

H2020 Policy Support Facility

**Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE)
on Alignment and Interoperability of Research Programmes
National Coordination**

Report No 4

Communication Flows and Visibility of JPP

April 2017

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1 Introduction

This is the fourth of five reports that will be produced as the main deliverables of the Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE) on Alignment and Interoperability of Research Programmes. It is concerned with the role of 'Communications Flows and Visibility' for a more efficient and effective participation in the Joint Programming Process (JPP)¹ including Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) and other public-to-public partnerships (P2Ps).

The report builds on a Challenge Paper on Communication Flows and Visibility, as well as the results of a self-assessment exercise and the feedback provided by participating countries at the MLE workshops held on 16 and 17 February 2017 in Oslo. More specifically, it provides a self-assessment framework for Member States to better identify strengths and weaknesses of the national R&D system and scope for improvement.

The Report focuses on the five Key Communication Factors that Member States have recognised to enable alignment and interoperability, namely:

- *Communication within the P2P-community (C1)*
- *Communication to impact other sectoral policies (C2)*
- *Communication to attract researchers (C3)*
- *Communication to reach out to end-users and other stakeholders (C4)*
- *Communication to build political support (C5)*

Each of the key factors is discussed with their barriers and illustrated with examples of good practice. This is followed by some general conclusions on 'opportunities for improvement' with more specific ideas on country-specific actions that have been inspired by the MLE.

Two other specific reports (considering the other key factors related to 'National Preconditions' and 'National Governance Structures' have been produced based on the Country Visit workshops in Austria (16 October 2016) and in Slovenia (15 December 2016) respectively. Due to the interdependence of the topics there is naturally some overlap, in particular between the report on governance structures and the one on communication. Since the three reports were conceived as self-standing publications, some of the examples referred to in the governance report will reoccur here; also to allow for a convenient reading of each report. A final report of this MLE will be produced and build on the analysis of the three topic-specific papers.

2 Methodology

A self-assessment framework has been developed as a learning tool to allow each participating country to carry out a customised analysis of the five factors related to Communication Flows and Visibility that enable alignment and interoperability. The self-assessment framework allows the user to:

- *Describe the current national situation and rate its degree of alignment with each of the Key Communication Factors (score 1 – 5)*
- *Consider the barriers to improvement of the communication activities and the degree of difficulty in overcoming them (very low, low, medium, high, very high)*
- *Propose opportunities for improvement based on the self-assessment and peer learning during the workshop*

Ten country representatives completed the self-assessment table for their country (Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and Turkey). The assessment framework is used as a learning tool, to help individual countries to consider where and how they can improve alignment and interoperability. The self-assessment conclusions of each country are not published, as they are elaborated by only a small number of national representatives and as such do not represent an "official" self-assessment.

¹ Throughout the report the terms 'JPP' and 'joint programming' are used in the widest sense to include not only the JPIs but also other P2Ps such as ERA-NETs and Article 185 initiatives. This terminology was agreed amongst MLE-participants.

The self-assessment tool MLE Alignment and Interoperability: Communication Flows and Visibility

Alignment Factors PRECONDITIONS		Degree of Alignment					Self Assessment				
		1	2	3	4	5	National Situation	Score for Alignment	Barriers to Improvement	Score for Barriers	Scope for Learning & Improvement
C1	Communication within the P2P-community	No forum of exchange among the members of the P2P-community				One or several fora involving the entire P2P-community	Briefly describe the national situation	1-5	What would be the main barriers to improvement	1-5	What do you think could be done to improve that national situation?
C2	Impact on sectoral policy	No, or only sporadic/infrequent, communication among relevant ministries				Regular and systematic communication and consultation with all relevant ministries	Briefly describe the national situation	1-5	What would be the main barriers to improvement	1-5	What do you think could be done to improve that national situation?
C3	Attraction of researchers	Basic information only				Effective means of communication to ensure high degree of participation	Briefly describe the national situation	1-5	What would be the main barriers to improvement	1-5	What do you think could be done to improve that national situation?
C4	Outreach to stakeholders	No systematic contact with industry and other stakeholders				Regular and systematic engagement with industry and other stakeholders	Briefly describe the national situation	1-5	What would be the main barriers to improvement	1-5	What do you think could be done to improve that national situation?
C5	Building political support	No systematic contact with policy makers				Regular and systematic dissemination to, and engagement with, policy makers	Briefly describe the national situation	1-5	What would be the main barriers to improvement	1-5	What do you think could be done to improve that national situation?

3 Key Factors for the improvement of communication flows and visibility

Five Key Communication Factors are considered below in more detail. Each of them is discussed by providing an introduction, followed by an overview of the main results of the self-assessment and a summary of the main barriers encountered by Member States. It then highlights some good practices examples and concludes with a general overview of opportunities for improvement. Country-specific opportunities for improvement that were inspired by participation in the MLE can be found in Section 0.

3.1 Communication within the JPP community

The first Key Communication Factor concerns the communication flows inside the JPP community. It serves three main goals: First, to ensure seamless decision-making on all matters concerning the JPP; to coordinate research activities and to align research priorities; and finally, to enable national parties of the JPIs to communicate their common interests.

Communication within the JPP community includes the GPC, representatives of all JPIs, in some countries representatives from other ministries and agencies (in as much as they are involved in the work of JPIs), as well as officers/units overseeing policy making for research funded by ERA-NETs, Article 185 and Horizon 2020.

The main communication channel for this type of communication is face-to-face meetings, as they would promote the creation of a tightly knit JPP community with a shared understanding of the process, actors and priorities.

