

Deliverable

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Project title: Coordination Action for the early implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) 'More Years – Better Lives – the Challenges and Opportunities of Demographic Change'

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1. Short description on the content of the deliverable:

The external evaluation deliverable D6.6 will examine the progress of the [Joint Programming Initiative More Years Better Lives \(JPI-MYBL\)](#) in its stated aims, the role and contribution of the J-AGE project to the JPI and the effectiveness of the governance arrangements for the JPI. The Evaluation will draw on existing evidence and will collect new evidence through interviews with those involved with the JPI MYBL. This External Evaluation will provide an independent and objective assessment of the JPI MYBL including the contribution of the J-AGE work packages to the overall aims and objectives of the JPI. The deliverable has been undertaken by an externally appointed assessor. This will incorporate the work initially proposed for deliverable D6.5. Workpackage 6 is subcontracting out this work using approved UK Government Procurement processes. This has been approved by the GA and the Commission. The deliverable will include information from work package 6 deliverables D6.1¹, D6.2², D6.3³ and D6.4⁴ and the J-AGE II proposal. The recent feedback from the commission assessors relevant to D6.6 has delayed the delivery of a final version of this document. The external assessor has responded to these comments where possible in the external evaluation report.

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3. Deliverable

The external evaluation was managed and undertaken by Dr Ruth Townsley (Ruth Townsley Research), an independent researcher with 22 years experience of social policy research, evaluation and review work for national and international clients her CV in shown in Annex 1. The list of documentation provided to the external evaluator is shown in Annex 2.

Using an interview topic guide devised by the ESRC and modified by the external evaluator telephone interviews with a sample of 17 key stakeholders involved in the management and delivery of the JPI-MYBL were completed. The sample was selected to represent, where possible, a range of geographical locations and job designations and would include members from the following JPI affiliations: the General Assembly (GA), the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB), the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB), the Task Forces, and a number of stakeholders taking part in Fast Track activities.

With consent, each interview was recorded digitally and transferred securely (using AES 256 encryption) to be transcribed. The transcripts will be held confidentially by the External Evaluator. The external evaluation will comply with the ethical code of the Social Research Association⁵ and with the Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care (DH, 2001⁶ and 2005), which sets out the specific responsibilities of the people and organisations accountable for the proper conduct of research.

The external evaluators report is shown in full in Annex 3. This detailed report includes summary, introduction, methodology, analysis, and a conclusions and recommendations sections.

The majority of data collected was qualitative and has been analysed thematically, with reference to the JPI MYBL objectives using the data queries list devised for the documentary analysis stage of the work.

Results

The table below shows the current progress in meeting the Type A indicators. This is discussed in detail in Annex 3.

Table A: Overview of progress in relation to Type A evaluation indicators

Indicator code	Input indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A1	Attitude of JPI members towards JPI MYBL goals and objectives as described in SRA.	Achieved
A2	Level of non-funded staff resource contributed to the activities of the JPI.	Achieved
A3	Participation grade of member states in JPI MYBL in SRA implementation planning activities and/or sub-groups.	Achieved
A17	Terms of reference (ToR) are considered adequate by GA, SAB and SOAB. Decision making follows the ToR and is satisfactory.	Partly achieved
A18	GA satisfied with interaction with SOAB. SOAB satisfied with interaction with GA.	Partly achieved
Indicator code	Process indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A4	Number of JPI members contributing funds to 'fast-track' activities.	Achieved
A5	The number of new joint activities.	Achieved
A6	Members find it as easy and cost effective to collaborate through the JPI as they do to fund their own research directly.	Not achieved
Indicator code	Output indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A7	National research funding priorities have been adapted as a result of JPI MYBL and the priorities in the JPI MYBL SRA.	Partly achieved

A8	Alignment of national research funding programmes.	Partly achieved
A9	National research funding policies have been influenced as a result of JPI MYBL and the activities of the JPI.	Partly achieved
A10	Joint activities reflect the input made by non-academic stakeholders.	Partly achieved
Indicator code	Outcome indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A11	Awareness of and engagement in demographic change and ageing research activities amongst non-academic stakeholders as a result of JPI activity.	Evidence unclear
A12	The total amount of funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members.	Not achieved
A13	The processes developed under the JPI (A6) can be used for activities and partners beyond those of the JPI.	Evidence unclear
A19	EU research activities reflect the research priorities of the JPI MYBL.	Evidence unclear

Recommendations

The report lists 30 recommendations for the JPI MYBL from the evaluation at the 30 month period. They are presented in Table B.

Table B: Recommendations from the External Evaluation report for the JPI MYBL.

Recommendation	
<i>Governance and decision making</i>	
R1	Clarify the structure of decision making processes during GA meetings, particularly in terms of presentation of the decision to be made and recording of the resulting agreed actions.
R2	Clarify the roles of the GA and SC in relation to which decisions are made at which group and how agreed action is decided.
R3	Clarify which JPI body or bodies have the mandate for implementing agreed action resulting from decisions .
R4	Consider ways to speed up decision making where time is of the essence and a delay may have an effect on other joint actions of the JPI.
R5	Ensure that future decisions about research priorities fully reflect those agreed through the SRA.
R6	Clarify how secretariat functions for JPI bodies will be organised and funded during J-AGE 2.
<i>Communication and dissemination</i>	
R7	Review communication across the JPI: this should include considering (a) how to reduce the volume and improve the efficiency of email communication; (b) the use of shared file storage space; (c) how best to update the JPI website; (d) the publication and dissemination a regular newsletter to update members

	and others about the on-going work and activities of the JPI (including actual and planned activities, and work with wider EU programmes and initiatives).
R8	Develop and draft a comprehensive communication and dissemination plan for internal communications and for publicising both existing JPI outputs (SRA, fast-track publications) and those to be completed under J-AGE 2.
R9	Consider engaging external consultancy input to advise on communication and dissemination activities.
R10	Review communication and dissemination activities at six monthly intervals to ensure progress is on track with agreed targets.
<i>Roles and effectiveness of the SAB and SOAB</i>	
R11	Review the documentation relating to the roles and terms of reference of the SAB and SOAB and consider making this available to all JPI members via the JPI website.
R12	Any further changes to the composition or membership of the SAB and SOAB should be handled carefully and sensitively.
<i>Interaction between the GA and the SAB and SOAB</i>	
R13	As part of R11, review and if needed clarify further the ways that the SAB and SOAB can best contribute to GA discussions and JPI joint actions overall .
R14	Consider a regular agenda item for verbal feedback from the SAB and SOAB chairs to the GA.
R15	Consider organising more opportunities (meetings, seminars) for direct interaction between members of the SOAB and the GA.
R16	Consider putting information on the JPI website about dates and agenda items for all meetings of JPI bodies.
R17	Discuss and agree the roles of individual JPI members in terms of representing the SAB or SOAB position, the position of their own country, or their own personal position to the GA and the wider JPI.
<i>Development and implementation of joint activities</i>	
R18	Ensure that a dissemination plan is drafted and kept updated for each new joint activity undertaken throughout J-AGE 2.
R19	Review plans for engagement with stakeholders during joint activities and make use of learning from examples of good practice from JPI-MYBL (e.g. consultation on the SRA) and from other JPIs (e.g. via JPIs To Co-Work' initiative).
R20	Consider drafting a framework and guidance on stakeholder inclusion and consultation at both JPI level and at national level for JPI members.
R21	Consider how best to schedule new joint activities so they can feed into the development of any new funding calls
R22	Document the learning from the development and implementation of the first funding call, to ensure this is taken on board by those taking responsibility for future calls.
R23	Consider how best to schedule new calls to ensure sufficient lead-in time for national governments to plan and commit financial resources.
R24	For any future funding calls, manage the expectations of JPI members by ensuring there is clarity and communication from the outset about the intended scope of the funding likely to be made available.
R25	Produce information and guidance for JPI members on how alignment might best be promoted and supported on a national level.
R26	Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that allow national representatives of JPI member states to easily record, map and define examples of alignment as they occur.
<i>Outcomes of the JPI-MYBL</i>	
R27	Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that allow JPI members to record, map and define examples of increased awareness amongst national non-

	academic stakeholders.
R28	Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that enable data to be collected and analysed relating to changes in national research funding for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members.
R29	Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that allow data to be collected relating to international collaboration and coordination in demographic and ageing research.
R30	Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that enable JPI members to easily record, map and define examples of the impact of the JPI-MYBL on EU agenda setting.

Actions for WP6 resulting from the D6.6 External Evaluation of JPI MYBL

WP6 has identified the following actions that must be addressed to ensure the success of the JPI MYBL. These are issues that have been raised in the monitoring reports D6.3³, 6.4⁴ and were further analysed in this report Annex 3. They are listed below and will be discussed at the J-AGE II launch on the 2 and 3rd of March 2015 and at future General Assembly meetings. The recommendations from the external evaluator will be assessed and incorporated where appropriate. A number of these recommendations will be addressed by the work to be undertaken as part of the J-AGE II project. The following areas have been identified as needing further JPI MYBL effort.

The development of an Implementation plan

The monitoring and evaluation framework would be enhanced by a JPI MYBL Implementation plan. The need for this will be raised at the J-AGE II launch and the General Assembly meeting in Vienna in March 2015.

The development of a Communication and Dissemination Strategy for JPI MYBL outputs

Results from the monitoring report D6.4 indicate that the communication and dissemination of the SRA followed similar processes in the different member countries. The dissemination of other outputs has varied for the different countries and clear guidelines are needed to ensure a consistent approach for the J-AGE II period (recommendations R7-10).

The Type B indicators Deliverable D6.2 have been revised and 3 proxy indicators for impact have been developed. The required data will have to be available for WP6 to complete future monitoring and evaluation reports. We have initial data in Annex 4 provided by WP 1 from the current JPI MYBL website but need to ensure that the information required for the proxy indicators can be captured from the new website and the J-AGE II work package programmes of work. Information required includes hits on the JPI MYBL Website, Media analysis of the reporting of the JPI in national and international media, citations of JPI MYBL policy documents, a stakeholder database, records of attendance at JPI MYBL events, GA members providing details of stakeholders relevant to each of the SRA priority areas to meet our target of 50 stakeholders per strategic area. The need for tools to capture this information is included in recommendations R27-30.

Governance and interaction between the GA, SAB and SOAB.

The need for clarity and transparency in the role, responsibilities and decision making of the JPI boards and advisory groups is covered by recommendations R1-6 and R11-12. The interaction between the GA, SAB and SOAB has also been highlighted as an area for the JPI to develop in recommendations R13-17. The most recent updating of the governance documents will be discussed at the next GA meeting.

Process to be developed for recommendations from WP6 to be implemented by the JPI

WP 6 will continue to monitor progress against the Type A indicators and the newly developed proxy impact indicators and will also set into progress a set of activities to track progress towards the Type B indicators. Reports will be delivered to the GA in months 6 (12 months after the last report in J-AGE), 18 and 30 of J-AGE II and include some tracking of data over time. Indicators will be used as a continuous feedback loop into the JPI in order to inform its future direction and activities. To ensure that WP6 recommendations are acted upon where appropriate a process will need to be established which will enable this.

The recommendations in table C relate to the proposed work planned by workpackage 6 in J-AGE II. These were requested by WP6 to ensure learning from this evaluation would feed into future monitoring and evaluation.

Table C: Recommendations for WP6 for JAGE II

	<i>Recommendations for WP6 for J-AGE II</i>
R31	Continued tracking against existing indicators is essential to record and demonstrate progress. However this should be supplemented by data relating to the perceptions of JPI members about the input, process and output indicators as well as examples of outcomes and impacts at national level. This may mean collecting monitoring data from all JPI members by questionnaire as previously, but supplementing this with a sample of in-depth interviews or a focus group to contextualise the quantitative findings.
R32	Monitoring reports to the GA at months 6, 18 and 30 should include more qualitative data as noted in R31 to contextualise the quantitative analysis of progress against indicators. It may be useful to focus in more depth on one aspect of the JPI (as evidenced by a set of appropriate indicators) for each of the three reports. This would enable more detailed data to be collected, but also for new research tools to be developed and piloted, in readiness for the more extensive data collection that will be needed for the second and final external evaluation at the end of J-AGE 2. For example, collection and analysis of data in relation to outcome indicator A11 might involve surveying non-academic stakeholders directly to measure any impact of the JPI on their awareness of demographic change and ageing research. Similarly, an assessment of success in relation to outcome indicator A12 might involve collecting and analysing statistical data from national funding agencies. Either of these activities would necessitate a more detailed and focussed approach to data collection and analysis than has so far been evident in the 12 and 24 month monitoring exercises conducted for J-AGE 1.
R33	As part of its monitoring role, ESRC should consider establishing a means of logging basic JPI developments and actions, including a list of key meetings, tasks undertaken and work in progress, with dates and names of those involved. Such information was difficult to locate for the first external evaluation, and JPI members also commented that more information about key meetings and work in progress would be helpful. It is also important to record whether these developments and actions are being conducted and funded through J-AGE 2, and if not, then to clarify and record the details of their coordination and finance arrangements.
R34	Clear, structured and comparable data about engagement with stakeholders and dissemination of JPI outputs, will be essential for J-AGE 2 monitoring and evaluation work. Analysis for this report has shown that this data will need to differentiate between (a) JPI members' own individual work in engaging with national stakeholders; (b) JPI members' own work in disseminating outputs at

	national level; (c) work by others on national level engagement and dissemination; (d) JPI-wide work on engagement and dissemination. The differences between these types of data will need to be reflected in the development of questions and research tools.
R35	The current definition of 'coordination' as evidenced by output indicators A7, A8 and A9 is both very specific and yet also in need of clarification. The output intention underpinning these three indicators currently reads as 'increased coordination between JPI member states', yet the success criteria relate to both increased coordination within JPI member states, and to increased coordination between the JPI and member states: thus the intention statement needs to be clarified. It is also important to ensure fidelity to the evaluation framework, since the definition of 'coordination' in the context of indicators A7, A8 and A9 is very specific. Some additional guidance is needed for future evaluations to ensure that the scope of the definition is clear in order to collect relevant, structured and comparable data about the extent and nature of 'coordination' in this context.
R36	Given that an evaluation framework has been established for this JPI, it is important that in any on-going JPI documentation there is fidelity to the indicators, intentions and success criteria set out therein. This is particularly important for any documents relating to monitoring and evaluation activities. We noted that terms that have a very specific definition in the evaluation framework (such as, impact, output, outcome, coordination, etc) are sometimes defined and used differently in other J-AGE documents. This is unhelpful, particularly where the documents relate to monitoring and evaluation activities.
R37	Further to R36, it is essential that there is agreement and fidelity about the scope and wording of the aims and objectives of (a) the JPI-MYBL overall; (b) the J-AGE 2 project; and (c) monitoring and evaluation activities relevant to the JPI and to J-AGE 2. We noted some inconsistency across these at present. It is important that there is agreement and clarification about the aims and objectives of these three components before any further monitoring and evaluation work is undertaken. In its role as WP 6 lead, the ESRC may want to consider monitoring this fidelity and ensuring that any new JPI documentation accurately represents and reflects agreed aims and objectives.
	<i>Development of evidence for the second external evaluation (task 6.2)</i>
R38	It is important that the development of evidence for the second external evaluation is able to (a) build on the data collection, analysis and findings of the first external evaluation reported here; and (b) maintain consistency with the existing evaluation indicators and to agreed aims and objectives as recommended in R36 and R37.
R39	Consider identifying a named, key informant for each JPI member state, who can act as a conduit for specific monitoring and evaluation activities. It is important to identify individual JPI members who are able to provide a definitive and accurate national perspective.
R40	With reference to R26, develop, pilot and implement monitoring and evaluation tools that allow national representatives of JPI member states to easily record, map and define examples of alignment as they occur.
R41	With reference to R27, R28, R29 and R30, develop, pilot and implement monitoring and evaluation tools that allow data to be collected about (a) increased awareness of demographic change amongst non-academic stakeholders; (b) changes in national research funding for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members; (c) international collaboration and coordination; (e) the impact of the JPI-MYBL on EU agenda setting.

