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DELIVERABLE 3.2

Stakeholder Perspectives on Structural Change

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I. EU 1.5° LIFESTYLES PROJECT SUMMARY

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

The project's aim is to contribute to 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 lifestyle options.

The uniqueness of the project's approach is that it recognises the importance of political acceptance for change, demonstrates the 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, 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 contribute to the mainstreaming of 1.5° 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:

o   a quantification of climate and health impacts on shifting lifestyles in the EU and three G20 countries (Indonesia, South Africa, Mexico);

o   an overview on potentials for and barriers to changes at the household level, including options for transitioning to 1.5° lifestyles as well as associated potential risks and opportunities;

o   an assessment of structural barriers and enablers for systemic transformations necessary for 1.5° lifestyles;

o   assessments of scenarios for economic and welfare systems, and business models compatible with 1.5° lifestyles.

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

II. 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 social structures** in which they are entrenched. The variety of pertinent structures includes values and normative societal foundations, economic structures, policies and regulations, infrastructures, and the (non-)availability of appliances, technologies, and services. Since households have limited or no direct influence on these structures, transforming demand towards sustainable consumption requires a comprehensive understanding of what these key structures are, the power relations that shape them, as well as the responsibilities of actors to shift the norms and means of production and consumption towards systems that enable the mainstreaming of 1.5° lifestyles.

This report builds on previous work in the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project which collated **7 key structures that need to be addressed to enable 1.5° lifestyles**, based on a state-of-the art literature review, delphi ranking method and 36 expert interviews (available as "Deliverable 3.1: First assessment of structural barriers and enablers"). Specifically, Deliverable 3.1 highlighted the necessity for change in the following key structural barriers and enablers: 1) "overcoming the economic growth paradigm", 2) "making "consistent and predictable integrated policies", 3) "overcoming the systematic influence of vested interests", 4) "giving economic incentives and internalising environmental costs", 5) "strengthening alternative narratives and measurements of wellbeing", 6) "overcoming inequity", and 7) "integrating information and skills about sustainable lifestyles in education".

Deliverable 3.2 now looks deeper into how this change could be achieved on the basis of results from **five participatory Stakeholder Thinking Labs**.

The five Stakeholder Thinking Labs were organised with **stakeholders from business, policymaking, media, civil society, and experts in think-tanks/academia**, in the project's case countries of **Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Spain and Sweden**. These 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. Through the backcasting session, participants were encouraged to think back from an imagined, positive, 1.5° lifestyles future in 2040, in order to assess which steps were taken to change each of the 7 key structures. The participants were divided into **four groups** according to the four most **carbon-intensive consumption fields of housing, mobility, leisure and nutrition**, and encouraged to think within multiple policy levels (locally, on the state, and also on the supra-national level). The participants were also encouraged to think in terms of individual steps, and to think about these steps in terms of short, medium and long-term governance timeframes.

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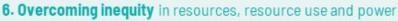
3. **Overcoming the systematic influence of vested interests**, including fossil-fuel incumbency (backed by powerful political actors/national geopolitical interests and underlying business models), retail corporations (especially in food sector), private media

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 1 - 7 Key Impactful Structures for 1.5° Lifestyles - the outcome of Deliverable 3.1

The stakeholders in the five case countries and in the four separate consumption fields interestingly came up with **similar themes and steps** as part of the thinking labs. The steps consisted largely of either strong policy "sticks" in the 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.

An important insight stakeholders developed was that the different **consumption fields overlap** in distinct ways. Stakeholders noted the natural overlap between the fields of

mobility and housing in many areas, since many mobility decisions depend on the availability of housing near amenities and meeting human needs (such as health, nutrition, education, leisure activities). They also considered how mobility and housing intersect with the fields of leisure and nutrition.

The intersection between the field of **leisure and other consumption fields** received attention as well: stakeholders noted that leisure also intersects with mobility via Europeans' continued use of unsustainable modes of mobility for their holiday travel, for instance. Similarly, they pointed out that nutrition also interacts with the field of leisure, when we consider unsustainable forms of high-dining as a part of unsustainable entertainment activities.

Finally, stakeholders noted that the field of **nutrition intersects with the other key consumption fields** in important ways, as questions around access to sustainable food intersect with questions around housing and mobility - whether communities can meet their needs sustainably within 15-minute cities.

Regarding **structure #1, "Overcoming the economic growth paradigm",** stakeholders identified 68 potential interventions across the five countries, despite growth being deeply ingrained in our productive and recreational structures. These 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 organization are impossible.

For **"Creating consistent policies", structure #2,** stakeholders were able to develop 172 actionable steps for in the short, medium, and long-term. An important insight stakeholders developed, was that the different consumption fields overlap in distinct ways. A key question that came up, when talking about the structures, was thus how to overcome a narrow, silo-focus in policy-making, and - seeing consumption across multiple fields as a whole – stakeholders 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[1].

Structure #3, "Overcoming systematic influence of vested interests", was also a more challenging structure for stakeholders, but they developed 67 steps to counter private companies' harmful 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

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[1] The 15-minute city is an urban planning concept that emphasizes the importance of accessibility and proximity to daily necessities and services. By providing easy access to work, shopping, education, healthcare, and leisure activities, the 15-minute city reduces the need for cars and promotes healthy and sustainable lifestyles.

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 122 steps for the **"Internalisation of eco-social costs in prices", structure #4,** in the four consumption fields. These steps are specific to housing, leisure, mobility, and nutrition and include general proposals and concrete measures. This broad spectrum of recommendations includes, for example, making emission-intensive food expensive (a more general proposal), as well as a tax on square meters per person to reduce housing emissions (a concrete measure).

For **"Alternative narratives and measurements of a good life", structure #5**, stakeholders suggested 95 potential steps. These steps included transitioning to new images of success, alternative ways of measuring well-being, and strengthening alternative narratives through 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 89 steps for "**Overcoming inequity in resources, resource use and power," structure #6**. Suggested steps focused on 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 112 steps. Participants emphasized the importance of 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 emphasized the need for coherent policies to support education efforts, linking structure #7 with structure #2.

Again**, 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 on how a good life looks like and may help to reduce inequities.

Also, **taxes and bans were by far the most popular steps** considered by the participants, including bans or heavy taxes on aviation, bans on driving in inner cities or in districts, bans or taxes on sugar and other foods, as well as bans or taxes on other unwanted or unsustainable consumption behaviours, amongst others. This shows, perhaps, that such strong interventions are more acceptable among stakeholders than typically considered in the political realm, where such suggestions would be met with doubts regarding the feasibility of their adoption and implementation.

Interestingly, there were also **country differences between the steps suggested by the stakeholders**, which will be analysed further as part of the project. These were 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. Initial observations suggest for example, that 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 the Hungarian stakeholders were often focused on issues of political implementation and governance, while steps from the Latvian stakeholders focused more on the municipality level, again perhaps due to the particular background of the stakeholders.

Although the stakeholders 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.

The outcomes of the first round of **Stakeholder Thinking Labs will provide inputs for many upcoming research tasks in the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project,** including the second round of Citizens Thinking Labs in the five case countries (Task 2.5, as part of Work Package 2), the EU level policy Stakeholder Thinking Lab (Task 3.4 in Work Package 3), the second Stakeholder Thinking Labs (Task 3.5 in Work Package 3), as well as ongoing work on business models and the welfare state (as part of Work Package 5).