- *Overview of the results of the self-assessment tool:*

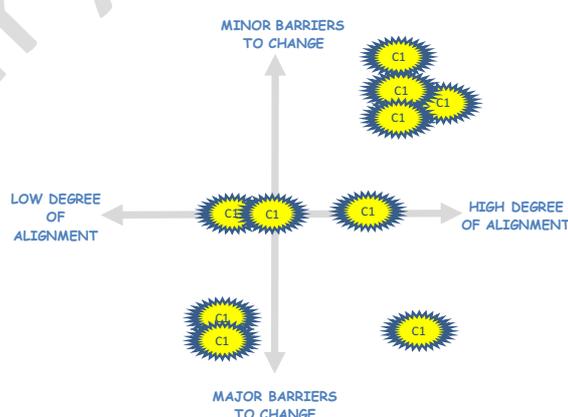
The self-assessment of MLE partners regarding their communication within the JPP community differs significantly. Well aligned countries share information at working level among different strands of JPP activity (e.g. H2020, ERA-Nets) on a regular basis. There is significant variation among them as to the level of detail and the strategic orientation of the information. In less aligned countries, the existing communication flows are either not specifically dedicated to JPP issues or do not include all strands of JPP work.

Views on the barriers to change are also wide spread. Countries with dedicated JPP governance structures tend to see less barriers for further improvements.

- *Main barriers to change:*

The main barrier to improve joint programming communication flows is the lack of a dedicated governance structure for strategic decision making (Key Governance Factor G1)², for coordination between ministries (G2) and for coordination between ministries and agencies (G4), as well as low political commitment (P1).

Where such a structure or elements thereof do not exist, communication is dependent on personal contacts, on ad hoc exchange or information flows in other forums. In such cases officers can also be easily burdened by outside requests for information and other tasks, which might otherwise be dealt with by other parts of the governance structure. The presence of the aforementioned Key Factors also supports further learning and improvement within the JPP community.



² Reference to Key Preconditions and Key Governance Factors is made by P and G respectively, followed by the number of the factor in Reports No. 3 and No. 4.

In countries with a dedicated governance structure barriers to further improvement are considered to be non-existent or low. They pertain mainly to institutional culture, which would be required to change.

- *Good practice examples:*

The good practice examples show that the creation of a dedicated JPP governance structure is key for having smooth communication flows and for improving them in the middle and long term.

In **Austria** the "JPI Gruppe Österreich" meets usually before GPC meetings or as required. It consists of national JPI representatives, experts from the relevant funding agencies, and is chaired by the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (BMWFW). The intention of these meetings is to exchange information, share experiences and collect positions for the GPC.

In **France**, the French representatives in a JPI Governing Board would typically be one person from the Research Council ANR and one person from one of the five so-called national research Alliances (thematic clusters of research centres and universities). Alongside the official JPI Governing Board (GB) each individual Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) has a Mirror Group.

The JPI Mirror Groups are chaired by the JPI Governing Board members, coordinated by the Ministry for Higher Education and Research (MESR), and include representatives from other sectoral Ministries (Health, Environment, Agriculture, Culture), specific RPOs and in some cases, other funders or private sector representatives. The involvement of sectoral ministries varies and depends on their own internal R&D policy capacity and budgets. Almost 90% of all RDI budgets in France are run by MESR so the strategic involvement of other Ministries is not always easy to achieve. The Mirror Groups are not (yet) formalized. They typically meet twice a year.

The main function of the Mirror Group is to share information and to agree on the position of ANR as the voting representative of France in JPI GB. Some Mirror Groups such as for Environment do not only cover JPIs but all European initiatives in its thematic area (with a goal of priority setting and of dedicating budgets to transnational calls). In addition to communication the Mirror Group also allows for the involvement of other Ministries in the discussion on priority research topics and interesting outcomes of research projects.

In **Germany** a voluntary working group with all funding agencies involved in JPPs, meets three to four times a year. The meetings provide the opportunity for best practice exchange on JPP management such as the implementation of joint calls, financial management, training of researchers or mapping of programmes. The group also serves as a bidirectional exchange forum: the ministry that is responsible for the coordination of JPP is involved in the meetings and informed on the implementation of activities. Practitioners are updated about current discussions on JPP policy.

Norway: One forum involving people from all ten JPIs and the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan meet every month to exchange information about recent development and ideas for mutual learning. The participants are one person per JPI representing Norway in the JPIs Governing Board at agency level. The meetings are chaired by the Research Agency's JPI-coordinator (who is also representing Norway in the GPC). The same group of people plus the experts working with ERA-NETs at agency level meet four times a year. These meetings are chaired by the Research Agency's ERA-NET coordinator.

- *Opportunities for improvement*

The main road to improving communication flows within the JPP community is through establishing a dedicated JPP governance structure. While the specific configuration of this structure will depend on the

situation and requirement of each country, it shall include all relevant actors from the research ministry and agency, from ministries with responsibility for policy making in other domains (no matter whether they have or do not have a role in research funding). It could also include the relevant stakeholder groups, which could, however, also be organised in separate JPI-specific advisory bodies (see the example of Norway under in section 3.4).

3.2 Communication to impact other sectoral policies

This Alignment Factor shows the extent to which the formation and implementation of socio-economic policies (other than research) is linked to the JPP. The way that communication is geared towards other ministries to impact policy making in their domains is to an extent dependent on the national governance model, specifically the coordination between ministries across policy domains (G2). Two archetypical models can be distinguished: (a) in a centralised model – e.g. France – one ministry (or agency) is clearly in charge of taking all decisions regarding JPP including their funding, while other ministries are merely informed but do not take part in the decision making; (b) in a decentralised model – e.g. Austria and Sweden – several ministries (and at times agencies) are involved in the JPP decision making processes (and at times funding).

