farmers' Organisation (CPE), Climate Leadership Group (CLG), "Traditional Trade Unions"), 3) political parties and groups aligned with traditional economic models (e.g. EPP, Renew Europe), 4) financial institutions and councils (e.g. the ECB, ECOFIN), and 5) certain think tanks and foundations (e.g. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)).

In sum, the mapping exercise showed that participants perceive a mix of support and opposition across different sectors and types of actors, thereby highlighting opportunities and obstacles for advancing a post-growth agenda in the EU which would facilitate the transition toward 1.5° lifestyles. Specifically, the results allow the identification of existing, and especially potential future networks and coalitions for a joint challenge to the growth paradigm at the EU level. At the same time, it also highlighted a frequent barrier to organising for sustainability - a struggle to effectively integrate environmental and social equity-oriented actors. In this context, the overall (lack of) diversity and the distribution of actors across categories is noteworthy. The resulting maps depicted largely homogeneous groups of environmental NGOs in the "strongly supportive" and "moderately supportive" categories, and a lack of inclusion of social actors - some of whom were included in the "moderately opposed" section. Yet, building coalitions of actors for transformation beyond the growth paradigm will require a multifaceted approach, with a diversity of perspectives and interests involved. The exercise revealed that current networks are not diverse enough for meaningful change. In the future, it may be advisable, therefore, to build coalitions for eco-social welfare that range from "strongly supportive" to "moderately opposed" actors in order to achieve necessary change in pursuit of long-term societal welfare.

Shared narratives play a crucial role in building coalitions and bringing together different social groups (Ruhrt, 2023). For the joint development of such narratives, working together with the few social welfare-oriented institutions already in the “moderately supportive” category could be helpful. These narratives, emphasising shared values, goals and experiences, can foster a sense of unity and solidarity among diverse stakeholders and may be able to convince also those groups currently located in the “moderately opposed” corner, to join a coalition. Alternatively, or in addition to this strategy, it would be possible to build on policies, strategies and/or cases that already connect environmental and social sustainability, and thus create joint narratives, such as the ones collected in the CONVERGE (FP7) project (Vadovics et al., 2012), or more recently in the EnergyPROSPECTS (H2020) project studying this in cases of energy citizenship (Vadovics & Szöllőssy, 2024). Results from the latter project also suggest that such socially-focused cases/initiatives might not focus enough on environmental issues or still aim at solving social issues while deepening environmental problems, which poses both challenges for cooperation, as well as possibilities for mutual learning (Vadovics & Szöllőssy, 2023; Vadovics & Szöllőssy, 2024).

The next section further explores opportunities for co-creating such narratives, focusing on examples that are broadly relevant in the EU landscape.

4.1.2 Narratives for change

Policy narratives

Co-creating positive
policy narratives

Participants at the EU STL identified both narratives and frames to use and strengthen in pursuit of a transformation towards 1.5° lifestyles (“dos”) as well as negative narratives and frames to avoid (“don’ts”).

MOBILITY

In the area of **mobility**, participants suggested that we want to create narratives actively highlighting positive aspects of public and low-carbon **mobility**:

- We should talk about the efficiency of shared mobility (resource & cost efficient);
- We should focus on need, access to mobility for all and the information needed to use it;
- We should discuss the freedom that comes with public transport (collective freedom): the freedom to be safely mobile and the public space freed up by this;
- We should focus on the individual benefits in terms of time and money that we gain through public transport: more time without traffic jams, more money left over through public transport, more time through cities of short distances and shared mobility;
- We should focus on emphasising the additional benefits of public transport: health and mental health and safety;
- We should discuss the advantages of land-based travel, such as greater attention to the journey itself (compared to flying).

When it comes to the “don’ts”, participants suggested to avoid focusing on the following elements, and be ready for “negative” framings from opponents based on the following:

- We should avoid negative aspects of public transport (slow, unreliable, uncomfortable);
- We should avoid positive aspects of cars (freedom, comfortable, high social status, masculinity);
- We should avoid stigmatising individual car use or flying.

NUTRITION

In the area of **nutrition**, participants wanted to use the following messages and frames:

- We should talk about a reduction in food waste;
- We should talk about a “dietary shift”;
- We should talk about the benefits related to affordable & decent sustainable nutrition;
- In terms of reducing meat consumption, we should talk about dietary shift towards plant-rich diets with the following arguments: health benefits, better growth; we want to depict it as cool & sexy, fresh & local;
- We should talk about the benefits of growing your own food and controlling it;
- We should talk about sustainable food in culturally adaptive ways and with diversity (present it as a trend);
- We should talk about education & knowledge in relation to the food transition, for example in schools;
- We should talk about the economic benefits of a plant-based food system: as a business opportunity, in terms of good jobs in the food industry, and in terms of better production methods.

In contrast, participants suggested we avoid the following messages and frames, and be prepared for negative framings from opponents based on:

- We don’t want to suggest the need for production growth;
- We don’t want to emphasise “vegan” nutrition, or “plant-based” nutrition;
- We want to avoid individualisation (“you are what you eat”);
- We want to avoid talking about possible disadvantages of plant-based nutrition (such as lack of vitamin B12 or iron);
- We don’t want to frame a plant-based diet as not masculine;
- We don’t want to demonise globalisation and global supply chains;
- We want to avoid overly positive or negative images.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE⁶

In the area of **work** and its relation to quality of life, participants suggested we create narratives around the following key messages and frames:

- We should address the value of people in themselves and appreciate unpaid labour (“Work is more than what you’re paid for”);

⁶ EU 1.5° Lifestyles, in general, focuses on leisure as a fourth consumption field, besides mobility, nutrition, and housing. Given the breadth of leisure as a consumption field, however, we considered it more appropriate to use the limited time available at the EU STL to focus on work and its relation to quality of life specifically. This is also in line with the EU’s focus on employment and comments by participants in the STL1s that they missed more emphasis on the role of work.

- We should address specific and clear aspects of how everyone can make a concrete contribution to a good life;
- We should address the increase in leisure time and family time that comes from the sustainable change in the world of work;
- We should talk about a better reconciliation for private and professional life through the necessary transformation;
- We should talk about the fact that purposeful work has better results.

In contrast, participants suggest we avoid these messages and frames, and be ready for the use of the following frames against any transition:

- We don't want to paint too catastrophic a picture (no "No jobs on a dead planet!");
- We don't want to reduce the value of people to their job or profession alone;
- We don't want to talk about abstract concepts such as a "just transition";
- We don't want to make promises that we can't keep;
- We don't want to actively talk about AI stealing jobs;

Overarching narratives for 1.5° lifestyles

The aforementioned sectoral aspects can be broken down and integrated into **three overarching narratives**. These in turn can be applied to all thematic areas, depending on the target group and purpose.

- **Individualist narrative:** Our individual lives will become better through transformation.
- **Community narrative:** Together, we will become a fairer, safer and more democratic society through transformation.
- **Economic narrative:** Our economies, companies and employees will benefit from the transformation.

The **individualist narrative** places the individual at the centre, as the name highlights. It conceptualises individuals as emancipated subjects who can help shape their world in their role as part of a collective. While thus also considering the individual's societal embedding and role, the individualist narrative highlights that the transformation has indeed advantages for the individual in terms of quality of life, individual freedom, and emancipated contributions to society.

The **community narrative** places (communities within) our society and its development at the centre. It emphasises the positive aspects of transformation for this society. In particular, the community narrative highlights the benefits of the transformation for equity, democracy, security, social cohesion, and a caring environment for one another and for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, in particular.

The **economic narrative** debunks prejudices that the transformation must be detrimental for the economy. Both through a new conceptualisation of what good economic development and success actually is, but also through classic economic arguments - the transformation already brings benefits in the here and now. However, in order to have as transformative an effect as possible, elements that clearly belong to the past, such as a positive reference to economic growth, should be avoided. The subjects in stories about this narrative are (new, progressive and open to change) companies and their employees.

4.1.3 Narratives as Political Strategies to Shift Away from Growth-Centric Paradigms

Political Strategies

Promoting structural
change towards a 1.5°
Lifestyles society

In the previous sections we have focused on the first two steps of the EU STL - the actor coalitions and the policy narratives. When it comes to **translating narratives into concrete political messages and calls to action**, it is not only important to know the general attitude of a certain target group and which issues are generally important to them. It is also important to be aware of how much they are already aware and in agreement with the sender in the specific area in question. In the following, we will expand on the outcomes of the policy narrative discussion of the EU STL by bringing them together with the narrative story-based strategy method (CSS, 2024) and focusing on the creation of (story-based) political strategies for change in the form of new narrative elements for different actor-coalitions.

While the story-based political strategies were discussed in the context of EU policy and may need to be updated according to country-context, these highlight possible narrative-based strategies for changing ideational structures in the fields of mobility, nutrition and work.

The exercise in the EU STL focused on looking at the “grouping” (“strongly supportive” - “moderately supportive” - “moderately opposed” - “strongly opposed”) and “influence” (low-high) axes of relevant actors. This categorisation fits into a broader way of thinking about audiences.

Since building broad coalitions can help to overcome the growth paradigm, this report will suggest different narrative elements for approaching **moderately opposed, moderately supportive** and **strongly supportive** actors differently, and in particular how calls to action should differ, in the following.

Strongly opposing actors will not be discussed in detail here - but they serve as a reminder that transformative messages should not be tailored to those in strong opposition, yet remain aware of the parallel stories and narratives of the opposition, with the possibility of **cooptation** or **inversion**. Cooptation occurs when powerful entities or groups adopt and reframe positive narratives or initiatives to serve their own interests, diluting or distorting the original message. Corporations co-opt sustainability narratives to greenwash their activities, while political actors co-opt social justice movements to gain public support while failing to address systemic issues. On the other hand, inversion involves twisting positive narratives into negative ones in order to discredit or undermine the original message. Vested interests (e.g. the meat industry or the fossil fuel lobby) use fear-mongering tactics to invert sustainability transitions as a threat to economic stability, social welfare, or personal freedoms. Resilient coalitions and alliances based on shared values and goals can help mitigate the risk of cooptation or inversion (Meade, 2019).

Addressing neutral groups, allies, and moderate opposition

Very often, the ultimate goal in targeting neutral groups is for them to form an educated opinion that is consistent with the facts and the sender's own progressive agenda. In order to build broader coalitions for overcoming the growth paradigm, narratives that engage and interest broader groups of actors who are currently **neutral or moderately opposed** to a post-growth agenda, should first clarify the issue and explain the problems. In the best case, this will begin to activate and subsequently politicise individuals or organisations within the target group. Facts should be succinct and grievances scandalised, but overly radical rhetoric and solutions should generally be avoided. Ideally, the addressees are at the beginning of an awareness-raising journey, with increasing recognition of the problem and increasing openness to progressive solutions.

The situation is slightly different with **moderately supportive** groups. They usually have an existing high level of awareness of the problem and their analysis or agenda is aligned with the sender's own one. The problem is that – as the name suggests – they are not yet actively involved in the issue. Accordingly, they need to be motivated to take action. This can be achieved, for example, by clearly communicating the urgency of the issue, ideally by linking it to their lived realities or in the case of an organisation to its core issues. This can also be done, depending on the specific case, using drastic words. The aim, as mentioned, is to make it clear to the stakeholders why action is needed and why it is important to get active right now.

For **strongly supportive** actors on the other hand, the aim is to increase activity and achieve greater (strategic) alignment with the sender's own plans and agenda. The aim here is often to convince allies to cooperate strategically and effectively, e.g. at certain points in time. Such events include cooperating for a specific policy goal (such as an EU-wide working time directive).

Reframing hegemonic stories according to story-based strategy & coalition group messaging

One strategy to change stories and eventually narratives is the five elements of the story, coined by the *Centre for Story-based Strategy* (CSS, 2024). According to this pattern, five key elements should be considered in all (political) stories: Conflict, Characters (hero/villain), Imagery, Foreshadowing and Underlying Assumptions. Conflict makes up the core of the political struggle; characters make the story accessible and relatable; imagery makes the story tangible and understandable; foreshadowing shows how the story could end; awareness of underlying assumptions is important in order to understand who (which target groups) could be reached with the story and who might not (Greibenjak et al., 2022).

By leveraging these story-based strategy principles we can reframe existing narratives to promote alternative visions of transportation, nutrition, and work that prioritise sustainability, equity, and community well-being. Next, we will therefore provide examples of how the hegemonic narratives could be challenged and reframed building on this strategy (CSS, 2024), based on the narrative outcomes suggested by the EU STL participants from the EU policy field that we discussed in the Findings section (the “do’s and don’ts”).

Thereafter, we also provide a few examples of what messaging could look like based on these lines in the subject areas in question, focusing on challenging the hegemonic stories.

MOBILITY

Based on an analysis of existing hegemonic narratives, considering story-based strategy principles (CSS, 2024), based on the participant's suggestion, change strategies are presented to reframe these narratives away from growth-based, unsustainable, individualised transport stories:

- Reframe the **conflict** from being solely about congestion and individual autonomy, to encompassing broader issues especially health concerns (e.g. road deaths, air quality, noise pollution, social isolation), social inequalities and lack of individual autonomy perpetuated by car dependency (e.g. lack of mobility for children, young people, elderly people without access to cars or who are not able to drive), as well as environmental degradation and land use change (e.g. new roads, emissions, parking lots). Highlight the conflict between the convenience of individual car ownership and the long-term sustainability and equity of public and low-carbon mobility options. Highlight the social and economic costs of car-centric urban planning.
- Shift the portrayal of the **hero** from the individual car owner to community-oriented individuals and collectives working for sustainable transport solutions. Highlight stories of urban planners and public officials working to create walkable cities, improve public transit and promote active transportation options. Showcase diverse voices and perspectives, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users (including specific groups) and mobility justice activists working to promote equitable access to transport. Humanise the current "**villain**" by showing how government regulators and environmental activists work to promote public health (air and noise pollution, fewer road-deaths), access to transport services, creating more livable urban environments, increasing personal freedom in cities for young people (rather than decreasing the freedoms of individual male car drivers). Create new "villains" in the form of car industry leaders, and specific locally-relevant individuals (local politicians) benefiting from or standing up for car-dependence at the cost of society.
- Create **imagery** that shows different modes of sustainable transport, such as cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users, with heroes of different ages (especially children, young people, disabled people having access to mobility) as protagonists in urban landscapes. Showcase vibrant communities, green spaces and shared mobility options to convey a sense of connectedness and collective well-being. Depict urban landscapes designed for human scale and community interaction, with accessible sidewalks, bike lanes and green spaces.

Contrast traditional images of sleek cars with images of congested highways and polluted urban environments frustrating car drivers (looking for a parking spot) to challenge the association between car ownership and success, ease and comfort. Contrast images of crowded highways and car parks with scenes of people enjoying pedestrian-friendly streets, vibrant public spaces and clean, green urban environments.

- Re-interpret **foreshadowing** to highlight the potential benefits of transitioning to sustainable transport systems, such as reduced congestion, improved air quality and better public health outcomes, autonomous and healthy children. Address concerns about inconvenience or safety associated with alternative modes of transport by emphasising the ease, freedom and comfort of public transport and cycling.

Challenge the assumption that individualised technological advances (e.g. e-cars) will solve congestion problems by emphasising the need for systemic changes and shifts in cultural norms towards more sustainable lifestyles. Highlight the role of public education and community engagement in promoting active transport, reducing car dependency and fostering sustainable mobility habits.

- Subvert **underlying assumptions** by promoting narratives that challenge the inherent superiority of car culture and consumerism. Challenge the notion that individual car ownership is synonymous with freedom and social status by highlighting the collective “freedom” and benefits of public and low-carbon mobility options, such as reduced congestion, increased access to transport and greater social equity. Highlight the social, environmental and economic costs of car dependency, including health impacts, road-deaths, lack of space for children to play outside, lack of public space, time wasted in congestion, while emphasising the benefits of investing in sustainable transport infrastructure and promoting inclusive, walkable communities. Highlight the social, health, environmental and economic benefits of sustainable transport systems, including increased physical activity, reduced healthcare costs and improved community cohesion.

Looking at different messages dependent on the audience’s coalition group, messages for **moderately opposing** actors should address the problems that the current fossil-based transport system has for both the climate and the environment, as well as its impact on specific areas of life, such as how it makes people dependent on cars, especially in rural areas, and thus prevents real freedom of choice when it comes to transport.

The extent to which current plans for the sector diverge from what is needed to meet climate and environmental targets could be shown to **moderately supportive** groups. In addition, specific policy proposals of the opposition could be analysed and their negative effects presented.

For **active allies**, opportunities could be highlighted if, for example, they join a campaign or mobilisation of the sender and thus increase their chances of success. This could be underpinned with examples of where similar initiatives, e.g. in specific cities, have led to successes in transforming the mobility system.

NUTRITION

The following change strategies help reframe current narratives around food consumption towards sustainability using a story-based strategy (CSS, 2024), based on participant suggestions at the EU STL:

- Reframe the **conflict** from convenience versus health to including broader health issues related to environmental sustainability, as well as issues such as food waste, food insecurity and economic inequality. Show the conflict in unsustainable food systems which perpetuate social injustices and exacerbate global challenges such as hunger and poverty. Highlight the conflict between the dominant narrative of production growth and the need for sustainable food systems that prioritise environmental stewardship, biodiversity conservation and resource efficiency. Highlight the negative impacts of industrial agriculture on soil health, water quality and ecosystem resilience.

Emphasise the conflict between short-term pleasure and long-term well-being in relation to environmental outcomes, and how unsustainable diets contribute to health inequalities, chronic disease and environmental degradation.

- Shift the portrayal of the **hero** from the passive consumer seeking convenience or indulgence to empowered individuals and communities working for sustainable food systems. Showcase diverse voices and perspectives, including farmers, communities and grassroots organisations working to transform the food system. Present stories of farmers, chefs, activists and community organisers working for food sovereignty, regenerative agriculture and equitable access to healthy food.

