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AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE
High Level Group for
Joint Programming

Secretariat

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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Final Report by the GPC task force on "Openness and Transparency of Networks

Delegations will find in the annex the final Report by the GPC task force on "Openness and Transparency of Networks", as endorsed by the GPC by written procedure on 18 March 2020.

GPC Task force

Openness and Transparency of Networks

FINAL REPORT

March 2020

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1 INTRODUCTION

The High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC) is a dedicated configuration of European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC). Its mission, as the ERA-related Group responsible for the European Research Area (ERA) Priority 2a "Optimal transnational cooperation and competition: jointly tackling grand challenges", is to address issues related to the Joint Programming Process (JPP) of European research.

The issue of inclusiveness was addressed for the first time by the GPC in the summer of 2016, when the idea to establish a Task force on inclusiveness was adopted. The objectives of the Task force were targeted solely towards Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs). The ambition of the Task force was directed toward the participation of widening countries[1] in all 10 JPIs, examining and identifying critical issues that need to be addressed for better and inclusive participation and to assess the relevance of the current best practices used for involving widening countries in relation with each of 10 JPIs. Furthermore, the group intended to analyze major bottlenecks for participation of widening countries in JPIs as well as motivations and benefits of strategies for inclusiveness in JPIs.

However, the Task force did not develop further as there was already an intention to form a new Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE)[2] in which national practices in widening participation and strengthening synergies were covered. This MLE started in May 2017, and one of four thematic reports focused on strategies, innovative mechanisms and schemes developed at national or regional level. This report aimed at improving networking through participation in a wide variety of EU-level initiatives, in order to reinforce capacities to participate in the Framework Programmes (FP) for research and innovation. The MLE finished in mid-2018 and its thematic report was presented at the GPC meeting in early 2019.

On the initiative of ERAC in 2019, the GPC discussed the idea to examine the issues of the inclusiveness in partnership initiatives, expanding the topic to all public-to-public partnerships (P2Ps), public-private-partnerships (PPPs) and other European partnerships. With the approval of the GPC Work Programme 2019-2020 in June 2019, the Task force on Openness and Transparency of partnership initiatives was given two assignments:

[1] countries with Research & Innovation (R&I) performance below 70% of the EU average in the EU Framework Programme
[2] MLE is one of the modules of the Policy Support Facility (PSF), the instrument that gives Member States and countries associated to Horizon 2020 practical support to design, implement and evaluate reforms that enhance the quality of their research and innovation investments, policies and systems.

1. Collecting available data and the elaboration of a report on inclusiveness in the sense of openness and transparency of networks.
2. The preparation of a report on openness and transparency of networks with conclusions and recommendations to ERAC.

Although the selected name of the Task force and the Report was on networks, we have replaced the term *network* in the text with *partnership initiative* in order to be consistent with the terminology. The term includes *(i) public-to-public partnerships* (P2Ps): Art. 185 initiatives, European Joint Programmes (EJPs), ERA-NETs and Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) and *(ii) public-private-partnerships* (PPPs): Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs), contractual Public-Private Partnerships (cPPP), European Institute of Innovation and Technology's Knowledge and Innovation Communities (EIT-KICs) and also Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) flagships. All of these were taken into account in the first part of analysis that covered mapping of country involvement. For the part covering inclusiveness in the sense of openness and transparency of networks Art. 185s, EJPs, ERA-NETs, JPIs and JTIs were considered.

In order to increase the participation of widening countries, funded partnership initiatives through the Framework Programme (FP) must be open for new partners. The Task force on Openness and Transparency therefore explored if there is a pattern regarding the participation of countries in existing European partnership initiatives that indicates that partners and research performers of widening countries are put at any kind of a disadvantage by facing *closed clubs*.

Delegates from Austria (Ingeborg Schachner-Nedherer), Germany (Christiane Wehle), and Portugal (Rui Durao and Madalena Antunes Pereira) and occasionally Romania (Ioana Ispas) volunteered to participate in the Task force. The GPC Vice-Chair, Petra Žagar from Slovenia, led the Task force.

2 OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY / INCLUSIVENESS

There are many articles and reports arguing that only an inclusive system can create the best conditions for excellence, which is the basic principle of the Framework Programmes (FP). In relation to partnership initiatives, most often public-private-partnerships are shown to be the ones that need to do more on greater openness. Joint strategic agendas are often mentioned as processes where access to the preparation of the joint strategic agendas should be open and transparent and include all relevant actors throughout Europe. Early access and openness to the discussions can allow identification of common challenges, overall goals and, priorities and the designing R&I roadmaps that includes the needs and contributions of widening countries. With this kind of openness the full potential of Europe's research and innovation can be captured.

The Task force has worked with the definition of **openness** from the Final Report of Technopolis group "Increased coherence and openness of European Union research and innovation partnerships"[3]. In this report, openness refers to transparency of the processes in which partnership initiatives are identified, prepared, launched and implemented. The Task force focused on the implementation of the partnership initiatives, mainly the phases in connection to the call preparation, evaluation, promotion and strategic planning.

In the Cambridge dictionary, **transparency** is defined as a quality of something being done in an open way without secrets, so users can trust that processes are fair and honest. In relation to partnership initiatives, we can observe that some are more transparent in terms of how they are identified and chosen than others. The access and awareness of research and innovation actors is sometimes limited during the design phase. This is usually due to lack of knowledge of the preparation process. According to the "Lamy report"[4], this presents a risk of diluting excellence by excluding those who may be excellent, but are unfamiliar with the system. For its survey, the Task force has defined transparency as a concept of availability of data and information on the implementation of the partnership initiatives. Meaning how much data is easily accessible and available on the (interactive) websites of each partnership initiative on calls, budgets, recipients of funds, etc.

With the term **inclusiveness** we are describing whether the respective partnership initiatives have managed to include different types of research and innovation actors and widening countries within the networks and their position therein.

[3] Increased coherence and openness of European Union research and innovation partnerships
[4] LAB – FAB – APP Investing in the European future we want

3 BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVES

Partnerships were designed to reduce fragmentation, to avoid duplication of efforts and to address societal challenges with critical mass. The various positive effects and potential benefits of participating in those networks for the individual countries have been outlined in different studies.

Partnerships create many opportunities for national actors who want to enter into R&D partnerships at the EU level. Partnerships **act as intermediary layers** between national programmes and Framework Programme (FP) participation and bring networking benefits for their participants. Especially *public-to-public partnerships* (P2Ps) often create frameworks that lowers the barriers to develop and participate in research projects under the FP.

The evaluation of the FP6 ERA-NETs states that "the most tangible impact of the FP6 ERA-NET scheme on national programmes related to the creation of new opportunities for research beneficiaries who would otherwise be excluded from the regular FP to engage in transnational research. It filled a gap between national research policies and the transnational research agenda generated at European level through the FPs"[5].

This implies that participating in partnerships can have positive effects for an improvement in the quality of countries' research activities and their innovation system. Participation can be useful for **improving the scientific and technological capabilities of a country**, especially with a view to enhance FP participation. Another advantage is that countries that were not used to more objective research project evaluation can learn a great deal from evaluation of proposals by peers.

Increased collaboration in partnerships can enable **access to research expertise** from other countries, leading to an overall improvement in their scientific and technological capabilities. Participation in the various partnership initiatives is a good way for researchers to get acquainted with other research actors in other countries, and this can attract qualified R&D staff in the public and private sectors. There are also **positive effects on improving research managing skills**, which can help to access and participate in international programmes. Developing relevant multinational partnerships helps develop a competence that benefits participation in a large variety of EU-level networks.

[5] https://rio.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/library/mle-widening-participation-and-strengthening-synergies-thematic-report-no-3-improving

The networking experience gained from participation in partnership initiatives can enhance the visibility and reputation of innovation actors and act as a stepping-stone to subsequent participation in FP projects.

When focusing on *public-private-partnerships* (PPPs), specific positive effects like dissemination of good practices and **cross-fertilization between sectors** were recognized. PPPs have also leveraged capacity to map markets in order to identify new opportunities for innovation diffusion.