Communication in this context aims mainly at making sure that the results of the JPP-funded research find their way into policy making addressing societal challenges, which is in most countries formulated and implemented by other ministries/agencies than those holding the research and/or innovation budgets. Two other goals of communication – consultation to get input from JPP instruments, as well as learning and exchange of best practices among them – have so far been less prevalent among the MLE participants.

The main actors to communicate with are ministries addressing societal challenges, specifically agriculture, health, transportation and energy, depending on the portfolio of the different ministries in each country.

The main communication channels for this type of communication appear to be, in addition to written electronic correspondence, face-to-face meetings. They allow to build the acquaintance and trust necessary to gain the support at working and political levels.

- *Overview of the results of the self-assessment tool:*

Most countries give themselves middle to low scores for their communication to impact other sectoral policy domains. This is typically a Communication Alignment Factor that is highly dependent on a country's governance structure, including the degree to which sectoral ministries have a mandate, a budget and competences to address issues of research and innovation. Well aligned countries have a dedicated organisational structure that includes other ministries.

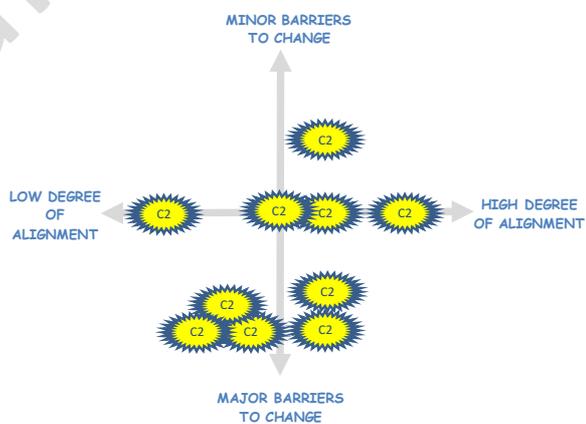
Most countries consider this to be a factor that is rather challenging to change (middle to major barriers).

- *Main barriers to change:*

Apart from the governance issues highlighted elsewhere, there are two main barriers to change: on the one hand, a missing link between the national research strategy (and programmes – P1) and the JPP; on the other, a limited commitment from other ministries. Related to the latter is the fact that there is hardly an evidence base to convince ministries of the relevance of JPP, as so far no country has systematically evaluated the impact of JPP on policy making and/or innovation more generally (G6).

- *Good practice examples:*

In Austria and Sweden – both representing the decentralised model – communication with sectoral ministries will start in the early stages of planning and decision-making about the JPP and the specific JPIs. The ministry funding the JPI is often representing the country in the Governing Board and, thereby, timely information about goals, progress and output is not an issue. Moreover, they are able to shape the specifics of the research work to a certain extent. Finally, the ministry whose funds are used has an incentive to make



sure the research is relevant and will be used for policy making. Austria and Sweden have JPP inter-ministerial groups at working level where some of the relevant ministries exchange information on JPP (and H2020) developments.

In countries with a more centralised governance model the setting is different, as the following good practice examples show.

In **Estonia** each ministry has a Scientific Counselor. Communication between them and the research ministry/agency is frequent and consistent. Together with scientific ambassadors (well known researchers) the Counselors help the research ministry to promote JPI and their ERA Co-Fund approach to involve sectoral ministries. For some topics – e.g. Marine science – the JPI and Article 185 initiative BONUS are the only thematic programs, which help communication with the relevant ministry.

In **France** the Mirror Groups allow for an early and continuous involvement of sectoral ministries. While the participation of other ministries at working level is rather effective, it remains a challenge to reach the attention of the political level in those ministries and make sure the research results find their way into policy making.

In **Norway** the sectoral ministries have responsibility for the respective JPIs within their remit. While the different ministries have a regular meeting on research and innovation (DFU), coordinated by The Ministry of Education and Research, the relations between ministries and ‘their’ JPIs varies: one JPI has a regular inter-ministerial meeting before the JPI-MB meeting, some have informal meetings in advance of JPI-MB meetings, and yet other have no such meetings before the JPI-MB meetings. The goal is to have inter-ministerial groups connected to all the relevant JPIs.

Portugal has been having Inter-ministerial Boards serving as high-level platforms to discuss specific challenges. This model could be used to address societal challenges and its research and innovation policy challenges through the use of JPP instruments, but has so far not been activated for this specific purpose.

- *Opportunities for improvement:*

A more integrated and inclusive approach is needed to make sure that research results find their way into the policy making addressing societal challenges. Ideally, this would be embedded within the national R&I strategy and associated governance system (close link to P1 and G4).

The main approach to improve the existing communication to impact policy in other domains is to systematically include the relevant ministries/agencies from the beginning of the decision-making process. While the traditional approach might be called “end of the pipe”-approach – where other ministries are informed about the results and output of JPP instruments after the research work has been finalised – it seems to be advisable to involve the relevant policy actors early on in the policy cycle.

If communication to impact sectoral policy domains started “upfront”, through a consultation and deliberation or even a joint decision-making by all relevant ministries in the priority setting and planning phase, then chances are higher that the research results will find their way into policy making. Sectoral ministries would provide input to joint programming. If they also contributed to the funding of JPIs and participated in the governance, their “intrinsic” interest in applying research results would be even higher.

Finally, impacting sectoral policy domains also means to “go beyond” the dissemination of research results, ensuring mutual learning and exchange of best practices among all JPP instruments and all relevant ministries. It appears that so far no country has systematically addressed this issue of continuous learning and improvement.

