

**MLE Alignment and Interoperability  
of Research Programmes: "National Coordination"  
Phase I**

**MS contributions to the scope of the MLE  
07/07/2016**

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**1. Priority topics chosen by the GPC on the basis of answers to April's 2016 survey (See Annex I)**

National governance structures, preconditions for participation in JPP and communication flows and visibility.

**2. Scope proposed by MS:**

Sweden

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National governance structures:

Political awareness and engagement at a high level. All ministries that have stake in the area of a JPI are partly responsible for the development of the JPI and should insight and influence the governance. The ministries should be involved in a coordinated work by which the JPIs can be governed under a common overarching policy.

Preconditions for participation in JPP:

Political commitment. Agency responsible for representation in JPIs with enough resources and competence to fulfil this task. Funding structures that allow for multinational collaborations. A national research community engaged in the societal challenge at hand.

Communication flows and visibility:

It is crucial that every MS has an organization that supports communication flow between all parts and all levels in the country's research and research policy system. Only if this is accomplished the necessary information on such as best practice, difficulties, obstacles, solutions and experience that have obtained by the JPIs during their work will be transmitted to (i) other JPIs, (ii) other transnational collaboration initiatives, (iii) the government and (iv) to the EU (through the GPC). The likewise necessary information from political level in each country and from EU has to be communicated to the active JPI stakeholders on the national level.

France:

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France has already set up a mechanism for national coordination on JPIs (mirror groups) but I think it is relevant to exchange practice and knowledge about that. The issue of inter-ministerial is important, especially because JPIs are not only about research, but also about taking into account research results into public policies. For instance, in France, we have several programmes on nutrition, dementia, antibioresistance, etc. lead by relevant Ministries (agriculture, health...) but they do not always coordinate well with research programmes and taking the most recent results to concrete public policies. Of course this is also link with the issue of JPI visibility at national level among ministries and other actors : how to best involve relevant stakeholders and put JPIs high on

their agenda ? This is a question of policy making in which JPIs could have an important role but this has to be developed...

Another issue regarding national coordination in JPIs is the way countries decide on priorities for national research programmes. As JPIs suppose a top-down approach, it could be interesting also to share practice on how to "choose" priority topics and develop top-down programmes for funding research...

Slovenia:

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Major policy challenge to be addressed:

There are many 'general' national policy challenges that also affects joint programming but can not be solved within this MLE. Major one is a lack of specific national policies addressing societal challenges that would lead to oriented/specialized financing of transnational research instruments related to societal challenges (JPIs, ERA-NETs, A.185...). For more intensive and efficient involvement of Slovenia in JPIs also the system of research financing should be adapted, besides increasing of research funds.

But we do need a general awareness raising of the Joint Programming and the JPIs as the awareness and commitment to the Joint Programming Process in the context of ERA and the common national policy for the JPIs could be improved. Slovenia has been through several changes of the government and before 2012 there was a great understanding of the Joint Programming and desire for cooperation in all JPIs, at least in the form of observers as paying fees has always been an obstacle for us, due to insufficient resources. But since 2012 not much effort was put into JPIs at least until 2015, when we started with awareness raising and recruitment of other Ministries. With adaptation of the new GPC mandate the GPC delegate now also acts as a national JPI coordinator and setting a model for coordinating 5 JPIs<sup>1</sup> and specifying the role of Slovenian Research Agency is needed. In February 2016 a meeting with representatives of JPIs Slovenia is involved in was organized by GPC delegate and they all find it very useful and wish to continue with that kind of coordination.

What to be learned?

- ① How to set up a model for management, administration and funding of the JPIs? How is this done in other countries participating in this MLE?
- ② How to design a good system (e.i. Norwegian), taking into account the limited human and financial resources?
- ③ How to correlate Strategic Research Agendas of the JPIs that we are involved in (or at least the ones where we have participated in the preparation of SRAs) with national system of research funding?

