

## Thank you from PERITIA!

As the end of the project draws near, we extend our warmest thanks to everyone who contributed to our final academic conference, '[Rethinking Policy, Expertise and Trust](#)'. As you will read below, these three days at University College Dublin were jam-packed with paper presentations and panel discussions, with over 200 participants in attendance.

But it's not over yet! [Registration](#) is now open for our closing event in Brussels on **4-5 May**, '**Research Insights for European Policymaking**'. Read all about the exciting programme we have lined up (spoiler alert: it includes a **bespoke policy simulation!**) and other project milestones in this penultimate newsletter.

## 'The Trust Race'

### A PERITIA Podcast



PERITIA's [final academic conference](#) hosted the launch of the project's timely **podcast**, '[The Trust Race](#)', a series which delves into the pivotal moments that continue to impact trust in science.

Produced by Shaun and Maurice and hosted by Shane Bergin, the series explores the scandals and controversies that have shaped trust in science over the past 50 years up to and including the COVID-19 pandemic. Through conversations with journalists, scientists, philosophers, lawyers, and activists, the listener is walked through the **complex nature of trust**.

'The Trust Race' is in part based on the **PERITIA lecture series**, [\[Un\]Truths: Trust in an Age of Disinformation](#), which will also soon be available in **podcast form**.

[Read more](#)

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## Research from PERITIA

### The Trust Hub

PERITIA's **brand new website** is now home to the [Trust Hub](#), a space that allows people to engage with data from social surveys on **levels of trust in public figures and institutions central to public policy**, with a particular focus on Europe. Collected and prepared by [The Policy Institute at King's College London](#), the hub features an **interactive tool** that displays data from surveys put out by [the European Social Survey](#), [Eurobarometer](#), [the European Values Study](#), and [the International Social Survey Programme](#).

The Trust Hub also features findings from PERITIA's cross-country survey, which was carried out by The Policy Institute, that explores **trust in expertise informing policy decisions** in Europe. The analysis was based on survey data from over 12,000 participants and include questions on public perceptions on climate change, Covid-19 and public institutions mediating expert advice.

[Read more](#)

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## News from PERITIA

### 'Research Insights for European Policymaking' – Registration Now Open!

PERITIA's [closing event](#) will take place 4–5 May in Brussels. Highlights include a **keynote** by the chair of the [European Parliament's Panel for the Future of Science and Technology \(STOA\)](#), MEP **Christian Ehler**, a **social simulation** based on the findings of the project, a **policy roundtable** with experts in the field, a reflection on our **DMP series**, the launch of a **Trustworthiness Toolkit**, a [Trust Data Hub](#) for researchers and journalists, the **PERITIA podcast** "[The Trust Race](#)", and, finally, an awards ceremony and roundtable for the winners of the [Youth on Trust Awards](#) competition among students from across Europe.

Please register for both days of the conference individually [here](#).

### Deliberative Mini Public Series Concludes

Following [London's](#) inaugural session of PERITIA's Citizen Fora, a series of deliberative mini publics co-organised by [Sense About Science](#) and [The Policy Institute at King's College London](#) in collaboration with local partners, further workshops were held in [Berlin](#), [Dublin](#), and [Warsaw](#), with the last in [Yerevan](#), marking the very first event of its kind to be held in Armenia. **Journalist Anahit Minasyan** noted, "We are moved by how deeply the participants appreciated the opportunity to understand and weigh into questions of both local and global significance. They felt included and empowered."

These sessions were designed to involve the public in **policy decision-making** and to **inform** on one key aspect of climate change – namely, **urban transport**. This particular format of bringing the public into engagement with experts yielded rich discussions which are currently being discursively analysed by a team at the Policy Institute at King's College London. The results will be then presented at the 'Research Insights for European Policymaking' closing event in Brussels ([register here](#)).

### UCD Hosts PERITIA's Final Academic Conference,

## 'Rethinking Policy, Expertise & Trust'

From 23–25 March, the **UCD O'Brien Centre for Science** hosted our final academic conference, covering a breadth of topics encompassed by PERITIA's investigation of public trust in expertise and examined by scholars from a wide range of disciplines. Researchers from the fields of **philosophy, sociology, political science, media studies, public policy** and **science communication** presented their most recent findings on questions related to key themes of the project. Over those three days, over 200 participants attended over **55 refereed papers** and **13 panel sessions**, of which many were hosted by research projects working on the topics of trust and expertise.