Commissioning a second external evaluation (task 6.3)	
R42	With reference to R38, the brief for the second external evaluation should (a) build on the data collection, analysis and findings of the first external evaluation; (b) build on the subsequent monitoring and evaluation activities to be undertaken during J-AGE 2; and (c) maintain fidelity with the existing evaluation indicators and to agreed aims and objectives as recommended in R36 and R37. In particular, clarity about the precise aims and objectives is essential: is the external evaluation focussing on the progress of the JPI, the progress of J-AGE 2 or both? If both, then which aims, those of the JPI or those of J-AGE 2, are to be the guiding objectives for the investigation?
R43	The commissioning process for the second external evaluation should start at least three months before the desired start date, to allow sufficient lead-in time for tenders to be submitted and appropriate consultants to be recruited. This would mean finalising the written brief (or invitation to tender document) by at least month 27 of J-AGE 2, preferably earlier.
R44	The timescale and budget for the second external evaluation needs to be commensurate with the scope of the research to be commissioned and adjustments to this should be considered if the expected scope reduces or increases over the lifetime of J-AGE 2. Advice on an adequate timescale and budget should be sought from the evaluation and monitoring expert advisory group.

Conclusion

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the JPI has been particularly successful in developing a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), which has helped to identify research gaps and highlighted the potential for alignment and joint activities in the area of demographic change. The JPI has also created a strong, coordinated network of national experts, who, in collaboration with stakeholders, have undertaken significant new work through several Europe-wide joint activities.

To date, some pooling of expertise has occurred during the implementation of the joint activities, particularly through the two fast-track projects on data mapping and understanding the employment participation of older workers. Less progress has been made regarding the exchange of best practice, particularly in terms of knowledge exchange on research funding policy and practice.

Through JPI activities, it appears that the foundations and principles for cross-disciplinary and holistic work have been laid. The development of the SRA and fast-track activities have helped to develop some consensus about key research priorities and gaps, a shared understanding and a common vocabulary for talking about demographic change. The JPI has helped to bring about improved cross-disciplinary understanding of demographic change, although this may not yet be reflected outside the membership of the JPI.

At national level, there are some early examples of the JPI's impact on JPI member states' funding priorities, but influence on national research funding policy and alignment of funding programmes is currently less evident. At EU level, the impact of the JPI on agenda setting remains unclear and will need further investigation as part of the future evaluation work planned for the J-AGE 2 project.

Annexes

Annex 1: External Evaluator CV Ruth Townsley

Current position

- Independent Researcher, Ruth Townsley Research, Bristol, UK
- Honorary Research Fellow, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol

Qualifications

- PhD (Education), University of Sheffield (1989-1992)
- BA (Communication Studies), first class, Sheffield City Polytechnic (1986-1989)

Previous employment

- Senior Research Fellow, Norah Fry Research Centre, University of Bristol (2002-2011)
- Research Fellow, University of Bristol (1997-2002)
- Research Associate, University of Bristol (1994-7)
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation Research Fellow, University of Bristol (1992-4)

Overview of experience

Ruth is a skilled social policy researcher and project manager, with 22 years experience of research and evaluation for government, academic, public sector, third sector and private sector clients. Her recent work has encompassed evaluation work, scoping studies and knowledge reviews for major national and international funders.

Since 1992 she has been responsible for initiating and leading numerous pieces of social research, evaluation and review work. Ruth has published and presented her work nationally and internationally, in the academic and professional press, including numerous authored books, published reports, refereed journal articles and other research outputs such as book chapters, training materials, web-based reports and accessible/easy-read booklets and summaries for disabled people and the general public. In 1997, she was part of a team who received an award from the Plain English Campaign for work to make social policy research findings easier to understand for disabled people and the general public.

Key expertise

- Applied social policy research and evaluation
- Research project management expertise
- Systematic literature/evidence reviewing
- Qualitative and quantitative data collection skills, including focus groups, interviewing, and survey work
- Data analysis and report writing, including skills in developing easy-read materials and plain language writing.

Commissioned research, evaluation and reviews (since 2004)

- An investigation into the outcomes and impact of the ESRC Festival of Social Science 2013: for the ESRC (2014-ongoing).
- A scoping study to explore the implementation of 'Independent Support' (a new government initiative under the Children and Families Act 2014): for Bristol Supportive Parents (2014).
- Research into the employment outcomes of young people with autism living in Wales: for the Welsh Government (2013-14).
- An investigation into the outcomes and impact of the ESRC Festival of Social Science 2012: for the ESRC (2013-14).
- Analysis of the post-19 education needs of school leavers in Pembrokeshire 2013-15: for Pembrokeshire College and Portfield Special School (2013).
- Research into levels of need and current provision of post-19 education for young people with complex learning difficulties living in Wales: for the Welsh Government (2012-13).
- An impact evaluation of the national Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy service: for the Social Care Institute of Excellence/Department of Health (2010-11).
- An evaluation of the National Autistic Society's Parent Support Programme for parents of young people with autistic spectrum disorder: for NHS Bristol (2010-11).
- An evidence review of access to independent advocacy for disabled people: for the Office for Disability Issues/Department for Work and Pensions (2009).
- A review concerning progress towards independent living for disabled people in European member states: for the EU's Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) (2009).
- A literature review and scoping exercise to establish research priorities in Learning Disabilities for the next ten years: for the NHS Service Delivery Organisation (SDO) R&D Programme (now NIHR) (2007-8).
- An evaluation and review of community based day activities for adults with learning disabilities: for the Social Care Institute of Excellence (2006).
- A review of the work of Care Co-ordination Network UK, a national umbrella organisation for those associated with the policy and practice of key-working for disabled children: for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2005-6).
- An action research project to investigate how adult learning professionals can promote progression and effective transition to adulthood for young disabled people: for the Learning and Skills Development Agency (2003-4).
- A literature review on transition to adulthood for young people with learning disabilities: for the Social Care Institute of Excellence (2004)
- A systematic review leading to production of evidence-based guidance on producing accessible information for people with learning disabilities (with RNIB): for the Department of Health (2002-4).
- An impact evaluation of multi-agency working in services to severely disabled children

with complex health care needs and their families (with the Family Fund Trust): for the Big Lottery Fund (2001-4).

Selected publications and reports (since 2004)

- Townsley, R. (2014) Independent Support: Evidence and Build Phase. A scoping study to explore the implementation of Independent Support within the context of Supportive Parents' current Parent Partnership Service. Bristol: Supportive Parents.
<http://www.supportiveparents.org.uk/sen-tools/independent-support-evidence-and-build-phase/>
- Townsley, R. (2014) The ESRC Festival of Social Science 2012: An investigation into the outcomes and impact of the Festival from the perspective of organisers. Swindon: Economic and Social Research Council.
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- Townsley, R. and Laing, A. (2011) Effective relationships, better outcomes: Mapping the impact of the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate Service (1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010). London: Social Care Institute for Excellence.
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ten years. Report for the National Co-ordinating Centre for NHS Service Delivery and Organisation R&D (NCCSDO). London: HMSO

http://www.netscc.ac.uk/hsdr/files/project/SDO_ES_08-1610-152_V01.pdf

- Watson, D., Abbott, D. & Townsley, R. (2007) 'Listen to me, too! Lessons from involving children with complex health care needs in research about multi-agency services', Child: Care, Health & Development.
- Swift, P. & Townsley, R. with Cole, A., Lloyd, A., Major, V., Mattingly, M. McIntosh, B and Williams, V (2006) Having a good day? A study of community-based day activities for people with learning disabilities. A review of the research, London: Social Care Institute for Excellence. <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/knowledgereviews/kr14.pdf>
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Annex 2: Documentation provided to the External Evaluator:

- a) D1.7 J-AGE 24 month report
- b) D1.7. J-AGE 24 month report – Annexes
- c) J-AGE Deliverable 6.1 – Type A indicators
- d) J-AGE D6.4 - 24 month monitoring report (final version)
- e) J-AGE D6.3 - 12 month monitoring report (resubmission)
- f) JPI MYBL – list of members
- g) JPI MYBL Fast Track “Understanding employment participation of older workers” – Scientific report (draft)
- h) JPI MYBL Strategic Research Agenda on Demographic Change (full version)
- i) JPI MYBL Second Annual Evaluation Questionnaire
- j) Answers to JPI MYBL Second Annual Evaluation Questionnaire (total13)
- k) Description of J-AGE II Work Package 6 Work Plan
- l) Feedback from the Commission Assessors relevant to Deliverable D6.6

First External Evaluation of the Joint Programming Initiative More Years Better Lives (JPI-MYBL)

A report for the UK Economic and Social Research Council

March 2015

**Report author:
Ruth Townsley, Independent Researcher**

Summary

The Joint Programming Initiative 'More Years Better Lives' (JPI-MYBL) was established in 2010 and its work is guided by the following aims:

1. To develop a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to identify research gaps, potential for alignment and joint activities
2. To better coordinate national, regional and European activities relevant for demographic change
3. To exchange best practice, pool expertise and financial resources, and carry out joint activities
4. To gain understanding of demographic change by a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach
5. To have an impact on national and EU agenda setting.

An external evaluation of the JPI-MYBL was commissioned in January 2015 and was completed over eight weeks, by Dr Ruth Townsley, an independent researcher. The evaluation examined the progress of the JPI towards its aims during a 30 month period, from 1st September 2012 to 28th February 2015. It involved desk-based research, via documentary analysis of selected JPI outputs and qualitative interviews (mostly by telephone) with a sample of 17 JPI members representing 12 countries.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the JPI has been particularly successful in developing a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), which has helped to identify research gaps and highlighted the potential for alignment and joint activities in the area of demographic change. The JPI has also created a strong, coordinated network of national experts, who, in collaboration with stakeholders, have undertaken significant new work through several Europe-wide joint activities. To date, some pooling of expertise has occurred during the implementation of joint activities, particularly through the two fast-track projects on data mapping and understanding the employment participation of older workers. Less progress has been made regarding the exchange of best practice, particularly in terms of knowledge exchange on research funding policy and practice. The pooling, or more accurately the convergence, of financial resources was not universally perceived as a success to date, though it was felt that the first funding call was a step towards this goal.

Through JPI activities undertaken during the J-AGE 1 funding period, it appears that the foundations and principles for cross-disciplinary and holistic work have been laid. The development of the SRA and fast-track activities have helped to develop some consensus about key research priorities and gaps, a shared understanding and a common vocabulary for talking about demographic change. The JPI has helped to bring about improved cross-disciplinary understanding of demographic change, although this is not yet reflected outside the membership of the JPI. At national level, there are some early examples of the JPI's impact on its member states' funding priorities, but influence on national research funding policy and alignment of funding programmes is currently less evident. At EU level, the impact of the JPI on agenda setting remains unclear and will need further investigation as part of future evaluation work planned for the J-AGE 2 project.

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1. Context for the first external evaluation

1.1. The Joint Programming Initiative ‘More Years Better Lives’

The Joint Programming Initiative ‘More Years Better Lives: The Potential and Challenges of Demographic Change’ (JPI-MYBL) was established in 2010. Its purpose is to foster collaboration and coordination between European and national research programmes related to demographic change. ‘Joint Programming’ is a European approach to pooling national resources to help tackle common challenges. EU Member States commit to Joint Programming initiatives to implement strategic research agendas.

The JPI-MYBL has five guiding aims:

1. To develop a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to identify research gaps, potential for alignment and joint activities
2. To better coordinate national, regional and European activities relevant for demographic change
3. To exchange best practice, pool expertise and financial resources, and carry out joint activities
4. To gain understanding of demographic change by a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach
5. To have an impact on national and EU agenda setting.

Currently the following 17 countries are participating as full members of the JPI-MYBL: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Each country is represented by several individual members, from one or more organisations, and these people are involved in different aspects of the JPI including management groups, working groups and advisory boards.

1.2. Governance structure of the JPI-MYBL

Two management groups and two advisory boards manage and oversee the work of the JPI-MYBL. The Steering Committee (SC) is comprised of 13 individuals, representing six member states. The SC is responsible for the day-to-day management of the JPI as a whole. Through its chair and two vice-chairs, the SC prepares and presents proposals and actions to the JPI’s General Assembly (GA). The GA is the main decision making body for the JPI and comprises 56 delegates, from 15 member states. Currently Turkey and Croatia are not represented on the GA. The GA makes decisions about the policy, strategy, implementation and management of the JPI and each country may nominate one individual to act as its voting member.

The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) advises the GA on its strategic and implementation plans and provides targeted scientific advice and input on JPI activities including the development and implementation of the SRA, funding calls, conferences, workshops and all relevant JPI

documents. The SAB has played a central role in the development of the SRA and in co-ordinating the activities of the five scientific Working Groups (see below). The SAB currently includes 32 individuals with specific scientific/research expertise from 10 countries, including the 10 members who comprise the SAB Secretariat. The Secretariat supports the functioning of the SAB (meetings, agendas, minutes, reporting requirements) and coordinates contact and liaison between members of the SAB and between the SAB and other JPI bodies, including the GA. The SAB Chair and a representative of the Secretariat are members of the GA, but do not have voting rights.

The Societal Advisory Board (SOAB) advises the GA on the societal dimensions and challenges of demographic change and like the SAB, provides specific input and advice on JPI strategy, dissemination and implementation activities. At present, the SOAB comprises 34 members, of whom seven form the Secretariat (whose function is the same as for the SAB). Current members of the SOAB include representatives of European-level organisations or networks whose interests are of particular significance to the issue of demographic change. The SOAB Chair and a representative of the Secretariat are members of the GA meeting, but do not have voting rights.

In addition to the SC, GA, SAB and SOAB, five scientific Working Groups were convened, comprising nominated national experts. Each group, through its Chair, and in partnership with the SAB, has taken responsibility for reporting on one of the following thematic areas as part of the development of the Strategic Research Agenda:

- Health and performance
- Social systems and welfare
- Work and productivity
- Education and learning
- Housing, urban and rural development.

1.3. The J-AGE 1 project and the role of Work Package 6

In 2012, a group of nine JPI-MYBL state members secured funding, through the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme, for a project to coordinate and support the early implementation of the JPI-MYBL. Known as J-AGE 1¹, the project has supported the overall management of the JPI from September 2012 up to the end of February 2015², through a series of six work packages (WPs):

- WP 1 - Management and coordination
- WP 2 – Development of the SRA
- WP 3 – Mapping of national programmes and foresight activities
- WP 4 – Implementation of the SRA through joint activities of JPI Member States
- WP 5 – Communication and dissemination of the JPI and its results

¹ And now comprising 10 member states.

² J-AGE 2 commences on 1st March 2015 and will support further implementation of the JPI-MYBL through an additional set of six work packages including: coordination, implementation, alignment, SRA updating, dissemination and evaluation.

- WP 6 – Monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of the JPI-MYBL.

The United Kingdom’s Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) led WP 6 and as part of its remit, developed two sets of evaluation indicators and conducted two annual monitoring and evaluation exercises, the first at 12 months and the second at 24 months. In addition, the ESRC was committed to commissioning a first external evaluation of the JPI-MYBL at the end of J-AGE 1, to examine the progress of the JPI towards its stated aims. The report presented here is a response to the ESRC’s specification for this first external evaluation.

1.4. Existing JPI monitoring and evaluation indicators

In its role as lead for WP 6, the ESRC has developed two sets of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the JPI. Type A indicators focus on the impact of the JPI on the research system – i.e. its effect on European and national research programming, research policy and funding. Type B indicators focus on the impact of the JPI on wider society – i.e. its effect on societal and scientific thinking and actions. The ESRC has categorised these Type A and Type B indicators according to the information they provide to the process of monitoring and evaluation:

- Input indicators describe the resources used for the implementation of JPI-MYBL (e.g. the amount of funding, human resources needed for the initiative and the contribution of members to initiatives and governance)
- Process indicators measure the activities which the JPI uses to deliver its business
- Output indicators measure the knowledge and added value directly produced due to JPI-MYBL activities (e.g. activities related to the implementation of the SRA)
- Outcome indicators measure the initial results of the JPI and are less tangible than outputs (e.g. increased amounts of research funding and awareness raising within the stakeholder community)
- Impact indicators measure the long-term socio-economic changes of the JPI and the activities that it delivers (e.g. the increase in quality of life for older people or changes in national policy).

Deliverable D6.2 submitted on 20th March 2014 sets out the modified Type A indicators and a set of Type B indicators which are currently in use for monitoring and evaluation purposes across the JPI-MYBL. The D6.2 document also specifies at what point in the JPI and J-AGE process the individual indicators are to be measured. With reference to this document, only the following Type A indicators are relevant to this first external evaluation:

Table 1: Type A input indicators relevant to the first external evaluation

Indicator code	Intention	Success Criteria	Indicator
A1	JPI MYBL meets expectations of MYBL member countries.	100% of members are satisfied with the goals and objectives of JPI MYBL as described in the SRA.	Attitude of JPI members towards JPI MYBL goals and objectives (A1) as described in SRA.
A2	Support for the JPI by its members.	All member states make a significant 'in kind' contribution to the JPI process.	Level of non-funded staff resource contributed to the activities of the JPI (A2).
A3	Implementation of SRA for JPI MYBL.	100% of member countries participate in SRA implementation planning activities and/or sub-groups.	Participation grade of member states in JPI MYBL in SRA implementation planning activities and/or sub-groups (A3).
A17	JPI has adequate and functional structures and procedures.	100% of GA, SAB, SOAB members agree.	Terms of reference (ToR) are considered adequate by GA, SAB and SOAB. decision making follows the ToR and is satisfactory. (A17).
A18	Adequate Interaction mechanism between GA – SOAB.	2/3 of members agree.	GA satisfied with interaction with SOAB. SOAB satisfied with interaction with GA (A18).