Expectation towards the MLE:

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<sup>1</sup>Slovenia is involved in:

JPI JPND: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

JPI CLIMATE: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

JPI MYBL: Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

JPI HDHL: National Institute of Public Health

JPI URBAN EUROPE: Slovenian Research Agency

At the end of MLE we would like to achieve:

- ①raised status of the Joint Programming and JPIs at national level (toward joint responsibility among ministries)
- ②placed structure for national governance of the JPIs (or even all P2P partnerships)
- ③design for quality management of JPIs, whereby the quality management also requires the design for development of monitoring and evaluation system
- ④exchange of practices how to increase cooperation between national research institutes that are/can be solving grand challenges (taken into account that there is no institutional funding)

Portugal:

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The decision of a Member-State (MS) to participate in any given instrument of the European Joint Programming Process (JPP) - which includes ERA-NET, JPI, JTI, EJP, CSA, and other instruments - is always a voluntary one. The decision making process is based, many times, on national strategic agendas, perceived added-value in the international cooperation in a given area, recognition of economies of scale, or the need of creation of critical mass in a given challenge that is common to a large number of the Member-States.

It is recognized that the success of the JPP relies on the dedication of the individual MS, which together agree on a number of targets, procedures and amount of funding necessary to, collaboratively, overcome a designated challenge. However, it is not clear how this decision-making process is carried out in different MS, and which are the factors that influence the decision to participate – or not – in a given instrument. At European level, we only see the final result of that political decision – to participate or not to participate – and can never clearly understand the process that lead to that final decision.

Therefore, PT believes that an insight into the decision-making process, and into the criteria that each MS uses when deciding when or where to participate in the JPP is quite useful to understand the successes and mishaps of the different instruments, and more importantly, it is a fundamental tool to design new instruments, or to adjust the existing ones, so that the commitment of the MS is as high as possible. In this regard, the Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE) seems to be an adequate way to delve into the issue, and identify a number of characteristics that each instrument of the JPP should have in order to guarantee the political (and financial) support of the MS. Therefore, and taking into consideration the topics that were identified under “National Coordination”, PT strongly supports the focus on the “National preconditions for participation in JPP”, expecting that the result of the MLE will be, as already mentioned, a list of characteristics that each instrument of the JPP should have, in order to maximize the political and financial support of the MS.

Underlying this focus on the national preconditions for participation in the JPP is the perception that the short to mid-term success of the European collaborative instruments is best achieved by adjusting those instruments to the common priorities, characteristics and procedures that are implemented in the different MS, and not by trying to change the national governance structures, or the national decision-making and evaluation process. In fact, the national governance structures for science and technology, or the involvement of different ministries in the development and implementation of a national strategic agenda for a given area is the result of a historical process that, throughout the decades, has shaped the way each State is organized, taking into account its history, its culture, its economy, its geography, and all other factors that helped define the modern nation state. Therefore, if we use the MLE on Alignment and Interoperability to know the different

national governance structures that influences the participation of the MS in the JPP, there is the risk of not being able to make a fruitful use of the knowledge we would gather. In fact, during the MLE we could identify a number of models, practices or procedures that could make a significant contribution to the advancement of the alignment and interoperability among the MS involved in the JPP, but would then face a serious difficulty in adapting those models to the national realities – that are dependent, as previously mentioned, on historic, political and economic characteristics that make the application of the model or procedure either impossible, or dependent on profound adaptations that might jeopardize the original spirit and perceived benefits of that model. Therefore, this does not seem to be the correct approach to the challenge, and not the most fruitful use for an MLE.

Estonia:

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On the priority topic „National Coordination“, we support the PT opinion that it would be interesting to find out more about decision-making processes carried out in different MS and factors influencing the final decision to participate (or not) in JPPs. Therefore, we also support the focus area “National preconditions for participation in JPP” and agree with the PT proposition to identify through MLE a number of characteristics what each instrument of the JPP should have in different MS in order to guarantee the political and financial support by MS.

As there are very many different programmes, initiatives, networks etc. initiated by EU and there are some overlaps between the programmes (e.g. water as priority area is addressed in several programmes) would be interesting also to find out if and how it is considered and if it affects the MS decisions to participate in JPPs (this topic is at the same time connected to focus area “Co-operation with other ministries”).

We also see that one of the key elements for the successful implementation of JPPs is good communication and visibility. Therefore, we firmly support the focus area “Communication flows and visibility”. Further development of implementation of JPPs at national level and continuous visibility and promotion of JPPs is rather important for fully implementing the JPPs at MS. A part of this process is definitely a national communication strategy of JPPs, therefore would be beneficial to find out which type of activities have been done, which communication channels have been used and how the communication is fostered (e.g. between different ministries), how the national mirror groups work at different MS. This focus area is therefore partially covering also the focus area “Co-operation with other ministries”.