The contractual public private partnerships cPPPs have more close to market projects than regular FP projects. "There is more industry participation across the border and the shorter grant times and the success rate have been credited with an **increased participation by SMEs**."[6]

[6] https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/eu_ri_partnerships_final_report.pdf

4 METHODOLOGY

The Task force decided to approach the assigned task on three levels:

① Mapping of country involvement: mapping of country involvement in partnership initiatives had a goal to collect data for each country participating in partnership initiatives. So far, only the data for individual partnership initiatives per country were available, and for the first time we have showed the joint overview of country-by-partnership initiatives data. Moreover, we have clustered partnership initiatives by the six defined thematic clusters of Horizon Europe's Pillar II (Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness).

② Questionnaire to Art. 185 and JTIs: being informed that the project ERA-LEARN were issuing a survey on inclusiveness, targeting ERA-NETs and EJPs, the idea sprouted to modify the survey and use it to address five (5) Art. 185 and seven (7) JTIs. We thus obtained comparable data between different partnership initiatives regarding the organization of the calls and general measures and activities for increasing inclusiveness.

③ Letter to JPIs: as the major share of the work done by JPIs is not focused on the organization of transnational calls and since half of the questions from the ERA-LEARN questionnaire touches on the topic of call organization, they were excluded from the previous questionnaire. Instead, they were asked via letter to describe measures for (increasing) openness in their partnership initiative.

4. 1 Mapping of country involvement in partnership initiatives

The basis of the work of the Task force on Openness and Transparency was a mapping of country involvement in each partnership initiative. All partnership initiatives that started in the period between 1.1.2014 (beginning of Horizon 2020) and 31.12.2018 were taken into account. We also considered the ones that have started prior to 1.1.2014 and were still running in the defined period as they are important for the analysis. With that we have covered Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), Contractual PPPs (CPPPs), Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) and Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs).

The availability of data was very different, depending on the kind of partnership initiatives: there was an easy access to the data on the participation of countries in the P2Ps (ERA-NET Cofund, Art.185, EJP, JPI) through the database of the ERA-LEARN projects. There were some difficulties getting the data for the PPPs (JTIs, FET flagships, cPPPs) and KICs which was finally achieved with the help of DG EAC for KICs and DG CNECT for cPPPs. Regarding general

partnership initiative information on JTIs, KICs and cPPPs, the respective websites turned out to be quite un-transparent and user unfriendly with missing or no easy access to basic information (contact details, funding data,…).

The analysis on the P2Ps was based on the involvement of MSs in each partnership initiative – meaning that country was marked as "participating" if MS or organizations from MS were part of the consortium or initiative (ERA-NET Cofund, EJP, JPI and Art.185). The same marking was made for the FET Flagships. Data received from DG CNECT for cPPPs and from eCorda for JTIs was presenting a number of grants signed per country – therefore if at least one was marked under each cPPP and JTI, the MS was further marked as "participating".
Data received from DG EAC for EIT KICs was presenting the amount of Euros received from each EIT per country – accordingly if there was an amount recorded under the country, the MS was further marked as "participating".

This approach resulted in the analysis of 103 partnership initiatives all together: fifty seven (57) ERA-NET Cofunds, six (6) Art.185s, four (4) EJPs, ten (10) JPIs, seven (7) JTIs, three (3) FET-Flagships, ten (10) cPPPs and six (6) KICs.

We marked "1" under each initiative for each country based on the participation data from ERA-LEARN database (Table 1).
Furthermore we have marked each initiative according to six thematic clusters of Horizon Europe's Pillar II (Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness). This mapping was done by using the so called "Cluster Reports" provided by ERA-LEARN, that issued five Reports on H2020 Partnership Landscape and its relevance for Horizon Europe in June 2019. At the time of their analysis the idea for Pillar II was to have five clusters that later evolved into six. When sorting the individual partnership initiatives into clusters, we quickly realized that many could be placed in two or more clusters, so we added the seventh, interdisciplinary one.

We started gathering the data for EU-28 Member States and were additionally asked to include Norway.

Table 1. Example of mapping exercise for the EJPs

EJP	EURATOM		H2020	
	EUROFUsion	CONCERT	HBM4EU	ONE HEALTH
Austria	1	1	1	1
Belgium	1	1	1	1
Bulgaria	1	1		1
Croatia	1	1	1	
Cyprus	1		1	
Czech Republic	1	1	1	1
Denmark	1	1	1	1
Estonia	1	1		1
Finland	1	1	1	
France	1	1	1	1
Germany	1	1	1	1
Greece	1	1	1	
Hungary	1	1		1
Ireland	1	1		1
Italy	1	1	1	1
Latvia	1	1	1	
Lithuania	1	1	1	
Luxembourg				
Malta				
Netherlands	1	1	1	1
Poland	1		1	1
Portugal	1	1	1	1
Romania	1	1		1
Slovakia	1	1	1	
Slovenia	1	1	1	
Spain	1	1	1	1
Sweden	1	1	1	1
United Kingdom	1	1	1	1
Norway		1	1	1

4. 2 Questionnaire to Art. 185 and JTIs

An additional source of information to explore openness and transparency of partnership initiatives was a questionnaire (Annex 1: Questionnaire) that was sent to five (5) Art.185 and seven (7) JTIs in the summer months of 2019.

The questionnaire was based on a survey launched by ERA-LEARN on inclusiveness that was targeting ERA-NET Cofund and EJP coordinators. It included six questions addressed to secretariats, directors, chairs, deputy chairs and presidents of Art.185 and JTIs. The respondents could choose between 3-4 optional answers and the additional options “None” and “Other”.

1.	*Which measures for increasing inclusiveness (openness of partnership initiatives) do you employ?*
2.	*Which type of measures do you employ in the call preparation phase?*
3.	*Which type of measures do you employ in the call promotion phase?*
4.	*Which type of measures do you employ in the call evaluation phase*
5.	*Which other type of activities for strengthening widening countries did you employ / for inclusiveness in the sense of openness and transparency of networks?*
6.	*Please highlight dedicated pro-inclusiveness activities implemented by your network, which have been most successful or effective, if any? Please also mention activities that you would not recommend.*

4. 3 Letter to JPIs

As previously explained, the major share of the work done by JPIs is not focused on the implementation of transnational calls. Therefore they were excluded from the questionnaire. JPIs were approached with the open-ended question *"Which measures for (increasing) openness do you employ in your partnership initiative?".* Decision to use an open-ended question was based on the idea not to not place limits on the response and freedom to give any answer of any length and any level of detail. This way we have allowed them to answer openly and with more depth.

5 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

5. 1 Mapping of partnership initiatives

The data collected through the methodology described in the previous chapter provides an insight into the participation patterns of countries in H2020 instruments. In the following graph, we can see a cross-analysis between the involvement of countries in a given instrument, and their status as innovators, according to the European Innovation Scoreboard[7]. The results show a clear predominance of participation of the innovation leaders in the ERA-NET instrument and, to a lesser degree, in the JPI, but less clear results in other types of instruments. Although recognizing that there is a clear role of national policies, and of the strength of the national research and innovation ecosystems in the successful participation in European collaborative instruments, this analysis suggests that the national characteristics and policies alone do not explain the phenomena adequately.

