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1. Executive Summary: 8 steps for a successful Policy Dialogue

The aim of the MIRRIS project (**Mobilising Institutional Reforms in Research and Innovation Systems**), a support action selected under the 7th European Framework Programme for RTD, is to facilitate a Policy Dialogue on widening the participation of researchers from academia and industry in HORIZON 2020 from Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

The tangible outcome of the Policy Dialogue should be an action plan with a roadmap and a list of prioritised interventions designed to increase the participation of researchers and research organisations as well as companies from the above mentioned countries in HORIZON 2020.

In order to implement a successful Policy Dialogue, the following eight steps have to be taken:

1. Committed leadership in each partner country and a shared readiness to implement a key stakeholder focussed Policy Dialogue for the sake of identifying ways to increase the participation in HORIZON 2020 has to be secured. A key contact person, who has to come from an institution with policy-making authorisation in this field, has to be nominated to work together with MIRRIS. MIRRIS is ready to provide financial and intellectual capacities, including this methodology to facilitate such a Policy Dialogue.
2. MIRRIS experts will identify and establish together with the national key contact person in each country the agenda and schedule for implementing the planned three Policy Dialogue cycles. Flexibility to adjust the Policy Dialogue process to the needs of the partner country and the involved stakeholders will be ensured.
3. Based on a first proposition of MIRRIS, key stakeholders from the policy-making level, the implementation level and – if relevant for the specific country under scrutiny – operational support institutions will be invited by the national key contact person through logistical support provided by MIRRIS to attend the Policy Dialogue cycles. Only stakeholders who are committed to participate in all cycles will have the chance to contribute to the dialogue.
4. The Policy Dialogue cycles will take into account national elections as well as already planned or implemented policy processes which deal with the issue of widening participation. In general, it is planned to implement the Policy Dialogue between spring 2014 and Winter 2014/2015.
5. The first Policy Dialogue cycle is about convening and issue focussing, the second one is on gap analysis, information exchange and discussion of national and – if relevant for a specific country - regional SWOTs (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) vis-à-vis the issue of increasing participation of researchers from academia and industry in HORIZON 2020. The third Policy Dialogue cycle finally should be used

to establish an action plan and a roadmap as well as a priority list of interventions to improve participation in HORIZON 2020.

6. MIRRIS will provide for the entire Policy Dialogue a moderator and a facilitator as well as targeted country reports to kick-off the first cycle. Based on the information needs generated by each policy cycle, MIRRIS will identify external expertise as well as inspiring cases on how other countries and/or organisations tackled the problem to increase their participation in previous Framework Programmes for RTD.
7. MIRRIS will collect all agreed upon action plans, roadmaps and suggestions for intervention from each partner country designed to widening participation and will organise a large final policy conference where the issue of widening participation will receive a large forum for deliberation and for influencing and shaping the widening participation policies at European, intra-Member States and national level.
8. Upon request of the partner countries and provided that enough resources are available, the MIRRIS team will coach the implementation of a few pilot interventions aimed to increase participation in HORIZON 2020.

2. The mission of MIRIS to improve participation in H2020

The MIRIS project, which is funded by the European Commission in FP7 (SSH)¹, aims at encouraging a higher participation of researchers, both from academia and economy, from the “new”² EU Member States in HORIZON 2020 and a widened participation in the European Research Area (ERA) of these countries by setting up a process of analysis, dialogue and mutual learning among key stakeholders from each of the target countries.

The target countries, to which MIRIS services are provided, are

- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia.

MIRIS supports the “widening” approach actively promoted under HORIZON 2020 and is clearly committed to work **WITH** the target countries **FOR** the benefit of the target countries.

The MIRIS service portfolio includes

1. awareness raising and advocacy
2. provision of analytical and technical input
3. organisation of a policy dialogue
4. coaching of pilots implemented in the EU12+1 to improve the situation.

The report at hand explains the structure and process of the Policy Dialogue to be implemented in each target country.

It also explains the interfaces to the other services provided by MIRIS.