3.3 Communication to attract researchers

This Alignment Factor reflects to what extent the research community is aware of, interested and participating in JPIs and in the JPP more broadly e.g. by supporting the creation of new JPIs.³

Sufficient interest among researchers is important to ensure a high quality of research and to yield research synergies, thus avoiding a duplication of research efforts. Raising awareness about JPP needs in some cases, where there is only little national funding available, be balanced with the consideration that too much awareness raising could lead to too many submitted proposals, out of which only a few can be funded, which in turn might frustrate researchers and imply less interest for the next round. Moreover, most MLE participants considered it helpful to inform researchers about the differences and particularities of JPP research e.g. in comparison to a funding obtained through Horizon 2020, which many researchers are more familiar with.

This type of communication targets researchers of research performing organisations but also of other organisations that might benefit from taking part in JPP activities, such as industrial companies or end-users, e.g. hospitals, law enforcement and other agencies, infrastructure providers.

While the internet (websites, electronic newsletters and emails) has been the most common communication channel so far, events, face to face meetings and workshops are necessary to not merely raise the awareness among researchers but to systematically mobilise them for a comprehensive participation in the JPP (see also below the discussion of good practice examples).

- *Overview of the results of the self-assessment tool:*

All countries consider the communication to attract researchers to be rather well aligned.

They all provide information through websites, albeit not always in form of a single source of information. In addition, well aligned countries draw researchers in before joining a JPP activity and consult them on a regular basis.

The barriers to improvement are by a majority perceived to be medium to low, implying that it should be relatively easy to achieve some short- to medium-term changes.

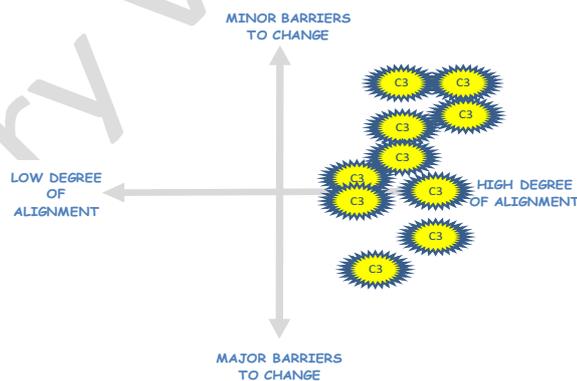
- *Main barriers to change:*

In as much as MLE participants mention barriers to change, they concern limited communication *between* different strands of joint programming, as closer cooperation could yield synergies in the communication with researchers. It implies that not all relevant researchers are well informed about all types of JPP activity and that communication in general is difficult to improve. In other cases, the existing contact details of researchers have not been consolidated yet in a single database, which hampers comprehensive and timely communication. An improvement would require additional financial investment.

- *Good practice examples:*

The usual practice to attract researchers includes one or several of the following elements: information, encouragement of collaboration, and consultation of researchers.

All countries provide information about joint programming, mainly electronically. This one-way communication is largely carried out through websites and newsletters circulated to email lists of interested researchers. Next to the ministry or agency responsible for JPP also individual JPI delegates participate in this kind of communication and e.g. update their research community regularly. While these communication channels are necessary to provide a basis of information about joint programming they do not allow for



³ Researchers could also be understood as a stakeholder group (see 3.4), yet there is a difference in the objective of communication between the two: while stakeholder communication is mainly concerned with ensuring impact of research and receiving input for research policy making, communication with researchers aims primarily at generating interest and awareness among researchers to take part in these research activities.

feedback or coordination of actions. These information activities are complemented by hosting events to raise awareness and to encourage networking among researchers.

In **Norway**, regular events to inform about the JPP include not only researchers but also end-users and other stakeholders. There is a strong emphasis on networking between these different groups and promoting the formation of mixed-working groups for the preparation of proposals and other joint activities.

The **Romanian** Ministry of Research and Innovation supports researchers in their efforts for successful participation in JPIs in two ways: First, EEA grants from the Bilateral Relations Fund are used for activities linked with successful networking: on the one hand, for support for the identification of potential partners from donor states and for the applicants in preparation and development of project proposals; on the other, for increasing the capacity, networking and exchange of best practices between Project Promoters and various entities from donor states. Second, the National Plan for Research Development and Innovation offers the possibility to fund different measures associated with good participation in JPI activities including official meetings, as well as the organization of JPI events in Romania. The first call is intended to be launched in 2017.

- *Opportunities for improvement:*

The communication with researchers appears to work rather well in most countries. Opportunities for improvement appear to lie in three areas: first, to systematically use all existing formats to inform researcher including e.g. the ERA Dialogue; to create greater transparency about the different funding instruments and their characteristics. In this context it is helpful if the national research programmes correspond/mirror rather closely to those agreed upon in the JPP. Finally, improvement could be achieved by complementing existing information activities by stronger elements of communication and consultation, which engage researchers throughout the policy cycle and encourage them to network beyond their established communities.