Table 2: Type A process indicators relevant to the first external evaluation

Indicator code	Intention	Success Criteria	Indicator
A4	Joint activities.	75% of members participate in funding 'fast-track' activities.	Number of JPI members contributing funds to 'fast-track' activities (A4).
A5		The launch of two joint activities within the J-AGE funding period that contribute to the implementation of the JPI MYBL SRA.	The number of new joint activities (A5).
A6		The processes developed for collaborative funding within the JPI are harmonised, simplified and have a low administrative cost.	Members find it as easy and cost effective to collaborate through the JPI as they do to fund their own research directly (A6).

Table 3: Type A output indicators relevant to the first external evaluation

Indicator code	Intention	Success Criteria	Indicator
A7	Increased coordination between JPI member states.	JPI MYBL has influenced the national focus of research funding on demographic change within and beyond organisations represented in the JPI.	National research funding priorities have been adapted as a result of JPI MYBL and the priorities in the JPI MYBL SRA (A7).
A8		Alignment of member countries' national programmes due to JPI MYBL.	Alignment of national research funding programmes (A8).
A9		JPI MYBL has influenced national funding policies in terms of e.g. innovative new funding concepts.	National research funding policies have been influenced as a result of JPI MYBL and the activities of the JPI (A9).
A10		Joint activities demonstrate the effective inclusion of a broad range of stakeholders Input of SOAB is taken into account.	Joint activities reflect the input made by non-academic stakeholders (A10).

Table 4: Type A outcome indicators relevant to the first external evaluation

Indicator code	Intention	Success Criteria	Indicator
A11	Increased awareness of demographic change and ageing related research by European non-academic stakeholders.	European stakeholders engaged in JPI MYBL have increased their awareness of demographic change and ageing research either through JPI dissemination activities or involvement in JPI activities.	Awareness of and engagement in demographic change and ageing research activities amongst non-academic stakeholders as a result of JPI activity (A11).
A12	Increase the amount of research funding.	The total amount of research funding for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members has increased taking into account the difference in national funding systems.	The total amount of funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members (A12).

A13	Increase the ease with which international co-ordinated activities can occur in the field of demographic and ageing related research.	It is administratively efficient for JPI members, and potentially other research funders, to collaborate.	The processes developed under the JPI (A6) can be used for activities and partners beyond those of the JPI (A13).
A19	Closer connectivity between national and EU funding activities.	EU research policy and specific research activities, such as H2020, ERA-nets and other JPIs are shaped by the influence of the JPI.	EU research activities reflect the research priorities of the JPI MYBL (A19).

It is important to note that data are not yet available in relation to Type A outcome indicator A20, Type A impact indicators A14, A15 and A16, and to all Type B indicators. These measures are thus outside the scope of the first external evaluation. They will, however, be considered as part of the second and final evaluation to take place towards the end of the J-AGE 2 project.

1.5. Aim and objectives of the first external evaluation

The aim of the first external evaluation was to examine the progress of the JPI-MYBL towards its stated aims. Three key objectives, linked to the evaluation indicators outlined above, guided the development of the methodology for data collection and analysis:

- To explore the effectiveness of the structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL (Type A input indicators A1, A2, A3, A17 and A18)
- To examine the activities and outputs of the JPI-MYBL, with particular reference to the development and dissemination of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), the two fast-track activities and the first call (Type A process indicators A4, A5, A6 and output indicators A7, A8, A9 and A10)
- To consider the outcomes of the JPI-MYBL to date, in terms of its impact on:
 - awareness of demographic change and ageing related research by European stakeholders (A11)
 - the amount of research funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members (A12)
 - additional international collaboration and coordination (A13)
 - EU agenda setting (A19).

2. Methodology

The ESRC drew up a specification for the first external evaluation which set out the expected methods, data sources and scope of fieldwork to be conducted. Working to the remit of this specification, the first external evaluation took place over eight weeks, from Monday 19th January to Friday 13th March. There were three main phases of work, as follows:

2.1. Project set-up and review of relevant JPI documents

This involved liaison with the ESRC to discuss and agree: contract and scope of the evaluation, key documents and stakeholders, any ethical issues, access to data sources and contact information for participants, data security arrangements, endorsement documents, interview topic guide, and participant information/consent agreements.

2.2. Interviews with key stakeholders involved in JPI-MYBL

The ESRC supplied a spreadsheet with contact details of all those involved in the JPI, their national and organisational affiliations and their membership of different JPI management and working groups. From this, a sample of 28 participants was drawn up, with the aim of conducting telephone interviews with up to 20 individuals involved in the management and delivery of the JPI-MYBL. The sample was selected to include, where possible, all countries involved in the JPI, a range of job designations and members from the following JPI affiliations: the General Assembly (GA), the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB), the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB), the Task Force, and a number of stakeholders taking part in fast-track activities.

Potential interviewees were contacted by email in the first instance to arrange a time for the interview to take place. They were asked to read a short information sheet and to complete a consent form to indicate they understood the nature of the evaluation, the uses of the data, and their right to withdraw from the evaluation at any time. Each interviewee was also sent an endorsement letter for the study from the ESRC. Please see Annex A for an example of the approach email, information and consent materials used with respondents.

Eighteen positive responses to take part in an interview were received and 16 interviews involving 17 people were conducted in total. This included 14 telephone interviews of around 30 to 40 minutes, one face-to-face interview of around 45 minutes with two participants and one interview conducted by email correspondence. One telephone interview was booked, but the interviewee was subsequently unavailable when called.

Those interviewed included:

- Representatives from 12 countries: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom
- Five members of the Steering Committee
- Twelve members of the General Assembly

- Six members of the Scientific Advisory Board
- Five members of the Societal Advisory Board
- Eight members of J-AGE 1
- Two people contributing to the first fast-track activity on data mapping
- Three people who took part in the second fast-track activity on understanding the employment of older workers.

Interview questions were formulated in collaboration with the ESRC and covered the following main topics:

- Respondents' roles on the JPI and the work and groups they had been involved with
- The extent of progress made against the aims of the JPI to date
- The impact of J-AGE project funding
- Effectiveness of the governance and management of the JPI, with particular regard to communication and decision making
- Effectiveness of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB)
- Effectiveness of communication between different JPI groups.
- Comments on the content, development and dissemination of JPI outputs, including the two fast-track activities, the first call and the SRA
- Engagement with stakeholders including dissemination and accessibility of JPI outputs
- Impact of the JPI on research, policy and practice in their own country.
- Main successes and main weaknesses of the JPI to date
- The added value of the JPI to national and European policy, practice and research on demographic change
- Anything else they would like to say about the effectiveness and impact of the JPI More Years, Better Lives.

Please see Annexes B and C for examples of the topic guides used with interviewees. With consent, each verbal interview was recorded digitally and transferred securely (using AES 256 encryption) to a transcriber (who was briefed and asked to sign a confidentiality agreement relating to this specific project) via a shared, secure storage area.

2.3. Analysis and reporting

The qualitative data emanating from the transcribed interviews were analysed thematically, with reference to the aim and objectives for the evaluation. Following feedback from interviewees in response to the consent form, a decision was made to anonymise all interview data and to take steps to ensure that no individual, organisation or JPI member state could be identified in the final report. All quotations used in the report have been edited to ensure that participants' identities remain anonymous.

3. Structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL: findings and discussion

In this chapter we will explore the effectiveness of the structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL (Type A input indicators A1, A2, A3, A17 and A18), paying particular attention to the roles of the General Assembly (GA), the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) and the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB) and the effectiveness of decision making and communication between and within these groups.

The second internal monitoring and evaluation process, undertaken by the ESRC between June and August 2014 with a deliverable (D6.4) submitted in September 2014, collected questionnaire data from GA members. The ESRC found that the following Type A input indicators had been met in full and no further action was needed:

- A1: All members surveyed were satisfied with the goals and objectives of JPI-MYBL as described in the SRA.
- A2: All countries participating in the JPI process were making a significant 'in kind' contribution in terms of non-funded staff resource.
- A3: All JPI members were involved in JPI activities and/or sub-groups.

However, findings relating to input indicators A4 and A5 were less positive and highlighted the following areas where the JPI still needed to direct attention:

- A17: Terms of reference for the GA, SAB and SOAB were not felt to be sufficiently functional and the decision making processes for these groups were largely described as inadequate.
- A18: Not all of the 14 GA members surveyed agreed that there was adequate interaction between the GA and the SOAB. Two felt strongly that interaction was inadequate and a further six were uncertain. The findings also showed that a number of people were unclear about the roles of the different JPI bodies.

3.1. Effectiveness of the JPI's governance structures

The results of the first external evaluation largely echo the earlier findings of Deliverable D6.4. The majority of those interviewed still felt that there were problems that needed to be addressed in terms of the effectiveness of the governance structures of the JPI, particularly with regard to communication and decision making.

It is worth noting, however, that two people spoke very positively about the existing governance structures:

As a member of the SOAB, the governance, the organisation, the announcement of the activities so far has been very, very good. The SOAB and the SAB are run by efficient persons, and all the communications received by email on the activities of the SOAB and the JPI were always clear and full of details and understandable. So I think that from a management point of view it has been very efficient.

One of these 'positive' JPI members highlighted that the replacement of the earlier Troika, by a larger Steering Committee³, was a helpful step. He felt that this decision was the result of useful and extensive discussion and that no further changes or adjustments were necessary to governance structures at this point:

In terms of governance and communication, you know, at one point there were discussions around this entity called the Troika, and so through discussions new terms of reference were written in order to create a Steering Committee. These discussions are sane and positive at the General Assembly and a decision was taken, so I'm happy.

Several people felt that communication across the JPI worked well, but that decision making processes and structures were less adequate, particularly in terms of the clarity of decision making during GA meetings. Some respondents felt that discussions about decisions to be made and the agreed actions were sometimes poorly presented and recorded.

Around communication it's OK. Around decision making sometimes it's a bit messy. I think it would help to stick to the decisions made. Because sometimes we have a governance document which says that the GA decides on this, and then we move on. And then somewhere between deciding and moving on, the course changes. So that's a little bit annoying.

It is often very unclear what we are doing; are we taking a decision, are we discussing, is this a point of information? So I think that comments, discussion and decision, and vice versa, it's poorly prepared, so that we have to do a lot of groundwork. In my opinion the Troika should do that before the meetings and present something to the General Assembly for decision, or discussion, or whatever.

There was also some confusion about the role of the GA and the role of the Steering Committee in terms of decision making: people wanted to know which decisions get made where, and how? And who, or which JPI body, has the mandate for implementing decisions made during meetings and ensuring that actions are followed through? These concerns and confusion were held by JPI members from all groups and at all levels.

The Steering Committee was a bit ineffective. I know that it's difficult to steer such an initiative. But it should be more about the General Assembly programme, or those programme holders. So maybe that would be a good idea to start with in future.

But General Assembly actually becomes too operational, too little happens between meetings, and it's not clear how the General Assembly adds value to positions – to processes. It has to do partly with the fact that people come from very different types

³ Changes to the JPI-MYBL governance structure were adopted in the May 2014 General Assembly meeting in Palermo and were followed up through election of further members to the new Steering Committee in November 2014 when the General Assembly met in Rome.

of organisations around the table, but there is something about the structure, and I think what this JPI is lacking is a secretariat that's given the mandate and power to actually drive the processes forward. And preferably in conjunction with one nation that takes responsibility for bringing things forward.

Some respondents expressed frustration at the amount of time spent on seemingly minor input and process decisions, rather than the business of delivering the JPI.

Decision making ... there's a lot of process stuff that needs to be dealt with. And sometimes it's frustrating that we spend relatively little time getting to the substance of the agenda.

A few people also commented that the speed of decision making across the JPI had been slow and insufficiently coordinated, which in turn had inhibited the prompt actions needed to progress key activities such as the development of the SRA and the first call.

Well I suppose with that process, as with many other processes in the JPI and J-AGE, they would need to be coordinated better and planned better. It was a little ad hoc at times. And sometimes I feel decisions are not made quick enough to change the route of how things are going.

Amongst some JPI members there was a lack of understanding and clarity regarding how the secretariat functions of the GA, SAB and SOAB were organised and financed. This appeared to be fuelling on-going confusion, and some concerns about how the secretariats would be funded and implemented from March 2015 onwards.

The minutes are not always very good. It depends. I think they're going to be worse. Because in the old part, the JPI secretariat wrote the minutes, so those were quite OK. And then we moved onto a more 'in kind' procedure, so now the minutes are made by the host country organising the meeting. So we're going to have different kinds of minutes. So I think we're going to need to find a way of doing it.

As mentioned above, a small number of members felt that communication across the JPI was adequate and mostly effective. However, the majority of those interviewed raised issues relating to communication that were less positive. These included voluminous and inefficient use of email communication; reliance on email attachments for sharing and commenting on documents, rather than the use of shared file space; and insufficient use of the website to keep members updated about key events, dates of JPI meetings and other JPI business and activities.

So I think that communication is the weakest point in this initiative. I think maybe it's caused by a lack of clear procedures; who should communicate on which level, so who should be invited to, let's say, email communications. Sometimes you receive 20 different messages from national delegates and I really have the feeling it's more confusing than effective.

For instance, sometimes I looked at the website of the JPI and it was not updated on the activities. So I didn't know if the GA was still working, or the Strategic Research Agenda was already drafted. So also exploiting the website more would be helpful.

3.2. Roles and effectiveness of the SAB and SOAB

The vast majority of JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation commented very favourably on the effectiveness of the work of the SAB and SOAB. Both advisory boards were felt to have made a strong contribution to the work of the JPI overall. The important role played by both advisory boards in developing the SRA and in commenting on other JPI processes and outputs was highlighted by a large number of JPI members interviewed.

The Scientific Advisory Board was really, very effective in terms of that research agenda.

I really appreciate the SOAB, it's important, especially for this topic, demographic change. We really need to have input from societal organisations, and I'm quite happy to have so many different European umbrella organisations in the SOAB. That's something special for our JPI that they have this strong voice.

A few JPI members admitted that they were less clear about the role of SOAB and felt that it was possibly less influential in terms of its impact on the GA and JPI overall than the SAB had been to date.

We've heard very little from the Societal Advisory Board. You need to work on the composition of that group, I think, and again you need perhaps one or two people in that group who are willing to take a little bit more of a role. It's very much in the back seat, it seems. It should really be parallel with the Scientific Advisory Board, but at the moment it's something you consult at the very end.

There was some discussion about the current composition of the SAB and SOAB in terms of their membership and the extent to which this might usefully evolve or change over the course of J-AGE 2.

I think that the Scientific Advisory Board should evolve. It was a very large board, and it was important because it was to create not only a place to receive advice, but also a kind of buy-in process where a lot of people were made aware of the JPI-MYBL. So that was a good strategy, but now you don't need that many people.

In terms of the SOAB, I do think it's a slightly odd group of organisations. It is essentially those interests who have a European coordinating body of some kind, and it doesn't include those interests that don't have a European coordinating body, or those where the European coordinating body isn't interested. So you end up with a perfectly legitimate, interesting area having a seat, but there are some other, major areas where nobody is represented.

However, one JPI member pointed out that any reconstitution of the SAB or SOAB should be handled with care and sensitivity by the GA and J-AGE 2, especially given the amount of time and resources already committed to the JPI by existing members of the two advisory boards.

This JPI member referred to the process of moving from the five thematic working groups to the establishment of the SAB and highlighted that some members of the disbanded working groups had found this a very difficult process.

3.3. Effectiveness of interaction between the GA and the two advisory groups

There were mixed views regarding communication and interaction between the GA and the SAB and SOAB. A few JPI members felt it worked well, but the majority raised concerns. Again, this finding concurs with that of the second internal monitoring and evaluation process conducted by the ESRC between June and August 2014 and documented in Deliverable D6.4. Issues highlighted by interviewees for the first external evaluation related to a general lack of clarity about how SAB and SOAB can best influence and feed into the on-going business of the JPI, through the General Assembly and Steering Committee.