The conference had **three aims**:

1. To serve as a platform for **early career researchers** to present their latest research on trust, expertise and related issues and hence to help us **rethink the core issues** that preoccupy PERITIA.
2. To bring together panels and representatives from the growing number of research projects on topics of trust and expertise from across Europe, and to create an opportunity for **dialogues and cross fertilisations**.
3. To showcase some of the **latest findings of PERITIA** by speakers and panels across its 11 work packages.

The conference kicked off with welcome remarks by **PERITIA Project Leader Maria Baghramian**, followed by the launch of ['The Trust Race'](#). In addition to the initial round of parallel paper presentations, the first day also featured a panel on **'Deliberative Mini Publics'**, which presented reflections from PERITIA team members from the various capital cities where these DMP sessions were held, allowing the speakers to draw comparisons.

That evening, **Professor Orla Feely** welcomed the participants and spoke of the university's continuing support for the project. The first day concluded with a **roundtable discussion** on strategic crisis management in the EU co-organised by [SAPEA](#) and the [Royal Irish Academy](#); ['Why do we need public trust in times of crisis?'](#). This [livestreamed](#) session is now available online, and is highly recommended viewing.

Participants were able to further exchange in a more informal setting at the **conference dinner**, which took place in the evening of a very full second day. The final day featured panels on the **PERITIA and COGITO research groups** and comparisons between perspectives on trust by three Horizon2020 projects, [EnTrust](#), [TiGRE](#), and [PERITIA](#).

The conference closed with words shared by **Colin Scott**, College Principal of the UCD College of Social Sciences and Law and the incomparable **Onora O'Neill**, chair of PERITIA's advisory board. Professor O'Neill reflected on the often insidious anonymity of public communication that marks this moment in modernity. 'The digital age has given deception new tools,' she warns. 'May our words not go fatherless into the world.'

Pictured below: Colin Scott, Onora O'Neill, and Maria Baghramian. To read more about the conference and see other media, please click [here](#).

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## Behind the Scenes

PERITIA partner [Strane Innovation \(STRANE\)](#) is a Research and Development SME specialised in the sectors of sustainable development (environment, energy, water, smart systems and human factors). Strane conducts multidisciplinary and collaborative research through participation in European projects, and has developed an ambitious research programme on social cognition, collective intelligence and human factors. Strane works in the areas of circular economy, water management, renewable energy, and cognitive science.

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## Our Science Communication Corner

### Science Communication Benefits Scientists, Too

According to a new study from the [University of Münster](#), scientists who present their findings to a non-scientific audience **experience a positive impact on their scientific work**. 'As a result of their involvement in public outreach, the scientists we surveyed not only perceived an increase in their personal motivation and competence for public communication, but they also saw benefits related to networking and knowledge exchange with colleagues from other disciplines within interdisciplinary research networks,' reports psychologist **Dr Friederike Hendriks** from the **Technische Universität Braunschweig**. Essentially, when scientists communicate their research to non-specialists or non-scientists, they need to expand their own specialised perspective to render complicated topics accessible. Participants in the study also stated that engaging with non-experts had 'encouraged them to reflect on their own work on a more abstract level'. And with no negative effects reported, it seems that this practice is worth the investment. Indeed, Friederike Hendriks is currently developing communication training for early career researchers that focuses on research-based strategies to support researchers in having '**comprehensible and counterpart-involving**' **conversations** about science.

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## Did You Know...

### Fessing up to Mistakes in Journalism is a Double-edged Sword

We all make mistakes – including journalists, whose errors can have massive repercussions. But what effect does correcting those mistakes have on consumers' trust?

In a [new study](#) by **News Co/Lab** and **Dartmouth College**, researchers analysed participants' reactions to corrections of various news items on Twitter. First they read a simulated thread that included a tweet seemingly attributed to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), reporting that a Canadian citizen had become an ISIS executioner. Some participants then viewed a second thread that included a correction to the news item by the CBC itself, while others received corrections by a third party challenging the validity of the story. Another group received both types of corrections, and the last group no corrections.

The results? The participants who had read the corrections were more likely to have an accurate understanding of the false claim in the original tweet. What's more, the group who received the correction issued by the CBC had a more precise grasp of the facts than those who read a correction

by a third party. When it came to trust, however, the source of the correction had no bearing on the outcome – all participants who read corrections were less likely to say they trusted the CBC's reporting.

But, the good news is that the decline in trust 'is small both substantively and in standardized terms relative to the increase in belief accuracy'. [Read more](#).

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## Proudly a Horizon 2020 Research Project

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870883. The information and opinions on this website and other communications materials are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission.



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