3.4 Communication to reach out to end-users and other stakeholders

This Alignment Factor reflects the extent to which end-users of JPP research and other stakeholders are approached and involved throughout the processes of planning of research, conducting it and disseminating its results.⁴

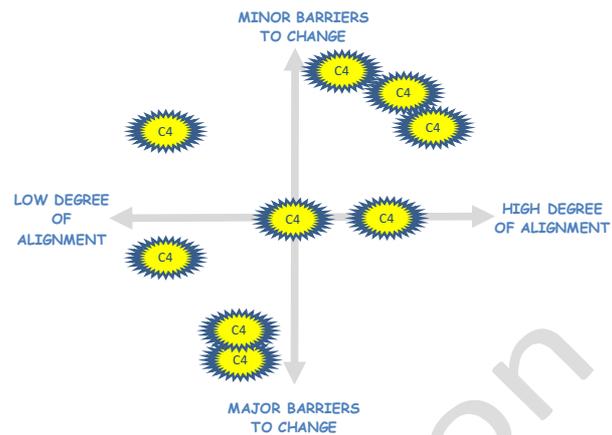
The primary objective is the broad and swift application of JPP research results in order to meet societal challenges. The communication aims at shaping solutions such as processes of production or new industrial products and services. Moreover, communication with end-users and other stakeholders at an early stage of the policy cycle would not only allow to raise their awareness but also to take their (research) priorities into account to shape the national JPP strategy. In this context the question arises to what extent the priorities of private actors should indeed be considered for policy decisions.

Target groups of this type of communication include end-users (e.g. public administrations and public services or hospitals), infrastructure providers, industrial companies or intermediaries such as regional development agencies or cluster organisations. The communication channels are events, face-to-face meetings and workshops to allow for the discussions necessary to build a common understanding of what is at stake and how the JPP can be used to achieve it. In any case, a targeted approach focusing on the central actors, seems to be most appropriate.

⁴ There is some overlap with the discussion of Governance Alignment Factor 5 (offering platforms for stakeholder involvement) of Report No. 3, where structure and setting for engaging different types of stakeholders are discussed. While there the focus is on stakeholder involvement in the early phases of the research programming cycle, this report concentrates on communication activities and on the entire policy programming process.

- *Overview of the results of the self-assessment tool:*⁵

There appear to be two groups of countries: on the one hand, those who consider their activities to be rather well aligned and see little barriers for communicating with end-users and other stakeholders; on the other, those, who consider themselves less well aligned and see rather high barriers to change.



In well aligned countries end-users and other stakeholders form part of established structures dedicated to JPP (“reference groups”) or to R&I policy making in general. So far the involvement has been mostly on an occasional basis. Several countries intend to communicate more systematically in the future.

- *Main barriers to change:*

The main barriers to change are structural and cultural. In most countries there is not a strong tradition of communication between the research policy and research communities, on the one hand, and industry and other end-users, on the other. Consequently, there is little familiarity with the rationale of working, the time horizons and vocabularies of end-users and other stakeholders, which differ significantly from those of researchers and research policy makers.

Moreover, governance structures, which are of particular importance for this Key Communication Factor, are missing. They concern structures to involve end-users and other stakeholders. In other cases, a missing link between the research ministry and the economy/industry ministry is seen as the reason, why communication to industry has been weak so far.

Finally, in some cases the relevant stakeholder groups are not known to the research policy community or stakeholders are considered not to be sufficiently motivated to join particular JPP activities.

- *Good practice examples:*

There is general agreement among most participants that there should be more communication towards end-users and other stakeholders. So far the practical experience is limited to a few examples.

Two approaches can be distinguished: in some countries, such as Portugal or Turkey, it is the ministry or agency responsible for the JPP that leads the communication activity. In this ‘centralised’ case the information is disseminated one-way to regional bodies or universities, which in turn approach their different stakeholder groups.

On the other hand, several MLE participants consider the outreach to end-users and other stakeholders to mainly be a responsibility of the JPP networks. While a ‘centralised’ communication could highlight the topic and character of societal challenge-driven research, it should primarily be JPP networks that reach out to ‘their’ end-user and stakeholders across the entire country. This can happen through the publication of JPI-related reports (Norway), active participation in JPP research (Norway) or the establishment of JPI-specific Advisory, Mirror or Reference Groups (in Norway, France and Sweden respectively), or Strategic Networking Platforms as in Austria.

⁵ Only nine countries assessed this Key Communication Factor.

*In **Austria** the pilots of “Strategic Networking Platforms” shall also include other stakeholders, such as end-user, social service- or infrastructure provider.*

*In **Denmark** the Ministry for Science and Higher Education uses the specialised reference groups for communicating relevant information. Academia, industry and ministries are represented in these fora. In addition, stakeholders in Denmark get involved through strong informal networking activities.*

*In **Portugal** there is an occasional engagement of stakeholders. However, a new policy instrument, the Public Participation Laboratories aiming at the involvement of scientific and higher education institutions, business, social and Cultural sectors and civil society in the design of R&I Agendas, may lead to a regular and systematic engagement with other stakeholders on JPP issues in the near future. The Laboratories were developed by the Ministry for Science, Technology and Higher Education and consist of regional open fora addressing all aforementioned actors to debate different possibilities to foster regional strategic development based on innovation, while reinforcing the partnerships between the higher education and scientific institutions of a region and its business community.*

*In **Norway** outreach to end-users and other stakeholders is mainly done at JPI level. Currently, each JPI is setting up an external Advisory Group. Its members are representatives from research institutes, industry, as well as public sector organisations. The Advisory Groups are to provide input to the representatives of the JPP Governing Board. Through their members they are linked to other relevant advisory groups e.g. H2020. In addition, each JPI produces once a year a national report on its activities and impacts, which can be used in all communication activities.*

- *Opportunities for improvement:*

The creation of JPI-specific groups consisting of different types of stakeholders offers an efficient way for a focused targeting of relevant end-users and other stakeholders. It builds on the interest of each JPI to ensure the impact of its research. Most countries can learn from the models of France (Mirror Groups) and Norway (Advisory Groups). In a further step, JPIs could start exchanging their experience and lessons learned from the engagement with different types of stakeholders.