Some members felt that more attention to the profile and visibility of the SAB and SOAB was needed across the JPI, so that the importance and potential of their roles and contributions were not ignored or simply overlooked.

The advisory boards are very willing to help with the expertise, and they do a lot, and they've made the SRA, and they put their time in it, they provide advice. But they feel that when it comes to the General Assembly, nothing is done with it. It is still not clear if the General Assembly understands the role of the advisory boards.

Although information and guidance documents have been drafted to define the nature and extent of the advisory roles of the SAB and SOAB, it appeared that not all JPI members were aware of these documents. Interestingly, even those people who were aware of the documents suggested that the guidance could be clearer and more effectively communicated in terms of its parameters.

I think clarity would be nice. Because we have all these documents stating how they should work together, and it would be nice if for once we would be able to stick to it.

One person pointed out that significant discussions and arguments about key JPI issues (for example the pooling of financial resources) often took place at SAB and SOAB level and sometimes led to the development of potential strategies for implementation. However, current structures and mechanisms made it difficult for these important developments to be adequately fed back to the GA, where decisions about such issues are ultimately made.

Actually that's all done at the level of the General Assembly, so people in the SAB, and among the stakeholders, feel slightly excluded. Some of the stakeholders of course are on the General Assembly, but we feel slightly disconnected from that process.

Several others commented on the lack of an agenda item for regular, verbal feedback from the SAB and SOAB chairs, to the General Assembly. In particular, several JPI members highlighted the lack of a direct link between the GA and the SOAB as particularly problematic in terms of potentially overlooking the contribution made by the SOAB.

The SOAB works mostly alone or sometimes in common with the Scientific Advisory Board. But looking at the General Assembly, SOAB was represented just by the chair, or a representative: there were no joint meetings, or immediate communication of activities from one body or the other one.

People interviewed for the first external evaluation talked about a need for improved feedback mechanisms between the General Assembly to the advisory groups and vice versa. GA members expressed a wish for more information about SAB and SOAB meetings, their agenda items and issues for discussion; whilst SAB and SOAB members were asking for clearer information and feedback in advance of and following GA meetings.

Several people also commented that there was sometimes a degree of confusion about the roles of individual JPI members in terms of representing the SAB or SOAB position, the position of their own country, or their own personal position to the GA and the wider JPI. There were suggestions for further guidance on this issue, alongside a need for increased national coordination within some countries.

Sometimes it's not clear to me if somebody speaks as a representative of the SAB or is it just a personal view? We also have a chair and a vice-chair, and I expect that when the SAB communicates to the General Assembly this should be feedback that is the majority decision of the whole SAB.

But I mean really we should be having conference conversations [at national level] to try and make sure that everybody is fully apprised of what's going on. And secondly that we're speaking from the same script. In terms of governance, at national level there should be more coordination.

3.4. Summary: To what extent have improvements been made to the JPI's functional structures and procedures and in terms of interaction between the General Assembly and the advisory boards?

This chapter has explored the effectiveness of the structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL, paying particular attention to the roles of the General Assembly (GA), the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) and the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB) and the effectiveness of decision making and communication between and within these groups. With reference to the relevant Type A input indicators, the findings of the first external evaluation confirm that:

- Although much has been achieved in terms of effective governance and organisation, there are still concerns relating to the adequacy of the JPI's functional structures and procedures, particularly in terms of communication and decision making processes (input indicator A17). It is assessed therefore that this indicator remains partly achieved.
- It still appears that there is inadequate interaction between the GA and the SOAB and many JPI members remain unclear about the roles and remits of the different JPI

bodies (input indicator A18). To date therefore, this indicator also remains partly achieved.

4. Activities and outputs of the JPI-MYBL: findings and discussion

This chapter will examine the activities and outputs of the JPI-MYBL, with particular reference to the development and dissemination of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), the two fast-track activities and the first transnational funding call (Type A process indicators A4, A5, A6 and output indicators A7, A8, A9 and A10).

The second internal monitoring and evaluation process, undertaken by the ESRC between June and August 2014 (Deliverable D6.4) documented progress in relation to the above indicators and found that the following Type A process indicators had been met in full and no further action was needed:

- A4: Overall, 75% of JPI member states were involved in a fast-track activity, thus meeting the required success criteria for this indicator. This included 78% involvement in the fast-track Data Project and 73% involvement in the fast-track project on Understanding Employment Participation of Older Workers.
- A5: Two new joint activities (the two fast-track projects) were launched within the J-AGE 1 funding period, with a third (the first funding call) in progress, thus meeting the success criteria for this indicator.

However, in terms of the inclusion of non-academic stakeholders in the above joint activities, the GA members surveyed by the ESRC felt that:

- A10: Joint activities undertaken up to June 2014 had not adequately involved a broad range of non-academic stakeholders and that the input of the SOAB had not yet been fully taken into account.

Findings relating to the remaining Type A process and output indicators suggested that the following significant work had yet to be achieved across the JPI:

- A6: Eight of the 14 GA members surveyed felt that the processes developed for collaborative funding within the JPI have not yet made it as easy and cost effective to collaborate through the JPI as to fund research directly in their own countries.
- A7: Almost all of the 14 GA members surveyed believed that the JPI-MYBL had not yet influenced the national research funding priorities for demographic change within and beyond organisations represented in the JPI.
- A8: There was partial agreement amongst the GA members surveyed by the ESRC that their countries' national research funding programmes were now aligned with the JPI-MYBL's priorities as described in the SRA, as a result of national involvement in the JPI.

- A9: Almost all of the GA members surveyed believed that JPI activities and outputs had not yet influenced their countries' national research funding policies relating to demographic change.

With reference to JPI documents and the interview data collected for the first external evaluation, we will now assess how far the **process** of the various joint activities has led to the intended **output** of increased coordination between JPI member states and whether there has been any significant progress since the ESRC's second internal monitoring and evaluation process in 2014.

4.1. The development of a Strategic Research Agenda for the JPI-MYBL

The JPI-MYBL's Strategic Research Agenda⁴ (SRA) was published in April 2014, following a launch event in Brussels attended by invited JPI members, researchers and stakeholders, representatives from the European Commission and members of the European Parliament. Without exception, all of the JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation described the SRA as a central and well-crafted document. They felt that the development and publication of the SRA was a crucial milestone for the JPI and it provided documented agreement of the key research issues and questions relating to demographic change in Europe.

The most important milestone for us was to develop this European Strategic Research Agenda. Because it's a kind of consensus document, it's a good starting point for all joint activities which will follow right now. And I think it's an excellent document.

It is worth noting that the development, drafting and delivery of the SRA involved a lengthy and complex process, taking nearly two years to achieve. Five scientific Working Groups were convened at the start of the JPI, comprising nominated national experts. Each group, through its Chair, and in partnership with the SAB, was given responsibility for reporting on one of five thematic areas as part of the development of the SRA. The resulting reports were submitted to the SAB and the original plan had been to edit these five documents into one substantive Strategic Research Agenda for the JPI as a whole. However, this proved to be an unworkable premise, and the first draft of the SRA, submitted in May 2013, was not felt to be fit for purpose.

A small editorial group was convened, comprising five members of the SAB and the chair of the SOAB. Over the next four months this group worked on the second draft of the SRA which was presented for comment and consultation to the two advisory groups in early September 2013. The editorial group was fortunate in that one of its members was a not only a native English speaker, but also had time, expertise and experience needed to coordinate the development and updating of the draft SRA over this period. Comments and input from the SAB and SOAB were incorporated to a third draft of the SRA which was discussed and approved by the GA in late September 2013.

⁴ <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/about/documents/full-version-of-sra>

The third draft SRA was then circulated for national consultation to all JPI member states and again to the SAB and SOAB. The 24-month project report from J-AGE⁵ states that the objective of the national consultations was to stimulate discussion amongst national stakeholders, to detect omissions in the SRA and to mobilise support for the SRA. The J-AGE report explains that it was important that the final draft SRA was informed by inputs and ideas from a broad base of national stakeholders. National responses were discussed at a joint meeting of SAB and SOAB in November 2013 and the meeting resulted in the agreement of a 'pre-final' version of the SRA which was circulated for further consultation to the two advisory groups. In January 2014, the pre-final version was approved by the GA and the final text was made available for publication in April 2014.

Many of the JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation bore witness to the complex and detailed process of drafting, consultation and re-drafting that underpinned the development of the SRA. It was universally agreed that despite the length of this process, it was a necessary and effective way of reaching agreement and commitment to the key research issues from the majority of JPI members. The resulting final draft of the SRA was seen as a very successful document which was clear, comprehensive and innovative in its approach to synthesising key themes and issues.

The research agenda was a careful process of development, with lots of opportunity for consultation, both with the research community and other stakeholders. I saw several different drafts of that document, and I'm very impressed with the final product. It's comprehensive, it sets out some exciting directions for research in this area, so I think that's been maybe the strongest outcome of the JPI so far.

Several people made the point that the SRA development process itself was the catalyst for discussion and coordination that enabled JPI members to reach a common understanding and shared vocabulary for talking about demographic change in a truly multi-disciplinary way.

The development of the Strategic Research Agenda was quite a lengthy process, and actually reaching consensus around some of those issues was of course a challenge, but it's there, and I think it's a document most members of the JPI are proud of.

It was also highlighted that ensuring sign-up and commitment to a joint agenda from such a large and diverse group of different countries was also a significant success in its own right.

It's quite an achievement to get so many countries to stand behind it. It's a significant achievement in itself.

Despite extensive consultation, there appeared to be some residual confusion about the scope of the SRA, the inclusion/exclusion of some research topics, and about the overall prioritisation of the 11 key topics for the agenda as a whole. However, given the scale of the task, this was likely to be an inevitable outcome.

It's now becoming clear that although lots of people signed up for the agenda, they weren't entirely clear what it was they were signing up to, and so people think that

⁵ Deliverable D1.7: J-AGE 24 month Activity and Financial Report

things are there that aren't there, and that things are not there that are there, and we are now seeing a problem with that.

In terms of next steps for the JPI, the SRA was seen as offering a clear and strong foundation for further joint activities by members and on-going coordination and alignment of national research programmes.

It is obviously a very broad research agenda, and I think the challenge now will be in the development of an implementation plan for the Strategic Research Agenda. Which will need to happen soon, so that we actually have a clear work programme of how we're going to do some of this work around alignment and joint activities, which will happen under J-AGE 2.

Indeed, JPI members explained that the SRA is **the** key starting point for the next steps of J-AGE 2 in terms of implementation and alignment, and it will be important for the GA to make clear and prompt decisions from here on, that fully reflect the research priorities agreed through the SRA.

We did spell out 11 possible topics. But the problem is that the General Assembly hasn't made strong decisions. Because within J-AGE 2 we have agreed that we're going to do three joint actions. So the General Assembly has to decide which of the eleven research questions we're going to implement.

4.2. The development of two fast-track activities

Two fast-track joint activities have been launched and completed within the J-AGE 1 funding period. Although co-ordinated by the JPI through its members, neither of these activities was supported by J-AGE funding: individual countries financed the input of their nominated national experts, with some states making additional financial contributions towards the coordination of the joint work, or providing extra support and resources in in-kind.

The first fast-track activity, the data mapping project⁶, aimed to map data sources on ageing at European and national levels across 12 countries in order to provide analysis of the current data infrastructure in this field. Coordinated by JPI members from Germany and funded by Sweden, work started in April 2013 and was completed in autumn 2013. Individual country experts were commissioned by their governments, through the JPI, to produce country reports mapping key demographic issues and policy concerns, current data sources for the study of ageing, and gaps and challenges. Each country expert also compiled a list of available databases of relevance to research and policy making in an ageing context. A total of 337 national and European-wide data sources were described and evaluated by country experts. The catalogue of databases was made available via a specifically designed website, along with individual country reports and an additional synthesis report of the findings of the project as a whole.

The second fast-track activity, understanding employment participation of older workers, aimed to critically review research findings, approaches and methodologies and to define

⁶ <http://www.jpi-dataproject.eu>

research needs and gaps in the field of employment participation at higher working age. It was a direct response to a key and urgent need for further analysis on this topic, identified by the SRA, in order to inform the development of the first call. From May 2014 to December 2014, an interdisciplinary group of 46 researchers from 10 European countries and Canada collected and analysed recent research evidence by topic and country, culminating in the publication and launch of a final report⁷ in February 2015. Individual researchers were supported by their own country governments for their input to the joint activity, which was coordinated by JPI members from Germany.

JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation were asked to comment on the development and dissemination of the two fast-track activities and to summarise how the outputs were being used nationally. Comments received highlighted the success of the two fast-track projects, particularly in terms of their cost-efficiency (low cost of high input from country experts).

One reason the fast tracks are so effective is you get very committed academics working in their own field, who think it's worth putting in far more time than they're being paid for to do the work. So we get an awful lot of work for our money out of those.

Let's say, when you look at outputs, the output was quite spectacular for the money that went into it. The one thing I can say about the data project is that it's nice that now in one database you can see all the databases that have anything to do with demographic change. I think our lack of communication is an issue. I think we could have communicated it more widely.

In a similar way to the development of the SRA, many people talked about how the development of the fast-track projects had facilitated discussion and coordination between, and also within, JPI member states. Specifically, the need to develop a shared understanding and common vocabulary in order to pool expertise and knowledge was highlighted.

If you work together with people from other research domains, you really have to define what the exact issue is, and we have to use the same vocabulary. I think this is also an exchange of best practice, or new communication between researcher communities, but of course also for us as policy makers it's interesting to see what other countries are doing. And some of them are quite active. So we can benefit a lot from this exchange of information.

The second fast track, on work and productivity, it was very visible that the 11 countries working together shared the knowledge, they shared their best practice, and now they shared it at the conference with the rest of the communities.

For some countries, this had led to improved understanding and alignment at a national level.

⁷ <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/about/fast-track-projects/understanding-employment/understanding-employment-participation-of-older-workers-creating-a-knowledge-base-for-future-labour-market-challenges>

The data mapping project was our first experience of participation in such a project. We found the range of data sources on ageing at the national and more local level and determined whether there are gaps in the data available. We also found out where is our place among the European countries. We have strengthened cooperation at the local level (among counties and some regions) and began cooperation with neighbouring countries.

A few people also noted that joint activities, such as the two JPI fast-track activities, can be as effective as funding calls in terms of providing the conditions for mapping and knowledge exchange. Indeed it was noted that this type of preliminary work and communication is essential in order for further coordination to take place. From a scientific perspective, JPI members (particularly those who were active researchers in the field of demographic change) talked about the usefulness of the fast-track outputs to the national and European research communities.

The fast- tracks I think are the greatest achievement we've made so far, because the data project has produced – I mean I don't think it's been disseminated, and people aren't sufficiently aware of it - but it has produced a critical review of 300 odd data series for researchers. And it's a really powerful resource for the research community that we haven't had before. The one which has just finished, on employment, I think has produced a useful map of the territory and the issues. But we have got much better information than we had before about how the participating member states are dealing with these questions.

As several of the quotations above have mentioned, there were significant concerns about a perceived lack of effective and on-going dissemination of the outputs of the two fast-track projects. The recent launch event for the second fast-track activity, which was organised and supported by Germany's JPI partners, was highlighted as a notable and successful exception. Overall, JPI members interviewed felt there was potential for much more to be done with the fast-track outputs.

The database could have been disseminated better. I don't know about all countries, but I think it's a little underused. I think that the working life has been more publicised. Now that's more recent, so we are still waiting to see what will be the outcome.

4.3. Development of the first funding call

The development and implementation of transnational funding calls is an integral part of the core business of a Joint Programming Initiative. Work on the development of the JPI-MYBL's first funding call started in spring 2014 and is still on-going (March 2015). To date, 13 countries have made tentative initial funding commitments, ranging from 250,000 Euros to 1,500,000 Euros per country, with an estimated minimum total budget expected to be in the region of 8,000,000 Euros. There are two working groups involved in the development of the first funding call. A group of 19 individual JPI members are working on the call-specific scientific text, whilst a parallel group of representatives from countries involved in the funding of the call are developing the governance, timetabling and assessment procedures. J-AGE Work Package 4 (led by Spain) is coordinating the overall work on the first call

documentation including consultation with the GA, SAB and SOAB. Currently, the objective of the call is stated as follows:

The objective of this call is to support innovative and interdisciplinary research across sectors and Government departments into drivers and constraints related to the implications for older workers(50+) of the current shift towards extending working life; the emergence of a new labour market and its interactions with health, wellbeing and intergenerational equity.⁸

Bearing in mind that work on this joint activity is still very much in progress, we asked JPI members to comment on the content and development of the first call and to highlight any issues that they felt were pertinent. The ESRC's second internal monitoring and evaluation process in 2014 had found that there was dissatisfaction with the speed of development of the first call. This was certainly an issue that was reiterated by many of those interviewed for the first external evaluation.

