Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

WORKING PAPER

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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	ERAC Secretariat
To:	ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)
Subject:	ERAC videoconference on 10 September 2020 - PPT Presentations

Dear ERAC delegates,

Please find attached the following PPT presentations given during the ERAC videoconference last Thursday, 10 September 2020:

- Item 3.2 of the agenda: Monitoring ERA Roadmap - NAPs: Progress of all priorities,

- Item 3.3 of the agenda: Strategic Coordinating Process for Partnerships.

Best regards,

ERAC Secretariat

MONITORING ERA ROADMAP NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

PROGRESS OF ALL PRIORITIES (FINAL REPORT)

ERAC Plenary
10 September 2020

Cecilia Cabello, Rapporteur

Content of the Final Repot

1. **Introduction**
2. **Mandate**
3. **Process** (*changes with respect to 2019*)
4. **Coverage** (*2020 exercise*)
5. **Analysis Quantitative information** (*2020 exercise*)
6. **Conclusions regarding the ERA priorities** (*2020 exercise*)
7. **Final Remarks**

Workplan 2020

Task	Description	Start / Finish
Appointment of rapporteur	Designation of rapporteur at ERAC Plenary: Cecilia Cabello	December 17, 2019
Preparing a monitoring tool	The rapporteur presented a draft tool for Priority 1 to the Steering Board which could be used by all ERA-related groups. The Steering Board requested slight adaptations to render it more clear while keeping it simple. Adaptations were included, with an example to further clarify the tool.	February 2020
Request for input/ Reception of information	Email to delegates to request input. Reminder to all delegates of the importance to provide input on time and reception of input.	March - April 2020
Collection update	Update on the state of play to the Steering Board	April 29, 2020
Process/analysis of input	Process/analysis of input. The rapporteur provides guidance to the ERA-related groups for a harmonized format presentation of each priority	May 2020
Presentation of first results	Oral presentation at ERAC plenary based on input from all ERA related groups (preliminary results).	June 4, 2020
Preparation of final report	Information and input from groups elaborated into a report	July 2020
1st Revision of final report	Report revision by Chairs of ERA related groups	10 August 2020
2nd Revision of final report	Final version circulate to all ERAC Steering Board members	19 August 2020
3rd Revision of final report	Circulate ERAC before meeting plenary	31 August 2020
Presentation of final report	A consolidated report will be presented to the ERAC plenary	10 September 2020

Conclusions: Priority 1 – Effective National Research Systems

- The specific analysis of the Top Action Priority (Strengthening the evaluation of R&I policies) indicates that: countries have implemented measures to:
  - Raise the aggregate standard of national policy intelligence tools (i.e. monitoring platforms, information systems, foresight activities).
  - Carry out ex post evaluation and impact assessment of R&I public policy and its main instruments.
  - Seek complementarities and align instruments at EU and national levels.
  - Mutual learning activities from good international practices, using tools such as the Policy Support Facility.
  - Improved procedures for research performance assessments of public research organizations and universities.
- The recommendations of the evaluations of policies and instruments inform subsequent measures, strategies and decision-making.

Conclusions: Priority 2a – Jointly Addressing Grand Challenges

- MS/AC are recognizing weaknesses in areas that have nothing to do with the implementation of joint programming process (funding projects): governance, coordination and outreach measures.

- As a result, MS/AC are focusing on national coordination -establishment of national structures, inter-ministerial configurations of research or management models- to achieve effective participation through transnational cooperation initiatives.

- MS/AC are not focusing on alignment. Text analysis and ERA Progress Report indicate that NAPs are not corresponding to the main challenges identified in the ERA Roadmap (improving alignment within/across joint programing processes and speeding up their implementation).

- MS/AC think that transnational Public to Public collaboration is more effective in an EU framework than bi- or multi-lateral cooperation.

Conclusions: Priority 2b – Research Infrastructures

- The importance of the strong involvement of delegations in the exercise (response rate: 95 %) indicates the value of **research infrastructures as a pillar in the construction of the ERA** at national level**.**

- The actions in most cases are continuous or periodic, linked to roadmapping processes and requiring more than one year for their conclusion. Reporting of a percentage of completion seems neither easy nor meaningful in these cases. However, there has been a steady increase of finished actions over time.

