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Supporting the preparation of future European Partnerships

Session A: Governance of and coherence among European Partnerships

- **Good examples already exist (Metrology, One Health, KDTs, Biodiversity, EOSC); new elements compared to the past; linking with scientific advice and broader stakeholders manageable**

- **More work (identifying good practice, spreading advice, making adjustments) is need with regards to links to other partnerships**

- **For the Cofunded partnerships it is important to understand how to link national and EU policies at the strategic level and how to reflect that in the governance structure at the strategic level, but then tactical level is the most difficult to structure**

- **Efforts need to concentrate mainly at the strategic level but also the valorisation of results (who to link to, how, for what purpose**

- **Shared principles: openness, transparency, fair reflection of role and responsibility in governance**

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Plans

Follow – up:

shared terminology and understanding of roles and responsibilities of EC, MS, industry

Specific activities for understanding pros and cons of each model and drafting concrete models for collaboration among partnerhsips

Better understanding of what we're doing, what impact we're creating

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Session: B Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas

Dimitri Gagliardi, Michael Dinges

Conclusions

INTRODUCTION

- The sessions included 6 presentations, critically reflecting upon SRIA development in relation to stakeholders involvement, general guidelines and prioritisation, synergies with Horizon Europe, and processes translating the SRIA into roadmaps or annual work plans.

- In all circumstances, SRIA development followed a structured processes, characterised by a broad range of underpinning justifications common characteristics among which were mapping exercises and stakeholder involvement, policy co-ordination, and flexibility.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

1) Mapping of their relevant domains for provision of inputs into their forward-looking strategy

2) Broad use of organisational structures such as advisory boards, governing boards and key stakeholders consultations.

3) Stakeholder involvement through various forms of open and targeted consultations OR co-creation approaches

4) SRIAS refer to policy priorities but tangible economic and social problems, and research needs which are eventually matched by policy priorities are at the core of SRIAS

5) Policy co-ordination for identification of topics that are relevant from both EU-MS perspective and EU-FP perspective

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'Guidance' - linked to SRIAs synergies with Horizon Europe.

Principles of directionality and additionality are at the core of the process:

- SRIAs are developed with a main pathway to impact in mind and more practical action plans are set out accordingly: bridging different academic and research domains, respond to policy needs, focusing their activities towards producing specific impact streams.

Issues of prioritisation emerged clearly from the majority of partnerships:

- Prioritisation strategies were not always clear and they were often changed according to pressures and emerging demands of the partnerships' R&I operations against high-level policy objectives (nationally and EU).

- From the presentations, and most prominently from the discussions, it emerged that substantial effort should be put into providing guidance on SRIAs and their directionality: The needs concerns mostly the link between the EU priorities and how/to what extent these may be backed up by partnerships and eventually delivered.

- In other words, early political agreement on priorities and funding are necessary to activate valuable dialogue and activate synergies.

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The main challenge in the translation of the mission and vision in a forward looking operational model, may that be a road map or an annual plan:

• Uncertainties related to future funding and policy coordination: How can a partnership design a roadmap, draw a long period plan or focus on the details necessary to achieve impact when there is uncertainty concerning resources and policy processes? These activities logically would be planned according to the resources available and not vice versa.

NEXT STEPS

• Critical importance should be put on 'Pathway to Impact' as a constant reminder of: "Where is impact coming from?" and work this in the SRIAs

• This would help tackle a problem which was picked up in several occasions:

• A gap between the high level partnership strategy (the strategic approach to mission and vision) and the application and operational actions

• Openness of the collective effort to translate the mission into strategic approaches and translate the strategic approaches into an action plan! Progress and achievments towards targets become somehow measurable.

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Results from the parallel session C: *Implementation of joint calls*

Highlights from the presentations and discussions

Minimum requirements
- EC: 1) More impactful and open/transparent partnerships, 2) Co-funded calls will have to be implemented on the basis of clearly defined criteria (more or less the same criteria as for previous FPs), ensuring the eligibility of costs
- Funding agencies: continuation for H2020 rules anticipated, however, more flexibility for the ranking list foreseen, observer's usefulness questioned
- Company view: 2-step evaluation is seen essential
- Ministry view: Wish for a more homogenous pattern for all partnerships, comparable to the H2020 FP calls, with a common management structure and low number of additional activities
- Art 185 view: 1) A common framework with EC rules preferred, but to achieve the chosen objectives, certain flexibility and adjustments & step wise improvements are still needed, 2) Virtual common pot is important: National funders are free to commit budgets, add more as required

Specific challenges identified so far
- Openness: what does it mean? 1) Openness at the partnerships level, 2) Open calls – internal and project calls for researchers? EC distinction: you are either a RFO or RPO, but not both!
- A major challenge is a need for more staff and funds
- COM expectations towards national commitments are too high – also possible to join with lower budgets?
- Timeline and transparency of the preparation process: MS need more information now about the plans of the new partnerships and responsible persons in order to make commitment decisions

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Next Steps

If something needs to be improved?