I think that so far the impact has been limited for the fact that the JPI has not been able so far to launch first calls for proposals.

I think it has been slower than I had hoped, and I think that decisions were taken at meetings that were not followed up closely. But perhaps I hope too much from international collaboration. I think that really this type of international collaboration must take time, and people must consult with their home agencies. But I think we could have come where we are now at least a half year, perhaps one year faster.

The slow development of the first call meant that in the case of one country, money originally earmarked for the call had now been allocated elsewhere.

[The first call] has taken so much time that we actually spent some of this money we originally thought might go into this, we put that somewhere else, so at the moment we don't have that much funding.

Other concerns related to a lack of information and clarity about the progress of the working groups involved in the first call, and what further consultation, if any, might be expected with the advisory boards.

[From a GA member] It's not clear to me where we are now in the discussion about the call. So it would be great if we could receive some sum-up so I can follow who's participating, where we are. And I'm not sure I understand what the role of the SAB is with regard to the final content of the call. Will they follow what the SAB is proposing, or are there discussions to rearrange the content within this group?

The clarity of the call text was also raised as an issue by many respondents. People were concerned that there had been too much emphasis on the process of implementing a funding call and not enough input on firming up the focus and content of the call text.

⁸ Taken from the draft call text version 3, 20th January 2015.

Actually a lot of what the J-AGE members are interested in, and the secretariat, is the procedural side of the exercise. Which is all very important, but the actual content of the call is not getting as much attention as it really needs.

At the point that we interviewed JPI members, there appeared to be some difficulties in finalising a draft text for wider circulation and there was a strong sense from many that (a) the clarity of the language used in the call text still needed attention; and (b) the focus of the call was not yet adequately explained within the text itself.

But the view was, it's just not sharp enough, and perhaps not securely routed in the SRA.

JPI members thought that there were several reasons for the lack of clarity and focus. Firstly, as mentioned in the quote above, it was felt that the first call was not sufficiently linked to priorities highlighted by the SRA document and the second fast-track activity report on understanding employment participation of older workers. Secondly, it appeared that some of the countries who had committed funding to the call were asking for changes and amendments to the draft text, in order to accommodate their government department's priority areas. Both these factors had meant that compromises to the original aim and objectives of the funding call had been made which were potentially at odds with the multi-disciplinary, alignment and coordination aims of the JPI overall.

There was a degree of acceptance that a more diffuse focus may be an inevitable outcome of the first call, given the complexity of the topic area, and the fact that the JPI involves representatives of countries, government departments and organisations with differing interests and needs.

My observation would be that the process has been difficult, partly because this is an extremely difficult field; it spreads across an enormous number of scientific disciplines that normally don't talk to each other. It's also complicated by the fact that the General Assembly contains people with very different backgrounds.

I think there are some inherent tensions in the JPI. Some countries around the table who have to finance health, can only finance health, and some countries can only finance labour, etc. So you have these structural challenges in the General Assembly in the participating countries, which I think makes it difficult to narrow it down.

Nonetheless, as several people pointed out, a less clearly defined focus will have an impact on the quality and success of the first call, which may bring significant difficulties further down the line, both in terms of managing the process and in terms of attracting relevant and high quality bids.

Obviously the more loosely the call is drafted in the first place, the more silly bids you're going to get. One of my worries is that we get a couple of hundred bids, need three referees for each, and possibly a large selection panel, and we end up possibly with a ranking of bids based on scientific quality, which is very proper, but not necessarily on the questions that matter. So the more loosely it's drafted, the more risk there is that we end up funding half a dozen scientifically very high status proposals, but we don't address the policy questions that the SRA was about.

There were also comments that the quality of the first call may be further affected by the more recent pressure to complete the process within the J-AGE 1 funding period.

So there's more work to be done. But we are up against a real problem on timing, because of the end of J-AGE1 and the beginning of J-AGE 2. So there's an enormous pressure to get this call finished by the end of March, although I think in reality we need a couple more serious meetings to talk about it.

Several JPI members pointed out that the scheduling of the second fast-track activity had not been concurrent with the development of the first call, which meant the link between the two activities was not as strong as it should have been. They highlighted the importance of ensuring any future fast-track projects are more purposefully timed to link with future funding calls where relevant.

If there's to be any more fast-tracks, they need to be scheduled in such a way that they actually inform the second and third calls, which are planned for 2016 and 17. Many of us thought that the whole point in the fast-track was to map the terrain and say, look, these are the big gaps, and these need to be addressed when a first call is made.

Finally, comments were made relating to the overall budget potentially available for funding the first call. Some JPI members expressed frustration that the money available was insufficient for a call of this nature and was not on a par with some of the other JPIs (namely the JPI on Neurodegenerative Disease). There were also concerns (a) about possible inequity between the amounts of funding committed by different countries and a lack of guidance about how to manage this; and (b) that the slow progress of the first call meant that timescales were insufficient for some country representative to obtain adequate funding agreements from their governments.

It doesn't make sense, if we're going to have a genuinely joint programme, if one country says, We'll put in a quarter of a million Euros, and another says, We'll put in ten million Euros. I'm not aware that there's been a discussion about the minimum. I think it is simply what people have volunteered. And it's no good the General Assembly deciding in March 2015 that they want a call in the autumn of 2015 and expecting everybody to have money available. Everybody's committed their money long in advance. You need a three or four year lead time.

A few JPI members interviewed felt that the cumulative effect of concerns outlined above had meant that the first call, and the JPI more generally, had lost some of its status within their national research communities.

We have made a conscious effort not to raise expectations too high in our country about this, because we fear this call is going to be of limited financial scope with a very broad thematic scope, and that's not a very good combination.

There was also a sense that the relatively low budget available for the first call was not reflective of either the research and policy actions needed in the field of demographic

change, or of the work and commitment that had been achieved by JPI members so far. This was a source of great frustration for some.

I think there's a fabulous network of very able and willing scientists, collaborating with stakeholders, I think that's been achieved. But what is happening now is that kind of enthusiasm, that's been very evident for the past, I would say, two and a half years, is beginning to dissipate.

There's a sense that we've done all this work, and actually we're talking about peanuts.

However, a few JPI members who were directly involved in the development of the first call pointed out that it was never the intention for a large amount of funding to be available at this stage: this simply was not the aim of the JPI.

The research community has an unrealistic expectation of what's going to happen. We're not going to be spending large sums of money. People do feel this is a European programme, therefore there must be tens, or hundreds of millions of Euros, and we're all looking forward to bidding. It's not going to be like that. So the calls have to be very sharply focused on really critical questions that nobody is answering.

4.4. Engagement with non-academic stakeholders in the development of JPI-MYBL joint activities

The ESRC's second internal monitoring and evaluation process noted that the GA members surveyed in June 2014 felt that the JPI-MYBL's joint activities had not adequately involved a broad range of non-academic stakeholders and that the input of the SOAB had not yet been fully taken into account. The findings of the first external evaluation are more circumspect, partly due to lack of specific data in relation to this issue.

We asked JPI members to talk about how relationships with relevant stakeholders had been developed. On reflection this question was not sufficiently clear to elicit comparative data from respondents: some people talked about their own efforts in engaging with stakeholders, and others described the work of the JPI as a whole; some people commented on how they had consulted stakeholders during development, and others about disseminating outputs to wider society. It was thus difficult to disaggregate and assess the various strands of description during data analysis. However some key points can usefully be made:

- In terms of JPI engagement with non-academic stakeholders in the development of joint activities, this was implemented primarily through consultation with the membership of the GA and SOAB.
- There was extensive consultation with all stakeholders (academic and non-academic) throughout the development of the SRA, as evidenced by comments from interviewees and also by material submitted as part of the 24-month project report

from J-AGE⁹. The editorial team made efforts to consult with the GA, SAB and SOAB at different points during the development of the SRA. There was also an opportunity for national consultation and guidelines were provided to JPI country representatives for undertaking this task and feeding back comments to the editorial group. The JPI members interviewed agreed that the final output largely reflected the input made by these various stakeholders.

- It is less clear as to the extent and nature of consultation during the development of the two fast-track activities and the first transnational funding call. The 24-month project report from J-AGE cites feedback from SOAB to the draft text of the second fast-track activity report, but there is no evidence of other forms of consultation. JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation were equally unclear about the inclusion of non-academic stakeholders in these joint activities.

This lack of clarity regarding past, present and future stakeholder inclusion is summed up by the following quotation from a SOAB member:

So far I know that dialogue with stakeholders has been developed in the first years of the JPI. I don't know how much these stakeholders have been involved in supporting the implementation of the Strategic Research Agenda. I think that the engagement was mainly focused on increasing awareness about JPI activities, but now, with the Strategic Research Agenda developed and published, I don't know in which way the engagement with the stakeholders is moving forward.

One JPI member explained that a list of non-academic stakeholders had been developed in collaboration with current members of the SOAB and that this had been updated from time to time. She pointed out that some stakeholder groups (namely businesses) were particularly hard to engage and were not well represented on the SOAB. Several people commented that there was no framework for stakeholder inclusion and consultation (with the exception of the national consultation for the SRA) and that more guidance, both at JPI and national level would be helpful. Individual JPI members also suggested that it would be helpful to have some guidance on expectations in terms of their national roles in engaging with stakeholders.

I just wonder what is happening in terms of connecting the JPI and what might flow from it over the next few years with stakeholders. I haven't been called upon to talk to stakeholders. And I'm not sure whether it's part of my remit to actually do that on my own initiative.

Within the context of commenting on stakeholder engagement, the issue of publicising and disseminating the work of the JPI and its current outputs was raised once again. This is an area where JPI members were consistently concerned that more work and input was needed and it will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

4.5. Dissemination and accessibility of JPI outputs to stakeholders

⁹ Deliverable D1.7: J-AGE 24 month Activity and Financial Report

To date, the main published outputs of the JPI are:

- The Strategic Research Agenda¹⁰
- The catalogue of databases and reports relating to the first fast-track activity on Data mapping¹¹
- The report of the critical review from the second fast-track activity on Understanding Participation of Older Workers¹².

All of these outputs are available via the JPI-MYBL website or from a link to the data mapping project website (see footnote 11). Other JPI outputs are listed under the information section of the website¹³ and include additional publications and a searchable database of national research programmes in the field of demographic change¹⁴. In addition, there have been several JPI-run conferences and meetings (see news and events sections of the website¹⁵) which have publicised and disseminated various outputs to national and European stakeholders, including JPI members themselves. GA members responding to the ERSRC's internal evaluation and JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation also gave numerous examples of dissemination to stakeholders at local and national levels. Despite these actions, there was an overwhelming sense from the majority of respondents involved in the first external evaluation that publicity and dissemination activities undertaken within the timescale of J-AGE 1 had been neither sufficiently effective nor adequate.

Well this is something I think this JPI really lacks. The public relations are not so good. So there is wide room for improvement, a big, big thing to do.

As mentioned in previous sections of this report, the consensus amongst interviewees was that none of the JPI's outputs had been disseminated widely or effectively enough. In addition many people thought the main website needed significant updating and improvement and that there was a lack of regular communication summarising key events, dates and actions. Several JPI members thought that a regular newsletter or e-bulletin would help in this respect, as would the opportunity to learn from other JPis via the 'JPis To Co-Work' initiative¹⁶. Some people added that the publication of a regular newsletter would help them to keep national colleagues and networks updated on the work of the JPI and would also provide a means of engaging with non-academic stakeholders.

For instance, if we had a newsletter, I know I could send it to this group of actors of research on ageing. That's something that they would read.

It became clear on talking with JPI members as part of the first external evaluation that a new website and a regular newsletter are part of the work planned for J-AGE 2. However it was also evident that these plans are not known by everyone and indeed several people

¹⁰ <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/about/documents/full-version-of-sra>

¹¹ <http://www.jpi-dataproject.eu/>

¹² <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/about/fast-track-projects/understanding-employment/>

¹³ <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/information>

¹⁴ <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/information/profiles>

¹⁵ <http://www.jp-demographic.eu/news-events/news>

¹⁶ <http://www.jpis2cowork.eu/>

suggested that a dissemination plan for J-AGE 2 had yet to be drafted. This lack of clarity was echoed by comments relating to whose responsibility it was to publicise and disseminate JPI outputs. Some people simply did not know where responsibility for publicity and dissemination lay:

I have no idea. I've done my bit in terms of telling people about this document and how to download it, but I'm not aware that there's been any plan to disseminate.

Others thought that no one organisation, or individual JPI member, was ultimately responsible for publicity of key messages, or planning and implementing the dissemination of outputs:

It's nobody's job to say, here is something really important, let's tell the world.

Yet further others suggested that individual county members should take responsibility for national disseminations (and indeed some countries had already done so, very successfully):

It's really a national responsibility. I have done what I can, and I think that some countries have done a good job, but we cannot just rely on the secretariat to disseminate it. On a European level they have done what they can. But on a national level I think that all of us could do more.

However, in order to undertake effective strategies for national dissemination, JPI members were aware that they may need some support and guidance from the JPI as a whole, and specifically from the GA.

The actual project should have been designed differently, that actually every partner would have their own points for dissemination. I don't think it should be the responsibility of a project, but it should be the responsibility on the GA level, that actually the countries would finance.

As noted earlier, helpful guidance had already been produced for those conducting national consultations on the draft SRA, but it appeared that there was no similar level of advice or guidance relating to national dissemination.

There aren't any sorts of set guidelines, but it has been discussed at the General Assembly. I think it's probably a message that is reinforced from time to time verbally through meetings, rather than there being any specific guidelines.

4.6. Coordination between the JPI and member states

The ESRC's second internal monitoring and evaluation process in 2014 highlighted that evidence of increased coordination, between the JPI and member states was low, as defined by output indicators A7, A8 and A9 as follows:

- JPI-MYBL had not yet influenced national research funding priorities for demographic change within and beyond organisations represented in the JPI (A7).

- Member states' national research funding programmes were not yet aligned with the JPI-MYBL's priorities (A8).
- JPI activities and outputs had not yet influenced member states' national research funding policies relating to demographic change (A9).

The ESRC evaluation report (Deliverable D6.4) had previously asked GA members to give an overall assessment by stating whether they agreed, were undecided or did not agree in relation to statements about each of the above indicators. The first external evaluation was able to explore the issue of increased coordination in more depth with JPI members, through two questions that asked about (a) the JPI's progress in facilitating better national and European coordination of activities relevant to demographic change; and (b) the impact of the JPI on research, policy and practice in members' own countries.

In relation to output indicator A7, evidence from interviewees suggests that for five¹⁷ of the 12 countries represented in the first external evaluation, governmental bodies had made adjustments or adaptations to national funding priorities to better reflect the JPI-MYBL priorities. In addition, JPI members from three countries suggested that it was likely that JPI-MYBL research priorities would have some influence in the near future, but this was not yet apparent. For a further three countries, their national research priorities already reflected those of the JPI, or were sufficiently embedded in existing national policy and funding initiatives that the interviewees did not feel that any further adaptation of their national agenda would be necessary, or fruitful.

Output indicator A9 relates to the question of whether national research funding policies have been influenced as a result of the JPI-MYBL, for instance in terms of innovative new funding concepts. Responses to this issue suggested that the involvement in the JPI had already had an influence on the funding policies of two countries. One country was undecided, whilst in five there had been no notable influence as yet, but this was expected and viewed as a distinct possibility by the JPI members who were interviewed. In three countries, as previously, it was felt that their funding policies in demographic change were already well-established and no further influence was needed at this point.

Regarding the issue of alignment of national research funding programmes with JPI priorities (output indicator A8), representatives from one JPI member state gave examples of how this had already happened in their own country. For seven interviewees, national alignment with the JPI was on the agenda, but had not yet occurred. In three countries, as above, the JPI members interviewed suggested that there was already significant alignment between existing national programmes, and that this pre-dated their involvement in the JPI-MYBL.

Some additional points relating to how best to achieve coordination and alignment were made by JPI members. One person spelt out the importance of ensuring those individuals involved in the JPI were able to communicate with and influence the appropriate decision-making bodies in their home countries:

¹⁷ One JPI member taking part in the first external evaluation felt unable to provide answers to any of the questions about national coordination and alignment of his country's research funding priorities, programmes and policies.

Some partners of this JPI are just sitting in the General Assembly and are not really linked to their ministries, or to national funding institutions. So we really have to get better collaboration with the decision makers in these countries.