- Acknowledgement of the need of improving the **alignment of national priorities with those of ESFRI and the establishment of sufficiently stable processes** for the use of **national funding for construction and operation of RIs**.

- The need for earmarked funds to invest in and operate ESFRI RIs and especially ERICs was emphasized.

- There is general consensus among the delegations to increase the involvement of ESFRI in the achievements of National Action Plans. Statements related to the major effort made by countries to continue joining ESFRI research infrastructures are recurrent.

Conclusions: Priority 3 – Open Labor Market for Researchers

- Completed activities include the establishment of funding programs, the publication of policies/strategies/frameworks, or specific campaigns, mostly to promote EU initiatives contributing to ERA Priority 3 (Charter & Code, HRS4R, EURAXESS Jobs, RESAVER, MSCA, etc.).

- The most common type of action reported by the countries are actions aimed at removing legal and other barriers. Some overlap with the other types of actions as they are ultimately aimed at incorporating innovative doctoral training principles, supporting the career development and open and transparent recruitment of researchers, or facilitating the attraction and retention of international research talent.

- The second most common type of actions are those linked to international talent attraction and retention, with countries actively promoting the use of EURAXESS but also some specific funding programs, as well as legal measures linked to the transposition of the EU Directive 2016/801.

- Most countries is increasing the share of researchers in the private sector, either by pushing forward strategies or policies increasing the capacity of enterprises to participate in research activities (particularly PhDs) or facilitating intersectoral collaborations and facilitating intersectoral mobility.

Conclusions: Priority 4 – Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming

- Priority 4 is generally treated as an independent priority: only nine NAPs link it with at least one other priority. So gender is not integrated as a cross-cutting issue.

- Currently, different gender equality discourses inform the NAPs. Additional policy coordination in Priority 4 is needed to advance gender equality in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025

- A large proportion of actions in the NAPS (over 60%) focuses on the ERA objective of gender balance in research teams overall, fewer actions focus on gender balance in decision-making and actions to foster the integration of the gender dimension in research.

- In terms of types of actions, around 40% focus on adoption of new strategies and policy alignment; in contract policy monitoring and evaluation are less frequent.

- The highest proportion of finished actions has been recorded in the actionistic NAPs for Priority 4 whereas countries with NAPS clustered among comprehensive and consistent NAPs and focused NAPs are of a more long-term nature, with some being regarded as continuous.

Conclusions: Priority 5 – Optimal Circulation, Access to and Transfer of Scientific Knowledge

- More actions are mentioned in 2020 than in 2019: 154 in 2019 for 193 in 2020. This is an indicator of the dynamism of the field.

- There is a balance in the actions between the two sub-priorities : OA and KT.

- Actions relating exclusively to OI are very rare, but OI as a component of KT and/or OS actions concerns more than one action out of five.

- The actions relate to a broad diversity of issues that reflect the multi-dimensionality of the notions of OS and OI.

- One action in three relates to the improvement of the circulation of knowledge between the various stakeholders of the knowledge society. Only one action in 20 relates to the thematic of Open Research Data, which is in contrast with the recent and important EU initiatives in this field like the EOSC.

- Countries participating in the survey cannot be strictly divided into clusters on the basis of their responses. On the contrary, the results reflect the different thematic priorities of the different countries, each of them tending to favour some OS and OI related topics at the expense of some others.

- Many OS and OI initiatives have been taken at national level in relation to the pandemic that could not yet be captured by this monitoring exercise

Conclusions: Priority 6 – International Cooperation

- Almost 2/3 have reported on actions around the increase/promotion of international cooperation activities - be it through bilateral agreements and their implementation, the funding of calls, the coordination at EU level or the use of other international instruments.

- Around ½ have reported on actions related to prioritizing specific countries or regions, while only a few have reported also on thematic priorities.

- Around 40% of responding countries have reported on actions related to strategy and policy development in the field of international cooperation.