Humanise and use the existing idea of a **villain** by showing how the food industry's promotion of unhealthy products *and* unsustainable practices undermines public health, environmental protection and cultural traditions together. Expose the exploitative practices of multinational corporations, especially individual villains (such as CEOs), industrial agribusiness and food monopolies that prioritise profit over people and planet. Highlight the role of government policies and trade agreements in perpetuating unsustainable food systems and undermining local food economies, including by highlighting individual government officials in favour of such policies. Challenge perceptions of government regulators or environmental activists as villains by highlighting their role as “heroes” in advocating for public health, consumer protection and environmental sustainability, highlighting individual heroes.

- Create **imagery** that celebrates whole, nutritious foods and sustainable food production practices as symbols of health, resilience and cultural heritage. Depict diverse culinary traditions, local food systems and community gardens to convey the richness and diversity of sustainable food cultures.

Challenge the common glorification of processed and convenience foods and sugary drinks by exposing the hidden costs of industrial food production, such as ecological degradation, animal cruelty and public health crises. Deconstruct stereotypes that associate meat consumption with masculinity and challenge the notion that plant-based diets are feminine, inherently less satisfying or indulgent.

Deconstruct the myth of globalised supply chains as efficient and desirable by highlighting their negative impacts on food security, food sovereignty and cultural autonomy.

- Reinterpret **foreshadowing** to envision a future where sustainable food practices are normalised and accessible to all, promoting dietary patterns that prioritise plant-based foods, seasonal produce and locally sourced ingredients. Highlight success stories of communities transitioning to sustainable food systems and adopting regenerative agricultural practices. Challenge the assumption that convenience foods are the only viable option in a fast-paced society by presenting alternative models of food production and distribution that prioritise nutrition, affordability and environmental sustainability. Emphasise the potential for culinary creativity and enjoyment within sustainable food cultures.
- Subvert **underlying assumptions** by promoting narratives that challenge the dichotomy between convenience and health, and advocate for food systems that prioritise both human well-being and ecological integrity. Subvert underlying assumptions by promoting narratives that challenge the individualisation of food choices and highlight the systemic drivers of food insecurity, environmental degradation and public health crises. Advocate for policies that address structural inequalities and support community-led solutions to food system challenges. Challenging the

perception that economic growth and consumption equals prosperity by highlighting the benefits of transitioning to sustainable food systems, including job creation, rural revitalisation and improved food security. Promote narratives that prioritise collective well-being and environmental sustainability over short-term profits and corporate interests.

Challenging the perception that healthy eating is expensive and time-consuming by demonstrating the affordability and accessibility of nutritious foods, especially when produced and consumed locally. Advocate for policies that support sustainable food production, equitable access to healthy food and cultural preservation.

Messaging for **moderately opposing** audiences in nutrition could address the environmental unsustainability of the food system. This can be coupled with aspects that address the health risks that can be caused by the current food system and the products it produces.

Messages for **moderately supportive** actors could address which current trends, projects and policy plans of the other side could affect and worsen the food system.

And finally, messages targeting those who are **strongly supportive** should be clear, detailed and convincing as to why the sender's (strategic or policy) proposals and plans contribute to solving the problem and are urgently worthy of support.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Using story-based strategy to reframe current narratives around work and paid labour, away from the ideology of growth and towards sustainability, the following story-based change strategy can be implemented (CSS, 2024), based on the narrative do's and don't from the EU STL workshop:

- Reframe the **conflict** around wealth, consumption and individual well-being, highlighting the conflict between traditional notions of success based on material wealth and status to alternative measures of well-being such as *timewealth*, quality of life, immaterial needs, and community. Emphasise that work extends beyond traditional paid employment to include unpaid work, care, volunteering and community engagement. Shift the conflict narrative to focus on the tension between conventional notions of productivity and success and holistic measures of human flourishing and fulfilment. Advocate a redefinition of work that prioritises purpose, meaning and quality of life over material wealth and consumption, (but with a focus on having enough and material need-satisfaction).
- Shift the portrayal of the (masculine) **hero** from the individual worker striving for success and upward mobility to collective and community well-being. Showcase diverse individuals and communities engaged in meaningful work in multiple spheres of life, including home, community and the environment. Highlight stories of individuals pursuing passion projects, creative pursuits and collaborative endeavours that align with their values and contribute to a more sustainable world. Humanise the hero by portraying individuals who find fulfilment and satisfaction in purposeful work, whether paid or unpaid, and emphasise the importance of recognising and valuing their contributions beyond monetary compensation. Highlight examples of people who find balance and fulfilment in their personal and professional lives through sustainable lifestyle choices and meaningful relationships. Showcase stories of

activists and changemakers who are working for just labour rights, regenerative economies and alternative models of work-life balance, as well as stories of success, fulfilment and material need-satisfaction outside of the “grind”.

- Humanise and specify the **villain** by showing how oppressive corporate structures, employers, specific CEOs use exploitative labour practices. Challenge the perception of employers and entrepreneurs as heroic figures by highlighting their role in perpetuating unsustainable systems, profit-driven motives, and the exploitation of workers.
- Create **imagery** that celebrates diverse forms of meaningful work and sustainable livelihoods, depicting people engaged in activities that promote environmental stewardship, social cohesion and cultural preservation. Showcase examples of regenerative agriculture, artisanal crafts, cooperative enterprises and community-based initiatives, as well as industrial transformation. Create imagery that celebrates the intrinsic beauty and dignity in socially and environmentally useful work.

Depict scenes of leisure, inactivity, family bonding and community activities as integral aspects of a good life, challenging notions of “unproductivity” or “laziness” as bad. Challenge stereotypes and gender norms associated with work by showing men and women equally engaged in caring, housework and community building. Promote images of people of all ages and backgrounds finding meaning and fulfilment in their daily activities, regardless of economic or occupational status.

Challenge the glorification of corporate culture and material wealth by deconstructing stereotypes associated with success and status. Highlighting the beauty and richness of nature, traditional crafts and community endeavours as alternative sources of fulfilment and inspiration, as well as alternative forms of success and societal status.

- Reinterpret **foreshadowing** to envision a future where work is redefined not just as an *end* or for economic production, but as a *means* of societally useful and necessary tasks, personal fulfilment, social connection and environmental stewardship. Imagine a world where individuals have more leisure time to pursue their passions, spend time with loved ones and engage in activities that nourish their well-being. Highlight the possibility for a more positive horizon with less work, more leisure time, more gender equality, and more equity in general. Emphasise the potential for transformative change through alternative work structures, new forms of ownership (e.g., cooperative), flexible schedules and participatory decision-making.

Challenge the assumption that technological progress and perpetual growth as positive and an aspect of progress (and productive work), and emphasise the priority of human flourishing and ecological resilience.

- Subvert **underlying assumptions** around the inherent virtue of work and the dominant work-centred culture. Advocate a shift towards valuing leisure, rest and non-economic forms of contribution as essential components of a sustainable society.

Challenge the belief that individual success depends on adherence to traditional work norms and corporate hierarchies, showing other forms of success - including community and collective action. Emphasise the importance of purposeful work in promoting personal growth, community resilience and social cohesion.

Messages for **moderately opposing** actors in the field of work should address the disadvantages

the growth- and competition-oriented system in the field of work has on both the planet's biosphere and on our lives - for example, through lack of leisure time and effects on mental and physical health.

Messages for those who are **moderately supportive** in this field could address current plans to deepen the current system and problematise these.

Messages for **strongly supportive** groups could point them to specific initiatives that need to be mobilised for now.

4.2 STAKEHOLDER THINKING LABS IN THE 5 CASE COUNTRIES (STL2s)

In the STL2s, which were carried out in the five case countries, stakeholders deliberated a set of six transformational political and policy objectives and tried to co-create ideas for their pursuit in dialogues, as outlined above. The six objectives were selected for their relevance as identified in the previous research process related to D3.1 and D3.2, and with the intention of covering a range of relevant consumption areas and themes of the the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project:

1. **Reduction in meat consumption** [consumption area: NUTRITION]
2. **Reduction in air travel** [consumption area: LEISURE]
3. **Upper limit for residential floor space** [consumption area: HOUSING]
4. **Reduction in car ownership in cities** [consumption area: MOBILITY]
5. **Work Time Reduction** [cross-cutting theme: WELFARE]
6. **Regulations for sustainable (sufficient) business models** [cross-cutting theme: BUSINESS MODELS]

While delving into the specific policy objectives, the 30 sessions or dialogues (six per case country) were aimed at exploring overarching themes relating to the research questions (RQ):

- **RQ1: How can we explain why deteriorating conditions have not led to changes in the achievement of societal consensus and structural transformation?**
- **RQ2: What are policy and political strategies, relevant enablers, and immediate next steps to undermine and overcome 'sustained unsustainability'?**
- **RQ3: Who is responsible for such a transformation and what are relevant actor coalitions and alliances?**

Below, we outline the findings from the 30 STL2 dialogues, categorised according to the six themes. At the end of each of the six thematic sections, a table summarising the relevant barriers, enablers and actor-related strategies is presented. The chapter concludes by highlighting key cross-cutting issues and exploring key similarities and differences observed across countries.

4.2.1 Reducing Meat Consumption

The first dialogue on "Reducing Meat Consumption" assembled stakeholders in the five countries to reflect on sustainable nutrition. While pointing out a range of policy levers, these dialogues in particular highlighted the importance of education.

With regard to the question of barriers that lead to the sustaining of meat consumption rather than a reduction (RQ1), in spite of its role in increasing the emission of greenhouse gases, the results from several countries pointed towards **financial hurdles**, often with regard to the European Union. These concern **subsidies** for animal husbandry, **existing tax structures** and EU regulations, making it difficult to adjust VAT rates specifically for meat products without

discriminating against market participants or violating EU rules, and the **lack of direct funding** from the EU for the promotion and certification of quality brands.

Moreover, stakeholders emphasised structural challenges with regard to **power relations**. Participants in all countries agreed that politicians have **financial and political interests that are aligned with big corporations**, which leads to a better support of those rather than small-scale businesses. Similarly, with regard to the influence of the **traditional agricultural lobby**, organic producers are confronted with difficulties in terms of maintaining market presence. An interesting problem raised by the Latvian triologue concerns **lacking cooperation between organic farmers** which would enable them to apply for larger production orders.

Apart from ingrained structural barriers, there are also **significant cultural and discursive barriers** as well as **misconceptions about nutrition**. Swedish stakeholders fittingly framed this in terms of the prevalence of the “**meat norm**” (1_SE_B) and its influence on advertising and communication. This norm was found to generate **fear** among the population about the potential **loss of traditional landscapes** as well as fear among **farmers** about the relevance of their work as well as among consumers about the **economic impact** of honest pricing:

*“So a large part of the rejection that often arises in the population is this argument that **poor people will never be able to afford meat again**. I think that’s a basic fear, a basic argument.” (1_DE_A)*

*“There are a lot of fears on farms that their core expertise, their core task, will become superfluous, so to speak. There is already a **great deal of fear or uncertainty among agricultural businesses** anyway.” (1_DE_A)*

To overcome these multifaceted challenges, the stakeholders suggested a diversity of relevant enablers (RQ2) in terms of political and policy strategies, and immediate next steps. In order to change norms in favour of plant-based foods, stakeholders from nearly all countries brought up the importance of **education** as a preliminary step. This concerns the provision of information on the **environmental benefits** of reducing meat consumption as well as on the **nutritional advantages** of a meat-reduced diet and ideas for the preparation of meatless meals. Advancing education in civil society might be achieved through **public campaigns**, which should avoid prohibitions and, instead, offer simple and personally significant challenges that can be rewarded. Moreover, it was agreed that **effective labelling** should aim for broad **acceptance** through **simple messages**, focusing on what we should eat rather than what not. This points towards an implicit controversy regarding more harsh measures such as banning advertising on meat products, which was addressed only by Latvian participants.

Such educational measures should be accompanied by political and economic developments, according to many stakeholders. The promotion of **organic** as well as **local food** was particularly emphasised. Spanish stakeholders, in particular, supported the ‘proximity approach’, i.e. supporting meat consumption coming from the local, small-scale and environmentally friendly livestock farming practices. They point out, however, that this requires **financial support**, for example through European funds, and the reduction of bureaucratic hurdles. Regarding the promotion of organic farming, German participants pointed towards the importance of **setting**

political targets to guide the agrifood industry towards more sustainable practices. Moreover, they suggested the use of **taxation**, acknowledging, however, that this requires careful consideration to ensure effectiveness. Compensatory measures like one-off payments to socio-economically weaker households could mitigate negative financial impacts.

On a smaller scale, stakeholders from all countries underlined the importance of a **convincing offer** of meatless food. In this context, they highlighted that a reduction of meat consumption can be achieved on a daily basis, e.g. through developing **flavourful**, attractive and diverse **alternatives** in restaurants and in institutions, such as hospitals, schools, and company **canteens**, as well as inexpensive **offers of vegetable and vegan products in shops**.

Importantly though, while all sessions reflected mostly on significantly reducing meat consumption and not on eliminating it, in Spain, stakeholders placed more priority on how to improve the quality of meat consumption, to which the reduction angle was more of a by-product:

*“So, to sum up, it is not that we will not make any policy against it, but that **we favour the consumption of meat.**” (1_ES_A)*

Besides, contrasts existed between stakeholders across countries, **whether the consumer demand or the supply sector needs to change first**.

In terms of responsible actors (RQ3), while a holistic political strategy to reduce meat consumption has to include **all relevant stakeholders**, across all dialogues, the importance of the **public sector** was particularly underlined. Stakeholders highlighted that national **governments** play a crucial role in setting examples and guidelines through national policies, considering the broader context of the European Union and global market dynamics and that **policy makers and regulatory bodies** are responsible for designing and implementing effective policy measures, including tax regulations, within the legal frameworks of national and EU laws. **European Union** as well as **municipal authorities** were equally considered as essential. Finally, in some sessions, responsibility was also attributed to **individual consumers**.

In terms of coalitions, stakeholders emphasised the potential for alignment between **smaller farming businesses, agricultural labour unions, media and communication professionals, the scientific community, non-governmental organisations, as well as the educational system**. Such coalitions should span different levels of governance. An interesting aspect raised by the Spanish triologue was to improve relations between consumers and producers by creating direct contact between those groups and supporting proximity.

Table 3: Overview of the triologue on the reduction of meat consumption.

	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Key Barriers (R01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial hurdles: (EU) subsidies for meat production, existing tax structures and EU regulations, lack of direct funding for quality brands Power relations: financial and political impact of big corporations, agricultural lobby, lack of cooperation between organic farmers Cultural and discursive barriers: the “meat norm” (1_SE_B), fear of losing traditional landscapes, fear of economic impact on farmers and consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LV: meat = one of the most exported products HU: misconceptions about nutrition
Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education (concerning environmental benefits, nutritional advantages, etc.): public campaigns, effective labelling, simple messages Promotion of organic and local food: financial support, political targets, use of taxation Convincing offer: attractive, tasteful alternatives to meat consumption, offers in canteens and products in shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LV: avoid prohibitions vs. banning advertising on meat products ES: particular support for the ‘proximity approach’ (i.e. local meat) -> priority = better quality, not mainly the reduction of meat consumption DE: rather support for organic food SE: supply needs to be changed in order to make the demand follow LV: consumers determine the extent of meat reduction
Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National governments Policy makers and regulatory bodies on EU, national and municipal levels smaller farming businesses & agricultural labour unions media and communication professionals scientific community non-governmental organisations educational system Individual consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES: importance of direct contact between consumers and producers

4.2.2 Reduction in Air Travel

Regarding the **main barriers** hindering the structural transformation (**RQ1**), stakeholders in all countries talked about the significant impact of corporate and work-related air travel and its contribution to the normalisation of air travel, next to the session's main focus on the reduction of air travel in the context of leisure.

On a discursive level, stakeholders in the majority of countries agreed that travelling to far-away vacation destinations is still too often seen as **part of "the good life"**. A German participant expressed her astonishment at "how strongly the need to fly is perceived by a certain clientele, while the need for general mobility of people with disabilities, carers and others, just to get out of the house, is not being seen" (2_DE_C). Stakeholders also described a difficulty of raising acceptance for reduction measures as **benefits are mostly intangible and long-term**, while the costs are short-term and immediately affect personal lifestyles. On an economic level, the high price elasticity of the **small minority that is responsible for most emissions from flying** strongly limits the effectiveness of pricing measures. Stakeholders also criticised **subsidies** for aeroplanes and airports, rooted e.g. in the EU taxonomy and national policies, along with tax benefits for jet fuel that counteract climate policy ambitions and exacerbate social and environmental damage. At the same time, stakeholders also highlighted the **lack of expertise even among policymakers**, leaving them vulnerable to industry lobbying and greenwashing, which is in part also reflected in the use of unsustainable economic indicators of "success", such as continuous GDP growth. As a result, the **need for political and policy change and respective responsibilities** in light of the climate crisis are often either **not recognised or ignored**. **Infrastructural lock-in effects** additionally slow down the transformation of the travelling sector, even when there is a will to change. While most stakeholders were largely united in their perspectives on key barriers and enablers for a significant reduction, participants in the **Spanish trialogue took a far more critical stance** as to how impactful a reduction of leisurely flights would be compared to efforts made in other sectors and considering the potential challenges such a change could pose for the tourism-centred Spanish economy. This division was also described for the EU-level where reduction efforts meet resistance from tourism-reliant states such as Greece and Spain.

In all countries but Spain, stakeholders named the immediate **key next step (RQ2)** to be the **taxation of jet fuel** at an EU level, to force the inclusion of negative externalities in ticket prices. Such a taxation would need to include CO₂, non-CO₂ and high-altitude effects and rely on a unified system for calculating emissions to ensure that airlines pay for the pollution their business activities cause. By comparing emissions from flying with emissions caused by other mobility options or goods at the time of buying the ticket, stakeholders also hope to raise consumer awareness. Stakeholders also stressed that short-haul flights are the first that need to be drastically reduced. Public clients, public procurement and public institutions all need to take action and **prohibit flights under 1,000 km** under certain conditions, acknowledging that single-parents of young children may have a more pronounced need for short business trips than many others. This change of norm must also be reflected in **corporate and public budgetary guidelines** that have to consider the ecological impact of travel and reduce incentives for flying.