Further to this point, several people explained that guidance and input from the JPI would be needed to support and influence alignment at national and political level. The JPI Research Policy Group was already undertaking work with JPI members in this area, but there was acceptance that this type of activity can take many years to bear fruit.

We are moving towards the real aim of our JPI which is the synchronisation and harmonisation of national research programmes. These still cover about 85% to 90% of the research funds throughout Europe in any research area, including demographic changes. We face many obstacles, because it is not easy to penetrate national organisations which plan strategy for the next five to ten years for the different research topics. We need to develop a common policy towards this goal, which we do not have yet. We do have a politically oriented group, in which funding agencies from national research programmes are represented. But we need to find a better way to compel our politicians to speak to each other and to accept the idea that the JPI can be a fruitful source of scientifically valid information for national politicians to develop their national programmes. We need many more years as we are very young.

The role of the European Commission was highlighted with respect to providing support for this type of national political leverage.

We need some help from the Commission. It is important for national political impact to be accompanied by a top-down activity from the Commission, or it will only be partly, or not successful at all. We need the Commission to understand that the JPI can become an extraordinary instrument for the growth of a common, scientific Europe. And that they have to invest money and political power in order to reach this goal.

Finally, it was felt important to recognise that before alignment **between** the JPI and its members could be achieved, it was necessary for alignment and coordination **within** individual countries to be in place.

Alignment issue is not only transnational, it's also national. We have at least ten national funding bodies with an interest in this area, and they don't talk to each other as often as they ought. So I think we need to be putting a lot more effort into national alignment.

Interestingly, for two countries, improved national coordination had been a result of their involvement in the JPI. For one country this had meant better coordination and some new alignment between national funding bodies for both health and social science. For another country, a new network of key academic and non-academic stakeholders had been specifically created in order for that country to participate effectively in the JPI.

4.7. Summary: To what extent has the intended JPI output of increased coordination been achieved through the implementation of joint activities?

This chapter has examined the development and dissemination of the main joint activities implemented by the JPI within the J-AGE 1 funding period. With reference to relevant Type A process indicators, the findings of the first external evaluation confirm that:

- The JPI's intention to implement a range of joint activities, involving a high proportion of JPI members, has been achieved (process indicators A4 and A5). However questions have been raised about the effectiveness of the dissemination of key outputs and publications, and about the extent and nature of inclusion of stakeholders in joint activities, hence it is assessed that output indicator A10 has only partly been achieved to date.
- The implementation of the first joint funding call is still in progress. Some important concerns have been raised about whether it will be a successful first step along the road to developing harmonised and simplified processes for collaborative funding within the JPI (process indicator A6). To date, this joint action has not been achieved.
- There appears to be some new and increased coordination between the JPI and member states, as a result of JPI joint activities, particularly in terms of adjustments or adaptations to national funding priorities. The JPI's influence on national research funding policies, and alignment of funding programmes, was currently less evident. Thus the intention of increased coordination, as evidenced by output indicators A7, A8, A9 and A10, has been partly achieved.

5. Outcomes of the JPI-MYBL: findings and discussion

This chapter will consider any evidence of outcomes of the JPI-MYBL to date, in terms of the JPI's impact on:

- Awareness of demographic change and ageing related research by European non-academic stakeholders (outcome indicator A11)
- The amount of research funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members (outcome indicator A12)
- Additional international collaboration and coordination (outcome indicator A13)
- EU agenda setting (outcome indicator A19).

The ESRC's second internal monitoring and evaluation process in 2014 (Deliverable D6.4) did not seek to capture data specifically about the above four outcome indicators. However, GA members were asked to say whether they agreed, disagreed or were undecided in relation to the following statements which are reflective of outcome indicator A11:

- *Based on discussions with other organisations in my country, the MYBL initiative has raised awareness in my country regarding the importance of demographic change and related research:* most of the 14 GA members surveyed by ESRC agreed with this statement.
- *The MYBL initiative has raised awareness in my organisation regarding the importance of demographic change and related research:* half of the GA members responding to the ESRC's survey agreed with this statement.

From these results, the ESRC evaluation and monitoring report surmised that:

- The JPI had raised awareness of the importance of demographic change in other organisations in JPI member countries.
- There was already high awareness of the impact of the area in the representatives' countries and this had been increased in seven countries.

With reference to JPI documents, and the interview data collected for the first external evaluation, we will now explore any further evidence for the JPI's intended outcomes as defined by the four Type A indicators listed above.

5.1. Awareness of demographic change and ageing related research by European non-academic stakeholders

Under outcome indicator A11, it is the intention of the JPI-MYBL to increase awareness of demographic change and ageing related research amongst European non-academic

stakeholders. We asked JPI members involved in the first external evaluation to comment on whether and how the JPI had helped to raise awareness of demographic change in their own countries. The question was possibly too unfocussed to elicit a definite and comparable sense of the extent of increased awareness, or to gauge the nature of the stakeholders affected. Nonetheless, an analysis of the data indicated that around half of the JPI member states involved in the first external evaluation felt that the activities of the JPI had made a difference to levels of awareness relating to demographic change. Raised awareness was described as a broadened understanding of the nature of demographic change in terms of:

- New areas of thinking and development:

It was surprising that a number of the issues which we've known and talked about in policy circles here, for example, extending labour market participation of older women, are still news in some countries.

- Its multi-disciplinarity:

We did help the demographers to sit around the same table with many other scientists, which they did not do before. So this might, probably, become the most important additional value of the JPI to the scientific part of the demographic changes community.

It's very important to have this step, and it's very interesting to bring these different disciplines, different issues, different focuses together.

- The importance of taking a more holistic approach to research and policy-making:

I think the Strategic Research Agenda was pretty impressive, and I had feedback from other stakeholders and people in the research community here that it is a broad, holistic view, it does leave scope for lots of inter-disciplinary input.

- Its potential impact on the implementation of local programmes and regional policy making within countries:

The data helps to track progress accurately in my country. JPI has the goal to increase coordination and collaboration between regional level research programmes in the field of demographic change. Lifelong learning is promoted in many regions and cities through open universities and through NGOs. There are attempts to adapt the educational system in order to meet the changing economic, social and demographic condition. It sure helped to raise awareness.

- The possibilities for comparative, international research and collaboration:

I think for us the big issue would be the ability to allow national researchers to have that broader, multi-country perspective on these issues, and to be able to compare policy experiments and directions here with what's happening in other jurisdictions.

Several people highlighted the important role that the SOAB had played in both facilitating a broader understanding of demographic change and in helping to raise awareness of key issues amongst non-academic stakeholders.

We've had a number of really interesting debates and discussions around particular issues and this is where the SOAB fits into it because stakeholders don't tend to think about disciplines, they want to know, for example, What are you doing that's going to help employment for older people? It's very rarely the case that these sorts of any challenges are owned by a particular discipline.

Conversely, one SOAB member felt that rather than broadening the scope of understanding on demographic change, the JPI's definition had narrowed it in a way that he thought was not helpful.

On the other side, what I think is missing is a more comprehensive definition of demographic change. Because so far, is that more than demographic change, we are talking about demographic ageing. There has been too much attention on the elderly population, on the 65+ European citizens, and not on the continuously decreasing number of young people, or on new European citizens that are also a part of the population.

Several JPI members alluded to the difficulties of describing and measuring changes in awareness, particularly in countries where the issue of demographic change is already well established as a research and policy priority. Designing evaluation measures that are able to respond to these descriptive and attribution issues will be important for the implementation of any future evaluation.

Awareness of demographic change is a challenge, and the research agenda that's associated with it is already quite high up the agenda in our country. So the impact of the JPI work here is going to be difficult to pin down.

Similarly, a few respondents made an effort to distinguish between raised awareness of stakeholders involved in the JPI, and raised awareness amongst those not involved, an important issue that again will need to be unpicked by future evaluation work.

I think within the JPI, the understanding of the cross-disciplinarity has grown. Regarding outside, I don't think an awful lot, because I think the JPI is seriously lacking in promotion and dissemination. And of course countries are very different, one country might be way more advanced in taking up multi-disciplinarity than another.

5.2. The amount of research funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members

A key intention of the JPI-MYBL is to increase the amount of research funding available for demographic change and ageing research, primarily amongst JPI member states (outcome indicator A12). To date, the joint actions of the JPI – the development of the SRA, the fast-track activities and the first funding call – have brought new sources of funding to the

European arena, so to a certain extent one could suggest that this intention has been partly achieved. However, as several JPI members explained, the purpose of the JPI's concept of alignment goes further than joint funding.

The joint call will run the traditional model of us each funding our own national leads. And to that extent, it follows a very traditional model of how we've always done joint European research funding.

Alignment in the JPI sense involves a convergent set of national funding streams being used to resource jointly agreed research priorities at European level, such as those set out in the SRA. And as many JPI members pointed out, this has yet to happen in any significant sense.

The original definition of alignment that the Commission have used is that European research funding is about 20% of everything that's available in Europe, and 80% resides within countries. The whole goal there is to make better use of that 80% in terms of delivering towards European level challenges. So the whole ambition of the JPIs is to help governments align their research agendas around topics in the SRA. I think the challenge there is that JPI membership is a particular subset of a government department, or a particular funding agency. And their ability and traction to align at a national level varies.

Even if we are able to launch three common calls per year, this might be completely meaningless if there is not a progressive harmonisation and synchronisation of national research programmes on demographic change.

5.3. Additional international collaboration and coordination

The JPI-MYBL aims to increase the ease with which international coordinated activities can take place in the field of demographic and ageing research (outcome indicator A13). The intention is that the processes developed under the JPI (through joint activities), can be used for new work with partners beyond those of the JPI. It is also intended that it should be administratively efficient for JPI members and potentially, other research funders, to collaborate.

There were just two examples of additional international collaboration mentioned by JPI members interviewed for the external evaluation. Firstly, one country had used the JPI-MYBL network to make international connections in readiness for responding to the first funding call.

To be ready for the first call we're running a summer institute for trainees, and we'll have some participants from partner countries of the JPI-MYBL, because of the linkages made there. It's not an activity of JPI-MYBL, but it's an additional outcome.

Secondly, a conference for late March 2015 has been organised under the JPI umbrella, to enhance coordination and collaboration between JPI members and Central and Eastern European countries. A small number of people thought that the JPI should broaden its international scope and coordination, but overall this was not yet an issue that was being considered as a future potential outcome.

We need to broaden up the scale of this JPI, especially in Asia. And also eastern European countries, it would be great to have more of them in.

5.4. EU agenda setting

It is the intention of the JPI to create closer connectivity between national and EU funding activities (outcome indicator A19). Specifically, it is expected that EU research policy and activities (such as Horizon 2020, ERA-nets and other JPIs) will be shaped by, and reflect the research priorities of the JPI-MYBL.

The J-AGE 24 month report¹⁸ includes an annex item on the JPI's input so far to the planning of Horizon 2020 (H2020). It shows how the SAB and SOAB each provided formal, written feedback to the H2020 Advisory Group for Societal Challenge 1 on Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing on 31st July 2014. No other documentary evidence is available relating to the JPI's influence on EU research policy and activities. However, a few JPI members interviewed for the first external evaluation were able to provide a little more detail and explained that the formal feedback had led to involvement in a workshop with the H2020 Advisory Group on 11th November 2014. The workshop took place in Brussels and involved 50 representatives from diverse disciplines and fields of activity who met together to explore how to ensure the societal relevance of future research under Horizon 2020's Societal Challenge 'Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing'.

The majority of JPI members interviewed were unclear about the exact details of the JPI's influence on H2020 and indeed on other EU programmes. There was a general sense of 'being in the dark' about the JPI's involvement in wider EU activities.

There is scope within Horizon 2020 for the kind of broad, holistic view that is behind this JPI, but the early funding priorities under Horizon 2020 are much more narrowly biomedical. I don't think we can claim that we've had an impact there. I think that the EU decision making is a little bit of a mystery to me, but I think the right issues are being brought forward through the JPI. Whether that will have an impact, I don't know.

People were also largely uncertain about whether it was possible, or feasible, to expect to have any significant influence on H2020, given its breadth and focus.

I would say that we've talked a lot about influencing Horizon 2020. Reality: the Horizon 2020 machine is such a juggernaut, and it's rolling with such enormous determination down a largely medical route, that we haven't had any real influence. My feeling is that it is largely a done deal, and that the Commission is much more inclined to see biological solutions before political, social ones.

Nonetheless, the intention of the JPI to have an influence on EU funding activities was appreciated and understood to be important, even if the details of implementation were lacking.

¹⁸ Deliverable D1.7: J-AGE 24 month Activity and Financial Report

I appreciate the role that the JPI is taking in trying to lobby for ageing issues to be in Horizon 2020. I don't think it's been very successful so far, as the Challenge 1, which is the programme that should be the target, is health-oriented. Maybe there would be room for improvement there, but I don't know how much is feasible.

5.5. Summary: Outcomes of the JPI-MYBL

This chapter has considered whether there is any evidence of intended outcomes of the JPI-MYBL to date. With reference to the relevant Type A output indicators, the findings of the first external evaluation confirm that:

- Since the ESRC's internal evaluation in 2014, the JPI has continued to raise awareness of demographic change and ageing related research amongst European non-academic stakeholders (outcome indicator A11). Respondents gave a range of examples of raised awareness in terms of a broadened understanding of the nature of demographic change by stakeholders. However, the evidence collected was not sufficiently focussed or differentiated in order to make a substantive assessment about the extent to which the indicator has been achieved. This remains a query to be followed up in future evaluations.
- To date, the joint actions of the JPI have brought new sources of funding to the European arena, which suggest that the intention to increase the amount of research funding (outcome indicator A12) has been partly achieved. However, the purpose of the JPI's concept of alignment goes further than joint funding. If increased funding is assessed as funding made available through alignment activities, then this has not yet been implemented, and thus outcome indicator A12 has not yet been achieved.
- Two examples of additional international collaboration and coordination (outcome indicator A13) were given as part of responses to the first external evaluation. More data is needed to make an assessment of achievement in relation to this indicator.
- The impact of the JPI on EU agenda setting (outcome indicator A19) remains unclear and will need further data collection and investigation in future evaluation work.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

The overall aim of the first external evaluation was to examine the progress of the JPI-MYBL. This aim was achieved through the following key objectives:

- To explore the effectiveness of the structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL.
- To examine the activities and outputs of the JPI-MYBL, with particular reference to the development and dissemination of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), the two fast-track activities and the first call.
- To consider the outcomes of the JPI-MYBL to date, in terms of its impact on:
 - awareness of demographic change and ageing related research by European stakeholders
 - the amount of research funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members
 - additional international collaboration and coordination
 - EU agenda setting.

6.1. Responses to the research objectives

Structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL

The first external evaluation explored the effectiveness of the structure, organisation and governance of the JPI-MYBL, paying particular attention to the roles of the General Assembly (GA), the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) and the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB), and the effectiveness of decision making and communication between and within these groups. The findings confirm that:

- Although much has been achieved in terms of effective governance and organisation, there are still concerns relating to the adequacy of the JPI's functional structures and procedures, particularly in terms of communication and decision making processes (input indicator A17). It is assessed therefore that this indicator remains partly achieved.
- It still appears that there is inadequate interaction between the GA and the SOAB and many JPI members remain unclear about the roles and remits of the different JPI bodies (input indicator A18). To date therefore, this indicator also remains partly achieved.

Activities and outputs of the JPI-MYBL

We examined the development and dissemination of the main joint activities implemented by the JPI within the J-AGE 1 funding period and found that:

- The JPI's intention to implement a range of joint activities, involving a high proportion of JPI members, has been achieved (process indicators A4 and A5). However questions have been raised about the effectiveness of the dissemination of key outputs and publications, and about the extent and nature of inclusion of stakeholders in joint activities, hence it is assessed that output indicator A10 has only partly been achieved to date.
- The implementation of the first joint funding call is still in progress. Some important concerns have been raised about whether it will be a successful first step along the road to developing harmonised and simplified processes for collaborative funding within the JPI (process indicator A6). To date, this joint action has not been achieved.
- There appears to be some new and increased coordination between the JPI and member states, as a result of JPI joint activities, particularly in terms of adjustments or adaptations to national funding priorities. The JPI's influence on national research funding policies, and alignment of funding programmes, was currently less evident. Thus the intention of increased coordination, as evidenced by output indicators A7, A8, A9 and A10, has been partly achieved.