- Also around 40% have reported on actions related to the promotion of the country´s R&I capacities abroad, e.g. through Science Marketing, Liaison Offices or the contact with scientific Diasporas in third countries.

- The support of internationalization via their respective national research and higher education organizations as well as businesses was mentioned by around 1/4 of countries in their actions.

- High relevance of the EU Framework Program for many countries as a tool in their international cooperation efforts.

- SFIC is mentioned by 30% of the countries specifically within their actions (coordination, increase of participation and boosting its relevance).

Final Remarks

- The priorities defined in the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020 are working towards achieving ERA and the ERA Roadmap National Action Plans have shown that this progress is supported by on-going, long term measures and actions.

- The monitoring exercise of the ERA Roadmap NAPs has concluded to the extent that they were defined up until 2020. This report constitutes a useful contribution to the ERA priority assessment.

- The lessons learned from the monitoring exercise may also feed into the debate and reflection on the future ERA and its governance.

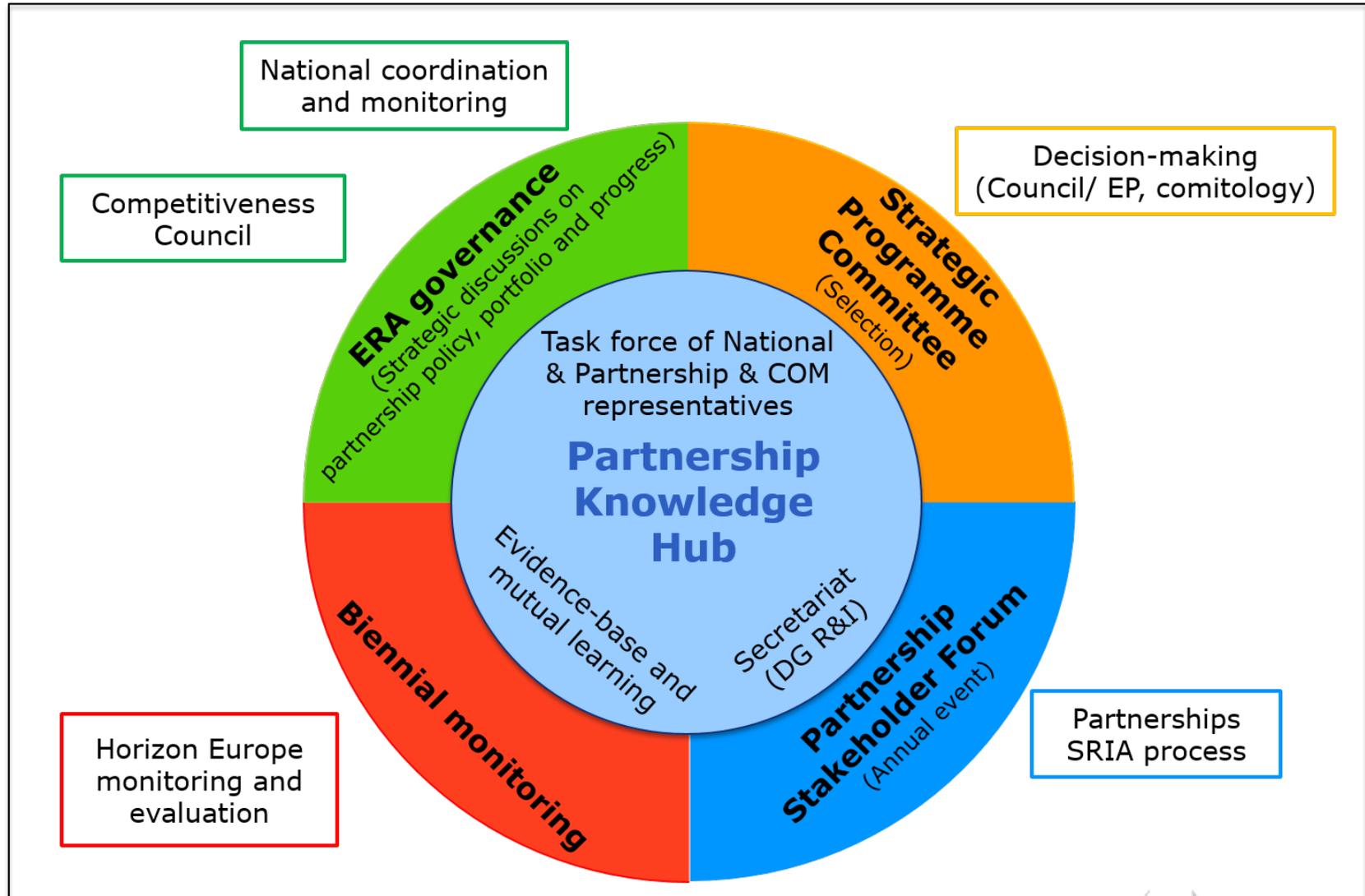# Strategic Coordinating Process for Partnerships Objectives