Large organisations and multinational companies need to additionally **reduce demand** for flights through digitalisation and similar measures.

Among the **key enablers (RQ2)** that were named for such a transformation was the **elimination of subsidies for flying, airports, and aircraft manufacturers**, which continue to counteract climate policies and divert funds from the expansion and improvement of more sustainable modes of travel. As the need of funding for climate adaptation measures continuously rises, a taxation of flights and jet fuel can grant fiscal policy-makers more flexibility and funds through significant tax revenues. **Rigorous reporting of corporate flying** and their impacts can put even additional pressure on corporations to change their travelling behaviour, after the COVID-19 pandemic had already demonstrated the possibilities for reduction measures.

Most stakeholders agreed that a **shift in public discourse and perception** is a key enabler and underlined the potential of a ban on advertisements for flying together with a stronger focus on the positive benefits of train travel. Swedish stakeholders also see potential in publicly shaming institutions that promote flying.

“The image of flying is so much about indulgence, experience, freedom, modernity. That image has been created over several decades. It’s not necessarily that we have to break the whole idea of travel, because it goes back much further than commercial aviation. People have always wanted to travel and experience the world. But how much do you really experience when you go to a place for 3 days and then fly back. We need to shift the idea of what is a good life, what is the purpose of travel, which trips are necessary and which are not.” (2_SE_A)

This ties into the need for a **broader societal discourse** on criteria to determine which flights are valuable and necessary and which are – in the words of a German participant – “frivolous”. By framing flying as **a valuable and rare resource** that needs to be distributed fairly, stakeholders in all countries wanted discourse to stress that it is in our best interest to reduce flying, but that there are some people and regions, for example island communities and globally dispersed families, for whom the need to fly is much more existential than for others.

Efficiency-focused measures were described mostly as end-of-pipe solutions by stakeholders, who went on to suggest a prohibition of half-empty flights, flying at lower altitudes, and more sustainable jet fuels.

Stakeholders remained divided over the role **market-driven strategies** should take. While most of them saw a need for more rigorous regulation of air travel through higher ticket prices, and bans on short-haul flights and advertisements, others disagreed and argued that people would shift automatically to sustainable modes of transport once those have become more attractive than flights in Spain. Assigning **carbon budgets** to persons, which they would be able to spend on goods and services, also provoked mixed reactions. While one stakeholder in Latvia deemed it a dystopian idea limiting the individual freedom of movement, another one saw it as a move towards more social justice. Similarly discussing the right to air travel, one stakeholder in Hungary stated that “It is certainly not a fundamental right to fly for a few thousand forints”, while acknowledging that carbon budgets could be a good way to create more equitable solutions. To account for the different stances and political flexibilities of the wide array of actors in aviation,

a German stakeholder recommended a **staggered approach** to policy making, where discussions with different political actors would have varying scopes: While an airline might be an important partner for discussing the relocation or redirection of certain flights, shrinking the sector as a whole would need to be discussed with a different array of actors to make progress.

Addressing the question of responsibility and which actors should take the lead in bringing about such a reduction (**RQ3**), all stakeholders agreed on the **central role of elected politicians, national governments** and **EU institutions**. In Spain, where stakeholders continuously underlined the need for an expansion of the **railway** network, the tourism industry and public institutions for this expansion need to play a central role. Corporations were described as having to lead reduction efforts by some stakeholders, as **business travel** was seen as a factor contributing to the normalisation of air travel, but it was also pointed out that corporations will not reduce flights voluntarily. Simultaneously, the **media and press** need to become more aware of the impacts of flying, especially when it comes to reporting on vacation destinations. To raise awareness, **teachers and scientists** were named as key actors. Actors from the **civil society** are in need of additional funding to counter lobbying efforts by the aviation industry, while transatlantic partnerships with large US-based NGOs can give additional momentum and expertise to movements. Stakeholders underlined that coalitions with actors from the **medical field** and with **people living in airport regions** can be valuable, especially when it comes to reducing the detrimental effects of noise and air pollution. Many stakeholders also pointed out that **public figures, celebrities and influencers** need to act as role models and awareness raisers.

Table 4: Overview of the dialogue on a reduction of air travel.

	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Key Barriers (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political resistance from tourism reliant states such as Spain and Greece) ● Travelling to far-away vacation destinations seen as part of the good life ● Lack of high-quality railway infrastructure ● Slow change due to infrastructural lock-ins ● EU taxonomy subsidises best-in-class aeroplanes ● need for political and policy change and respective responsibilities are not recognised or ignored ● politically communicating need for change difficult due to intangible and long-term benefits and short-term costs to personal lifestyles ● lack of expertise among policymakers leaves them vulnerable to industry lobbying and greenwashing ● Cheap ticket prices do not adequately reflect social and environmental costs of aviation ● Budgetary guidelines favour cheapest mode of travel without regard for environmental impact, which often results plane travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ES: Reducing air travel needs caution and must be considered from a broader approach including its impact on the labour market, besides it would have a strong impact on tourism industry which is the backbone of the Spanish economy ● SE: additional awareness for negative impacts and long-term outcomes ● LV: low demand for sustainable travel limits supply of options ● HU: consumer protection law for sustainable modes of transportation are not as strong as in aviation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● loyalty programmes encourage additional flying 	
<p>Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taxation of jet fuel at EU level, to include CO₂, non-CO₂ and high-altitude effects, based on unified system for calculating emissions ● Higher ticket prices to reduce demand and frequency of flights ● Revise corporate and public budgetary guidelines to consider environmental and social effects of travel together with prices ● Ban on advertisements for flying & highlight positive benefits of train travel, publicly shame institutions that promote flying ● Elimination of subsidies for flying, airports, and aircraft manufacturers ● Reduce demand through digitalisation ● broader societal discourse on criteria to determine which flights are valuable and necessary and which are “frivolous” ● Improvement and expansion of train travel networks (incl. night trains) ● End-of-pipe solutions: Disincentivizing empty and half-empty flights to increase flight occupancy rate, flying at lower altitudes, more sustainable jet fuels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ES: social safety net for those whose jobs would be threatened by reduction measures or increased taxation ● ES: Market-driven strategies need to provide attractive alternatives without a politically organised shift towards more sustainable transport ● DE: Public clients, public procurement and public institutions all need to prohibit flights under 1,000 km under certain conditions, but e.g., single-parents of young children have more pronounced need for short business trips than many others
<p>Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Politicians and governments ● EU institutions ● Ministries for transport and economy ● Ministry of Finance: collecting tax revenues from aviation ● Local government institutions ● Institutions responsible for expansion of rail network ● Civil Society organisations need more funding to counter aviation lobby ● Medical activists and people in airport regions ● Teachers and scientists together with public figures, celebrities and influencers raise awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ES: Active participation of actors from the tourism industry ● SE: IATA and ICAO ● DE: Budget administrators ● ES: Public private alliance to research more sustainable modes of travel ● HU: Scientific community and media ● DE: Transatlantic partnerships between EU and US NGOs

4.2.3 Upper Limit for Residential Floor Space

In the third dialogue stakeholders explored the idea of reducing living space as a significant step toward lower CO₂ emissions. This conversation extended beyond just **reducing residential floor space** to include the concept of **shared living spaces**.

Recognizing the complexities introduced by prevailing cultural preferences and regulatory frameworks that endorse spacious living, stakeholders examined numerous deeply ingrained structural barriers (RQ1). There was agreement among all participants that current urban planning **regulations** and prevailing legal and financial structures **promote larger homes**. Similarly, stakeholders across case countries pointed out that the **dominant economic models** within the housing industry tend to **emphasise growth and profitability**.

The discussions across case countries also highlighted fundamental structural issues, such as the existing **inflexible housing stock**, which complicates the transition to smaller, more versatile living spaces. Furthermore, a **lack of (access to) comprehensive data on housing sizes and inconsistent building regulations** were identified as obstacles.

The **lack of a common interpretation of reducing floor space** as a policy strategy was considered as another crucial barrier by the stakeholders (e.g., does it involve decreasing per capita floor space, favouring apartment living over detached houses, reducing average home size, limiting property ownership per individual, or decreasing population density?). On a related yet distinct note, participants underscored the risk of **rebound effects**, related to diminished well-being and heightened emissions stemming from the construction of new, smaller homes.

A further common structural challenge across all housing dialogues was **societal resistance to smaller and shared living**. Variations among dialogues primarily revolved around differing perspectives on the primary factors driving resistance among participants in each respective country. In Hungary, past shifts from private to state ownership have left a lasting scepticism towards shared living. Latvians associate smaller, communal living with the low-quality, shared facilities of their Soviet past. In Germany and Sweden, prevailing cultural norms and educational practices favour larger living spaces, with Swedish participants particularly noting a decline in the popularity and utilisation of shared amenities. The stakeholders therefore stressed the importance of illustrating to the public how smaller living spaces can, despite opposing conceptions, actually enhance life quality.

Hungary presents a unique and controversial case where **residential floor space reduction was not considered a key lever** for reducing carbon emissions in housing. Instead, the stakeholders suggested considering a variety of factors and options (including the energetic condition of the home and residents' socio-economic status). The size of the living space would be part of such a complex approach, but not the main lever. The participants rather emphasised the **critical issue of energy efficiency in the building sector**, which is largely due to low energy costs, maintained by government policies, which disincentivize renovations aimed at energy conservation.

These challenges taken together highlight the intricate interplay of political, economic, technological, and sociocultural factors that complicate the adoption of smaller and shared living arrangements. To facilitate this transformation, stakeholders proposed a range of immediate and long-term strategies. A key consensus across all discussions was the unified call for **a holistic, needs-based approach to sustainable housing**. This emphasis stems from concerns that an overly narrow focus on reducing living space could detract from a more comprehensive strategy aimed at integrating sustainability into housing design and development. Such a strategy should account for both ecological and social sustainability, ensuring that the design of rooms, homes, and neighbourhoods is thoughtfully aligned with the specific needs of their inhabitants, according to the stakeholders:

*"If we look at a building holistically, it's not just the living space in square metres, but also the cubic metres in the built space. And if these increase because we want to build more simply, and perhaps ultimately with a reduced footprint, then **the simple size of living space is not sufficient in the assessment**. That is a realisation that is quite central [...]." (3_DE_A)*

*"When developing [a] new vision for housing, we also need to understand very early on which people will use them and what these people will need. **This is not only about those square metres, but the whole [neighbourhood]**." (3_LV_B)*

*"[R]educing floor space, of course, is a necessary issue, but I don't think **we can talk about reducing floor space in general, but we have to adjust it [...] to each situation [...]**. So, we must adjust, yes, but it cannot be a general policy. What we have to do is to move towards an optimal dwelling, which has an adequate floor space according to the number of people who live in it [...]." (3_ES_C)*

Particularly the dialogues in Hungary, Latvia, and Spain highlighted the critical need for additional policy measures and packages designed **to protect the interests of disadvantaged communities**. They proposed various strategies, including financial assistance for low-income families and improved financing options for smaller homes to address market disparities and promote equity in the housing sector. These efforts are intended to ensure that decisions for smaller living spaces are made out of preference rather than need. Specifically, participants recommended adopting a **"housing doughnut" approach** that seeks a balance between ecological sustainability and social welfare, coupled with initiatives to bolster social housing.

To encourage smaller and shared living, stakeholders across case-countries outlined a range of immediate strategies (RQ2). The stakeholders suggested enhancing **data on housing inventory** to uncover potential for smaller living. They also advocated using **development plans to mandate sustainable housing** and recommended CO₂ **life cycle assessments** for buildings, potentially linked to a CO₂ certificate market. The **promotion of the infrastructure and the attractiveness of shared living** was emphasised, alongside **engaging residents** in housing project planning, and giving people the opportunity to **try out smaller and shared living** to reduce resistance. Other suggestions included designing **flexible living spaces** for evolving (family) needs and altering life circumstances and identifying **underutilised spaces for home exchanges**, paired with matchmaking services.

Long-term strategies discussed in nearly all housing dialogues included establishing a **robust rental market** and implementing **higher taxes on larger properties**. Addressing the issue of **vacant second homes through taxation or compulsory occupancy laws** was also discussed in multiple countries, alongside **regulating against new detached houses**.

According to all participants, a comprehensive strategy to encourage smaller and shared living necessitates involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders (RQ3). The important role of **intermediary actors like housing and tenant associations** was underscored by all participants in terms of their potential to promote smaller living arrangements and foster collaboration among key stakeholders.

Stakeholders considered the involvement of housing associations essential in broadening the perspective beyond the usual industry-focused dialogue. Additionally, engaging tenants' associations was believed vital, although they might not primarily focus on climate impact reduction, for understanding the implications for tenants, particularly those in rented accommodations who typically have a lower environmental footprint.

Notably, the well-developed infrastructure for such intermediaries in Germany contrasts with Hungary, where housing associations are yet to be established. If introduced, they could significantly contribute to community housing management and support moving to smaller spaces when circumstances allow or family conditions change.

Table 5: Overview of the dialogue on an upper limit for residential floor space.

	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Key Barriers (R01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing regulations, incentives and business models promoting larger homes and logics of growth and profitability Inconsistent or unclear building regulations Unclear interpretation of reducing floor space as a policy strategy Existing housing stocks rarely enable smaller and shared living concepts Lack of (access to) comprehensive data on housing sizes Potential rebound effects related to reduced well-being, and the building of new and smaller homes Societal/ cultural resistance to smaller and shared living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resistance to smaller/shared living: bad experiences state ownership (HU), associations with the low-quality, shared facilities of Soviet past (LV), prevailing cultural norms and educational practices (DE, SE) HU, unique case: energy inefficiency in the building sector (not floor space) is considered as the main barrier and lever to lower carbon emissions
Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A holistic, needs-based approach to sustainable housing, addressing ecological and social sustainability in the design and development of rooms, homes, and neighbourhoods Enhancing data on housing inventory to uncover potential for smaller living and underutilised spaces for home exchanges paired with matchmaking services Using development plans to mandate sustainable housing (incl. CO2 life cycle assessments for buildings) Promote infrastructure and attractiveness of shared living, design flexible living spaces for evolving residential needs Engage residents in housing project planning Giving people the opportunity to try out smaller and shared living to reduce resistance Higher taxes on larger properties Taxation or compulsory occupancy laws to address the issue of vacant second homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HU, LV, SE: critical need for additional policy measures designed to protect the interests of disadvantaged communities DE: Promoting a "building simply" narrative to cultivate a positive view of smaller living spaces, encouraging planners and residents to explore options for forgoing certain comforts. SE: revisiting the "million program" principles for communal living
Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad and diverse coalition including (not limited to) public administrations, real estate developers, architects, construction firms, and financial institutions, as well as research entities, media, and educational institutions. Crucial role of intermediary actors and actors facilitating transition processes: e.g., housing and tenant associations could promote smaller living arrangements, facilitate collaboration, and expand the conversation beyond industry-focused dialogues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DE vs. HU: well-developed infrastructure for intermediaries like housing associations in DE contrasts with HU, where housing associations are yet to be established.

4.2.4 Reducing Car-Ownership (and -Use) in Cities

In the dialogues on reductions in urban car-ownership and use, stakeholders in all case countries highlighted the multi-dimensional effects of intensive car-use that go far beyond the emission of greenhouse gases and also diminish the quality of life in urban areas by taking up valuable living space that could otherwise be used for greenery and community activities, as well as threatening the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, and polluting the air.

Considering the **barriers for structural transformation (RQ1)**, discursively, the use of cars for transportation remains at the heart of many **people's vision of a good life**, rooted in everyday practices, cultures and discourses. Stakeholders described cars as symbols of status and prestige in a highly gendered environment, where they are also tied to **traditional gender roles** and ideas of masculinity as well as to a concept of freedom. These ideas manifest in a low inclination to use public transport, the common assumption that access to on-street parking is a resident's right, the belief that car-use is already overtaxed, and a political polarisation surrounding debates of sustainable mobility. In an environment that has been car-centred for decades in most countries, cars often provide a **high perceived amount of comfort** to users, making it difficult to politically acknowledge that those with a high yearly mileage will lose some of those privileges to enable a higher quality of life for the large majority. However, stakeholders pointed out that the free use of cars is not available to all parts of the population and heavily depends on wealth and income. When it comes to **imaginaries of a common future**, myths and false information about the effects of higher taxation and sustainable modes of transport can cause a lack of trust and understanding and act as a significant barrier. Limits to personal and collective imagination can also make it difficult to imagine how people's lives would change – for the worse or for the better – if they were to adopt different transportation habits. A Latvian stakeholder stated that the fact that the benefits of sustainable transport are mostly long-term and intangible while the costs occur short-term complicates political communication and decision-making. As an additional barrier, stakeholders stressed that the current **narrow focus on electric vehicles (EV)** draws attention away from more systemic issues, while a pure electrification of the status quo would yield few benefits.

Coherent sustainability-focused decision-making in all case countries is frequently made difficult by a lack of coordination between different authorities and insufficient integration between different modes of transport. Participants criticised too little coordination between the public transport and housing authorities that frequently leaves neighbourhoods and villages without sufficient access to the public transport network. This makes new residents form car-based habits out of necessity, making a shift later on much more difficult. In most case countries, cities lack the appropriate authority to make small or big changes to the local mobility landscape or are otherwise overburdened with bureaucratic procedures or limited by legislation that is ill-suited to local contexts. In some countries, a reduction of car-use is also complicated by a fragmentation of political responsibility for public transport and the multitude of transport providers, which makes decision-making and timetable coordination too difficult and necessitates a large bureaucracy that diverts resources from quality improvements. More generally, infrastructural lock-in effects and long planning processes slow down many types of urban change even when decision-making is successful.

Conflicts of interest also hinder a reduction of car-use in most case countries, as interests in state revenue are often in conflict with facilitating sustainable transportation. This dynamic is promoted, among others, by a well-networked car-industry and manifests in subsidies for car-use and the car industry, but also in the promotion of commercialised parking spaces that provide cities a revenue stream.