Outcomes of the JPI-MYBL

The first external evaluation considered whether there was any evidence of intended outcomes of the JPI-MYBL to date. Findings confirmed that:

- Since the ESRC's internal evaluation in 2014, the JPI has continued to raise awareness of demographic change and ageing related research amongst European non-academic stakeholders (outcome indicator A11). Respondents gave a range of examples of raised awareness in terms of a broadened understanding of the nature of demographic change by stakeholders. However, the evidence collected was not sufficiently focussed or differentiated in order to make a substantive assessment about the extent to which the indicator has been achieved. This remains a query to be followed up in future evaluations.
- To date, the joint actions of the JPI have brought new sources of funding to the European arena, which suggest that the intention to increase the amount of research funding (outcome indicator A12) has been partly achieved. However, the purpose of the JPI's concept of alignment goes further than joint funding. If increased funding is assessed as funding made available through alignment activities, then this has not yet been implemented, and thus outcome indicator A12 has not yet been achieved.
- Two examples of additional international collaboration and coordination (outcome indicator A13) were given as part of responses to the first external evaluation. More data is needed to make an assessment of achievement in relation to this indicator.
- The impact of the JPI on EU agenda setting (outcome indicator A19) remains unclear and will need further data collection and investigation in future evaluation work.

Table 5: Overview of progress in relation to Type A evaluation indicators

Indicator code	Input indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A1	Attitude of JPI members towards JPI MYBL goals and objectives as described in SRA.	Achieved
A2	Level of non-funded staff resource contributed to the activities of the JPI.	Achieved
A3	Participation grade of member states in JPI MYBL in SRA implementation planning activities and/or sub-groups.	Achieved
A17	Terms of reference (ToR) are considered adequate by GA, SAB and SOAB. Decision making follows the ToR and is satisfactory.	Partly achieved
A18	GA satisfied with interaction with SOAB. SOAB satisfied with interaction with GA.	Partly achieved
Indicator code	Process indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A4	Number of JPI members contributing funds to 'fast-track' activities.	Achieved
A5	The number of new joint activities.	Achieved
A6	Members find it as easy and cost effective to collaborate through the JPI as they do to fund their own research directly.	Not achieved
Indicator code	Output indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)
A7	National research funding priorities have been adapted as a result of JPI MYBL and the priorities in the JPI MYBL SRA.	Partly achieved
A8	Alignment of national research funding programmes.	Partly achieved
A9	National research funding policies have been influenced as a result of JPI MYBL and the activities of the JPI.	Partly achieved
A10	Joint activities reflect the input made by non-academic stakeholders.	Partly achieved
Indicator code	Outcome indicators	Progress by end of February 2015 (end of J-AGE 1 funding period)

A11	Awareness of and engagement in demographic change and ageing research activities amongst non-academic stakeholders as a result of JPI activity.	Evidence unclear
A12	The total amount of funding available for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members.	Not achieved
A13	The processes developed under the JPI (A6) can be used for activities and partners beyond those of the JPI.	Evidence unclear
A19	EU research activities reflect the research priorities of the JPI MYBL.	Evidence unclear

6.2. Progress of the JPI-MYBL towards its stated aims

The overall aim of the first external evaluation was to examine the progress of the JPI-MYBL towards its own stated aims. In order to measure this progress, the report has explored and assessed the nature and extent of inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of the JPI up until the end of the J-AGE funding period, as outlined above in section 6.1. As explained in chapter one, data are not yet available in relation to all Type A and Type B impact indicators. These measures were thus outside the scope of the first external evaluation and will be considered as part of evaluation plans for J-AGE 2 (March 2015 to September 2017). It will be important to collect impact data in order to reach a full and comprehensive assessment of the JPI-MYBL’s progress overall.

To recap, the JPI-MYBL has five guiding aims:

1. To develop a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to identify research gaps, potential for alignment and joint activities
2. To better coordinate national, regional and European activities relevant for demographic change
3. To exchange best practice, pool expertise and financial resources, and carry out joint activities
4. To gain understanding of demographic change by a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach
5. To have an impact on national and EU agenda setting. With reference to the findings from interviews with JPI members, progress to date in relation to each of these aims will now be summarised. We will also consider the perceptions of JPI members about the role played by J-AGE 1 in helping the JPI to meet its aims.

To develop a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to identify research gaps, potential for alignment and joint activities

This aim was assessed to be fully achieved by all those interviewed for the first external evaluation. The SRA was viewed as a very successful document, informed by careful and extensive consultation with stakeholders. Despite a complex process of development, the result was a clear, innovative and comprehensive statement of the current European research agenda for demographic change. The development of the SRA has enabled JPI members to reach a common understanding and shared vocabulary for talking about demographic change in a truly multi-disciplinary way. There appears to be some residual confusion about the scope of the SRA and the inclusion/exclusion of a few key topics and issues. But overall, the SRA is seen as **the** key starting point for the next steps of J-AGE 2 in terms of implementation and alignment.

It was noted by respondents that support from J-AGE 1 was essential to achieving this aim. JPI members felt that the respondents felt that the successful development of the SRA would simply not have been possible without J-AGE.

To better coordinate national, regional and European activities relevant for demographic change

This aim was assessed as partly achieved by majority of JPI members who took part in the first external evaluation. It is, however, important for future evaluation work to clarify the definition of 'coordination' used in different components of the JPI. A very specific definition of 'coordination' is used by the ESRC's evaluation team, as evidenced by output indicators A7, A8 and A9. Within the context of assessing the aim above, however, the definition of 'coordination' was perceived by interviewees as a much broader concept which included 'working together' as partners of the JPI, as well as just coordination and alignment of funding programmes. This may, or may not, be the intention of J-AGE 1 and will need to be firmed up for future evaluations.

With regard to national activities relevant for demographic change, respondents described some examples of national level coordination linked directly to countries' involvement in the JPI. However it was noted that progress against this aim is difficult to gauge as different countries are at different stages of policy, practice and programme development.

At European level, the two fast-track activities and development of the first funding call were widely cited, but little else was felt to be happening at present. Despite early mapping work undertaken by the JPI, it was felt that still more work would be needed to fully understand individual countries' activities and research finance policy and practice **before** fruitful discussion about on-going coordination could be implemented.

Overall, JPI members felt that the JPI-MYBL has created a strong, coordinated network of able and willing scientists, collaborating with stakeholders, who have undertaken significant work so far. However there is a sense from some members, that enthusiasm and goodwill for coordinated efforts are beginning to dissipate now it is becoming clear that the first funding call is not the major research initiative that was expected by some.

J-AGE 1 support was perceived as crucial in guiding and prompting the development of joint activities and coordinating and focusing action and goodwill from JPI members towards taking part in these. However, since the fast-track activities were financed through support from individual countries, respondents felt it was not possible to fully attribute progress against this aim to support from J-AGE 1.

To exchange best practice, pool expertise and financial resources, and carry out joint activities

This aim was also assessed as partly achieved by the majority of JPI members involved in the first external evaluation. It was felt that some pooling of expertise had occurred during the implementation of the joint activities, particularly through the two fast-track activities. Less progress appeared to have been made regarding the exchange of best practice, particularly in terms of knowledge exchange on research funding policy and practice. The pooling, or more accurately the convergence, of financial resources was not universally perceived as a success to date, though it was felt that the first funding call was a step towards this goal. Overall, respondents agreed that more work and a clearer focus was still needed to fully achieve this aim.

J-AGE 1 support was again viewed as important for mobilising and coordinating the actions of JPI members and as essential for the development of the first funding call. However, as previously, it was felt to be less important to the success of the fast-track activities as the funding and management of these had been undertaken by individual country members, rather than through the J-AGE project.

To gain understanding of demographic change by a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach

This aim was assessed as partly achieved by majority of respondents. JPI members interviewed felt that the foundations and principles for cross-disciplinary and holistic work had been laid. The development of the SRA and fast-track activities had helped to develop some consensus about key research priorities and gaps, a shared understanding and common vocabulary; and to improve and support dialogue across disciplines and sectors. Interviews for the first external evaluation highlighted that there are still some queries about the scope and comprehensiveness of the definition of demographic change used across the JPI. It was also clear that although the SRA has helped to bring about more cross-disciplinary understanding of demographic change amongst JPI members, this may not yet be reflected outside the membership of the JPI. It was felt that this aim would be met more fully once the first and subsequent funding calls have been implemented and new research commissioned.

Support for this aim from J-AGE 1 was seen as essential for the development of the SRA and first funding call, but less so for the implementation of the fast-track activities.

To have an impact on national and EU agenda setting

There was a small amount of evidence relating to impact on national and EU agenda setting that could be linked to this JPI aim. At national level, respondents cited some examples of the JPI's impact on their own countries' funding priorities, but influence on national research funding policy and alignment of funding programmes was less evident. At EU level, the impact of the JPI on agenda setting remains unclear and will need further investigation in future evaluation work. It is not possible therefore to assess the extent to which this JPI aim has been met. As noted in earlier sections of this report, a full and comprehensive assessment of the impact of the JPI is outside the remit of this first external evaluation and will be the focus of evaluation activities under J-AGE 2.

In terms of their assessment of support from J-AGE 1 to help progress this aim, respondents felt that more clarity and input on publicity and dissemination of the JPI outputs would have been helpful.

6.3. Recommendations for the JPI-MYBL

Findings from this first external evaluation have highlighted a number of recommendations relating to both the process and progress of the JPI-MYBL, as follows:

Governance and decision making

- R1: Clarify the structure of decision making processes during GA meetings, particularly in terms of presentation of the decision to be made and recording of the resulting agreed actions.
- R2: Clarify the roles of the GA and SC in relation to which decisions are made at which group and how agreed action is decided.
- R3: Clarify which JPI body or bodies have the mandate for implementing agreed action resulting from decisions.
- R4: Consider ways to speed up decision making where time is of the essence and a delay may have an effect on other joint actions of the JPI.
- R5: Ensure that future decisions about research priorities fully reflect those agreed through the SRA.
- R6: Clarify how secretariat functions for JPI bodies will be organised and funded during J-AGE 2.

Communication and dissemination

- R7: Review communication across the JPI: this should include considering (a) how to reduce the volume and improve the efficiency of email communication; (b) the use of shared file storage space; (c) how best to update the JPI website; (d) the publication and dissemination a regular newsletter to update members and others about the on-going work and activities of the JPI (including actual and planned activities, and work with wider EU programmes and initiatives).
- R8: Develop and draft a comprehensive communication and dissemination plan for internal communications and for publicising both existing JPI outputs (SRA, fast-track publications) and those to be completed under J-AGE 2.
- R9: Consider engaging external consultancy input to advise on communication and dissemination activities.
- R10: Review communication and dissemination activities at six monthly intervals to ensure progress is on track with agreed targets.

Roles and effectiveness of the SAB and SOAB

- R11: Review the documentation relating to the roles and terms of reference of the SAB and SOAB and consider making this available to all JPI members via the JPI website.
- R12: Any further changes to the composition or membership of the SAB and SOAB should be handled carefully and sensitively.

Interaction between the GA and the SAB and SOAB

- R13: As part of R11, review and if needed clarify further the ways that the SAB and SOAB can best contribute to GA discussions and JPI joint actions overall.
- R14: Consider a regular agenda item for verbal feedback from the SAB and SOAB chairs to the GA.
- R15: Consider organising more opportunities (meetings, seminars) for direct interaction between members of the SOAB and the GA.
- R16: Consider putting information on the JPI website about dates and agenda items for all meetings of JPI bodies.
- R17: Discuss and agree the roles of individual JPI members in terms of representing the SAB or SOAB position, the position of their own country, or their own personal position to the GA and the wider JPI.

Development and implementation of joint activities

- R18: Ensure that a dissemination plan is drafted and kept updated for each new joint activity undertaken throughout J-AGE 2.
- R19: Review plans for engagement with stakeholders during joint activities and make use of learning from examples of good practice from JPI-MYBL (e.g. consultation on the SRA) and from other JPIs (e.g. via JPIs To Co-Work' initiative¹⁹).
- R20: Consider drafting a framework and guidance on stakeholder inclusion and consultation at both JPI level and at national level for JPI members.
- R21: Consider how best to schedule new joint activities so they can feed into the development of any new funding calls.
- R22: Document the learning from the development and implementation of the first funding call, to ensure this is taken on board by those taking responsibility for future calls.
- R23: Consider how best to schedule new calls to ensure sufficient lead-in time for national governments to plan and commit financial resources.
- R24: For any future funding calls, manage the expectations of JPI members by ensuring there is clarity and communication from the outset about the intended scope of the funding likely to be made available.

Coordination between the JPI-MYBL and member states

- R25: Produce information and guidance for JPI members on how alignment might best be promoted and supported on a national level.
- R26: Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that allow national representatives of JPI member states to easily record, map and define examples of alignment as they occur.

Outcomes of the JPI-MYBL

- R27: Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that allow JPI members to record, map and define examples of increased awareness amongst national non-academic stakeholders.
- R28: Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that enable data to be collected and analysed relating to changes in national research funding for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members.
- R29: Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that allow data to be collected relating to international collaboration and coordination in demographic and ageing research.

¹⁹ <http://www.jpis2cowork.eu/>

- R30: Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that enable JPI members to easily record, map and define examples of the impact of the JPI-MYBL on EU agenda setting.

6.4. The ESRC's planned activity for WP 6 under J-AGE 2

During J-AGE 1 (September 2012 – February 2015), the ESRC led WP 6 on monitoring and evaluation of the JPI-MYBL and commissioned the first external evaluation reported here. The ESRC will continue to be the lead partner for WP 6 in J-AGE 2 (March 2015 – September 2017) and has produced a draft work program for evaluation and monitoring activities over that period. Key elements of the draft work program currently include:

Monitoring of indicators (task 6.1)

- Progress of the JPI-MYBL will continue to be tracked against existing Type A and Type B indicators
- Reports on the JPI's progress against these indicators will be delivered to the GA in months 6, 18 and 30 of J-AGE 2 (Deliverables D6.1, 6.2 and 6.3)
- Where appropriate, existing indicators will be amended or new indicators may be developed
- The monitoring process will be used to inform the JPI about its future direction and activities.

Development of evidence for the second external evaluation (task 6.2)

- An impact evaluation of the fast-track data project
- An evaluation of the reach of the JPI in terms of its profile amongst stakeholders
- An evaluation of the impact of the JPI on international collaboration in demographic change
- Qualitative analysis to understand changes in national funding in demographic change, with reference to baseline data collected during J-AGE 1.

Commissioning a second external evaluation (task 6.3)

- Develop a brief for a second external evaluation to be undertaken over the final six months of J-AGE 2, from inception in month 30 to reporting in month 36 (Deliverable D6.4)
- The second external evaluation will use as its evidence base the outputs of tasks 6.1 and 6.2
- The work brief will need to ensure that the second external evaluation addresses the needs of the JPI and any comparator analysis with other JPIs.

The draft work program will be developed and finalised over the first three months of J-AGE 2, culminating in an agreed, written program in month 3 (milestone MS30, May 2015). The work program will be reviewed and refined if needed in month 15 (MS31, May 2016).

6.5. Recommendations for the ESRC as WP 6 lead (monitoring and evaluation)

The research represented in this report is the first external evaluation of the JPI-MYBL. As far as we are aware, it is also the first external evaluation of **any** European JPI to date. As such, it is helpful to reflect on the process of undertaking this external evaluation and to capture these reflections as feedback and recommendations as follows:

Monitoring of indicators (task 6.1)

- R31: Continued tracking against existing indicators is essential to record and demonstrate progress. However this should be supplemented by data relating to the perceptions of JPI members about the input, process and output indicators as well as examples of outcomes and impacts at national level. This may mean collecting monitoring data from all JPI members by questionnaire as previously, but supplementing this with a sample of in-depth interviews or a focus group to contextualise the quantitative findings.
- R32: Monitoring reports to the GA at months 6, 18 and 30 should include more qualitative data as noted in R31 to contextualise the quantitative analysis of progress against indicators. It may be useful to focus in more depth on one aspect of the JPI (as evidenced by a set of appropriate indicators) for each of the three reports. This would enable more detailed data to be collected, but also for new research tools to be developed and piloted, in readiness for the more extensive data collection that will be needed for the second and final external evaluation at the end of J-AGE 2. For example, collection and analysis of data in relation to outcome indicator A11 might involve surveying non-academic stakeholders directly to measure any impact of the JPI on their awareness of demographic change and ageing research. Similarly, an assessment of success in relation to outcome indicator A12 might involve collecting and analysing statistical data from national funding agencies. Either of these activities would necessitate a more detailed and focussed approach to data collection and analysis than has so far been evident in the 12 and 24 month monitoring exercises conducted for J-AGE 1.
- R33: As part of its monitoring role, ESRC should consider establishing a means of logging basic JPI developments and actions, including a list of key meetings, tasks undertaken and work in progress, with dates and names of those involved. Such information was difficult to locate for the first external evaluation, and JPI members also commented that more information about key meetings and work in progress would be helpful. It is also important to record whether these developments and actions are being conducted and funded through J-AGE 2, and if not, then to clarify and record the details of their coordination and finance arrangements.
- R34: Clear, structured and comparable data about engagement with stakeholders and dissemination of JPI outputs, will be essential for J-AGE 2 monitoring and evaluation work. Analysis for this report has shown that this data will need to

differentiate between (a) JPI members' own individual work in engaging with national stakeholders; (b) JPI members' own work in disseminating outputs at national level; (c) work by others on national level engagement and dissemination; (d) JPI-wide work on engagement and dissemination. The differences between these types of data will need to be reflected in the development of questions and research tools.