3.5 Communication to build political support

This Alignment Factor shows the extent to which systematic measures are taken to ensure a stable and continuous support for joint programming amongst politicians and the society at large. The latter implies that relevant media and societal actors such as non-governmental organisations are informed and supportive of JPP research.

Communication in this context aims at gaining attention, raising awareness and spreading knowledge about joint programming and its significance to address societal challenges. Detailed information about the investments into and impacts of joint programming will help to communicate their significance for society. MLE participants consider it most important to show the “whole picture” of joint programming and to demonstrate its added value, e.g. regarding structuring/aligning effects, as well as other achievements.

Since both, ministries/research agencies and the JPP networks, can be involved in building support for joint programming, the JPP governance structure in a country has an impact on this Key Communication Factor. In countries where a number of ministries are involved in the planning, overseeing and financing of JPIs it is more likely that the political level of those ministries too, will also be susceptible to the communication about JPP. However, ‘centralised’ communication usually hits a ceiling at the ministerial management level, while some JPP networks enjoy access to the political level of the relevant ministry.

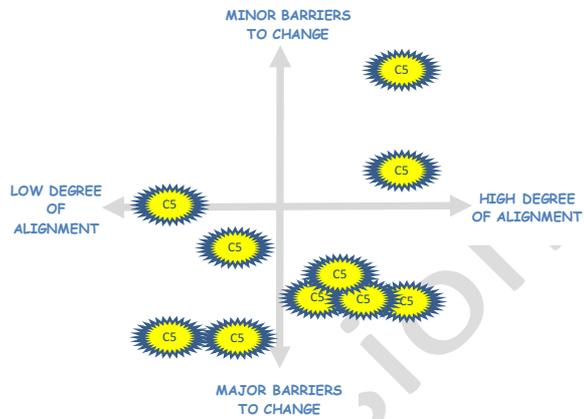
Target groups of this kind of communication include the political level of all ministries (including the ministry for research), members of national parliaments, the media and relevant societal groups, as well as the

European Commission, the European Parliament and other actors at European level. The communication channels can vary from face-to-face communication and workshops, to create initial awareness and interest, to targeted e-mailings to keep all actors up-to-date about recent developments.

- *Overview of the results of the self-assessment tool:*

The alignment of countries in their communication to build political support differs. Yet most countries see themselves with a middle to high degree of alignment. However, in most cases the communication with politicians and other actors is ad hoc or does not reach the political level but is rather limited to the policy level, i.e. the working level of ministries and agencies.

A clear majority of countries considers the barriers to change to be significant (medium to high). Countries with a high degree of alignment also regard the barriers to change as moderate to low.



- *Main barriers to change:*

There are two main barriers to change: It remains a challenge to translate JPP results into policy relevant facts and arguments demonstrating the added value or impact of joint programming. While the differences of culture and language are one issue, the lack of impact studies is another.⁶ Moreover, access to the political level in other ministries remains a challenge in most countries.

- *Good practice examples:*

While the importance of sustained political support is acknowledged among all MLE participants there is little practical experience with a systematic effort in this regards. Good practice combines communication with policy makers and society at joint programming instruments level with that at ministry or agency level. Moreover, the formulation of a national research strategy can support communication about JPP, as it provides a conceptual framework for orientation. Finally, a central repository of all relevant documents and a website presenting joint programming in an accessible manner are important channels for communicating with public, media and societal organisations.

Many JPIs are in the process of developing a dedicated communication capability. Some, such as Urban Europe or Antimicrobial Resistance consider this kind of communication to be a critical factor for the successful application of their research results and for tackling societal challenges. While they use websites and newsletters for basic information and updates, they also involve the public through events and large scale meetings gathering input and discussing research results.

The government of **Norway** adopted a “Strategy for research and innovation cooperation with the EU”, which outlines the country’s ways of active participation in the European Research Area including JPP. In addition, each JPI publishes an annual report about the progress of research. These reports are announced on JPI-dedicated national webpages that to a certain extent also demonstrate the impact that research has on society. As for the future, the plan is to arrange dedicated workshops and meetings involving the media and the public.

- *Opportunities for improvement:*

Any convincing argument about the benefits of joint programming requires solid input data and needs to be presented in an appropriate format and language. To provide reliable data calls for a systematic

⁶ For more details see the discussion in Report No. 3 on Key Governance Factor 6 (measuring impacts and dissemination of results).

measurement of the impacts that the JPP has. ERA-Learn could offer ideas for the development of a framework for such an evaluation.

In addition, building political support for joint programming should not follow the 'deficit model' of science communication, which holds that giving more information to a supposedly uninformed public will suffice to overcome their scepticism and criticism towards scientific research. The recent science communication literature points to the need to actively engage the public. To this end the JPP will in most cases be required to "piggy back" on other public engagement/participatory activities, given the cost of such processes.

In the current situation a targeted approach, focusing on selected politicians and the media seems to be more appropriate as a first step to ensure continuous political support for joint programming.

4 The way forward: opportunities for improvement

As discussed above, MLE participants used the learning and improvement framework to carry out an informal assessment of their national situation and barriers to improvement in relation to the five Key Communication Factors. This allowed them to consider their country's strengths and weaknesses and where there is most scope for learning and improvement. On this basis, an exchange of ideas took place during the country visit to Oslo in February 2017.