Austria:

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1. National preconditions for participation in JPP
  - a. How does an optimal national framework (legal, etc ) look like?
  - b. What are decision criteria for participation in new JPIs?
  - c. How can it be guaranteed that these objective criteria are not overruled by subjective or organisational interests?
  - d. How can running JPIs be assessed to channel national money flows?
  - e. How to ensure sufficient national commitment?

2. Communication flows and visibility on national level
  - a. How to reach/address the national high policy level?
  - b. How to include national non-RTDI players (the Public; multipliers; end user, societal actors etc)?
  - c. What are successful participation models to include them?
  - d. How to disseminate the JPI output and impact to the public, policy or other relevant stakeholders?
  - e. How can JPI results be transformed into policy actions?
  - f. How to create convincing evidence for the impact achieved?
  
3. National governance structure.
  - a. What are national good practices for JPP coordination structures in an existing national innovation system?
  - b. What are JPI friendly national eco systems?
  - c. How can a cross ministerial decision making be realised?
  - d. How can national JPI monitoring be guaranteed with different responsible ministries?
  - e. How to guarantee long-term or up-front commitment?
  - f. Are there best practices where the national JPP is best linked with the national Smart specialisation strategy?
  - g. How to decide which aspects of a topic should be funded nationally and which parts should be done on the European level? How can the national and European level be aligned / connected better to achieve highest benefit for all.
  - h. Are there lists of arguments existing, why multilateral cooperations are better than bilateral ones?

## Norway

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JPIs are established to coordinate ongoing research on great societal challenges between participating MSs and ACs. Such coordination is demanding because of differences in research policy and structure in the participating countries. It is made utterly difficult because the topics addressed is of cross-disciplinary nature, covering the remits of responsibility of several ministries. Enhanced national coordination will benefit the transnational cooperation in the JPIs, and thereby the possibility to find solutions to the challenges in question.

For a MS to be supportive of the JPI it has decided to participate in, several consideration should be made. The questions below tap into the priority topics mentioned: "national governance structures", "preconditions for participation in JPP" and "communication flows and visibility"

- 1) **Basically:** Is there a strategy on the challenge at hand? Is there research going on on the issue? Should there be for participation to take place? This would be a great benefit for the JPI in question, and make it easier for national stakeholders to see their responsibility/get involved. Is there an overall strategy for international research cooperation, or for participation in JPIs?
  
- 2) **At the ministerial level:** Does the ministries responsible communicate and cooperate on the issue (strategically and financially)? Is one ministry in charge? How is the communication with the other ministries that should be involved, and especially with the ministry of research? How is the communication between the ministries and the research council(s)? Is the financing of the research directed through the research council, or directly to the performing R&D-institutions? Is there a national coordination of the financing?

- 3) **At the research council(s) level:** How is the communication between the research council(s) and the relevant ministries regarding strategy and financing? How is the JPI managed in relation to the national programmes / projects on the issue? If several research countries are involved, how do they communicate on this? How does the research council(s) communicate with the scientific community performing research on the challenge at hand? Are the research council(s) managing national networks/platforms/advisory groups related to the JPI?
- 4) **At the research performing level:** is there national cooperation/networking between the different research actors on the issue? Between the ones being directly funded from ministries and the ones receiving grants in open calls? How is the industry and/or public sector involved?

**Expectations:** Increased knowledge and awareness of the importance of national communication, coordination and cooperation on these issues within a MS/AC, as well as information on how this is dealt with in other MS/AC is important. It will hopefully lead to enhanced organisation nationally (in regard of JPI-cooperation), and thereby/also be beneficial for transnational cooperation.

## Annex I: MLE Alignment and Interoperability "National Coordination"

### Results to GPC survey on priority topics – April 2016

Participants from the survey in April

Block	Topics	Countries												Total	
		AT	CZ	DK	EE	IT	MT	PT	RO	SE	SI	NO	BE		HU
National Coordination	National preconditions for participation in JPI/JPP		x	x			x	x		x					5
	Legislative structures of JPI/JPP participation		x												1
	Co-operation with other ministries				x			x		x	x	x			5
	<b>National governance structures</b>	<b>x</b>		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>		<b>x</b>		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>			<b>8</b>
	National oversight structures	x		x	x			x			x				5
	Opportunities for small member states		x		x		x	x							4
	Raise JPI status								x		x	x			3
	Communication flows and visibility	X			x					x	x	x			5
	Common framework for set up of new JPI/JPP			x		x						x			3