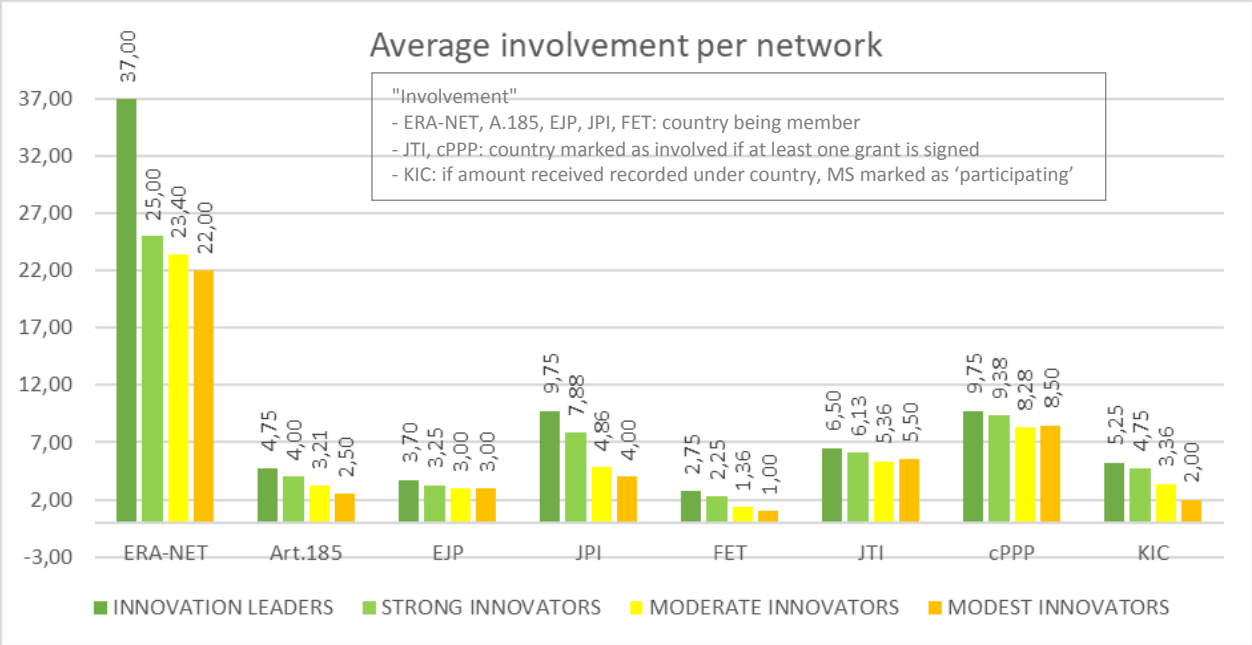


Figure 1. Average involvement in partnership initiatives clustered by the EIS

A very small deviation can be observed in JTIs and cPPPs where modest innovators are (on average) involved in slightly more partnership initiatives than moderate ones.

[7] https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards_en

If performing a similar analysis, but this time differentiating involvement[8] of EU-13 and EU-15 countries, the results show a clear dominance of EU-15 countries in some instruments, such as JPI and FET, and a more balanced participation in EJP or cPPP. Complementarily to the analysis in the previous graph, this suggests that some instruments are better at attracting a more diverse set of participants for different countries. This could be explained by intrinsic characteristics of the instrument (legal base or regulation that imposes a broader participation, for example), or by specificities of the area and type of activities that it covers, which may be of interest, or be responsive to competences of a broader set of countries.

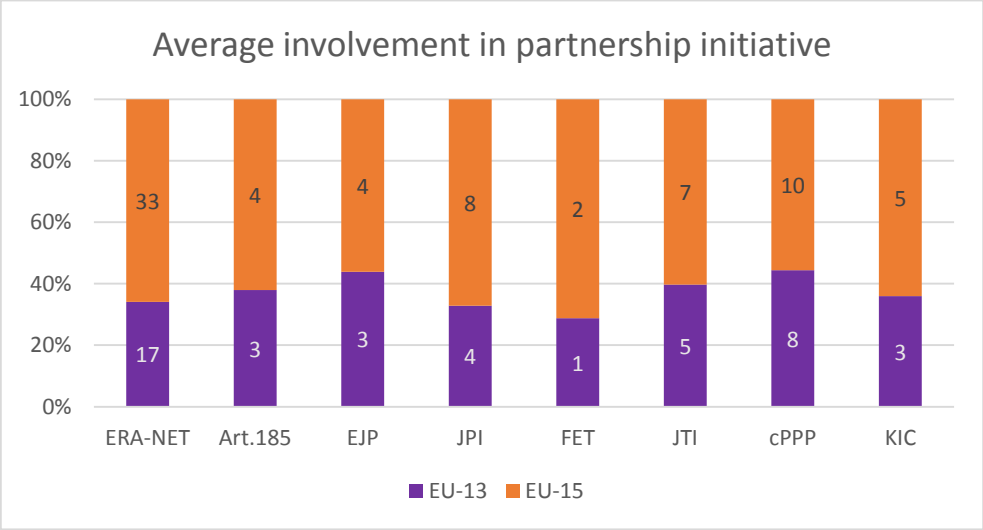


Figure 2. Average involvement in partnership initiatives by EU-13 vs. EU-15

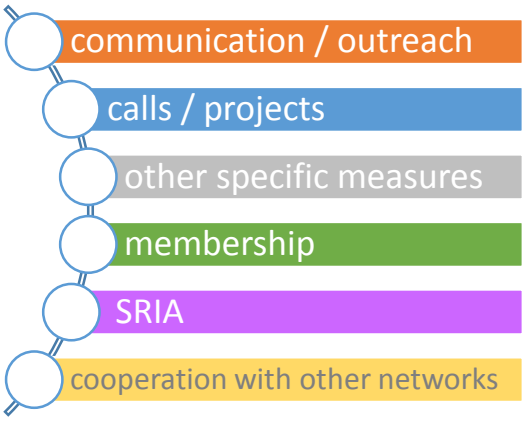
Another point of analysis would be not only the participation of a given country in the instrument, but the actual benefits and stimulus it receives from the instrument to develop its national research and innovation ecosystem. In fact, it was recognized during the data collection that "involvement" in an instrument may have limited meaning in terms of concrete policy effects – for example, a country can be member of a large number of ERA-NETs, but have very limited capacity to actually fund collaborative projects promoted through those ERA-NETs, and therefore have limited effect on internationalization of its research community. However, further analysis is beyond the scope of the task force, even though it seems of paramount importance for the future Partnership instruments, and for the reinforcement of a competitive ERA that takes full advantage of the potential existing in all countries.

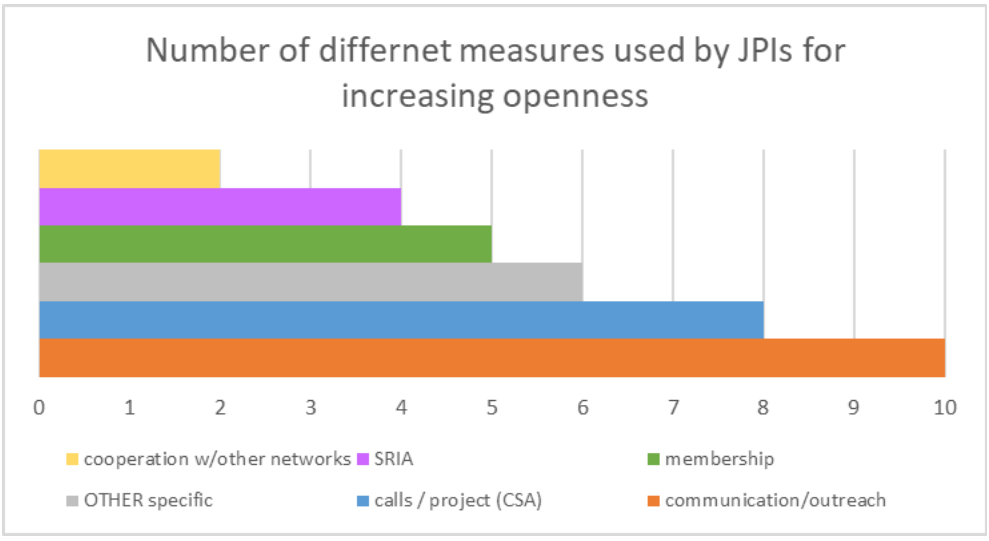
[8] Definition of "involvement" is the same as in the previous chart: ERA-NET, A.185, EJP, JPI, FET: country being member; JTI, cPPP: marked as involved if at least one grant was signed per country; KIC: if there was amount received recorded under country, MS was marked as 'participating'

5. 2 JPI Survey Analysis

A survey with an open-ended question "*Which measures for (increasing) openness do you employ in your partnership initiative?"* was sent to 10 JPIs. Response rate was at 70% with various different measures.