From the discussion five central messages emerged on how the topic of communication flows and visibility can be taken forward:

- *The main road to improving communication flows and raising the visibility of joint programming is through establishing and refining dedicated JPP governance structures. Governance structures should be set up or adjusted to facilitate regular, timely and tailored communication within the JPP community, to all relevant ministries, as well as end-users and other stakeholders.*
- *To increase the visibility of joint programming, communication activities are to be improved in close coordination with the JPP instruments that a country participates in. An increasing number of JPIs, in particular, are developing dedicated professional communication activities targeted towards researchers, ministries in their policy domain, or/and end-users and other stakeholders. They do so in the countries participating in the initiative and across the EU. Consequently, governments need to decide what contents to communicate "centrally" in their country and what kind of communication to leave to JPIs. Beyond setting up the relevant communication flows as part of the governance structure this includes e.g. contents relevant for all JPIs such as raising awareness about the JPP and how it fits into the wider landscape of research strategy of the country.*
- *In this context, a clarification of what joint programming is and what it stands for – possibly through the creation of some form of 'corporate identity' – will help to gain more visibility. While JPIs were originally not conceived as a single enterprise, they already share a certain 'brand' identity in that they all entail 'joint programming' in their names, indicating some sort of commonality. The commonality is foremost in funding first-rate research addressing a societal challenge. However, there is no agreement, even among experts, whether to present joint programming initiatives as a funding instrument or rather a policy framework. In the wider community, it is not well understood what 'joint programming' stands for, how the different JPIs are related, let alone what their link is to other instruments such as Article 185, ERA-Nets or Horizon 2020 would be. While some countries wish to clarify these differences, others do not.*
- *Communication to all target groups should in the future shift from one-way activities of information to two-way activities of consultation and engagement. While raising awareness about joint programming will remain of central importance in almost all countries, upcoming communication measures should actively seek input from target groups and also promote networking among them. This would also present one option of getting the attention of administrators at higher levels in (other) ministries, possibly including the political level.*
- *Increasing the visibility of joint programming with politicians, as well as with end-users and other stakeholders calls for particular attention and efforts. It not only involves the identification of the relevant actors and the appropriate access to them, but also requires an adjustment in terms of culture and language. Communication to these target groups requires to demonstrate impact on*

aspects as varied as research performance, competitiveness, regional development or employment. While some countries monitor the JPP in one way or another, a systematic evaluation with clear performance criteria still needs to be carried out.

The remainder of the chapter presents a summary of the main opportunities for change that were identified by each of the national representatives participating in the MLE workshop.

Austria

Austria scores average against the five Key Communication Factors and the barriers to improvement vary from low to high. The following possibilities for improvement were identified:

- *One option to advance the communication within the JPP community is to consider the involvement of H2020 delegates and H2020 National Contact Points (NCP).*
- *While the involvement of other sectoral ministries in the JPP works rather well, a national roadmap on challenge driven research – possibly akin to the ‘Strategy for research and innovation cooperation with the EU’, which outlines Norway’s means of active participation in the European Research Area including JPP – would help to make the efforts across government more consistent.*
- *To improve the communication with the political level of ministries a close contact between “JPI Gruppe Österreich” and the ministerial cabinets should be established.*
- *Concise and short "policy briefs" about JPP, addressing politicians, members of parliament and Austrian Members of the European Parliament could be prepared.*
- *In addition, it would be helpful to explore the possibility of a Year of Science. Like activities in Germany scientific institutions could present their contributions to research in a specific domain e.g. the futures of cities or digital society. The involvement of JPIs could be highlighted in this context or the general focus of the Year of Science could be on societal challenges.*

Denmark

Denmark has a medium to low score regarding most Key Communication Factors, while barriers are considered to be medium. The following improvements are suggested:

- *As for shaping other sectoral policies the improvements of the governance structures – a meeting of a cross-ministerial working group for JPP is planned for Spring 2017 – will certainly have a positive impact on the communication flows. Here it would be important to agree on regular information and feedback to the Ministry of Higher Education and Science.*
- *Moreover, JPIs should be encouraged to play a more active role in the communication with other sectoral ministries. It would be helpful to point their attention to this possibility and support an exchange of good practices among them on this topic.*

Estonia

Estonia scores medium to high on the Key Communication Factors. The barriers to change are considered to be medium to high too, in particular with regard to improving the communication with end-users and other stakeholders and with politicians. The focus of improvements is, hence, on these two factors, while communication within the JPP community and with other ministries works well, not least due to specific qualities of the governance structure such as the Scientific Counsellors.

- *To improve communication of JPP activities at national level other ministries will be engaged in a series of meetings. As a first step the Research Council will organize a meeting/workshop to start a discussion on the topic of JPP-related communication. It will be discussed how to best communicate about JPP towards the different stakeholder groups and which tools to use. In cooperation with different ministries, a common position on how to deal with this topic at national level could be formulated. The Research Council could foster the discussions between the ministries e.g. in sharing best practices and provide support e.g. using our communication channels.*
- *The Estonian Parliament holds a conference each autumn, the next one in October or November 2017. This year’s conference has as the general topic the “Introduction of scientific*

initiatives/programmes where Estonia is involved". This presents a great opportunity to show the importance of JPP.

- *Partnerships (including P2Ps) will be widely addressed during Estonia's presidency of the Council of the EU (July-December 2017). For example, it is one of the key discussion topics at the Informal Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Competitiveness (Research). National stakeholders are involved in the preparation of the meeting and will be informed about the results after the event.*

France

France's well established JPP governance structure enables effective communication and ensures a relatively high visibility of joint programming. While the alignment scores are medium to high, the barriers to change vary from high to low. Measures on improvement concentrate on gaining increased political support from across the government, in particular outside the Ministry of Research.