- R35: The current definition of 'coordination' as evidenced by output indicators A7, A8 and A9 is both very specific and yet also in need of clarification. The output intention underpinning these three indicators currently reads as 'increased coordination between JPI member states', yet the success criteria relate to both increased coordination **within** JPI member states, and to increased coordination **between** the JPI **and** member states: thus the intention statement needs to be clarified. It is also important to ensure fidelity to the evaluation framework, since the definition of 'coordination' in the context of indicators A7, A8 and A9 is very specific. Some additional guidance is needed for future evaluations to ensure that the scope of the definition is clear in order to collect relevant, structured and comparable data about the extent and nature of 'coordination' in this context.
- R36: Given that an evaluation framework has been established for this JPI, it is important that in any on-going JPI documentation there is fidelity to the indicators, intentions and success criteria set out therein. This is particularly important for any documents relating to monitoring and evaluation activities. We noted that terms that have a very specific definition in the evaluation framework (such as, impact, output, outcome, coordination, etc) are sometimes defined and used differently in other J-AGE documents. This is unhelpful, particularly where the documents relate to monitoring and evaluation activities.
- R37: Further to R36, it is essential that there is agreement and fidelity about the scope and wording of the aims and objectives of (a) the JPI-MYBL overall; (b) the J-AGE 2 project; and (c) monitoring and evaluation activities relevant to the JPI and to J-AGE 2. We noted some inconsistency across these at present. It is important that there is agreement and clarification about the aims and objectives of these three components before any further monitoring and evaluation work is undertaken. In its role as WP 6 lead, the ESRC may want to consider monitoring this fidelity and ensuring that any new JPI documentation accurately represents and reflects agreed aims and objectives.

Development of evidence for the second external evaluation (task 6.2)

- R38: It is important that the development of evidence for the second external evaluation is able to (a) build on the data collection, analysis and findings of the first external evaluation reported here; and (b) maintain consistency with the existing evaluation indicators and to agreed aims and objectives as recommended in R36 and R37.

- R39: Consider identifying a named, key informant for each JPI member state, who can act as a conduit for specific monitoring and evaluation activities. It is important to identify individual JPI members who are able to provide a definitive and accurate national perspective.
- R40: With reference to R26, develop, pilot and implement monitoring and evaluation tools that allow national representatives of JPI member states to easily record, map and define examples of alignment as they occur.
- R41: With reference to R27, R28, R29 and R30, develop, pilot and implement monitoring and evaluation tools that allow data to be collected about (a) increased awareness of demographic change amongst non-academic stakeholders; (b) changes in national research funding for demographic change and ageing research amongst JPI members; (c) international collaboration and coordination; (e) the impact of the JPI-MYBL on EU agenda setting.

Commissioning a second external evaluation (task 6.3)

- R42: With reference to R38, the brief for the second external evaluation should (a) build on the data collection, analysis and findings of the first external evaluation; (b) build on the subsequent monitoring and evaluation activities to be undertaken during J-AGE 2; and (c) maintain fidelity with the existing evaluation indicators and to agreed aims and objectives as recommended in R36 and R37. In particular, clarity about the precise aims and objectives is essential: is the external evaluation focussing on the progress of the JPI, the progress of J-AGE 2 or both? If both, then which aims, those of the JPI or those of J-AGE 2, are to be the guiding objectives for the investigation?
- R43: The commissioning process for the second external evaluation should start at least three months before the desired start date, to allow sufficient lead-in time for tenders to be submitted and appropriate consultants to be recruited. This would mean finalising the written brief (or invitation to tender document) by at least month 27 of J-AGE 2, preferably earlier.
- R44: The timescale and budget for the second external evaluation needs to be commensurate with the scope of the research to be commissioned and adjustments to this should be considered if the expected scope reduces or increases over the lifetime of J-AGE 2. Advice on an adequate timescale and budget should be sought from the evaluation and monitoring expert advisory group.

6.6. Concluding comments

The first external evaluation, reported here, has examined the progress of the JPI-MYBL towards its aims during its first 30 months of existence. The evaluation was a tightly

focussed and small-scale undertaking. It was commissioned by the ESRC in January 2015, commenced the same month and was completed within eight weeks by 13th March 2015. It involved desk-based research, via documentary analysis of selected JPI outputs and qualitative interviews (mostly by telephone) with a sample of 17 JPI members representing 12 countries.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the JPI has been particularly successful in developing a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), which has helped to identify research gaps and highlighted the potential for alignment and joint activities in the area of demographic change. The JPI has also created a strong, coordinated network of national experts, who, in collaboration with stakeholders, have undertaken significant new work through several Europe-wide joint activities.

To date, some pooling of expertise has occurred during the implementation of the joint activities, particularly through the two fast-track projects on data mapping and understanding the employment participation of older workers. Less progress has been made regarding the exchange of best practice, particularly in terms of knowledge exchange on research funding policy and practice. The pooling, or more accurately the convergence, of financial resources was not universally perceived as a success to date, though it was felt that the first funding call was a step towards this goal.

Through JPI activities, it appears that the foundations and principles for cross-disciplinary and holistic work have been laid. The development of the SRA and fast-track activities have helped to develop some consensus about key research priorities and gaps, a shared understanding and a common vocabulary for talking about demographic change. The JPI has helped to bring about improved cross-disciplinary understanding of demographic change, although this may not yet be reflected outside the membership of the JPI.

At national level, there are some early examples of the JPI's impact on JPI member states' funding priorities, but influence on national research funding policy and alignment of funding programmes is currently less evident. At EU level, the impact of the JPI on agenda setting remains unclear and will need further investigation as part of the future evaluation work planned for the J-AGE 2 project.

Annex A Approach email, information and consent form for respondents

Dear,

I am writing to ask you to take part in a short telephone interview as part of the external evaluation for the JPI More Years Better Lives (MYBL).

I am an independent researcher, working with the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on this evaluation. Please see the attached email text from Vera Raivola from the ESRC.

The interview would focus on your perceptions of the impact of the JPI MYBL on national and European research and policy relating to demographic change.

I would call you, and the interview would last about 20-30 minutes. With your agreement, I would like to audio-record our conversation, for recall purposes, but I can take written notes if you prefer. Any information you provide will be treated as confidential and stored securely. Your data would be anonymised in any reports or feedback, unless you say otherwise.

If you are willing to take part, please could you complete the consent form and indicate your availability below? I will then reply by email to confirm the appointment and with details of the questions I plan to cover.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

Ruth Townsley

Consent to take part in the external evaluation of the JPI More Years Better Lives:

I confirm that I understand the information provided about the above evaluation and have been able to ask questions if needed.

I understand that any information I provide may be used in the evaluation report and other documents and presentations relating to the external evaluation of the JPI More Years Better Lives.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the external evaluation at any time, up to the publication of the final report.

I agree to take part in a telephone interview.

I agree to the interview being audio-recorded.

I DO / DO NOT want to be personally identified by name in this evaluation.

I DO / DO NOT want my institution / employer to be identified by name in this evaluation.

Name:

Telephone number for interview:

Date:

My availability for a 30 minute telephone interview is currently as follows:

Annex B Topic guide used for telephone interviews with GA, SAB, SOAB, J-AGE, Steering Committee and Task Force members

Good morning/afternoon. Thank-you very much for making the time to talk with me today.

The purpose of today's interview is to find out more about the impact of the JPI More Years Better Lives on national and European research and policy relating to demographic change.

But before we start, I would like to check a few things with you:

- The interview will take about 30 minutes – is this still OK with you? I will let you know when 30 minutes is up, in case it looks like we need any extra time.
- As you know, this interview is part of the first external evaluation of the JPI and as such any information you provide will be treated as confidential, stored securely and anonymised in any reports or feedback, unless you say otherwise.
- (If relevant) You indicated that you are happy for the interview to be audio-recorded for recall purposes – is that still OK with you? Thank-you - I am turning on the recorder now.

Warm up

To start with, could you tell me about your role on the JPI and the work and groups you have been involved with?

Aims and Objectives of the JPI

I would now like to move onto thinking about the **aims of the JPI** and the **extent to which you think these have been met**. I am going to take each of the five aims in turn and ask you some questions about each one.

- Q1. To develop a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to identify research gaps, potential for alignment and joint activities:
- a) What progress has been made against this aim? (prompt re: effectiveness of implementation of the SRA)
 - b) Has the J-AGE project funding helped? In what ways?
 - c) Do you think there would have been a European SRA without the JPI, or without J-AGE funding?
- Q2. To better coordinate national, regional and European activities relevant for demographic change:
- a) What progress has been made against this aim?
 - b) Has the J-AGE project funding helped? In what ways?

- c) Do you think this coordination would have happened without the JPI, or without J-AGE funding?

Q3. To exchange best practice, pool expertise and financial resources, and carry out joint activities:

- a) What progress has been made against this aim?
- b) Has the J-AGE project funding helped? In what ways?
- c) Do you think these activities would have happened without the JPI, or without J-AGE funding?

Q4. To gain understanding of demographic change through a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach:

- a) What progress has been made against this aim?
- b) Has the J-AGE project funding helped? In what ways?
- c) Would this have happened anyway, without the JPI, or without J-AGE funding?

Q5. To have an impact on national and EU agenda setting (for example Horizon 2020):

- a) What progress has been made against this aim?
- b) Has the J-AGE project funding helped? In what ways?
- c) Would this impact on agenda setting have happened anyway, without the JPI, or without J-AGE funding?

Governance

Q6. Could you comment on the effectiveness of the JPI's governance, particularly with regard to communication and decision making? How could this be improved?

Q7. Could you comment on the effectiveness of the two advisory groups - the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and the Societal Advisory Board (SOAB)? How could this be improved? (prompt re: input of SAB and SOAB to FT activities)

Q8. Could you comment on the communication (and relationship) between the General Assembly (GA) and the SAB and SOAB? How could this be improved?

Outputs

Q9. The JPI has co-ordinated two Fast Track activities - 'Mapping the Data' and 'Understanding the Employment of Older Workers'. Could you comment on the coordination and development of these? How are the outputs being used? Have the outputs helped to raise awareness of research issues relating to demographic change?

Q10. Do you have any comments on the content and development of the ?

Q11. (If not already covered by Q1) Do you have any comments on the development and content of the Strategic Research Agenda? Has it helped to raise awareness of demographic change?

Engagement with stakeholders

- Q12. How have relationships with relevant stakeholders been developed? How could this be improved?
- Q13. How have JPI outputs been made accessible to policy makers and practitioners? (eg SRA, Data Mapping outputs, other reports, etc) How could this be improved?
- Q14. Thinking about your own country, what impact has the JPI had on research, policy or practice? Has it helped to raise awareness of demographic change?

Overall

- Q15. Overall, what are the main successes of the JPI to date?
- Q16. Overall, what are the main weaknesses of the JPI to date?
- Q17. Overall, what has been the added value of the JPI and J-AGE to the area of demographic change?

And finally ...

- Q18. Is there anything else you would like to say about the effectiveness and impact of the JPI More Years Better Lives?

Thank-you very much for your time and help. The report of the first external evaluation should be available in a few months time.

Annex C Topic guide used for telephone interviews with Fast Track Activity members

Good morning/afternoon. Thank-you very much for making the time to talk with me today.

The purpose of today's interview is to find out more about the impact of the JPI More Years Better Lives on national and European research and policy relating to demographic change.

But before we start, I would like to check a few things with you:

- The interview will take about 30 minutes – is this still OK with you? I will let you know when 30 minutes is up, in case it looks like we need any extra time.
 - As you know, this interview is part of the first external evaluation of the JPI and as such any information you provide will be treated as confidential, stored securely and anonymised in any reports or feedback, unless you say otherwise.
 - (If relevant) You indicated that you are happy for the interview to be audio-recorded for recall purposes – is that still OK with you? Thank-you - I am turning on the recorder now.
-

Warm up

To start with, could you tell me about your role on the JPI and the work and groups you have been involved with?

The Fast Track Activity – Data Mapping or Understanding Employment of Older People

Q1. Thinking about the [DM or UEP] project, to what extent do you think this Fast Track activity has achieved its aims?

DM - to map the range of data sources on ageing at European and national levels;
- to examine whether there are any gaps in the available data infrastructure;
- to provide statistical agencies with user-driven feedback on data sources;
- to provide a comprehensive overview of where to find appropriate data for cross-disciplinary approaches and evidence-based decision-making in an ageing context.

UEP - to address the issue of employment participation amongst older workers;
- to compile a review of research, considering the broader economic and social context in Europe.

Q2. Do you have any comments on the development, content and governance of the DM or UEP project?

Q3. How are the outputs being used? [prompt re: any cross-country collaboration]

The JPI-MYBL as a whole

Q4. I would now like to move onto thinking more broadly about the JPI. Let's start with the **aims of the JPI as a whole** and the **extent to which you think these have been met**. I am going to take each of the five aims in turn:

- a) To develop a European Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) to identify research gaps, potential for alignment and joint activities. What progress has been made against this aim?
- b) To better coordinate national, regional and European activities relevant for demographic change. What progress has been made against this aim?
- c) To exchange best practice, pool expertise and financial resources, and carry out joint activities. What progress has been made against this aim? ?
- d) To gain understanding of demographic change through a cross-disciplinary and holistic approach. What progress has been made against this aim?
- e) To have an impact on national and EU agenda setting (for example Horizon 2020). What progress has been made against this aim?

Outputs of the JPI

Q5. Do you have any comments on the content and development of the ?

Q6. (If not already covered by Q4) Do you have any comments on the development and content of the Strategic Research Agenda? Has it helped to raise awareness of demographic change?

Engagement with stakeholders

Q7. How have relationships with relevant stakeholders been developed? How could this be improved?

Q8. How have JPI outputs been made accessible to policy makers and practitioners? (eg SRA, Data Mapping outputs, other reports, etc) How could this be improved?

Q9. Thinking about your own country, what impact has the JPI had on research, policy or practice? Has it helped to raise awareness?

And finally ...

Q10. Is there anything else you would like to say about the effectiveness and impact of the JPI More Years Better Lives? Thank-you very much for your time and help. The report of the first external evaluation should be available in a few months time.

Annex 4: Information provided on Hits to JPI MYBL Website

Usage summary for www.jp-demographic.

Annual Total	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-2014	
						Total increase	Total %
Hits	171,283	238,907	270,654	486,281	618,004	446,721	261
Files	136,097	202,167	241,954	302,897	414,984	278,887	205
Visits	10,463	20,437	28,037	31,781	55,383	44,920	429
Pages	29,897	48,663	69,476	155,684	209,633	179,736	601

#	Hits		KBytes		URL
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April 2014

4	659	0.86%	3838	0.06%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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May 2014

3	760	1.05%	4365	0.06%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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June 2014

4	452	0.78%	2407	0.05%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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July 2014

5	467	0.89%	3421	0.09%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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August 2014

3	513	1.07%	8861	0.26%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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September 2014

4	400	0.94%	8801	0.27%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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October 2014

5	425	0.94%	9400	0.29%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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November 2014

3	396	0.93%	8763	0.29%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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December 2014

5	353	1.02%	7768	0.36%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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January 2015

4	512	1.09%	11314	0.35%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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February 2015

3	516	0.94%	12450	0.19%	/about/strategic-research-agenda
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References

- 1) J-AGE Deliverable 6.1 – Type A indicators
- 2) J-AGE Deliverable 6.2 – Type B indicators
- 3) J-AGE D6.4 - 24 month monitoring report (final version)
- 4) J-AGE D6.3 - 12 month monitoring report (resubmission)
- 5) <http://www.the-sra.org.uk/documents/pdfs/ethics03.pdf>
- 6) http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/Researchanddevelopment/Researchgovernance/DH_4002112