After the text analysis measures were classified into 6 groups:





From what was gathered it is seen that JPIs mostly use measures related to the communication and/or outreach issues which include workshops with Research Funding Organizations (RFOs), inviting new members to biannual meetings, country visits, missions to widening countries, attending and reaching out at policy conferences, organizing various kinds of workshops (exploratory, good practices workshops) and road shows among others.

Figure 3. Different measures used by JPIs for increasing openness

Further frequently reported measures are related to the implementation of joint transnational calls – either using ERA-NET Cofund or collaborative joint calls performed by JPI members and engagement in CSA projects. The level of openness and inclusiveness in the process of call preparation, implementation and evaluation varies from engaging with and focusing on low and middle-income countries and specific targeting of RFOs in the case of upcoming joint calls.

Other measures are allowing submission of revised proposal where under-represented countries can be additionally included and encouraging participation of experts from new and non-associated countries in the evaluation phase.

Additionally, six measures were detected that could not be classified in any of the other five groups described above. They are specific to the individual JPI. For example, JPI Oceans's measure includes the promotion of grants from EEA and Norway and regional funds among non-associated countries, to be used for engaging with the JPI Oceans, for capacity building and funding of the transnational calls performed by JPI. Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research (JPI JPND) has established an action group that is specifically dealing with engagement and partnerships and has accepted a protocol to include 3rd countries. Another example is JPI Climate's role as organizer of the next ECCA conference in 2021, focusing on engaging and sustaining the participation of widening countries in JPI Climate and contributing to the creation of a coherent and inclusive European Research Area.

Quite a few measures have been highlighted in the field of memberships, where JPIs enable different models of memberships. The models range from full member to participant and observer status. They also offer flexible models for participation within boards and committees with different focus (e.g. Management Board, Strategic Advisory Body (SAB), Transdisciplinary Advisory Body (TAB), Internal Advisory Committee etc.)

Another group of measures is connected to strategic planning, namely formulating SRIAs using stakeholder involvement via general public consultations, national consultations and stakeholder consultations.

Two responses stressed that openness is also achieved through strong ties with other international initiatives in their field and cooperation with other partnership initiatives.

Conclusion 1

- Most commonly used measures for increasing openness within JPIs are the ones related to communication and/or outreach measures.

Conclusion 2

- JPIs carry out wide range of different measures for openness and transparency within their partnership initiatives.

5. 3 Art. 185 and JTI Questionnaire Analysis

Out of five (5) requests to respond to the questionnaire, four (4) Art.185s responded, which represent 80% response rate and out of seven (7) requests that were sent to JTIs, six (6) responded, bringing us to the response rate of 86% for JTIs. Altogether the response rate stands at 83% which is considered quite positive.

As mentioned before, the questionnaire made it possible to choose 3-4 optional answers with additional options "None" and "Other".
We were hoping that the answer "None" – as in: No inclusiveness measures are taken in the specific phases of the call - would not appear, however with the second question: Which type of measures do you employ in the call preparation phase? "None" was answered three times. Answers came from one Art.185 and two JTIs.
The answer option "Other" was most often not left empty. Most of those who completed the questionnaire, added their own measures in addition to those that were optional in the answer.

So, for the first question on the measures for **increasing inclusiveness** all respondents replied that they are actively involving organizations from widening countries in their partnership initiatives, less than half that they involve widening countries in core positions of partnership initiatives and one third that they address inclusiveness as an explicit additional activity in their partnership initiative.

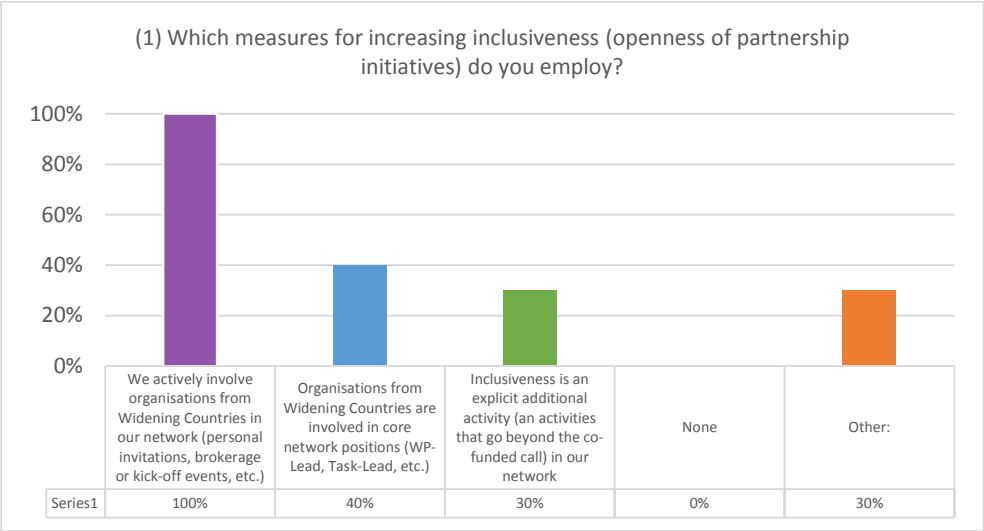


Figure 4. Measures for increasing inclusiveness employed by partnership initiatives

Among "Other" measures, inviting widening countries to participate in Advisory Bodies (Scientific Committee), and the engagement of experts from this countries in support for evaluation was mentioned.

For the second question which focused on the **preparation phase of the calls**, not many answers came from prescribed ones, however there were quite some additional actions/measures that the partnership initiatives resort to. For example, consultation of topic texts with representatives from all MSs and ACs, organizing stakeholder meetings before each call to provide input to call text, trying to attract less performing countries via info days, defining minimum consortia involvement, specific calls tailored to the priorities of widening countries.

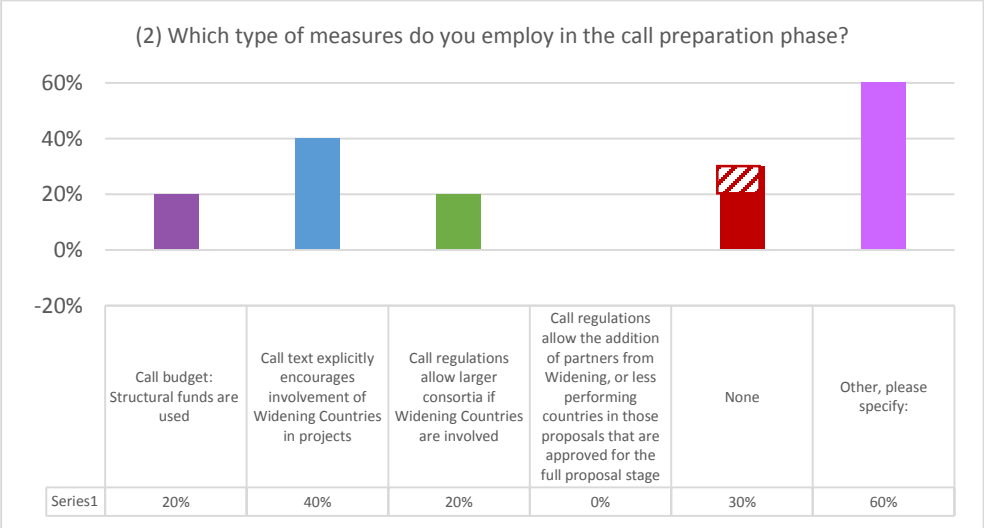


Figure 5. Measures for increasing inclusiveness in the call preparation phase

As previously mentioned one Art.185 and two JTIs answered with “None”, however one of these JTIs also specified some measures under the answer “Other” – that they are following the rules of Horizon 2020 and implement all rules and guidelines fully. We can conclude that they are definitely implementing some measures and that the answer “None” can be disregarded and therefore reduced to 20%.