When it comes to **key next steps (RQ2)**, stakeholders across case countries agreed that an **honest dialogue** with the multitude of actors identified below and especially with people often excluded from the mobility discourse is essential. They expected that such a dialogue would strengthen the participation of civil society, foster **acceptance for change**, make policies more successful in meeting various needs, and increase awareness for current deficiencies. But stakeholders also emphasised that current laws for accessibility and on-street parking need to be strictly enforced to maintain credibility and to achieve immediate benefits for residents. The **public transport sector** was deemed the most important building block for sustainable mobility and stakeholders in all countries underlined the need for network expansions and improvements in the quality of service. Public transport was reported to be underfunded in all countries and needs to be subsidised to improve accessibility and become more efficient, convenient, and attractive than taking one's own car. Commuting routes need to be streamlined with a working connection between road and rail-based transports. Stakeholders stressed both push and pull factors and named the **inclusion of externalities** in the pricing of fuel and parking spaces as key next steps to discourage car-use along with a narrowing of car lanes and restricted speed limits. Users also need more simplified tariff structures, a unitary point of sale for all ticket types, and sufficient help in navigating different modes of transport.

When it comes to **key enablers** for a reduction of car-ownership and -use, stakeholders agreed that a **holistic approach to the transport system** from a national down to the local level is central for shifting the narrow focus on electric vehicles towards promoting the large variety of sustainable modes of transport. Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) were named as a useful enabling tool in this context. Eliminating subsidies for car-use and parking spaces along with requirements for buildings to provide parking spaces needs to be part of any credible transformation efforts, as stakeholders in all case countries pointed out. Various stakeholders also recommended **pricing measures** that increase the cost of car-use and ownership, e.g. through the EU Emissions Trading System.

One fundamental enabler for this remains however the **societal and political acknowledgement** that the current system needs to change to improve the overall quality of life and reduce inequalities.

"If you instead of focusing on electrification, EVs and charging points, look at a sustainable transport system in a broader sense, you have a much better chance of getting people on board. The climate problem is the overshadowing problem, but we also have the problem that society is more and more divided, that people feel excluded, that people find it difficult to manage their daily necessities. If you then have a climate policy that is based on something that is considered completely unattainable for those with low incomes, you risk losing both support for an effective climate policy, as well as the concrete measures that make people feel

they can be involved in the whole thing” (4_SE_A)

Participants pointed out that the current **discursive focus** on resilience and emergency preparedness can also inform a discourse on sustainable lifestyle and system changes: Greener and more sustainable cities can, for example, reduce energy dependencies and are less vulnerable to floods and heatwaves. Highlighting inefficiencies of the current system can broaden the array of actors willing to discuss changes, while a growing awareness for air and noise pollution and time losses can additionally shift political priorities.

Stakeholders suggested that the **quality of transport policies** can be improved by establishing democratic processes that identify collective and individual needs and seek out ways to guarantee their satisfaction. Learning from and adapting well-functioning transport networks in other regions and countries, can be an additional support for urban planners in local contexts.

Clearly **communicating and creating benefits and positive side-effects** of sustainable mobility such as greener, safer, more accessible cities that are more resilient against floods and heatwaves while also being cheaper for households than car-use, was described as crucial to garner people’s acceptance. Stakeholders recommended that policy-makers consult with residents on solutions to open up spaces that were formerly occupied by cars for urban experiments according to community needs. Making such benefits immediately tangible in peoples’ local contexts through a transformation of parking spaces and low emission zones is key to outweigh lifestyle changes that might seem uncomfortable at first.

“To introduce and garner support for these initiatives, we must adopt a broader perspective, highlighting the diverse gains that individuals and communities can expect. It’s crucial to address conflicting goals and showcase how reducing car ownership aligns with broader societal objectives. By framing the discourse around the varied benefits and addressing conflicting priorities, we can pave the way for a more comprehensive and compelling approach to reshape urban mobility.” (4_LV_B)

Encouraging people to change their mobility habits at **times of general change in their lives** (moving, new job, new school, etc.) can grant additional momentum as long as workplaces, schools and health centres are reachable by public transport in short amounts of time.

Policy strategies to bring about such change should focus simultaneously on **push and pull factors** according to German stakeholders. Positive benefits of the transformation need to be communicated in an encouraging vision for the future such as the Welsh **“well-being of future generations”** approach, as stakeholders in all countries underlined, and stakeholders in Spain recommended that a walkable city should be framed as a **subjective right**. Swedish stakeholders emphasised that **measures need to target over-consumers** and that a reduction of demand, e.g. through 15-minute cities and online services, has to precede an electrification of vehicles for reasons of resource efficiency. While all stakeholders saw a need for an overarching framework for change on a regional and national level, all described **large potentials for change on a city and community level**, where benefits of changes are immediately tangible for residents.

In all case countries, stakeholders identified a diverse array of **actors responsible for the transformation (RQ3)** of the mobility sector with varying national foci. Stakeholders were divided over the question, whether politicians on a local or on a national level were in a stronger position to lead the transformation. Yet in most countries they were united in the belief that **elected politicians** are generally in the strongest position to lead the transformation. In addition, most stakeholders pointed out that **people with limited mobility**, e.g. senior citizens and people with disabilities, need to form a vital part of the transformation. Together with people who do not own cars at the moment, they can contribute essential information about what more accessible and convenient public transport systems need to look like. By including **passenger, walking and cycling associations, tenants' associations**, and associations focused on **mental and physical health** in the decision-making, stakeholders expected policies and their implementation to match closer the needs of the population. In all countries they underlined that local **transport and urban planners** in municipal governments need to break with old planning habits and implement sustainable practices in their everyday work. At the same time, **large employers and operators of car fleets** need to take action and contribute to the transport costs of their commuting employees and create green travel plans. In some countries **unions** were deemed to have enough political influence to be important partners in addressing issues of social justice. Additionally, stakeholders called for an inclusion of car-sharing providers, innovative mobility start-ups, the energy sector when it comes to electrification, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME), companies causing delivery traffic, railway companies, and the financial sector, who often provides funds for the transformation.

To **build coalitions**, stakeholders in Latvia proposed to make use of the “**neighbour factor**” in coalition-building: Residents come together in local communities and consult with businesses and delivery companies to build sustainable habits and solutions together. By uniting neighbours in a collective planning process, stakeholders saw it as more likely that people will actually implement lifestyle changes than when individuals are feeling alone in their efforts. For creating a framework for providers of transport, stakeholders in all countries emphasised the need for **coalitions across levels of governance**, spanning from a local to an EU level. Significant leaps can be achieved in **surprising alliances** with partners that are commonly opposing political actors, according to a German stakeholder who named coalitions with chambers of commerce and the business community as examples and reported that such coalitions can suddenly shift political majorities.

Table 6: Overview of the dialogue on the reduction of car-ownership (and use) in cities.

	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Key Barriers (RQ1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car-use as part of the people’s vision of a good life, rooted in everyday practices, cultures and discourses, tied to traditional gender roles, masculinity, and concepts of freedom • High perceived amount of comfort although car-use is not available to all • Difficulty of politically acknowledging that those 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LV: lack of trust in government, lack of understanding, esp. Households that fear substantial initial investments • DE: Fragmentation of political responsibility for public transport sector, making decision-making and coordination difficult • SE & DE: lack of integration between different

	<p>with a high yearly mileage will lose some privileges to enable a higher quality of life for the large majority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Myths and false information about the effects of higher taxation prevent more ambitious concepts ● Limitations to personal and collective imagination: people find it difficult to imagine how their lives would change if they were to adopt different transportation habits ● Narrow focus on electrification draws attention away from more systemic issues ● Underfunded public transport sector ● Lack of coordination between different authorities, e.g. housing and transport authorities ● Conflicts of interest: e.g. State revenues vs. sustainability (DE: interests of car-industry framed as identical with state interests) ● Lack of authority and competency: municipalities and cities want to be more sustainable but are limited by national and EU legislation ● Government subsidies for car-use prevent more sustainable modes of transport ● Decision-making is difficult as benefits are long-term and intangible while costs occur in the short-term 	<p>modes of transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ES: Hot and windy climatic conditions make sustainable modes of transport less attractive ● DE: Privatisation of public transport has decreased quality of service ● DE: Financial policies have not acknowledged the need for comprehensive transformation and accompanying costs ● DE: Rebound effects may act as barriers where flows of mobility initially increase due to expanding transport networks, lower costs for individuals in public transport and overall improvements in accessibility
<p>Key Enablers & Strategies (RQ2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broad dialogue with multitude of stakeholders and people frequently excluded from mobility discourse, to make policies more successful in meeting various needs and foster acceptance for change ● Strict enforcement of current laws for accessibility and on-street parking to achieve credibility and immediate benefits for residents ● Demand reduction through online services and 15-Minute-City ● Subsidies for public transport to become more accessible, efficient, convenient and attractive ● Address push and pull factors: price of car-use needs to include externalities e.g. in the pricing of fuel and parking spaces, through EU ETS, eliminate subsidies for car-use ● Communicate benefits and positive side-effects such as greener, safer, more accessible and more resilient cities to garner people's acceptance. ● Making benefits immediately tangible for local residents: transformation of parking spaces, low emission zones, open space for urban experiments to expand imaginaries ● Focus on resilience and emergency preparedness can also inform discourse on sustainable lifestyles and system changes ● Highlight inefficiencies of current system ● SUMP's can help framework to identify collective and individual needs in democratic process ● Learn from other regions and countries ● Times of general change in one's life can be leveraged to also change habits ● Frame a walkable city as a subjective right and make use of encouraging visions such as the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HU: social pressure needs to increase to encourage people to change mobility habits

	<p>Welsh “well-being of future generations”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduction of overconsumptions needs to precede an electrification of vehicles 	
<p>Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elected politicians are in the strongest position to lead the transformation ● People with limited mobility need to be involved ● People who do not own cars ● Passenger, walking and cycling associations, tenants’ associations, unions, and organisations focused on mental and physical health ● Local transport and urban planners need to break with old planning habits ● Large employers and operators of car fleets need to contribute financially to public transport used by their employees and create green travel plans ● Car-sharing providers, mobility start-ups, energy sector, SMEs, companies causing delivery traffic, railway companies, the financial sector ● Coalitions across levels of governance, from local to EU level ● Coalition of environmental and social justice groups ● Surprising alliances with typically conservative actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SE: National policies must take the lead in bringing about the transformation ● LV & HU & ES: Municipalities are more effective at taking appropriate measures as long as sufficient resources are provided ● DE: Climate movement is in a suitable position to credibly unite social and environmental issues ● SE: Driving schools could be used to raise awareness for more sustainable modes of transport

4.2.5 Working Time Reduction

In the dialogues on “Working Time Reduction”, stakeholders came together to think about ways of changing the world of work towards socially and ecologically sustainable conditions.

In the attempt to explain why worsening conditions have not led to changes in achieving a consensus or structural transformation with regard to more sustainable ways of working, several hurdles have been identified (RQ1). Firstly, stakeholders in most countries agreed that there are many **practical challenges** complicating the reduction of working hours. In particular, these concern sectors like healthcare and transportation, where **shift systems** and a **shortage of personnel** make it difficult to cover necessary hours. Moreover, some economies have to deal with a **scarcity of skilled workers** or high degrees of **youth unemployment**. Interesting aspects raised by single sessions concern the effects that **globalisation** produces in connecting workers across time zones as well as potential **loneliness** as a barrier since the workplace is also very often the main location of social interactions:

"Those who are absolutely lonely and work is their family, who went into the office to work voluntarily even under Covid, even risking their health, because that community is simply the only community they belong to. This should not be underestimated." (5_HU_D)

The stakeholders also emphasised more deeply ingrained barriers, such as **capitalist structures**, creating strong **concerns about competitiveness** in the global market, as well as **consumerism and business models of growth**. These are said to depend on as much workforce as possible, hence, the self-definition of a **‘work-based society’** as in Hungary. This creates **cultural resistance**, as was emphasised in nearly all sessions. These factors create a complex web of economic and psychological hurdles that hinder the adoption of reduced working hours, despite the potential benefits for both employees and employers. Participants in two sessions further emphasised that the reduction of working hours could lead to **rebound effects**, if people spend their extra time for leisure with emission-intensive consumption such as travelling often by taking long-haul flights. This implies that working time reduction must be accompanied with a broader change in norms, values, and narratives about the good life.

In order to overcome these barriers and to enable the sustainability transformation, stakeholders suggested multiple different measures and strategies (RQ2). In terms of policy measures, stakeholders proposed the **introduction of compensatory mechanisms**, e.g. in the form of a **government fund**, acting as reinsurance for companies experimenting with new practices like reduced working hours as well as **balanced and flexible regulations**, since there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Moreover, **role models** could be supportive, i.e. work groups in the public sector, could go first in order to demonstrate the potential of reducing working time.

Another recurrent aspect was the **strengthening of workers’ rights**. This could be achieved within the company and politically, i.e. through **bargaining** and the **strengthening of trade unions**. Such measures serve the aim that was articulated in nearly all dialogues on the issue of improving the work-life balance, decision-making autonomy, and mental health of workers as well as human well-being.

Swedish stakeholders also discussed the importance of **‘inner’ and ‘outer transformation’**, i.e.

changes in thinking about what is needed for a good life and society-shaping structures:

"Ken Wilber has developed this matrix or a model where you look at individual factors and collective factors, inner and outer factors. And we can work in all four corners of this model. The inner is about yourself, what makes you happy etc, and the outer factor on the individual level is about what you can do for the collective; for example choosing to not go to Thailand. We can work with these four corners. And what I think and what is close to my heart is the inner transformation, we talk too little about this [...]. I think a deeper debate about this is necessary. The inner transformation is the key." (5_SE_B)

This call for 'inner transformation' points towards the importance of new **narratives** influencing individual thinking as well as societal discourses. Participants in most sessions emphasised that the **connection between the climate crisis and the working hours** within the growth-based system must be scrutinised in order to further question the growth paradigm:

"We're cutting, we're not saving as much, we're cutting the economy, we're giving up international competitiveness, many aspects, but for the climate and for your well-being. [...]. And the old consumerist model is what we need to get rid of." (5_LV_B)

In order to realise these transformative strategies, several actors have been identified as responsible (RQ3). Most importantly, **trade unions** have been named as the actors that must take the lead in almost all country sessions. German stakeholders especially underlined their educational role and their importance within collaborations with environmental groups and social movements while Swedish stakeholders emphasised their agenda-setting power. However, in Hungary, it was pointed out that in the past three decades - since the fall of communism/socialism - the role and power of the unions have significantly decreased, they are not as strong as they used to be during the socialist era. Furthermore, the present (Fidesz) government has passed several national legislation in the past 10 years by which companies are almost free to do anything in terms of labour issues in certain economic areas (e.g. car manufacturing industry).

Interesting aspects raised in single dialogues concerned the removal of sectors like energy, water, transport, care, education, and medicine to be removed from the profit-driven logic, which could be achieved through **cooperative structures or community networks**, as well as the importance of paying special attention to female workers and health-care professions.

The role of the **individual** was addressed, but there was dissens about their impact. However, they do especially play an important role as employees and employers in work councils where a bottom-up approach should be applied, as suggested by participants in most country sessions. There should thus be a **coalition between employers and employees** in the aim of improving productivity *and* well-being. The need for **open-minded entrepreneurs and progressive business organisations** was also emphasised in this context.

Lastly, while **public institutions, governments, and politicians** were highlighted in all dialogues due to their top-down regulatory powers, to achieve social change, the responsibilities of **educational institutions** as well as of **media and leaders of public opinion** were also addressed.

Table 7: Overview of the triologue on the reduction of working time.

	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Key Barriers (R01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practical challenges, e.g. shift systems, necessity to cover personnel all the time ● Globalised world of work ● Capitalist structures: concerns about competitiveness, consumerism, business models of growth ● Cultural resistance: self-definition as 'work-based society' ● Risk of rebound effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DE: scarcity of skilled workers ● ES: youth unemployment ● HU: potential loneliness
Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compensatory mechanisms, e.g. government funds ● Balanced and flexible regulations ● Importance of role models ● Strengthening of workers' rights and trade unions ● Creation of new narratives: connection between climate crisis and working hours, social dialogue between stakeholders and researchers 	
Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trade unions = most important actors ● Cooperative structures and community networks in sectors like energy, water, transport, care, education, and medicine ● Coalition between employers and employees ● Open-minded entrepreneurs and progressive business organisations ● Public institutions, governments, politicians ● Educational institutions ● Media and leaders of public opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HU: lack of power of trade unions

4.2.6 Regulations for Sustainable (Sufficiency-Oriented) Business Models

In the dialogues on sustainable, and specifically sufficiency-oriented business models, finally, participants delved into the necessity and design of political regulations as well as important flanking measures to encourage sustainable business practices.

The conversation covered a wide array of significant obstacles (RQ1) that elucidate why adequate regulations for sustainable business models and practices have not been fully implemented in the case countries. A predominant challenge identified in all discussions was the **influence of entrenched interests**, particularly those linked to the fossil fuel sector and its financial networks. The participants recognized this corporate influence as surpassing governmental policy-making power and political will that would steer corporations towards sustainability: *"If people are paid by large corporations to sit in ministries and help write laws that are then presented by the ministry, then something is going wrong"* (6_DE_B). They further noted ingrained conventional business models result in **organisational inertia** and a widespread resistance to change in many companies.

Examining the restrictive power of entrenched interests led to discussions about the **prevailing economic growth paradigm**, identified as a major hurdle to enacting effective business regulations and practices. The participants emphasised the **absence of a discourse on how economic activities could enhance welfare** as well as the **failure to connect economic growth with policy goals** like climate protection and sustainability. Instead, an overarching emphasis on economic growth prevails, facilitating the **externalisation of social and environmental costs**. The stakeholders also highlighted the problem of **unnecessary or false antagonisms** (e.g., equating the shrinking of selected economic sectors with nationwide deindustrialisation) that can be observed in numerous public debates, as elucidated by this quote: *"So, this [challenge is about] how to create a democratic culture, a culture of dialogue that is not so confrontational, so populist. But at the moment the whole development is heading towards this hardening into two fronts, into black and white, into **populism**."* (6_DE_B)

The participants unanimously acknowledged a significant resistance to change, manifesting in **entrenched unsustainable consumer behaviours and narratives**, alongside the corporate sector's reluctance to embrace transition processes. This resistance is palpable through the perpetuation of unsustainable shopping habits in both business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) sectors.