- EC: Need for 1) continuous openness for joint calls, 2) increased quality and inter-operability of data produced during joint calls, 3) ambitious and long-term commitment for call contributions

- Funders/ secretariats: No major changes; professional call secretariats are still needed to run the calls to keep the developed standards of call processes, but more flexibility for the ranking list is desired (example Eurostars), observer's usefulness also questioned

- Ministry: There is a need 1) to agree about the standards in a holistic approach on how to manage the initiatives (a common management structure), 2) for a homogenous pattern of joint calls in all partnerships, 3) for same ICT call management system and dissemination tools, same calendar and rules with low number of travelling and additional activities – but what is the added value of the partnership then?

Possibilities for commonly agreed rules & procedures

- Professional secretariats and learned procedures for call management

- ERA-LEARN has contributed to standardization of joint calls by collecting best practises and providing learning possibilities https://www.era-learn.eu/support-for-p2ps/implementing-joint-calls

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Session D: Activities and contributions beyond joint calls

Conclusions and messages

- EC message: joint activities are not creative enough until now; partnerships need to think out of the box in order to create the expected impact

- Measurable impact needs to be defined on the level of the individual partnership

- There have been valuable activities in the past but partnerships need to create tools for the uptake of their results

- Examples of activities defined so far:

  - Scientific support to policies

  - Data management

  - Training and dissemination for a better uptake of results/ knowledge transfer

  - Mobility schemes

  - …

- Note: Examples of Joint Activities available on ERA-LEARN (SRIA, Stakeholder Involvement …) https://www.era-learn.eu/support-for-p2ps/joint-activities

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Next Steps/ what is needed

- Learn from existing experiences/ examples that worked well (e.g. Fast track projects, research infrastructure)

- Take criteria for new partnership approach into account

- New approach at national level is needed to enable the new ambition

- We need to establish the consortia with the relevant partners (e.g. also from the private sector) and the governance structures that are able to implement activities

- Guidelines would be helpful (with enough flexibility for governance, consortium etc.)

- We need the resources to generate the demanded impact from the additional activities. On national level it is easier to get money for the calls than for other activities. We have to be ambitious but realistic!

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Conclusions

- **Complexity of partnerships is increasing and requires a proper financial management**

- **Flexibility required to react on emerging issues**

- **Difficulties of some partners to understand allocation of resources inside the consortium (black box)**

- **Difficulty to commit for long-time periods**

- **Important role of the coordinator, high administrative burden and resources required**

- **Openness vs. internal calls**

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Next Steps

- **Definition of what can be included as in-kind contributions**

- **Develop models for simplified financial management and reporting**

- **Special case of consortia including RFOs and RPOs in one partnership requires clarifications**

- **Address the situation of smaller countries with limited financial resources / clarify use of structural funds**

- **In general more guidance / templates / examples required**

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Session F: Creating synergies between different funding sources at regional, national and European level

Conclusions

- Synergies in H2020 – missed opportunity. **We need to get it right in Horizon Europe to ensure impact.**

- Synergies are not only ERDF, but **ALL other relevant programmes at EU, national and regional level**!

- We can learn from good practices existing/ being piloted currently (Synergies Label, Mobilitas+, with regions…) ← **more systematic collection of good practices needed for synergies in the context of P2Ps**

- We should not get stuck in technicalities (legal), but **be more focused & proactive on what we want to achieve (not just about top up)**!

- Synergies need to be **complementary** and **coherent** (think 'value chains', strategic planning). A lot of parallel activities, we need more converenge

- Synergies need to be **incentivised** (what can DG REGIO and R&I do about it?)

- Information gap across all stakeholders, and coordination problem levels

- Synergies need **a lot of work** and effort from all sides (e.g. Action Plan, 'individual solutions' for Widening)

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Next Steps
[Finalisation of negotiations of related provisions]

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- Tools for Synergies' (to fill the knowledge gap for partnerships with MS)

Countries / regions:

- Map HE priorities (incl. partnership candidates) when developing your OPs and S3 strategies, align.

- Fine-tuning of synergies provisions (clarify, e.g. transfer of funds).

- Improve national coordination, e.g. use NCPs to consult on synergies; bring national regional, thematic funders to same table.

COM:

- think of incentives for synergies (e.g. conditionalities)

- facilitate programming of synergies: map and incentivise partnerships thematically to discuss with each other.

- Guide how to translate legal provisions into practice (e.g. country desks).

Partnerships -

- think of ambitious and novel ways how programme synergies (action plan, living labs, pilots); plan (human) resources to it! For impact plan synergies close to market (IA).

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Thank you.