Question 3 was concentrating on the **promotion phase of the calls**. All respondents replied they are employing measures in the call promotion phase, mostly through dedicated activities to inform and encourage research communities in widening countries. This was followed by the answer with the second largest number of responses – organizing match-making and brokerage events and as the least often – use of partner search tools. Let us remember, that partnering tool was also described by one of the JPIs as being very useful and very well received by stakeholders.

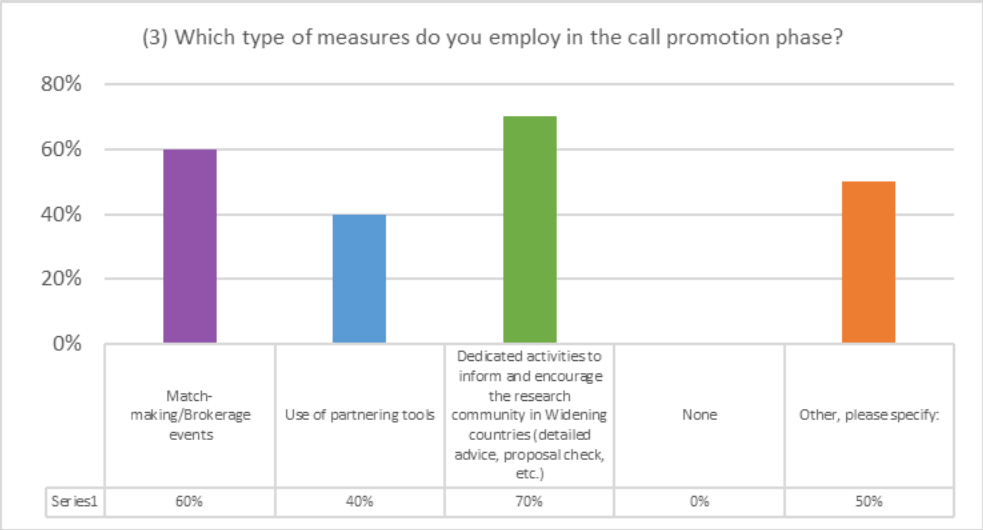


Figure 6. Measures for increasing inclusiveness in the call promotion phase

As with the previous responses, there were many additional ones. Examples consisted of organizing joint meetings with national members to promote the call, setting up a dedicated web page for the call with full information, a full time employee “capacity building officer” dedicated to the needs of widening countries including the provision of trainings, events and workshops. One of the JTI’s is also collaborating with the Horizon 2020 National contact Points (NCPs) during the call promotion phase.

The role of NCPs could also be one of the aspects regarding increasing inclusiveness. Their role should be intensified in the sense of enhancing the awareness of partnership initiatives and also preparing actors in the widening countries for better participation. Similar was mentioned in the

Policy Suggestions and Lessons Learnt of the MLE Widening Participation and Strengthening Synergies: Summary Report[9].

Conclusion 3

- NCPs from widening countries could offer promotion and/or match making services with partners (or NCPs) of "stronger" countries to have widening partners gain more recognition.

The last answer regarding the call phases was referring to the **call evaluation phase**. First column is presenting the answers of all the respondents saying they are including experts from widening countries in their evaluation panel. The other measures to choose from were not that popular. Only one respondent (Art. 185) is using a wild card and considering the number of widening countries in the project proposal as an advantage over equally evaluated proposals. Another Art.185 is flexible with extending the selection list by increasing the national budget. JTIs do not seem to pay much attention to the widening country in the evaluation phase, except for the already mentioned inclusion of experts from widening countries in evaluation panels.

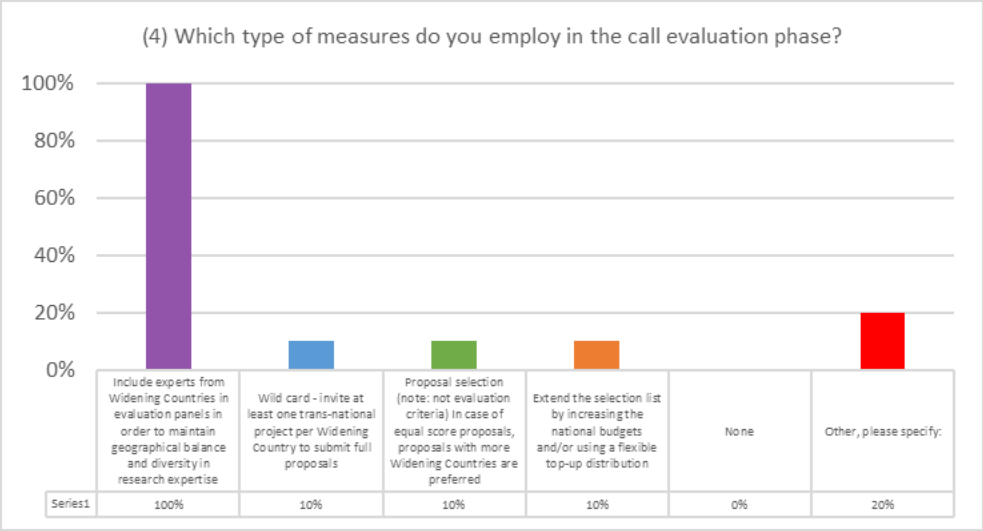


Figure 7. Measures for increasing inclusiveness in the call evaluation phase

Regarding the evaluation phase, a very adequate proposal came from the Turkish MLE[10] participant concerning the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESRs) which are, under Horizon 2020, shared among national Programme Committee delegates. From their experience, it is not possible to receive ESRs from project proposals evaluated under JTIs. This is indeed something that could be given more attention from various partnership initiatives, as it is not just a cliché

[9] MLE Widening Participation and Strengthening Synergies: Summary Report

[10] MLE on Widening Participation and Strengthening Synergies: Thematic Report No 3 - Improving networking through participation in EU-level initiatives

to say that we learn more from our mistakes than our successes and ESRs could obviously provide the possibility to analyze the quality of project proposals and improve them. This would also greatly contribute to transparency of JTIs.

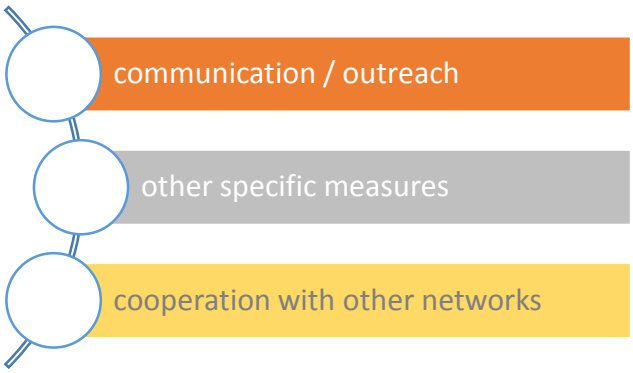
Conclusion 4

- Availability of ESRs for all FP (co)funded projects would contribute to increased transparency.

"Which other type of activities for strengthening widening countries did you employ / for inclusiveness in the sense of openness and transparency of partnership initiatives?" was question number 5.

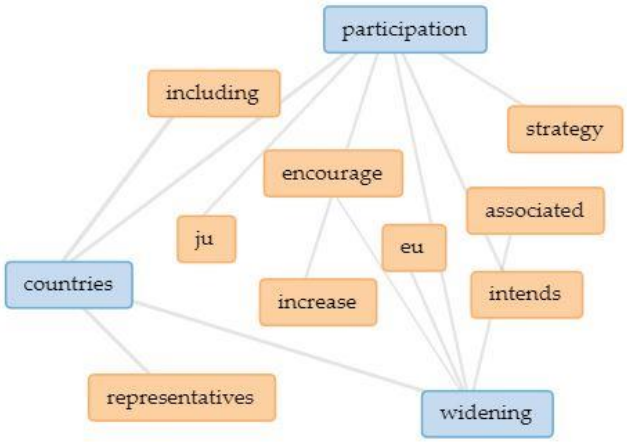
Answers varied from encouraging increased participation, organizing information days, specific training days, searching for members from EU-13 to participate in scientific committee, organizing summits and family days, stakeholder public consultation, networking with other similar organizations, training workshops and training seminars. A couple of JTIs also mentioned engaging MSs/ACs in the States Representatives Group.