Another significant barrier to sustainable business performances considered relevant in all case-countries is the **lack of a cohesive legal framework and coherent policies**. This deficiency often leads to sustainable business practices appearing irrational, while unsustainable behaviours seem rational – a notion underscored in numerous quotes:

"If you categorise it a bit like this, there is the small part [in the business sector] that is full of conviction, [businesses] who simply want to do it and have the money to do it. Then there's a very significant part that says, I'm under so much pressure, I would if I could, but the framework I have is working completely against me. [...] And, of course, there are the vast majority of those who [couldn't care less] and are practising profit maximisation and who are not interested at all. Ultimately, all three need the same thing. What I don't need is to brainwash board members. That leads nowhere, it doesn't make sense. What I need is a legal framework." (6_DE_B)

"[We, the companies] always need stability: stability in governments and stability in the frameworks, in the legal system. It is only with clear, stable and updated legal frameworks and with social peace that we can give security to the necessary investments to face all these changes." (6_ES_A)

In addition, all discussions were critical of the **current policies and administrative demands** for being **rigid and obstructive** to sustainable businesses, alongside a general unawareness of the importance of sustainability in business practices. Notably, there is a widespread belief in the business world that environmental protection is primarily the responsibility of the government or the EU, allowing **companies to evade their share of responsibility**.

To overcome these challenges (R02), participants outlined what sustainable business regulation should include and how it should be enforced across various institutions and sectors. All business model dialogues referred to political instruments, such as **taxes, bans, leveraging public procurement, ESG guidelines for banks, and obligatory CSR measures**, emphasising the **need to align national regulations with EU standards** to ensure fair competition:

***"It is imperative to recognize that businesses respond to market signals and demand. This could be changed only by using regulatory measures and/or economically incentivizing tools.** By implementing regulatory frameworks that promote environmentally friendly practices and introducing economic incentives that encourage sustainability, we can steer businesses towards more responsible and sustainable operations. This integrated strategy aims to align market forces with ecological priorities, fostering a harmonious relationship between economic growth and environmental preservation." (6_LV_A)*

*"I have to change the incentive framework systemically in such a way **that even a company that operates quite conventionally can't help but** say that it wants to **act in a way that is orientated towards the common good, that it wants to be ecologically and socially fair, wants to pay good wages, wants to have a good work-life balance, only wants to work a certain number of hours per week** and so on and so forth, wants to offer different models, wants a high level of participation. I can favour companies that have strong participative elements. 20 percent of GDP is public. I can organise all tenders in such a way that they are subject to these principles." (6_DE_B)*

Stakeholders of all case countries stressed the importance of **certification opportunities, sustainability metrics, and strict oversight** of sustainability efforts to address the growing

trend of greenwashing, and emphasised the important role of social and non-for-profit entrepreneurs in this effort. Public sector incentives (e.g., public procurement) for sustainable practices, **reductions in fossil fuel subsidies**, and **increased subsidies for sustainable economic development** (e.g., energy transition) were also highlighted.

Furthermore, participants in nearly all case-countries emphasised the need for **scalable solutions to enable businesses of all sizes to meet sustainability criteria**, with special support for small businesses. Among others, they discussed the importance of **prioritising large companies** in policy efforts and the need for a strategy focusing on **information dissemination and awareness-raising** to enhance acceptance for business regulations. They also noted the necessity of measures to **increase acceptance of price increases** due to the internalisation of environmental and social costs.

Contrasts existed between stakeholder perspectives on the importance attached to promoting **leadership at the management and employee level** to drive organisational culture change towards sustainability. While some participants supported this, others were convinced that this was a waste of energy and **the only real change would come from a strong policy** framework.

To facilitate potentially unpopular changes to existing regulatory frameworks, a particularly interesting measure proposed by the German triologue included employing **new formats for citizen participation** (e.g., citizen councils on national level) **to generate political legitimacy** and prepare difficult decisions.

Finally, all participants agreed on the need to build a broad alliance of various actors to enable effective regulation and counteract the influence of vested interests (RQ3). This alliance of actors should include **scientific communities, businesses of diverse scales, citizens (e.g., citizen councils), NGOs, and prominent institutions like the World Bank**. Participants further deemed it advantageous to **engage influential corporate associations and financial entities** to steer investments towards sustainable endeavours. They also outlined the **significance of the regional dimension and its actors**, including local governments, enterprises, civil society organisations and academic institutions, spanning various sectors and political affiliations. This was considered pivotal for fostering close relationships and engaging on equal footing.

Stakeholders of nearly all case-countries underscored the **critical role of environmental movements in catalysing public interest and participation**, thereby exerting pressure on corporations to embrace sustainable practices. They articulated, “[p]olitics needs majorities, so it can only ever follow. It's always initiated by society. It's always marginalised groups.” (3_DE_B), highlighting the grassroots nature of significant change. Besides, they illuminated the necessity for **specific partnerships**, such as those between legislators and businesses, networks of specialists across different firms, coalitions tailored to specific industries or products, and alliances along value chains. The importance of education, research, and innovation as drivers of sustainable practices was also accentuated.

However, participants also cautioned against allowing the focus on forming coalitions to detract

from the **need for clear mandates** and the establishment of effective structures and **processes for implementation**. They remarked, "[d]ialogue formats in the triangle between science, politics, and business is something we already did 20 years ago. There is a lack of a clear mandate and the structures and implementation channels that need to be linked to it." (3_DE_A), stressing the **need for well-defined responsibilities** and actionable frameworks to actualize sustainable initiatives.

Table 8: Overview of the triologue on sustainable (sufficiency-oriented) business models.

	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Key Barriers (R01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of cohesive legal framework and coherent policies; existing ones promoting unsustainable business practices • Corporate influence surpasses governmental power • Corporations tend to assign responsibility for environmental protection entirely to their government and the EU, evading their own responsibility • Organisational inertia breeds resistance to change in conventional business models. • Absence of discourse linking economic activity to welfare; aligning economic actions to policy goals • Externalisation of environmental and social costs • Political polarisation resulting in unnecessary antagonisms and populism • Entrenched unsustainable consumption behaviours and narratives (incl. B2C and B2B) 	
Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed policy instruments: taxes, bans, public procurement as leverage (e.g. tender calls), obligatory CSR measures, ESG guidelines for banks, sustainability metrics, certification opportunities, and strict oversight of sustainability efforts, reductions in fossil fuel subsidies, and increased subsidies for sustainable economic development (e.g., energy transition) • Aligning national regulations with EU standards for fair competition • Information dissemination and awareness-raising to enhance acceptance for business regulations • Internalising environmental and social costs and implementing measures to increase acceptance for resulting price increases • Scalable solutions for businesses to meet sustainability criteria (e.g. special support for small business, more ambitious demands for large corporations) • Framing sustainability as an opportunity for innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE: new citizen participation formats (e.g., national citizen councils) to facilitate regulatory changes (promote policy legitimacy and acceptance).. • HU vs. DE views: promote business leadership at management level to foster sustainability culture (HU) vs. indoctrination of board members or staff has no significant effect => strong policy framework required (DE)
Responsible Actors & Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with scientific communities, businesses of diverse scales and sectors, 	

Coalitions (R03)	<p>citizens and consumers, NGOs, national banks , the World Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional engagement with local governments, enterprises, academic institutions, and civil society organisations (regional level allows fostering close relationships and engaging on equal footing)• Environmental movements play a crucial role: they catalyse public interest and participation, pressure corporations to embrace sustainable practices; politics only ever follows societal initiatives (exemption HU case)• Specific partnerships needed, e.g. legislators and businesses, networks of specialists, industry-specific coalitions, value chain alliances• Emphasis on education, research, and innovation as drivers of sustainable practices	
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4.2.7 Summary of STL2 Findings

The empirical findings of the STL2s encompass data from five case countries and examine six political objectives/policy options (reduction in meat consumption, reduction in air travel, upper limit for residential floor space, reduction in car ownership in cities, work time reduction, and regulations for sustainable (sufficient) business models).

While the EU STL focused on mapping actor coalitions at the EU level, identifying the need for more diverse and inclusive networks, the STL2 findings further underline the importance of broad coalitions, especially in overcoming sectoral lock-ins and vested interests that resist sustainable transformation, as well as suggesting necessary local coalitions in the 6 key topics. The need for coordinated efforts across sectors and actors is emphasised, with national and EU-level policy frameworks requiring alignment to promote a 1.5°-aligned transformation. The STL2 outcomes furthermore build on the narratives created during the EU STL, by offering a deeper analysis of how these frames can be politically and strategically employed to shift ideational structures in the 6 policy frames, in local contexts. The empirical findings of STL2 offer insights into three key inquiries.

Firstly, they shed light on the **persistent barriers (RQ1)** that explain why deteriorating environmental and social conditions fail to spur changes towards achieving widespread societal consensus and structural transformation. Across all case country dialogues, it becomes evident that **inconsistent and incoherent political frameworks**, along with economic incentives, serve as fundamental obstacles to fostering structural change. Instead of advancing sustainability, national policy frameworks often incentivize the expansion of unsustainable practices, undermining sustainable alternatives. This is in part due to organisational deficiencies such as the fragmentation of responsibility and a lack of coordination between different authorities. National and EU subsidies for unsustainable practices were named as key barriers in the majority of dialogues, preventing the uptake of sustainable lifestyles and further cementing fossil infrastructure. Currently, in all sectors the pricing of services does not adequately include externalities such as social and environmental impacts, benefitting unsustainable consumption patterns. The **lack of accessible alternatives**, such as high-quality railway infrastructure and shared living spaces, takes away opportunities for change even from those willing to implement sustainable lifestyle changes. At the same time, the lack of access to comprehensive data, of personnel or political authority can inhibit the creation or provision of suitable alternatives.

Both the private and public sectors frequently harbour **vested interests**, such as financial gains or electoral strategies, anchoring them to the status quo and hindering their willingness to embrace change. Corporations tend to assign responsibility for environmental protection entirely to their government and the EU, which exacerbates corporate irresponsibility and regulatory inconsistency. Combined with a lack of expertise among policymakers and widespread false information about many sustainable policies, industry lobbying is very effective in sustaining unsustainability, especially wherever corporate influence and resources surpass governmental power.

As a result, a variety of **lock-in effects** of unsustainability have manifested across sectors, taking the form of infrastructural lock-ins such as parking spaces, airports, large single-family homes, and meat production farms, and organisational lock-ins, where budgetary guidelines and

regulation pay little attention to environmental and social impacts and organisational inertia favours resistance to change in conventional business models. Broader socio-economic phenomena such as a high youth unemployment rate and a lack of skilled workers in some countries can also function as lock-in effects, making change difficult even if there is a political will. On a national level, lock-in effects often further contribute to a resistance to change, as tourism-reliant states such as Spain are mostly unwilling to reduce air travel and car-producing countries like Germany still do not perceive sufficient benefits from reduction measures. In this context, stakeholders criticised that industry interests are too often presumed to be identical with state interests and that an interest in short-term state revenues must not prevent long-term improvements in sustainability and quality of life.

Moreover, **broader cultural and discursive barriers** exacerbate this resistance to change, fostering fear of repercussions such as price hikes or unpopular decisions, and perpetuating false dichotomies (e.g. transforming the economy/ shrinking specific sectors understood as deindustrialisation). This can in part be attributed to misconceptions and false information, but also to historical experiences of people that have caused a lack of trust in governments and resistance towards sufficient lifestyles, as well as to identities that are frequently intertwined with fossil practices such as car-use, large family homes, and long working hours. As a result, stakeholders across all dialogues stressed that our visions of a good life need to progress beyond what is possible within a fossil infrastructure and abandon lifestyle and production habits that diminish our overall quality of life. Yet, the need for change often remains politically unrecognised. Limitations in social imaginaries and the glorification of consumerism as the epitome of the good life further entrench this status quo, partly due to the difficulty of bearing short-term and immediate costs for long-term and often intangible benefits.

Consequently, **political polarisation, destructive narratives, and societal divisions** emerge aided by reactionary actors and leadership, eroding public support for climate policies as individuals (e.g. low-income households) fear social exclusion and the inability to meet their daily needs. As all political/policy recommendations and dialogue efforts are context-dependent and to some extent country- or region-specific, in some contexts climate policy faces a “glass ceiling” for transformation, while in others these barriers are more likely to take the form of concrete “walls” that prevent almost any action towards living within planetary boundaries.

Secondly, the findings highlight **next steps and enablers (RQ2)** to foster structural change and garner societal consensus. Across all labs, there is a unanimous call for the **development of cohesive policy frameworks** that align economic activities with societal objectives. Most stakeholders advocated for a **democratic and participatory approach** to build such frameworks. Coupled with transparent dialogue and the dissemination of information and general awareness-raising, they deemed this crucial for formulating comprehensive, needs-oriented policy responses to contemporary social and ecological challenges. Essential to this process is the integration of social justice principles, ensuring access and affordability, alongside the cultivation of new, inclusive narratives that expand the horizons of societal imaginaries. The inclusion of groups that are especially vulnerable and marginalised – e.g., people with disabilities, young families, and low-income communities – is essential for a holistic transformation that deeply unites environmental and social concerns. A discussion of fundamental rights and the creation of new narratives can open the door for new definitions of well-being and visions of a

good life. Tapping into dominant discourses, e.g. around innovation and resilience, can broaden stakeholder engagement as well as references to the inefficiencies of the current system. Highlighting positive benefits for everyday lives and making them immediately tangible for users through greener, safer, and more accessible cities can foster additional acceptance for transformative change. Especially in urban settings, open spaces for communities to experiment with alternative lifestyles can expand individual and collective imaginaries. Stakeholders underscored that a reduction of overconsumption needs to precede any electrification efforts to ensure an efficient use of resources in the transformation.

In most dialogues, the **internalisation of ecological and social costs** was named as a particular enabler and many stakeholders suggested a taxation of fossil fuels and overconsumption along with an elimination of subsidies for unsustainable products, services and infrastructure as countermeasures. Although participants recognised that the price elasticity is not equal for all users of services, they hoped that an increase of prices would significantly reduce demand for many unsustainable goods and services and level the playing field for more sustainable products. Some participants also highlighted the potential of bans on certain products and services or on advertisements thereof. Through a change of corporate and public budgetary guidelines along with respective reporting and oversight mechanisms, corporations and public institutions can act as pioneers, promoters and role models.

At the same time, stakeholders stressed that especially on a **local and regional level, sustainable alternatives are in need of additional support and promotion** through political framing, preferential regulation and significant subsidies as key services such as public transport often remain underfunded and underdeveloped. By engaging in dialogue with other regions and countries and by enhancing data on sustainable practices, policymakers and planners at all levels can improve social and environmental outcomes. Practices of creating and sharing common spaces and goods, such as community spaces and the sharing of cars and appliances, can significantly reduce the carbon footprint and the material throughput of communities, while also providing a fairer access to essential goods and services. In addition, in all proceedings, social safety nets must be put in place to protect disadvantaged communities from hardship through transformative measures and price increases for fossil goods and services, keeping in mind that social and environmental issues go hand-in-hand. Small businesses can also be in need of support to comply with sustainability criteria. Finally, some stakeholders pointed out that measures to increase efficiency need to remain end-of-pipe solutions wherever no further demand reduction can be achieved.

To bring about change, stakeholders suggested **strategies (RQ2)** such as a staggered approach, where different dialogues with different stakeholders differ in scope to account for varying political flexibility: While corporations are often willing to discuss a change of practices, a shrinking of a whole sector will be discussed much more productively on a governmental and civil society level. Simultaneously, policies commonly need to address both push and pull factors, to provide sustainable and accessible alternatives that can be integrated into one's lifestyle and to reduce the overconsumption of non-sustainable goods and services. Stakeholders in Sweden underlined the importance of an inner and an outer transformation that assesses not only collective needs for change and benefits, but also individual needs and potentials.

Lastly, the empirical data offers insights into the dynamics of responsibility among **relevant**

actors (RQ3) and suggests the formation of **new actor coalitions**. A pervasive challenge is the existing status quo, characterised by fragmented political responsibilities, lack of coordination, and conflicting interests among key stakeholders. In many sessions, stakeholders argued in favour of broad coalitions that bring together users and providers of services, both from the public and the private sector, to establish cooperative structures and community networks spanning sectors like energy, transport, care, education. They stressed the importance of local and regional coalitions and highlighted the potential of issue-specific partnerships, e.g. for specific industries. Surprising partnerships with actors from opposing political fractions can provide sudden political sway and produce unexpected policy leaps.

While **public authorities from the EU-level down to municipalities** are recognized as essential players in implementing regulatory measures, they often encounter barriers such as insufficient authority to implement necessary measures or complex bureaucratic hurdles. At the same time, these actors must also recognise their responsibility for change and break with old habits, especially in the face of diffused responsibility in many planning institutions. Coalitions of actors spanning levels of governance can be useful to connect various decision-makers and ensure a more successful implementation of policies

Additionally, there is acknowledgment of the crucial role played by **facilitating and mediating entities**, such as housing and passenger associations, underscoring the importance of including marginalised and particularly affected groups in decision-making processes. People already implementing sustainable lifestyles and those who are frequently unheard and unseen in discourse need to be allowed to play a vital part in the transformation.

Simultaneously, there is a call to involve **social justice advocates** like unions and leveraging the power of grassroots movements to challenge incumbent structures. Stakeholders however also highlighted that many **civil society organisations** face the strongholds of industry lobbying and are in need of additional funding. Transatlantic partnerships with large NGOs abroad can provide them with additional expertise, networks, and potential for action. By uniting groups for environmental and for social justice, coalitions can become stronger and can exert pressure on politicians and corporations alike. An important exception for this poses the case of Hungary, where civil society initiatives advocating for environmental justice are often rather repressed than being heard and where the influence of unions has considerably declined in the past decades.