- *The possibility of setting an inter-ministerial structure for societal challenges should be explored. The objective would be to give other ministries more ownership, so that they would consider JPIs less of a Ministry of Research-issues, thereby increasing the chances for impact on policy making in other sectors.*
- *Moreover, an annual forum presenting societal challenges and how they are addressed through research may offer an opportunity to raise the visibility of joint programming. The format and scope of such a forum should be explored. For example, while the forum would address a variety of stakeholders, it needs to be seen whether this should be done by each JPP network or "centrally" for all of them.*

Norway

Norway has a well organised JPP framework, which in turn allows for effective communication flows and a relatively high visibility of joint programming. The scores of alignment are high to medium and the barriers to change are seen to be medium to low. Measures for improvement focus on the practical implementation and "quality assurance" of those structures and processes already in place or intended to be put into practice.

- *The communication flows, collaboration and coordination with other ministries is good, and there are plans to further improve on them.*
- *For the attraction of researchers and the outreach to end-users and other stakeholders the Advisory Groups that are currently set up play a crucial role. All groups should be established and get into an operational phase.*
- *As for the communication with politicians and the wider public, the focus will be on an improved understanding of the tools that are appropriate for this type of communication. The Research Council will study the experience shared through the ERA-Learn platform. In this context, the development of tools to measure the impacts of JPP is another priority action for Norway.*

Portugal

The self-assessment for Portugal varies from low to very high for the five factors. In particular, communication to attract researchers works well, which is key for a system that is strongly internationalised. The scores for barriers to change differ strongly too. Measures to improve the communication flows and visibility of JPP in Portugal are as follow:

- *Regular meetings with other Ministries to define common S&T Policies would help to overcome the lack of a formal inter-ministerial coordination of JPP activities.*
- *The recently introduced and implemented Public Participation Laboratories may be consolidated with a due consideration of ways for the integration of JPP in the communication strategy. This way the laboratories would help to communicate about JPP to a wide range of stakeholders and, potentially, to politicians.*

Romania

Romania's self-assessment shows scores from very high to very across the five factors. Communication to researchers and ensuring political support receive particularly high marks. Against this background, the following possibilities for improvement were identified:

- *The key priority for Romania, also from the perspective of communication flows and visibility, is the creation of governance structure for each JPI and later for JPP as whole. It will help communication within the JPP community and beyond.*
- *Currently, the JPP community is rather separated along the lines of the different instruments. One option to improve communication flows is to consider the involvement H2020 NCPs, as well as of the ERA NET COFUND contact points.*
- *As for communication shaping other sectoral policies, a cross-ministerial working group for each JPI as national mirror group will be set up, a measure already planned under ERA ROADMAP.*
- *As for the communication with politicians and the wider public, the focus will be on an improved understanding of the tools that are appropriate for this type of communication. The ministry of Research and Innovation will study the experience shared through the ERA-Learn platform.*

Slovenia

Slovenia has high and low scores on Key Communication Factors with a strong performance regarding communication to attract researchers and to build political support. Scores for communication within the JPP community, with end-users and other stakeholders and with other ministries are low. The lack of a dedicated JPP governance structure is the main barrier to change.

- *The priority for Slovenia, also from the perspective of communication flows and visibility, is the creation of governing structures for joint programming. Currently, the JPP community is rather separated along the lines of the different instruments. However, as ERA-NETs are part of H2020, having a functional national network of H2020 contact points would greatly enhance the current communication channels.*
- *In addition, there is a need for a coordinator of all JPP activities who would have an umbrella-like role over all initiatives/actions/projects. The person would coordinate common meetings, prepare yearly reports on JPP involvement and take care of communicating about joint programming towards all stakeholders.*

Sweden

Sweden scores medium to high against the five Key Communication Factors. Especially, the communication within the JPP community and with politicians, media and the wider public are assessed rather positively. The barriers to change are considered to be medium to low and only the outreach to stakeholders seems to pose a major challenge. Actions considered for improvement are:

- *Communication within the JPP community can be improved by developing the work modes, tasks, roles, strategic thinking of the Swedish JPP-group and the EU-Sam. In addition, the soon to be started national research programs will be included in the communication effort.*
- *Communication to impact sectoral policies of other ministries will be helped through more regular meetings between the various policy stakeholders involved in JPP in general, and within the recently set up inter-ministerial group that aims to develop a more common approach across departments.*
- *Efforts to attract more researchers will focus on a utilisation of the soon to be formed national programs, the working groups such as EU-Sam and an involvement of universities.*

Regarding the outreach to end-users and other stakeholders Sweden can learn from other countries, in particular from the JPI-specific Advisory Groups in Norway and the Mirror Groups in France.

Turkey

Turkey has medium scores for all five Key Communication Factors. The attraction of researchers is considered particularly well aligned with the requirements of the JPP. Barriers to change are considered to be medium across the board, with the exception of communication to politicians, the media and the public, where change is regarded to be specifically challenging. Turkey is seeking improvement on five Key Communication Factors:

- *The establishment of better communication channels within the national JPP community, in particular the relevant sectoral ministries is considered to be a priority.*
- *The involvement of other Ministries in the JPP requires that research and innovation policy is communicated to policy stakeholders outside the research and innovation policy domain. Early involvement of other ministries in the programming process will increase the likelihood that JPP research results will be considered for policy making.*
- *The NCPs, which are in-between researchers and other stakeholders, should in the future be used for communication to researchers too.*
- *To reach other stakeholders Turkey can improve communication about JPPs through the existing EU platforms, to which the Turkish stakeholders/organizations are affiliated or where Turkey has a right to attend such as in European Technology Platforms, SET Plan Working Groups, Programme Committee Meetings.*
- *As in other countries, the communication with the public at large, with the media and with politicians can benefit from information about JPP impacts, which requires, in turn, the development of indicators for international S&T cooperation in general and JPP in particular.*

Preliminary version