If we gather all the answers, three groups of measures can be classified, in the field of: - communication, - other specific measures and – cooperation with other partnership initiatives.



Visual representation of answers resulting from question 5 is also shown in the form of a word cloud (left) where single words are shown with a larger font size as their frequency increases. This format is used for quickly perceiving the most prominent terms to determine its relative prominence. Another graph (right) is a collocation graph representing a network graph of higher frequency terms that appear in proximity. Keywords are shown in blue and collocates (words in proximity) are showing orange.

Table 2. Visual presentation of answers about other type of activities for strengthening widening countries



Key words from both graphs are participation, countries and widening. In collocation graphs phrases connected to "countries" are including-countries, widening-countries, countries-participation and countries-representatives. For "participation" most meaningful connections are JU (joint undertaking)-participation, encourage-participation, widening-participation and strategy-participation. For "widening" most common word links are widening-countries, encourage-widening, widening-EU and associated-widening.

Conclusion 5

- Data suggests that Art.185s and JTIs operate with a smaller range of measures for increasing openness compared to JPIs, yet according to *Figure 2. Average involvement in partnership initiatives by EU-13 vs. EU-15* are more successful in including EU-13 countries.

The last question from the questionnaire was about dedicated pro-inclusiveness activities, which have been most successful or effective and about the ones that partnership initiatives would not recommend. Respondents mentioned organizing local events with stakeholders and governments, having a dedicated focal person for widening countries, proactive outreach and bilateral interactions, having dedicated training activities, information days and general events.

Table 3. Visual presentation of answers about dedicated pro-inclusiveness activities

One response came from Art. 185 regarding activities they would not recommend: schemes designed to encourage widening countries to take on the coordination role. Reason lies in reality that these countries should spend their limited budgets and efforts on doing science rather than management activities.

Conclusion 6

- Great care and detailed consideration must be given when developing schemes to encourage widening countries to participate in partnership initiatives.

5. 4 ERA-LEARN EJP and ERA-NET Cofund Analysis vs. Art. 185 and JTI Questionnaire

ERA-LEARN has also addressed the issues of openness and transparency in partnership initiatives in a recent survey[11], focusing on ERA-NET Cofunds and EJPs. For reasons of comparability, we based our survey on the ERA-LEARN questionnaire and broadened the target group by including Art.185 initiatives and JTIs.

[11] Link to report when available

Figure 8. Comparison of measures for increasing inclusiveness employed by different partnership initiatives

Comparing the replies, it gets obvious that regarding the measures for **increasing inclusiveness**, there are not many differences between the various partnership initiatives. It can be seen that Art. 185 initiatives and JTIs involve more organizations from widening countries in their partnership initiatives than ERA-NETs and EJPs. However the latter are more inclusive in terms of including widening countries in core positions of partnership initiatives.

The following three comparisons will show phases in the call procedure, from preparation phase, promotion phase and evaluation phase.

Only 20% of Art.185 and JTIs (corresponds to two initiatives) replied that they are using mechanism of allowing larger consortiums if widening countries are involved. This mechanism is used by 50% of ERA-NETs and EJPs that have filled in ERA-LEARN Survey (corresponds to twenty initiatives) and concern the **preparation phase.**