Stakeholders however also emphasised the crucial role that **corporations** must play across all sectors, where they need to be involved in broad coalitions for change. The responsibility of corporations should however be differentiated with regard to their size, recognising that small local corporations with few employees have considerably less sway over large societal trends than transnational corporations. All corporations must however contribute to the costs caused by negative externalities such as commuting traffic, air travel, and high meat consumption in canteens, but should also proactively support transformation efforts by proposing transition plans for all aspects of their corporate activity.

The **press and media together with celebrities and influencers** have a key role in the formation of public opinion and need to recognise this considerable political influence by becoming public role models. In conjunction with the scientific community, they can shed light on the complexity

of social and environmental policies. **Teachers and scientists** are key actors in communicating scientific findings to the public. Enhancing clarity regarding political responsibilities and establishing effective implementation channels are identified as pivotal steps towards fostering actionable frameworks.

Overall, these insights illuminate the web of shared responsibilities, responsibility overlaps, and responsibility evasions among actors, driven by both enabling factors and barriers unique to each stakeholder group.

5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION: PATHWAYS TOWARDS STRUCTURAL CHANGE

The EU STL and STL2 findings offered a comprehensive examination of two crucial aspects, an identification of the deep barriers that sustain unsustainability and the leverage points for change (strategies and enablers, including actor-specific ones). The following two sections will synthesise the key insights gained through this research, connecting them to previous contributions (D3.1 and D3.2):

1. **Identifying Deep Barriers:** Delving into the core impediments that perpetuate "sustained unsustainability," shedding light on the fundamental challenges hindering progress towards sustainable practices and policies.
2. **Leverage Points for Change:** Exploring strategies to disrupt the unsustainable status quo, including the deep integration of social and ecological sustainability, as well as the use of political and participatory strategies to target the relevant barriers effectively.

5.1 DEEP BARRIERS TO TRANSFORMATION

The failure to achieve consensus or structural change despite deteriorating conditions can be attributed to a number of hindering factors and actors, including progressive actors committed to transformation towards enabling 1.5° lifestyles. The insights from the different rounds of STLs, especially the most recent STL2s and the EU STL, can be structured along the seven most impactful structures with regard to 1.5° Lifestyles, which "sustain unsustainability" on different levels, reinforcing one another (Deliverable 3.1 and 3.2).

Firstly, **the economic growth paradigm** emerges as a deeply ingrained barrier to achieving 1.5° Lifestyles, as explicitly noted in numerous thinking labs. Across all STL1 sessions, participants struggled to envision and devise strategies to overcome the entrenched underlying structures that perpetuate sustained unsustainability, particularly due to their interconnections and mutual reinforcement across various consumption sectors. This challenge is primarily linked to the pervasive growth narrative, as highlighted in both the EU STL and the STL2 sessions.

The STL2 dialogue on work time reduction, in particular, underscored how capitalist structures manifest in concerns regarding competitiveness, consumerism, and growth-oriented business models. These dynamics, rooted in the economic growth paradigm, increase the likelihood of rebound effects if sustainable policies are implemented, such as the risk of intensified emission-intensive activities following work time reduction.

Consequently, challenging this paradigm involves not only reshaping the material organisation of the economy but also addressing ideational factors, including individual lifestyles, norms, discourses, and societal modes of living. Although confronting such deeply entrenched forces presents significant challenges, the intricate interplay among these factors underscores the imperative of doing so.

Secondly, the **absence of consistent, predictable, and integrated policies** continues to present another significant challenge. In STL2 discussions focusing on regulations for

sustainable business models, participants highlighted the lack of cohesive legal frameworks at national and EU-level. Existing policies often endorse unsustainable business practices, aligning with the dominant economic growth paradigm, instead of enabling alternative sustainable behaviours and practices. Similarly, within the housing sector, regulations, incentives, and business models frequently lack consistency or clarity, promoting the construction of larger homes and prioritising logics of growth and profitability.

Highlighting the deficiency in holistic policy approaches, the actor-influence mapping conducted during the EU STL underscored the ongoing challenge of effectively integrating social equity and environmental concerns. This analysis revealed a shortage of civil society actors concentrating on social issues who were seen as potential coalition partners for advancing a transformation toward 1.5° Lifestyles. Instead, there was a prevalence of homogeneous environmental actors, including NGOs and think tanks, operating within their respective “green bubbles”. Consequently, the existing networks lack the diversity crucial for fostering meaningful change. While EU STL focused on mapping actor coalitions at the EU level, identifying the need for more diverse and inclusive networks, and highlighted the importance of creating coalitions that range from “strongly supportive” to “moderately opposed” to challenge the growth paradigm effectively at a broad and European-level, in the STL2 we zoomed in on existing actor-coalitions in specific consumption fields, and in specific local settings.

Furthermore, many STL1 and STL2 discussions underscored the “democratic legitimacy trap” that impedes state or municipal governments from taking action. This trap arises from the prevalence of the economic growth paradigm over the imperative of sustainability in public opinion. Consequently, many politicians question the democratic legitimacy of sustainable policies, despite personal convictions, scientific evidence, and communicated commitments. This reflects the “organised irresponsibility” of actors as a deep structural barrier: Political and economic entrenchments within these governments result in a ping-pong game of responsibility, hindering the development of consistent, predictable, and integrated policies, such as in the context of the fragmented political responsibility in the German mobility sector, where any even local change to the transport system has to be coordinated among a plethora of actors already overburdened with bureaucracy and procedural regulation.

Thirdly, the **pervasive influence of vested interests** emerged as a recurring theme across all STLs. This includes concerns such as the financial and political sway of large corporations and the agricultural lobby, which often prioritise their interests over those of small, local, and organic meat producers. Additionally, corporate power extends to business models that surpass governmental authority, allowing corporations to shift the responsibility for environmental protection entirely to governments and the EU. Moreover, the entanglement of the automotive industry with German politics further exemplifies this phenomenon.

Ideational barriers, such as the discursive power of businesses, frequently intersect with tangible factors, enabling corporate actors to evade accountability and perpetuate the dynamic of the responsibility ping-pong game. However, vested interests extend beyond powerful economic actors. Contemporary politics is deeply intertwined with capitalist structures, with individuals from large corporations sometimes occupying positions in ministries and contributing to the formulation of laws, as highlighted in discussions on sustainable business

models.

Unsustainable policies, such as the promotion of larger homes, persist due to the entanglement between politics and powerful economic interests, which reinforce logics resistant to sustainability transformations through complex administrative and bureaucratic processes. Moreover, breaking such lock-ins entails significant costs. These policies may benefit the public sector in terms of state revenues and provide perceived comfort to citizens, such as individual car mobility, influencing electoral strategies and contributing to polarisation surrounding debates on sustainable living, as highlighted by the EU STL.

Therefore, it comes as little surprise, fourthly, that instead of offering economic incentives and internalising environmental costs in prices, there is a **lack of economic incentives, and environmental and social costs are externalised**. In many STL2 dialogues, participants pointed out financial obstacles, including national and European subsidies for meat production, air and car travel, existing tax structures, and the absence of direct funding for sustainable brands. The aspect of externalisation was particularly emphasised in the Hungarian STL2 on sustainable business models and is closely intertwined with the economic growth paradigm.

Similarly, the affordability of air travel does not adequately reflect the social and environmental costs of aviation. While low prices and subsidies for socio-ecologically harmful forms of production may seem like tangible, “shallow” factors that could potentially be addressed relatively easily, they still link to deep-seated ideational barriers ingrained in societal norms over an extended period. The normalisation of comfortable, cheap, hedonistic, unquestioned, and often emission-intensive consumption patterns, at the expense of the Global South, people with low income, and the environment, has perpetuated a state of social justice blindness, as highlighted by the EU STL.

Therefore, even addressing surface-level barriers might prove more challenging than expected if such policies are not accompanied by discursive changes regarding what constitutes a good life, which are necessary to break through the glass ceiling of transformation.

Fifthly, **prevailing narratives** actively contribute to sustained unsustainability. This is evident in the pervasive “meat-eating norm”, or the “flying norm”, prominently discussed in one STL2 dialogue, which perpetuate the notions that meat is an essential part of a “real” meal and that travelling to far-away vacation destinations is essential for a fulfilling life. Societal and cultural resistance to smaller and shared living, the entrenched association of cars with masculinity, comfort, and freedom, and the prevailing self-definition as ‘work-based societies’ further reinforce this narrative. Additionally, there persists a view of materials as waste rather than resources, accompanied by a tendency towards simplistic solutions.

These ideational narratives translate into tangible infrastructures that create lock-ins. Beyond the case of business models, there is a lack of discourse on how economic activities could enhance welfare, with minimal attention given to the potential benefits of sustainable consumption practices. Instead, the focus remains on perceived losses, reflecting a particular conception of freedom that prioritises individual autonomy and consumption liberties.

Like the economic growth paradigm, this discursive barrier is deeply ingrained and reinforces other barriers across consumption fields, as evidenced in all STL1 discussions, expert interviews, and the EU STL. Moreover, it perpetuates policies of weak sustainability, affirming

the economic growth paradigm and entrenched notions of the good life while disregarding the inconsistency between growth and sustainability.

Furthermore, as highlighted in the EU STL, even progressive narratives on sustainability inadvertently contribute to social exclusion and elitism, inadvertently fostering oppositional alliances on social justice issues and perpetuating unnecessary or false antagonisms in political debates. Consequently, public discourse on sustainability and climate protection increasingly becomes a tool for hyper-politicisation and societal division, making the climate target challenging to achieve not only for physical reasons but also due to socio-political factors.

Sixthly, **inequity in resources, resource use, and power** acts as a barrier to political and policy change. This dimension intersects with the influence of vested interests, often wielded by actors who benefit from these inequities, such as large agricultural and automotive corporations. However, this aspect also highlights another dimension: The current disparity in resources and power instils fear among citizens that political changes will disproportionately impact those in less favourable socio-economic positions, as noted by various STL2 participants. This fear is evident, for example, in concerns about the economic ramifications of political efforts to reduce meat consumption on farmers and consumers.

Paradoxically, while this inequitable state is perpetuated by sustained unsustainability, particularly within the social context, attempts to address this unsustainability are met with apprehension that they may exacerbate rather than alleviate the situation. Consequently, the glass ceiling of transformation appears to reinforce itself in a self-perpetuating cycle. Similarly, concerns raised in one triadlogue about the potential for work time reduction to lead to loneliness, given that the workplace serves as the primary venue for social interaction for many people, fall into a similar category. This highlights how more sustainable lifestyles may indeed offer opportunities for increased social interaction.

Seventhly, there exists a **deficiency in information and skills regarding sustainable lifestyles**. This shortfall begins with inadequate access to comprehensive data on housing sizes, making it challenging for politicians to devise effective strategies, as highlighted in the housing triadlogues. It extends to misinformation about the consequences of higher taxation, which serves as a significant barrier to implementing more sustainable mobility concepts. Additionally, there is a lack of trust in and understanding of government policies for sustainable mobility.

Furthermore, there are prevalent misconceptions, particularly regarding nutrition. The examples named in the STL2 underscore the importance of education on sustainable lifestyles and the cultivation of sustainability skills, in this respect. Such education is essential for empowering citizens to embrace socio-ecological transformations confidently, both in their trust in politics and in their own sustained well-being, even as unsustainable practices and narratives are challenged.

Conversely, the current lack of information and skills fosters distrust, insecurity, and polarisation, thereby exacerbating barriers and undermining public support for climate policies and transformation efforts. Thus, sustained unsustainability perpetuates a cycle that can only be broken by addressing each of these barriers, especially those rooted deeply within societal structures.

5.2 LEVERAGE POINTS FOR CHANGE: ECO-SOCIAL JUSTICE, NEW ALLIANCES, AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF DEMOCRACY,

Undermining and overcoming the deep barriers to transformation requires delineating political and policy strategies as well as addressing the web of actors that is responsible for driving such a transformation. This section is thus concerned with articulating political and policy goals and strategies, and responsibilities in forging structural changes for achieving 1.5° lifestyle pathways across the case countries (including local and national levels), the EU, and to some extent even globally. It will be structured along three overarching insights and clusters of leverage points derived from the STLs (including STL1, EU STL, and STL2).

They concern :

1. **the deep integration of the social with the ecological sustainability dimension,**
2. **the creation of diverse political coalitions and alliances, and**
3. **the fundamental democratisation of democracy.**

The deep integration of social and ecological dimensions of sustainability

To begin with, **a fundamental insight of the STLs underscores the imperative of pursuing eco-social justice.** Such an approach would implement a deep integration of the social and ecological dimensions of sustainability from the beginning, i.e. the current status quo, to the end, i.e. the identification, implementation, and discursive and material support of relevant policies. It would include, for instance, inclusive and affordable infrastructural options in the context of fuel taxes aimed at improving the sustainability of mobility and especially reductions in air travel. It would also require a social safety net for individuals whose livelihoods may be jeopardised by such measures or by increased taxation, as highlighted in triologue sessions on flight reduction. More fundamentally, however, it would start with an assessment of the distribution of the costs and benefits in the current unsustainable status quo in air travel.

An emphasis on eco-social justice most fundamentally underscores that, while reducing consumption is indeed crucial, it is equally important to ensure that all individuals have equitable access to goods and services essential for meeting their needs. Such a perspective is, for instance, exemplified by the consumption corridors framework (Fuchs et al., 2021). Only the joint consideration of ecological and social concerns enables a just and flourishing society within the confines of planetary boundaries. In this context, an eco-social justice approach has to address the material conditions of sustainable needs satisfaction. It would ensure the inclusivity and affordability of provisioning systems. Moreover, it would foster the crafting of incentive structures that render companies inclined towards ecologically and socially responsible actions.

An eco-social justice perspective also has to be a cornerstone in sustainability narratives. Specifically, the support and promotion of sustainable alternatives in products and services (e.g. through policy design, preferential regimes and subsidies, and the internalisation of

environmental and social costs) must also be reflected in alternative narratives. For instance, in the context of advocating for reduced working hours to address the climate crisis, it is essential not only to underscore the connection between reduced working hours and climate mitigation but also to articulate the benefits of a sustainable lifestyle with reduced work commitments, as emphasised by the EU STL findings. As mentioned earlier, concerns about social isolation may arise. Therefore, integrating social and ecological sustainability entails not only conceptualising eco-social welfare systems but also envisioning vibrant communities capable of meeting the diverse needs of all members. Similarly, the narrative for sustainable nutrition developed in the EU STL envisions food systems that prioritise *both* human well-being and ecological integrity. The sustainability narrative for mobility, in turn, highlights the social, environmental *and* economic costs of car dependency as well as the social, health, environmental *and* economic benefits of moving to sustainable transport systems. While being in line with the idea of true sustainability, such integrated, holistic narratives might also have a more important and convincing impact, due to their comprehensiveness and relatability to everyday life.

The creation of diverse political coalitions and alliances

Furthermore, **the establishment of diverse political actor coalitions and alliances emerges as a critical strategic imperative in advancing pathways towards 1.5°C lifestyles** in the STL2s and in the EU STL. Within the STL2 dialogues, the central role of the public sector – comprising local and national governments, elected officials, ministries, and EU institutions – was underscored. While these entities are recognised as pivotal in instigating structural transformations, the discussion on deep barriers highlighted the intricate entanglement of state apparatuses with vested interests. To address this challenge, the formation of broad and diverse actor coalitions has been identified as imperative.

Such coalitions, inclusive of the public sector, encompass a spectrum of stakeholders, including:

- Experts from relevant domains and implementers of policies on the ground, such as developers, planners, architects, and construction firms
- Civil society organisations, encompassing trade unions and non-governmental organisations
- Media and communication professionals
- Research entities
- Educational institutions

While the formation of broad coalitions is desirable, it's imperative that they are built upon sustainability objectives from their outset, according to the STLs. Stakeholders highlighted that ongoing vigilance would be essential to safeguard the integrity of sustainability goals, Within these coalitions. Civil society organisations can play a pivotal role in this regard. One of their key contributions could involve enhancing an equity and fairness perspective within these coalitions, thus ensuring they are more inclusive and accessible for vulnerable social groups. Additionally, actors with expertise in facilitating transition processes or mediating conflicting interests may also contribute significantly to the success of such coalitions.

If the most progressive actors and social groups in such coalitions frame their arguments in a

convincing and listener-oriented way, especially actors and social groups that have so far been moderately opposing or moderately supportive might see their own position and leverage in a new light, as the EU STL findings suggest. As indicated by the findings of the EU STL, if the most forward-thinking actors and social groups within these coalitions articulate their arguments in a compelling and audience-centric manner, it could create a shift in perspective for important actors and social groups. Such changes of actor roles may prove indispensable in shattering the glass ceiling of sustained unsustainability.

In addition to these aspects, two noteworthy considerations emerged from the STLs' findings with respect to coalitions. Firstly, the STL2 dialogues on car-ownership underscored the importance of including representatives of vulnerable groups, often marginalised and excluded, such as people with disabilities, young families, and low-income communities, thus perpetuating their vulnerability. Secondly, there was a recognition of the need to be open to building unexpected coalitions, for example with traditionally more conservative actors. Such strategic partnerships, even with entities traditionally perceived as adversaries – such as corporations and entities that did previously not really pursue sustainability goals – might be particularly pertinent in the context of achieving a just transition.

The principles of inclusivity and dialogue and collaboration between stakeholders extend beyond specific domains. The diversity within coalitions not only fosters societal cohesion but also enhances the engagement with sustainability among stakeholders, transcending traditional environmental paradigms and spanning various policy and action levels, our STLs suggest. Moreover, broad coalitions might especially improve cohesiveness in aims and allow the overcoming of responsibility fragmentation, which often leads to the ping-pong game of responsibilities diagnosed earlier.

At the same time, smaller, and potentially locally confined coalitions, which include only very few actors, are not necessarily less important. In such smaller coalitions, involving public authorities, alliances may form, for instance, between trade unions and governments advocating for working time reduction. Similarly, collaborations between legislators and businesses may focus on fostering specific sustainable business models.