The overall goal of the strategic coordinating process is to support an evidence-based policy for partnerships and a strategic vision of the landscape. It should allow a consolidated view on the progress made by partnerships.

Concretely it aims to:

1. Support Community Building and mutual learning across partnerships;
2. Raise Visibility and strengthen stakeholder communication and consultation;
3. Provide policy makers and partnerships with the Evidence Base;
4. Prepare Strategic Discussions on key policy issues;
5. Ensure a Feedback Loop from Member States and Partnerships on the portfolio evolution, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

➔ **The achievement of these 5 objectives will be driven by the Partnership Knowledge Hub!**

European Commission

Strategic Coordinating Process for Partnerships

Strategic Coordinating Process for Partnerships

Partnership Knowledge Hub (network of key actors)

- **Task team composed of national, Commission and Partnership representatives**
  Working level interactions and meetings to discuss the different work streams of the strategic coordinating process, including preparation of strategic discussions and the Partnership Stakeholder Forum, as well as monitoring, foresight and mutual learning activities.

- **Intelligence and mutual learning activities** to improve evidence-base and knowledge management, and to support partnerships and policy makers in addressing common policy/operational challenges (foresight and monitoring; mutual learning activities on cross-cutting issues, e.g. through the Policy Support Facility; online platform).

- **Secretariat (in DG RTD)** to coordinate and support the different work streams of the strategic coordinating process. Supported with a rotating system of seconded national experts from MS/AC.

European Commission

Strategic Coordinating Process for Partnerships

Strategic discussion

Distinct component of the future ERA governance covering issues related to partnership R&I policy (structural objectives, such as investments in transnational collaboration, public-private cooperation, knowledge transfer and broader ERA objectives), as well as progress in achieving thematic objectives. Possibility to lift certain topics to the Council level.

Partnership Stakeholder Forum

Regular (annual) event bringing together the whole community, e.g. as part of the R&I days. It provides a venue for networking, broadening engagement, sharing of experiences and discussing policy and practical dimensions related to Partnerships.

Consultation of Member States on the selection

The consultation of Member States is fully integrated in the Strategic Planning of Horizon Europe, with the (Shadow) Strategic configuration of the Horizon Europe Programme Committee as the single entry point for the structured and early consultation of Member States (and Associated Countries).

Draft Opinion of the Transitional Forum (Del.5)

Overall feedback: The proposal reflects very well the intention of the legislator and the discussions within the Transitional Forum and is broadly supported by the country representatives.

Key messages to MS and COM for the next steps:

- The Strategic Coordinating Process (SCP) is key for the success of the partnership policy approach;

- Political buy-in, commitment and resources, as well a proper involvement of the Council are required;

- Urgency: Next steps of preparation and implementation of SCP have to start swiftly at both, MS and COM level, independent of preparation of partnerships;

- Main elements should be in place by mid-2021 (+feedback loops with MS that have to set up their corresponding elements);

- The Work Programme of Horizon Europe (ERA-Part) need to provide sufficient resources for implementing the different SCP elements;

- Knowledge-hub requires a dedicated MS/COM configuration;

- Positioning within the future ERA governance can most likely only be decided towards the end of 2021.