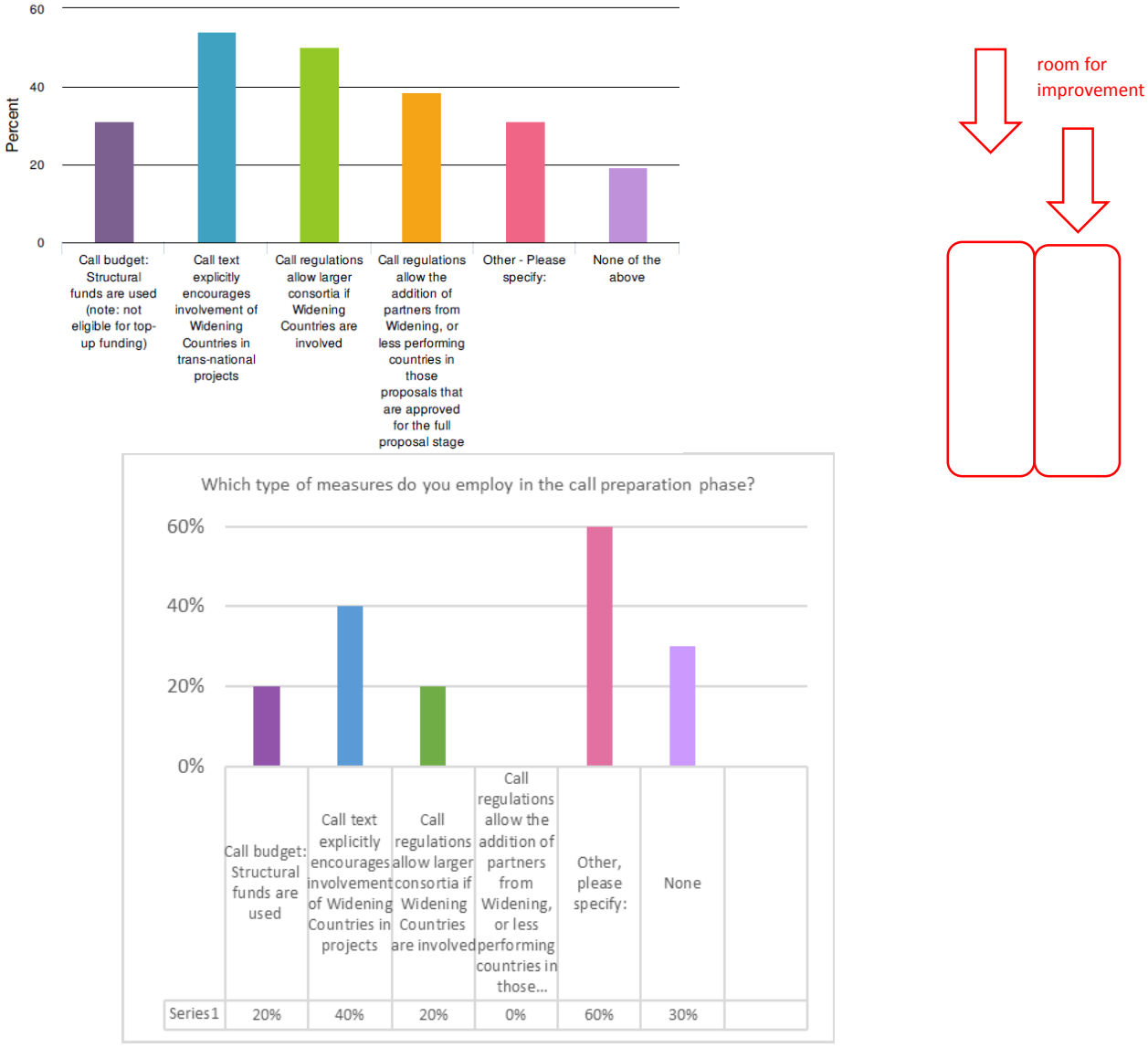


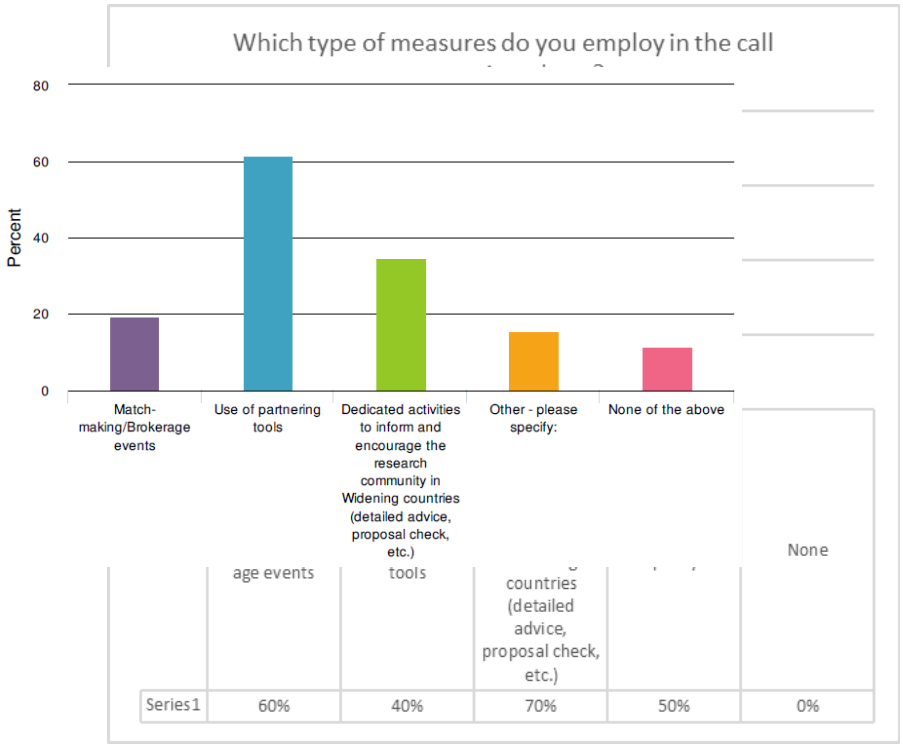
Figure 9. Comparison of measures *for increasing inclusiveness in the call preparation phase between different partnership initiatives*

Similar mechanisms for allowing larger consortiums if widening countries are involved is used by ERA-NETS and EJPs – adding partners from widening countries is allowed after the pre-proposal submissions have been approved for the full proposal stage. None of the initiatives from our survey uses this opportunity.

As collaboration is a key aspect of the framework programme widening countries should be given an opportunity to collaborate with the most significant RDI institutions in the Framework Programme, the so-called TOP15 Higher Education institutions and research organizations in the running Framework Programme. This would considerably increase the participation success rate of the widening countries[12], generate spillover effects and knowledge sharing.

In the **promotion phase** there are no significant differences between various partnership initiatives.

For some measures it has even turned out that Art. 185s and JTIs are doing more with regard to opening the calls, especially through measures such as brokerage events and match-making events and also having detailed advice to widening countries regarding project proposals.

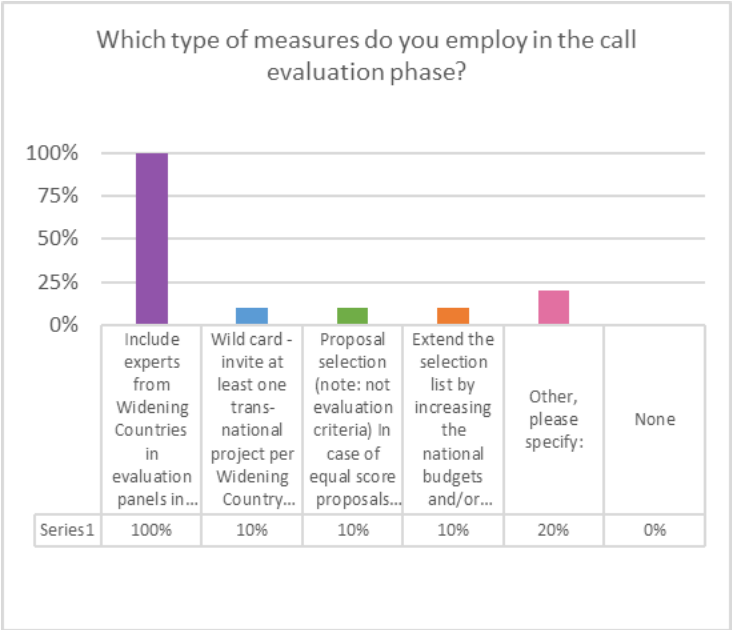


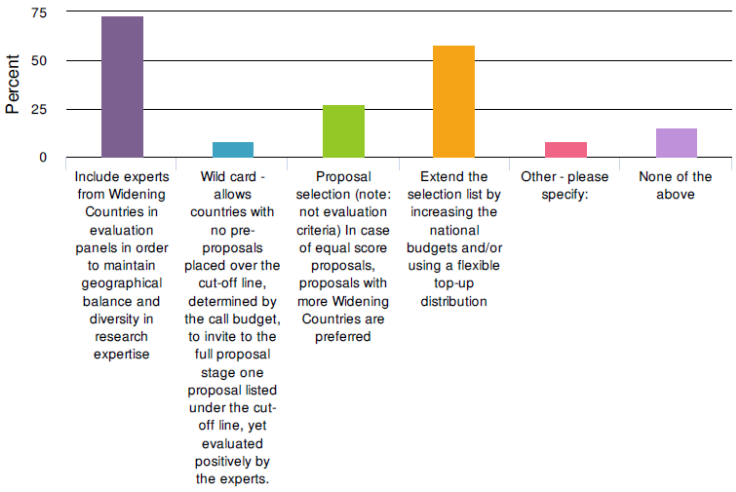
[12] Overcoming innovation gaps in the EU-13 MemberStates, STOA Study, March 2018

*Figure 10. Comparison of m*easures *for increasing inclusiveness in the call promotion phase between different partnership initiatives*

Data shows that in the **evaluation phase** more towards inclusiveness is done by ERA-NETs and EJPs. They are opting for flexible top-up distribution. This is usually done for the benefit of widening countries, resulting in more research project co-funded.

The same, in praise of ERA-NETs and EJPs, can be observed in case of equal scores, when in case of equal score of research project proposal, proposals with more widening countries are preferred.





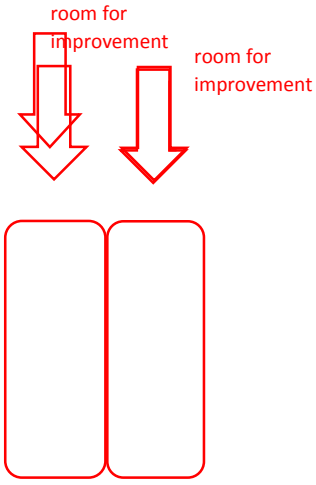


Figure 11. Comparison of measures *for increasing inclusiveness in the call evaluation phase between different partnership initiatives*

Conclusion 7

- Flexibility in the call evaluation and call regulations might lead to greater inclusiveness of widening countries.

Conclusion 8

- We must also consider what the data does not tell us and take into account the self-reporting bias, where in general, respondents want to respond in a way that makes them look as good as possible.

5. 5 Compilation of the Conclusions

Conclusion 1

- Most commonly used measures for increasing openness within JPIs are the ones related to communication and/or outreach measures.

Conclusion 2

- JPIs carry out wide range of different measures for openness and transparency within their partnership initiatives.

Conclusion 3

- NCPs from widening countries could offer promotion and/or match making services with partners (or NCPs) of "stronger" countries to have widening partners gain more recognition.

Conclusion 4

- Availability of ESRs for all FP (co)funded projects would contribute to increased transparency.

Conclusion 5

- Data suggests that Art.185s and JTIs operate with a smaller range of measures for increasing openness compared to JPIs, yet according to *Figure 2. Average involvement in*

partnership initiatives by EU-13 vs. EU-15 are more successful in including EU-13 countries.

Conclusion 6

- Great care and detailed consideration must be given when developing schemes to encourage widening countries to participate in partnership initiatives.

Conclusion 7

- Flexibility in the call evaluation and call regulations might lead to greater inclusiveness of widening countries.