Environmental actors generally are expected to play a core role in such coalitions. Indeed, the pivotal role of environmental movements in sparking public interest and engagement has been underscored in nearly every STL2 session. However, it's important to note that the actual impact of environmental movements varies depending on the national political context. Moreover, it is crucial for environmental actors to recognise the opportunities for more influence that coalitions with social actors, as well as with public actors, the media and science can create.

The democratisation of democracy

Finally, achieving **fundamental political and policy change necessitates the democratisation of democracy**. This entails embracing the two clusters of leverage points discussed earlier, along with fostering a broader societal dialogue. Such dialogue involves cultivating inclusive, participatory conversations within society about our collective vision for the future. It also highlights the need to think of individuals not only in terms of their role as consumers, but also

in their role as citizens.

To facilitate societal discourse on 1.5°C Lifestyles, there is a need to provide information and skills. Often, knowledge gaps exist, such as regarding the environmental and health benefits of reducing meat consumption. Educational institutions, public campaigns, media, and scientific communication play vital roles in raising awareness, stimulating reflection, and initiating debates to address these knowledge gaps. However, addressing these gaps represents only surface-level factors that can be directly targeted. A forward-thinking and constructive societal discourse requires deeper changes.

The importance of societal dialogue has been underscored across various domains, predicated on the belief that such discourse is essential for discerning genuine needs, defining what constitutes a good life, and envisioning sustainable living. The EU STL and many STL2 dialogues highlighted the significance of social dialogue in this context. However, for such dialogue to be effective, it must not only dismantle unnecessary antagonisms resulting from a lack of information but also incorporate all perspectives, acknowledging the pervasive power relations inherent in such inclusion transparently. Also, power differences must be addressed openly while striving to achieve meaningful and equitable deliberation. Importantly, the addressing of conflict and the finding of compromises must align with the integration of social justice principles, ensuring access and affordability for everyone, as highlighted by the STL findings. If such public discourse can be achieved, the strengthening of promising, progressive narratives integrating social and ecological concerns necessarily follows.

Of course, such dialogue does not only need to take place, it also needs to be allowed to be impactful. Currently, a trend towards participatory governance is notable, with citizen dialogues and assemblies taking place at various levels of governance in many countries. However, the results from these participatory formats frequently are not sufficiently reflected in political decisions by the relevant governmental actors. Democratising democracy, however, means also returning power to citizens and making their voices count. As such, it requires both the confronting of the power of vested interests as well as opportunities to hold actors accountable.

Finally, the challenge of democratising democracy leads us back to the question of responsibility. One of the most fundamental insights from our STLs is the need to end the responsibility ping pong. Currently, stakeholders expect governmental actors to be much more active and stringent in the pursuit of sustainability. Business actors also point the finger primarily at governmental actors, as well as at consumers. Public actors, in turn, are entrenched in politico-economic structures set against the sustainability transformation and, in consequence, point to business actors and consumers as those responsible for driving the transformation. The hopeful outlook from our STLs is that broad societal dialogues in combination with the new coalitions and alliances discussed above, will allow for the development of spaces and mechanisms for shared responsibility, as a means to overcome the existing structural barriers and end sustained unsustainability.

The activities and results summarised in this report, based on the EU STL and STL2 labs, now feed into the Synthesis Report and will inform all project communication in the final year. This will include the development of policy briefs, a massive open online course (MOOC), and co-

creation workshops with policymakers and stakeholders at national and EU levels. These efforts will help to contribute to the achievement of the project's overall objective of mainstreaming lifestyles in line with the 1.5° limit.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Ethics Overview H2020

The project partners strive to adhere to the H2020 Open Access Mandate, prioritising the protection of personal and sensitive data from public access. All data intended for public access will be made available via Zenodo or the EU 1.5° Lifestyles website, free of charge, under the Creative Commons License CC-BY 4.0. This data is easily accessible through permanent identifiers (e.g., DOI versioning) and shared in formats compatible with free and open-source software (such as docx, xlsx, pdf, csv). EU 1.5° Lifestyles adheres to the Open Access Publication principles of the EC.

Involvement of Human Participants

In recruiting stakeholders - stakeholders, policymakers, representatives from business, civil society organisations (CSOs), or the media - EU 1.5° Lifestyles project has adhered to democratic and civil rights and values as regulated in the European treaties.

For informed consent procedures, participation in the study was voluntary, with adult volunteers capable of understanding and consenting to the proposed research. Before signing their informed consent, participants were informed of several key aspects:

1. Voluntary participation and the right to ask questions and receive understandable answers.
2. Awareness of the risks and burdens involved.
3. Understanding who benefits from participation and how their data would be collected, protected during the project, and handled at its conclusion.
4. The right to withdraw from the project and have their data removed without negative consequences.
5. Assurance of pseudonymity and the possibility of secondary data use.

The Ethics Statement of the EU 1.5° Lifestyles consortium is available here:

https://onepointfivelifestyles.eu/sites/default/files/attachment/2024-02/EU%201.5%20Lifestyles_Ethics%20Data%20Handling%20Statement.pdf

Annex 2: List of Triologue Topics [Policy Options & Objectives] and Assumed Reduction Levels

- 1 . **Reduction in meat consumption [NUTRITION]**
 - The production and subsequent consumption of meat accounts for the largest part of carbon emissions in the nutrition domain.
 - A significant reduction entails a diet that limits meat consumption to a maximum of 12kg/person/year of red meat and 10kg/person/year of other meats while the calorie intake remains constant and the protein intake stays within a healthy limit (50g/person/day [[Latva-Hakuni et al. 2023](#)]). Depending on other measures, the maximum for meat consumption might have to undergo further reduction.

- 2 . **Reduction in air travel [LEISURE]**
 - A significant reduction in air travel for leisure is one of the strongest impacts that a single measure can accomplish.
 - A reduction in air travel assumes that the distance formerly travelled by plane is now travelled by train, whereas train types are not differentiated and run on the current energy mix in the country.
 - Short-haul flights can readily be replaced by other modes of transportation and there is an urgent need to do so to comply with 2030 reduction paths [[Greenpeace 2021](#)]. Long-distance flights are responsible for a considerable portion of the EU's aviation emissions, while only about one percent of the global population is responsible for 50% of CO₂ emissions in aviation [[Gössling and Humpe 2020](#)]. To stay within the 1.5° limit, emissions from flights need to be radically reduced and while a possible reduction path for 2030 could still allow for 750 km of air travel on average per year and person, the carbon budget for 2050 cannot accommodate such carbon-intensive modes of travel [[C40](#)].

- 3 . **Implementing an upper limit on Residential Floor Space [HOUSING]**
 - In the housing domain, most CO₂ emissions come from the energy consumption, which increases if floor space increases ([C40 2019](#)). Several studies investigated the potential of transforming cities towards sustainable development and argue that living space in general can be reduced by 20% without causing much inconvenience to residents. Such a reduction must aim for equal distribution of floor space, while also reducing the need for carbon-intensive construction of new buildings. Large reduction potentials on an individual and household level become available through the creation of shared common spaces and the redevelopment of existing buildings and structures. This change would greatly help to promote sustainable lifestyles and reduce the societal footprint ([Moran et al. 2020](#)).
 - In line with this, we target an upper limit on residential floor space with a maximum of 20-30m² per person in line with the global Low Energy Demand scenario proposed by [Grubler et al. 2018](#). The reduction path towards this target would need to accommodate current national averages.

4 • Reduction in car ownership (and use) in cities [MOBILITY]

- Changing everyday mobility habits from using individual motorised transportation to cycling, walking or using buses and trains is an essential element of “1.5° consumption corridors”.
- A meaningful reduction is achieved
 - when the current average distance travelled by car is reduced by 50%
 - when 50% of the population does not use cars for everyday transport in 2030
 - when car ownership has declined to 190 vehicles per 1,000 people by 2030 (current German level is 583 per 1,000)(cf. progressive target in [C40 report](#)).
 - A reduction of car ownership must be accompanied by sufficiency-focused measures that address the excess of material bound in cars.

5 • Working Time Reduction (30 Hour Work Week) [WELFARE]

- A working time reduction can contribute to a more even distribution of working time across the population and limit climate change (Gunderson, 2019; King & van den Bergh, 2017), breaking the circle of working to earn to consume, enabling a better work-life balance, and freeing up time for the care economy (e.g. childcare and personal care), for voluntary work, and for more time-intensive climate-friendly basic consumption.
- To avoid exacerbating social inequality, it is important to perceive working time reductions as a collective agreement and ensure anti-poverty measures and a minimum income threshold.
- A reduction of working time can be implemented in different ways: shorter working week, six-hour working day, longer vacation or earlier retirement age, as well as on different scales: national, industry or company level. It can also entail a reduction of output across the whole economy or for certain, potentially carbon-intensive sectors.
- For the purposes of the dialogue, we discuss a work-time reduction to a 30 (/32?)-hour working week and to which degree this should be accompanied by other measures to reduce working time (currently, this option is politically gaining ground).

6 • Regulations for sustainable (sufficient) business models [BUSINESS MODELS]

- Sustainable business model regulations refer to a set of rules and guidelines designed to promote and ensure that businesses operate in a manner that prioritises long-term environmental, social, and economic viability guided by **sufficiency** and **social justice** over short-term gains. This applies both to the ways businesses operate as well as to the types of products they produce (i.e. no sustainably and well produced weapons of war).
- These regulations encourage businesses to adopt strategies and solutions that move away from or reduce dependency on a continuous growth paradigm. Such regulations edit the array of actions available to businesses by making actions causing social or environmental harm unavailable as a choice for the whole market (‘choice-editing’). Instead, they emphasise sustainability and a holistic approach to value creation that benefits both the enterprise and the broader eco-social system in which it operates.

Annex 3: Suggested Stakeholder Constellations for the 6 dialogues in STL2

Table 1: Suggested Stakeholder Constellations - STL2.

Suggested Stakeholder Constellations - STL2	
Dialogue	Suggested Stakeholders
Meat consumption reduction [NUTRITION]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Food sector business/Food organisation/Farming organisation/Farmer • 1 Agricultural policy/Food policy • 1 NGO or Activist/ Advocacy group (i.e. animal rights, nutrition and health, environment)
Air travel reduction [LEISURE]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Policy/Governance (i.e transportation authorities) • 1 Business representative (e.g., business travel service providers) • 1 NGO or community group against aviation expansion (i.e. Stay Grounded, local anti-airport group) or workers' representative/Trade union active in Aviation
Upper floor space for residential housing [HOUSING]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Housing & urban development authority / local or regional politician • 1 Architect or urban planner • 1 Housing Association/Housing cooperative/NGO for housing (i.e. Habitat for Humanity)
Significant reduction in car ownership [MOBILITY]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Mobility policy (e.g., urban planner, local/regional/ national politician) • 1 Public transport representative (e.g., transit union, railway company, bicycle company) • 1 Consumer protection organisation or Activist group (i.e. cyclist/ pedestrian)
Working time reduction [WELFARE/ WORK]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Trade union representative • 1 Business sector/Business association (interested in WTR) or human resource specialists • 1 Labour Market & Employment Authority (i.e. Public Employment Service) or relevant politician
Regulations for sustainable (sufficient) BM [BUSINESS MODELS]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Business sector representative • 1 Trade union or civil society representative • 1 Policy/governance

Annex 4: Interview Guidelines – 2nd Stakeholder Thinking Labs

The dialogue structure outlined below was designed for flexible implementation, thereby leaving room for case country partners to ask follow-up questions in the different areas that allow gathering more detailed answers or to increase the intensity of the exchange between the participating partners. The interview guidelines are divided into six sections. The same guidelines were used for all six dialogue foci across the five case countries.

1. Introduction

- Welcome and tour-de-table
- Purpose of the dialogue (EU1.5° Lifestyles Project rationale, purpose of the STL2, purpose of this particular dialogue, introduction to its topic and policy option/objective)
- Reference to signed Consent Forms and Chatham House Rule (information can only be shared from this setting in a form that is anonymized and presented in an abstract manner)
- Start with introductory question: What is your personal concern for being here today?

2. Next steps & possible policy strategies

- What would be the key next actions to pursue the [Policy Option & Objective]?
 - Is there a particular sequence or mix of actions and steps towards them to consider?*
- *i.e. a policy framework or political strategy

3. Barriers & Enablers specific to Policy Option/Objective

- What are the primary barriers that could hinder achieving the [Policy Option & Objective]?
- What are the key enablers that could facilitate the successful realisation of [Policy Option & Objective]?
- Moderator's Note: Should the discussion not organically touch upon narratives, vested interests, and the rebound effect, please actively inquire about their roles as potential barriers or enablers in this context.

4. Responsible Actor(s)

- Who would need to be significantly involved* in creating these prerequisites (said steps and policy measures) or take the lead?
- *also includes the actor groups, who are affected by these steps and measures
- Follow up questions: What are YOU (as an organisation/ institution in this field) currently doing to achieve [Policy Option & Objective]? What is working well and/or not so well, what barriers are you facing?

5. Coalition Building

- What coalitions of actors would be needed to successfully implement these steps and policy measures?
- In which coalitions of actors would you like to be involved? Which coalitions of actors do you consider particularly useful?
- What can WE (the organisations and institutions participating in the dialogue) do

together to get closer to the goal?

6. Closing Round & Identifying the Essence

- Is there anything you feel we've missed or should explore further in future discussions

Annex 5: STL2 participants' professional backgrounds

Table 2: Participants' Background: Trilogue No.1 "Reduce Meat Consumption".

Trilogue No.1 "Reduce Meat Consumption"			
#	Expert ID	Participants' Professional Backgrounds	Country
1	1_DE_A	Member of civil society organisation focused on sustainable agriculture and seed diversity	Germany
2	1_DE_B	Higher positioned official working in a government authority focused on sustainable nutrition and food security	Germany
3	1_HU_A	Managing Director of independent research company on rural development and adaptive food systems	Hungary
4	1_HU_B	Expert on sustainable consumption and production, sustainability education, at the Ministry of Energy	Hungary
5	1_HU_C	Researcher specialising in people living in extreme poverty at the Social Sciences Research Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences,	Hungary
6	1_HU_D	Founder of the Conscious Consumers Association	Hungary
7	1_HU_E	Chairperson of the Scientific Committee of the National Committee of Hungarian Dietitians	Hungary
8	1_LV_A	Deputy director of the Food Safety and Hygiene Division of the Veterinary and Food Department of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia.	Latvia
9	1_LV_B	Founder and brand creator for a food producing company focusing on organic products and innovative solutions	Latvia
10	1_LV_C	Manager of the campaign "Don't eat planet Earth" and the program "Plants & Friends" in the animal rights NGO "Animal Freedom"	Latvia
11	1_ES_A	Director of Agriculture, Agroindustry and Rural Development Association	Spain
12	1_ES_B	Representative from the Animal Rights NGO	Spain
13	1_ES_C	Extensive livestock farmer and small farmers union representative	Spain
14	1_SE_A	Municipal project manager for sustainable development and food	Sweden
15	1_SE_B	Vegan entrepreneur, food blogger and cookbook author	Sweden

16	1_SE_C	Chief Sustainability Officer of a Swedish fast food chain with a green and plant-based profile	Sweden
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Table 3: Participants' Background: Trilogue No.2 "Reduce Air Traffic".

Trilogue No. 2 "Reduce Air Traffic"			
#	Expert ID	Participants' Professional Backgrounds	Country
1	2_DE_A	Air traffic expert working for a German MoP from the Green Party	Germany
2	2_DE_B	Local NGO representative for stronger regulation of air traffic, started out as an initiative against air traffic noise pollution	Germany
3	2_DE_C	Federal NGO representative with several decades of experience in advocating for climate policies	Germany
4	2_HU_A	Expert from an NGO advocating for stronger regulation of air traffic	Hungary
5	2_HU_B	Expert, from the LMP, the green party in Hungary	Hungary
	2_HU_C	Expert on sustainable consumption and production, sustainability education, at the Ministry of Energy	Hungary
6	2_LV_A	Head of risk and quality management in domestic public transport services by rail in Latvia	Latvia
7	2_LV_B	Researcher and activist working in sustainable development, environmental protection and sociology	Latvia
8	2_LV_C	Owner and consultant of ethical travel agency	Latvia
9	2_ES_A	Labour Union representative for aviation sector	Spain
10	2_ES_B	General Director of Mobility and Transporting of a local Autonomous Government	Spain
11	2_ES_C	Director of the Travelling Agency - Alternative and sustainable travelling	Spain
12	2_SE_A	Doctoral student at Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies focusing on social and cultural change in low-carbon transformations and specifically in flight reductions	Sweden
13	2_SE_B	Expert for sustainable mobility at Swedish Society for Nature Conservation	Sweden
14	2_SE_C	Environmental economist at Naturvårdsverket specialising in the	Sweden

		impacts of transportation	
15	2_SE_D	Co-founder and president of a non-profit promoting a reduction in air travel	Sweden

Table 4: Participants' Background: Trilogue No. 3 "Floorspace Reduction".

Trilogue No. 3 "Floorspace Reduction"			
#	Expert ID	Participants' Professional Backgrounds	Country
1	3_DE_A	Chief Urban Planning Executive and Architectural Assessor	Germany
2	3_DE_B	Sustainable Urban Development Specialist	Germany
3	3_DE_C	Architect, Educator, and Climate Activist	Germany
4	3_HU_A	Local Government Housing Secretary	Spain
5	3_HU_B	Housing Technical Officer	Spain
6	3_HU_C	Principal Architect and Urban Planning Professor	Spain
7	3_LV_A	Architect	Hungary
8	3_LV_B	Sustainable Energy Specialist	Hungary
9	3_LV_C	Urban Development Specialist	Hungary
10	3_LV_D	Tiny House Development Entrepreneur	Latvia
11	3_ES_A	Deputy Director of Housing Affordability, City Council	Latvia
12	3_ES_B	Head of Maintenance Unit, Housing and Environment Department, City Council	Latvia
13	3_ES_C	Architect	Latvia
14	3_SE_A	Alternative Housing Researcher	Sweden
15	3_SE_B	Climate Impact Specialist at Construction Company	Sweden
16	3_SE_C	Municipal Sustainability Specialist	Sweden

Table 5: Participants' Background: Trilogue No. 4 "Reduce Car-Ownership".

Trilogue No. 4 "Reduce Car-Ownership"

#	Expert ID	Participants' Professional Backgrounds	Country
1	4_DE_A	Youth representative of large railway workers' union	Germany
2	4_DE_B	Researcher from the German Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, focusing on traffic research	Germany
3	4_DE_C	Local politician focusing on urban planning and development	Germany
4	4_DE_D	CEO of a regional car sharing company	Germany
5	4_DE_E	NGO expert on sustainable transport and traffic	Germany
6	4_HU_A	NGO representative, founder and leader of one of the oldest and most impactful NGOs in Hungary	Hungary
7	4_HU_B	Senior Expert of a Hungarian think-tank, focusing on climate change	Hungary
8	4_HU_C	Environmental Referent at the Ministry of Building and Transport	Hungary
9	4_LV_A	Blogger, entrepreneur, and researcher on electric mobility and external costs	Latvia
10	4_LV_B	Consultant on socioeconomic aspects and mobility	Latvia
11	4_ES_A	Advisor at the Department of Environment and Mobility of City Council	Spain
12	4_ES_B	Representative from a public transport and mobility company	Spain
13	4_ES_C	Representative from NGO promoting sustainable mobility	Spain
14	4_SE_A	Former MP (sat in the transport committee for 16 years), representing the Green Party and previously the Left Party	Sweden
15	4_SE_B	Sustainability strategist/project manager at the City of Malmö	Sweden
16	4_SE_C	CEO of corporation that offers consulting services, research and development in the field of transport and mobility	Sweden

Table 6: Participants' Background: Trilogue No. 5 "Working Time Reduction".

Trilogue No. 5 "Working Time Reduction"			
#	Expert ID	Participants' Professional Backgrounds	Country
1	5_DE_A	Leading Trade Union Representative focusing on WTR	Germany
2	5_DE_B	Business Representative (Railway Company), Human Resources	Germany

3	5_DE_C	Public Authority, Director, Coordinator of Education	Germany
4	5_HU_A	Research Group Lead at Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest), focusing on sustainable WTR	Hungary
5	5_HU_B	Sustainability expert at the Community of Hungarian Business Leaders, also director of a sustainability related consultancy.	Hungary
6	5_HU_C	Director of a Hungarian think-tank, previously in public administration working on climate and environmental policies	Hungary
7	5_HU_D	Director of Business Council for Sustainable Development Hungary	Hungary
8	5_LV_A	Bank of Latvia head of sustainability and communications with the government	Latvia
9	5_LV_B	Sustainability event organiser, entrepreneur, art influencer	Latvia
10	5_LV_C	Member of parliament, youth worker	Latvia
11	5_ES_A	General Secretary at the Labor Union	Spain
12	5_ES_B	Representative of the Association of the Human Resources Management Center	Spain
13	5_ES_C	Lawyer and the Director of the labour and security unit.	Spain
14	5_SE_A	Professor emeritus, independent researcher and writer focussing on the future of work and working time	Sweden
15	5_SE_B	Former Regional Safety Official at Swedish Transport Workers Union for 20 year, Research Officer for 2 years at Landsorganisationen Sverige, (umbrella organisation for 14 unions in Sweden) and now Expert at European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)	Sweden
16	5_SE_C	Representative of the Swedish Consumer Agency	Sweden
17	5_SE_D	CEO of company in the clothing and retail sector who implemented a 4-day work week	Sweden

Table 7: Participants' Background: Trilogue No. 6 "Sustainable Business Models".

Trilogue No. 6 "Sustainable Business Models"			
#	Expert ID	Participants' Professional Backgrounds	Country
1	6_DE_A	Managing Director of a business initiative promoting corporate environmental protection	Germany
2	6_DE_B	Common good economy consultant, educational trainer, initiator, author and coordinator of a common good economy	Germany

		regional group	
3	6_DE_C	Economist, Research Fellow at the German Bundestag, Climate Policy and Social Justice Focus	Germany
4	6_HU_A	Director of Business Council for Sustainable Development Hungary	Hungary
5	6_HU_B	Member of the Sustainability and Environmental Protection Committee of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Regional Environmental Initiatives Leader in a Business Federation	Hungary
6	6_HU_C	Senior Advisor of a non-profit organisation helping cooperation between companies and "impact" organisations	Hungary
7	6_HU_D	Professor of environmental economics, editor	Hungary
8	6_LV_A	RTU assistant professor working for Ministry of Finance and PWC	Latvia
9	6_LV_B	NGO Permaculture association & lecturer in sustainability	Latvia
10	6_LV_C	Association of social entrepreneurship	Latvia
11	6_ES_A	Representative from Business Association	Spain
12	6_ES_B	Just transition and environment coordinator at labour union	Spain
13	6_ES_C	Director of sustainable development certificates office	Spain
14	6_SE_A	Environmental policy expert at Svenskt Näringsliv (the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise) focusing on circular economy, product legislation and chemical issues	Sweden
15	6_SE_B	Sustainability consultant and former Vice President Corporate Responsibility at a global industrial group selling engineered polymer solutions	Sweden

Annex 6: Overview of STL2 results

Table 8: Overview: Barriers, enablers, strategies, responsible actors, and coalitions aligned with policy objectives and country perspectives.

Policy Objectives	Key Barriers (R01)		Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)		Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)	
	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
Reducing meat consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial hurdles: (EU) subsidies for meat production, existing tax structures and EU regulations, lack of direct funding for quality brands Power relations: financial and political impact of big corporations, agricultural lobby, lack of cooperation between organic farmers Cultural and discursive barriers: the “meat norm” (1_SE_B), fear of losing traditional landscapes, fear of economic impact on farmers and consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LV: meat = one of the most exported products HU: misconceptions about nutrition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education (concerning environmental benefits, nutritional advantages, etc.): public campaigns, effective labelling, simple messages Promotion of organic and local food: financial support, political targets, use of taxation Convincing offer: attractive, tasteful alternatives to meat consumption, offers in canteens and products in shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LV: avoid prohibitions vs. banning advertising on meat products ES: particular support for the ‘proximity approach’ (i.e. local meat) -> priority = better quality, not mainly the reduction of meat consumption DE: rather support for organic food SE: supply needs to be changed in order to make the demand follow LV: consumers determine the extent of meat reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National governments Policy makers and regulatory bodies on EU, national and municipal levels smaller farming businesses & agricultural labour unions media and communication professionals scientific community non-governmental organisations educational system Individual consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES: importance of direct contact between consumers and producers
Reducing air travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political resistance from tourism reliant states such as Spain and Greece) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES: Reducing air travel needs caution and must be considered from a broader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taxation of jet fuel at EU level, to include CO2, non-CO2 and high-altitude effects, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES: social safety net for those whose jobs would be threatened by reduction measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politicians and governments EU institutions Ministries for transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES: Active participation of actors from the tourism industry

Policy Objectives	Key Barriers (R01)		Key Enablers & Strategies (R02)		Responsible Actors & Important Coalitions (R03)	
	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences	Country Commonalities	Country Particularities & Differences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelling to far-away vacation destinations seen as part of the good life • Lack of high-quality railway infrastructure • Slow change due to infrastructural lock-ins • EU taxonomy subsidises best-in-class aeroplanes • need for political and policy change and respective responsibilities are not recognised or ignored • politically communicating need for change difficult due to intangible and long-term benefits and short-term costs to personal lifestyles • lack of expertise among policymakers leaves them vulnerable to industry lobbying and greenwashing • Cheap ticket prices do not adequately reflect social and environmental costs of aviation • Budgetary guidelines favour cheapest mode 	<p>approach including its impact on the labour market, besides it would have a strong impact on tourism industry which is the backbone of the Spanish economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SE: additional awareness for negative impacts and long-term outcomes • LV: low demand for sustainable travel limits supply of options • HU: consumer protection law for sustainable modes of transportation are not as strong as in aviation 	<p>based on unified system for calculating emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher ticket prices to reduce demand and frequency of flights • Revise corporate and public budgetary guidelines to consider environmental and social effects of travel together with prices • Ban on advertisements for flying & highlight positive benefits of train travel, publicly shame institutions that promote flying • Elimination of subsidies for flying, airports, and aircraft manufacturers • Reduce demand through digitalisation • broader societal discourse on criteria to determine which flights are valuable and necessary and which are “frivolous” • Improvement and expansion of train travel networks (incl. night trains) • End-of-pipe solutions: 	<p>or increased taxation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ES: Market-driven strategies need to provide attractive alternatives without a politically organised shift towards more sustainable transport • DE: Public clients, public procurement and public institutions all need to prohibit flights under 1,000 km under certain conditions, but e.g., single-parents of young children have more pronounced need for short business trips than many others 	<p>and economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Finance: collecting tax revenues from aviation • Local government institutions • Institutions responsible for expansion of rail network • Civil Society organisations need more funding to counter aviation lobby • Medical activists and people in airport regions • Teachers and scientists together with public figures, celebrities and influencers raise awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SE: IATA and ICAO • DE: Budget administrators • ES: Public private alliance to research more sustainable modes of travel • HU: Scientific community and media • DE: Transatlantic partnerships between EU and US NGOs

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	<p>of travel without regard for environmental impact, which often results plane travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> loyalty programmes encourage additional flying 		<p>Disincentivizing empty and half-empty flights to increase flight occupancy rate, flying at lower altitudes, more sustainable jet fuels</p>			
Upper Limit Floor Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing regulations, incentives and business models promoting larger homes and logics of growth and profitability Inconsistent or unclear building regulations Unclear interpretation of reducing floor space as a policy strategy Existing housing stocks rarely enable smaller and shared living concepts Lack of (access to) comprehensive data on housing sizes Potential rebound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resistance to smaller/shared living: bad experiences state ownership (HU), associations with the low-quality, shared facilities of Soviet past (LV), prevailing cultural norms and educational practices (DE, SE) HU, unique case: energy inefficiency in the building sector (not floor space) is considered as the main barrier and lever to lower carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A holistic, needs-based approach to sustainable housing, addressing ecological and social sustainability in the design and development of rooms, homes, and neighbourhoods Enhancing data on housing inventory to uncover potential for smaller living and underutilised spaces for home exchanges paired with matchmaking services Using development plans to mandate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HU, LV, SE: critical need for additional policy measures designed to protect the interests of disadvantaged communities DE: Promoting a "building simply" narrative to cultivate a positive view of smaller living spaces, encouraging planners and residents to explore options for forgoing certain comforts. SE: revisiting the "million program" principles for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad and diverse coalition including (not limited to) public administrations, real estate developers, architects, construction firms, and financial institutions, as well as research entities, media, and educational institutions. Crucial role of intermediary actors and actors facilitating transition processes: e.g., housing and tenant associations could promote smaller living arrangements, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DE vs. HU: well-developed infrastructure for intermediaries like housing associations in DE contrasts with HU, where housing associations are yet to be established.

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	<p>effects related to reduced well-being, and the building of new and smaller homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societal/ cultural resistance to smaller and shared living 		<p>sustainable housing (incl. CO2 life cycle assessments for buildings)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote infrastructure and attractiveness of shared living, design flexible living spaces for evolving residential needs • Engage residents in housing project planning • Giving people the opportunity to try out smaller and shared living to reduce resistance • Higher taxes on larger properties • Taxation or compulsory occupancy laws to address the issue of vacant second homes 	<p>communal living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>facilitate collaboration, and expand the conversation beyond industry-focused dialogues</p>	
Reducing Car-Ownership (and -use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car-use as part of the people’s vision of a good life, rooted in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LV: lack of trust in government, lack of understanding, esp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad dialogue with multitude of stakeholders and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HU: social pressure needs to increase to encourage people to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected politicians are in the strongest position to lead the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SE: National policies must take the lead in bringing about the

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	<p>everyday practices, cultures and discourses, tied to traditional gender roles, masculinity, and concepts of freedom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High perceived amount of comfort although car-use is not available to all • Difficulty of politically acknowledging that those with a high yearly mileage will lose some privileges to enable a higher quality of life for the large majority • Myths and false information about the effects of higher taxation prevent more ambitious concepts • Limitations to personal and collective imagination: people find it difficult to imagine how their lives would change if they were to adopt different transportation habits • Narrow focus on electrification draws attention away from more systemic issues 	<p>Households that fear substantial initial investments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE: Fragmentation of political responsibility for public transport sector, making decision-making and coordination difficult • SE&DE: lack of integration between different modes of transport • ES: Hot and windy climatic conditions make sustainable modes of transport less attractive • DE: Privatisation of public transport has decreased quality of service • DE: Financial policies have not acknowledged the need for comprehensive transformation and accompanying costs 	<p>people frequently excluded from mobility discourse, to make policies more successful in meeting various needs and foster acceptance for change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict enforcement of current laws for accessibility and on-street parking to achieve credibility and immediate benefits for residents • Demand reduction through online services and 15-Minute-City • Subsidies for public transport to become more accessible, efficient, convenient and attractive • Address push and pull factors: price of car-use needs to include externalities e.g. in the pricing of fuel and parking spaces, through EU ETS, eliminate subsidies for car-use • Communicate benefits and positive side- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change mobility habits 	<p>transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with limited mobility need to be involved • People who do not own cars • Passenger, walking and cycling associations, tenants' associations, unions, and organisations focused on mental and physical health • Local transport and urban planners need to break with old planning habits • Large employers and operators of car fleets need to contribute financially to public transport used by their employees and create green travel plans • Car-sharing providers, mobility start-ups, energy sector, SMEs, companies causing delivery traffic, railway companies, the financial sector • Coalitions across levels of governance, from local to EU level • Coalition of 	<p>transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LV&HU&ES: Municipalities are more effective at taking appropriate measures as long as sufficient resources are provided • DE: Climate movement is in a suitable position to credibly unite social and environmental issues • SE: Driving schools could be used to raise awareness for more sustainable modes of transport

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underfunded public transport sector • Lack of coordination between different authorities, e.g. housing and transport authorities • Conflicts of interest: e.g. State revenues vs. sustainability (DE: interests of car-industry framed as identical with state interests) • Lack of authority and competency: municipalities and cities want to be more sustainable but are limited by national and EU legislation • Government subsidies for car-use prevent more sustainable modes of transport • Decision-making is difficult as benefits are long-term and intangible while costs occur in the short-term 		<p>effects such as greener, safer, more accessible and more resilient cities to garner people’s acceptance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making benefits immediately tangible for local residents: transformation of parking spaces, low emission zones, open space for urban experiments to expand imaginaries • Focus on resilience and emergency preparedness can also inform discourse on sustainable lifestyles and system changes • Highlight inefficiencies of current system • SUMP’s can help framework to identify collective and individual needs in democratic process • Learn from other regions and countries • Times of general change in one’s life can be leveraged to also change mobility habits • Frame a walkable city 		<p>environmental and social justice groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surprising alliances with typically conservative actors 	

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			as a subjective right and make use of encouraging visions such as the Welsh “well-being of future generations” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of overconsumptions needs to precede an electrification of vehicles 			
WTR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical challenges, e.g. shift systems, necessity to cover personnel all the time • Globalised world of work • Capitalist structures: concerns about competitiveness, consumerism, business models of growth • Cultural resistance: self-definition as ‘work-based society’ • Risk of rebound effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE: scarcity of skilled workers • ES: youth unemployment • HU: potential loneliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensatory mechanisms, e.g. government funds • Balanced and flexible regulations • Importance of role models • Strengthening of workers’ rights and trade unions • Creation of new narratives: connection between climate crisis and working hours, social dialogue between stakeholders and researchers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade unions = most important actors • Cooperative structures and community networks in sectors like energy, water, transport, care, education, and medicine • Coalition between employers and employees • Open-minded entrepreneurs and progressive business organisations • Public institutions, governments, politicians • Educational institutions • Media and leaders of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HU: lack of power of trade unions

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					public opinion	

<p>Regulations for sustainable (sufficiency-oriented) Business Models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of cohesive legal framework and coherent policies; existing ones promoting unsustainable business practices • Corporate influence surpasses governmental power • Corporations tend to assign responsibility for environmental protection entirely to their government and the EU, evading their own responsibility • Organisational inertia breeds resistance to change in conventional business models. • Absence of discourse linking economic activity to welfare; aligning economic actions to policy goals • Externalisation of environmental and social costs • Political polarisation resulting in unnecessary antagonisms and populism • Entrenched unsustainable consumption behaviours and narratives (incl. B2C and B2B) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed policy instruments: taxes, bans, public procurement as leverage (e.g. tender calls), obligatory CSR measures, ESG guidelines for banks, sustainability metrics, certification opportunities, and strict oversight of sustainability efforts, reductions in fossil fuel subsidies, and increased subsidies for sustainable economic development (e.g., energy transition) • Aligning national regulations with EU standards for fair competition • Information dissemination and awareness-raising to enhance acceptance for business regulations • Internalising environmental and social costs and implementing measures to increase acceptance for resulting price increases • Scalable solutions for businesses to meet sustainability criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE: new citizen participation formats (e.g., national citizen councils) to facilitate regulatory changes (promote policy legitimacy and acceptance). • HU vs. DE views: promote business leadership at management level to foster sustainability culture (HU) vs. indoctrination of board members or staff has no significant effect => strong policy framework required (DE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with scientific communities, businesses of diverse scales and sectors, citizens and consumers, NGOs, national banks, the World Bank • Regional engagement with local governments, enterprises, academic institutions, and civil society organisations (regional level allows fostering close relationships and engaging on equal footing) • Environmental movements play a crucial role: they catalyse public interest and participation, pressure corporations to embrace sustainable practices; politics only ever follows societal initiatives (exemption HU case) • Specific partnerships needed, e.g. legislators and businesses, networks of specialists, industry-specific coalitions, value chain alliances • Emphasis on education, research, and innovation as 	
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			<p>(e.g. special support for small business, more ambitious demands for large corporations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Framing sustainability as an opportunity for innovation		<p>drivers of sustainable practices</p>	
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