Conclusion 8

- We must also consider what the data does not tell us and take into account the self-reporting bias, where in general, respondents want to respond in a way that makes them look as good as possible.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with above findings and conclusions, we suggest a number of recommendations regarding openness and transparency of partnership initiatives. Recommendations are pooled together and according to whom the recommendations are addressing, they are split into three levels. We have also included the *national level*, although it does not have a direct effect on openness and transparency of partnership initiatives. But anyhow, knowledge and commitment at the national level are a prerequisite for participating in initiatives.
The graphic represents concise recommendations that are further elaborated and in some cases, concrete suggestions are proposed.

Table 4. Graphic presentation of recommendations

NATIONAL LEVEL (precondition)	LEVEL OF PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES	EU LEVEL
• awareness raising and acknowledging benefits of partnership initiatives • assuring national funding and human resources	• encouraging widening countries to increase their involvement in partnership initiatives • encouraging initiatives and research consortia to include widening countries • enabling call regulations in favour of widening countries	• encouraging widening countries to increase their involvement in partnership initiatives • allowing flexibility of instruments used by partnership initiatives in a way that widening countries can be valuable partners • advocating the importance of bridging the innovation divide

6. 1 National level

Increasing awareness about partnership initiatives among policy makers at national level of the widening countries is very important. Although it was not a part of our analysis, it came up several times during conversations and discussions we had. We have concluded many times that involvement in any type of partnership initiative does not solely depend on the openness of the initiative but also on the interest and knowledge of the decision makers on the existing European research and innovation landscape, which is sometimes flawed and insufficient. This can be further matched with a lack of knowledge about the **benefits of partnership initiatives** that particularly increase international collaboration of national research communities and have immense capacity building impacts. Ideally awareness raising and acknowledging benefits of partnership initiatives among policy makers would lead to a recognition of the value of partnerships and assuring **sufficient financial and human resources** for active involvement from countries. Here we can note a lack of high profile promotion campaign of the individual impacts achieved by each partnership initiative and also the promotion and exploitation of results of research funded projects under partnership initiatives. This is further reflected in one of the recommendations to the EU, where we put forward encouraging and empowering widening countries to increase their involvement in partnership initiatives.

6. 2 Level of partnership initiatives

One of the recommendations is **encouraging widening countries to increase their involvement in partnership initiatives**. This is written as the recommendation at the level of partnership initiatives and at the EU level as it applies to both, however it can be implemented differently. At the level of partnership initiatives, we were thinking of increasing the intensity and number of contacts in widening countries and directly addressing researchers, promoting the potential benefits of participation. On the other hand support to widening countries could be provided in the form of trainings, capacity building, and workshops allowing for exchange of best practices and offering a high quality and effective platform for partner search. Our analysis demonstrates that partner search tools are highly recommended for integrating widening countries, however experiences of stakeholders suggest that using current partner search tools feels like hitchhiking on the highway.

The second recommendation, which mirrors the findings of the analysis, refers to **initiatives and research consortia to include widening countries**, meaning ensuring openness by involving them in core positions and inclusion in decision-making / governance processes. Opportunities to widening countries should be given to actively participate in Management Boards, Strategic Advisory Bodies, Transdisciplinary Advisory Bodies, Internal Advisory Committees and the preparation of Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas. On the level of research projects, consortia opportunities could be given to widening countries to lead Work Packages, Task forces, etc.

The third recommendation is the result of comparison between ERA-NET and EJP versus Art.185 and JTI responses on the call preparation phase where the latter two should give more attention to enabling **call regulations in favor of widening countries**. Examples on how to implement this are already given in the survey, suggesting allowing larger consortia if widening countries are involved and allowing the addition of partners from widening countries in those proposals that are approved for the full proposal stage. In the call evaluation phase preference could be given to proposals with widening countries in case of proposals receiving same score.

6. 3 EU level

The encouraging of widening countries to increase their involvement in partnership initiatives somehow connects to the results, impacts and effects of what such partnerships bring to each country. Therefore, the component of promotion and visibility of individual impacts achieved by each partnership initiative and also the promotion and exploitation of results of research funded projects under partnership initiatives must be intensified in order to give greater attention to decision makers. Another aspect that depends on the EC is to ensure the structure of evaluators that should be fair and proportionate to the widening countries.

Another important recommendation is about having **flexibility in the implementation of the partnership initiatives**. Although in Horizon Europe we are striving for harmonization and simplification of procedures, and recognizing that the 3 categories of partnership instruments (co-funded, co-programmed and institutionalized) should provide adequate response to the collaborative needs in the European Research Area, it is nevertheless essential to allow a certain level of flexibility during the implementation of the instruments. Given different characteristics of the instruments, of the R&I area they support and, therefore, of the relevant actors to which they are aimed, the possibility – as well as the stimulus – to create differentiated mechanisms to

promote a broader participation must be allowed within the instruments, and, therefore, adequately promote the participation of widening countries in the area they cover.

The general recommendation goes for advocating the **importance of bridging the innovation divide** as openness of partnership initiatives and appropriate selected measures under Horizon configuration Spreading Excellence and widening participation would influence and lead to reaching the research potential of widening countries. This would be logically followed by strengthened (international) competitiveness of the EU.

ANNEX 1: Questionnaire

GPC - Openness & Transparency of networks

Survey short title: GPC: Openness & Transparency of networks
Question number: 8
Survey is closed.
Active from: 29.07.2019 Active until: 29.10.2019
Author: petra.zagar Edited: petra.zagar
Description: GPC Task Force on Openness and Transparency of Networks

Please take a few minutes and start by completing the survey by clicking on the Next page.

Q1 - I am answering for

◯ Art. 185 EDCTP
◯ Art. 185 AAL2
◯ Art. 185 EMPIR
◯ Art. 185 EUROSTARS
◯ Art. 185 PRIMA
◯ JTI BBI
◯ JTI IMI2
◯ JTI Shift2Rail
◯ JTI CleanSky2
◯ JTI FCH2
◯ JTI ECSEL
◯ JTI SESAR

Q2 – Which measures for increasing inclusiveness (openness of networks) do you employ?
Multiple answers

☐ None
☐ We actively involve organisations from Widening Countries in our network (personal invitations, brokerage or kick-off events, etc.)
☐ Organisations from Widening Countries are involved in core network positions (WP-Lead, Task-Lead, etc.)
☐ Inclusiveness is an explicit additional activity (an activities that go beyond the co-funded call) in our network
☐ Other:

Q3 - Which type of measures do you employ in the call preparation phase?
Multiple answers

☐ None
☐ Call budget: Structural funds are used
☐ Call text explicitly encourages involvement of Widening Countries in projects
☐ Call regulations allow larger consortia if Widening Countries are involved
☐ Call regulations allow the addition of partners from Widening, or less performing countries in

those proposals that
are approved for the full proposal stage
☐ Other, please specify:

Q4 - Which type of measures do you employ in the call promotion phase?
Multiple answers

☐ None
☐ Match-making/Brokerage events
☐ Use of partnering tools
☐ Dedicated activities to inform and encourage the research community in Widening countries (detailed advice,
proposal check, etc.)
☐ Other, please specify:

Q5 - Which type of measures do you employ in the call evaluation phase?
Multiple answers

☐ None
☐ Include experts from Widening Countries in evaluation panels in order to maintain geographical balance and
diversity in research expertise
☐ Wild card - invite at least one trans-national project per Widening Country to submit full proposals
☐ Proposal selection (note: not evaluation criteria) In case of equal score proposals, proposals with more Widening
Countries are preferred
☐ Extend the selection list by increasing the national budgets and/or using a flexible top-up distribution
☐ Other, please specify:

Q6 - Which other type of activities for strengthening Widening Countries did you employ / for inclusiveness in the sense of openness and transparency of networks?

☐ Please specify:

Q7 - Please highlight dedicated pro-inclusiveness activities implemented by your network, which have been most successful or effective, if any? Please also mention activities that you would not recommend.

Multiple answers

- ☐ Most effective:
- ☐ Not recommended:
- ☐ Other:

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email - The results of the survey will contribute to the report of the GPC Task Force on Openness and Transparency of networks, due 2nd Semester 2020. If you wish to be informed on the results, please leave your email.

(e.g. john@gmail.com)