¹ Grant Agreement No: 320209

² The term „new“ is not meant to be used in any evaluative way. If we address the target countries at a group, we use the term EU12+1. MIRIS

3. Starting Position

HORIZON 2020, such as its predecessor FPs, is based on competition and the pursuit of excellence.

The participation in HORIZON 2020 and the success of participation will be influenced by several factors. Among them, the ability of different as well as diverse research communities from the participating countries to be competitive themselves in terms of non-material and material research capacities (incl. RTI infrastructures), close integration in international networks of excellence, improved skills in proposal writing etc. will be of utmost importance.

Several studies and policy deliberations³ have concluded that there is a correlation between the quality of the national innovation system (NIS) and success in the FPs. In most cases the assumption holds true, that the more fit the NIS, the richer the research ecology (including non-academic R&D; especially industrial R&D) and the more excellent the research base is, the relatively higher and more successful also the participation in the FP competitions is. There are, however, also a few diverging factors, which slightly distort a too simplistic linear relation, like the size (and hierarchy) of the internal (R&D) market of a country, which effects the level of mobilisation of researchers both from academy and industry to participate in FPs.

In general the mobilisation and success rates achieved by the EU12+1 in the previous FPs have been lower than in economically more advanced EU Member States.

Although there is a huge variation between the target countries with regards to certain aspects⁴ and also remarkable variations over time, the overall rather low success in FPs seems to correlate with the lesser developed research and innovation systems of these countries.

This is also indicated by the European Innovation Scoreboard (2013)⁵, which shows the majority of EU12+1 countries among the group of “modest innovators” and “moderate innovators”. Only Slovenia, Cyprus and Estonia are subsumed under the group of “innovation followers”. None of the EU12+1 belongs to the “innovation leaders” group.

To improve the overall situation for the EU12+1, national as well as European efforts have to be reinforced. This calls for structural interventions reflecting national needs for catching-up, which should arise from evidence-based and shared problem understanding and analysis.

³ see for example Andreff, W. et al. (2000): 1999 Five-Year Assessment Related to the Specific Programme INCO. Brussels: European Commission; Le Masne, D. (2001): Report on the 2nd Parallel Session (RTD Systems) of the 8-9 March Seminar on Integration of the Candidate Countries into ERA, Brussels, March 2001; Schuch, K. (2005): The integration of Central Europe into the European System of Research. Guthmann-Peterson: Wien und Mülheim a. d. Ruhr.

⁴ Detailed lists of participation compared with different benchmarks of potential or optimum participation are shown in the MIRRIS inception report.

⁵ European Commission (2013): Innovation Union Scoreboard 2013. Brussels.

MIRRIS is committed to support this identification of common ground through facilitating a Policy Dialogue on this issue in each partner country by involving the relevant stakeholders.

4. Structure of the Policy Dialogue Process

By definition, a Policy Dialogue⁶ is convened to address major public policy issues, bringing diverse interest groups on one table

- to open up discussion,
- improve mutual understanding and
- assess the degree of consensus and controversy that exists.

Policy Dialogues usually focus on regulatory, policy, or planning issues that are of common interest (e.g. to establish a joint action plan or to launch a pilot intervention) and they seek to formulate practical solutions to complex problems.

To improve the participation in HORIZON 2020, MIRRIS suggests implementing a 3-cycle targeted Policy Dialogue in each EU12+1 separately **with the aim to exchange information, build consensus recommendations and to establish an action plan/roadmap** for launching relevant short-term and long-term interventions. Such interventions have to be tailored to the countries' specific needs and conditions. MIRRIS will not propose a magic formula, but will support the identification of suitable long- and short-term interventions through provision of technical expertise and inspiring practices developed elsewhere.

To secure a meaningful and targeted policy dialogue process, this methodology provides guidelines, points out important factors which have to be considered and raises questions which should be answered before and during the implementation of the policy dialogue.

Important factors for success of the policy dialogue are the provision of qualitative analysis and technical information, the mobilisation of the right mix of stakeholders and the methodological precautions which have to be taken to support an effective process management.

⁶ See for instance: EASAC – European Academies Science Advisory Council: EASAC Guidelines: Good Practice in the Dialogue between Science Academies and Policy Communities, no date; Jones, N., Jones, H. and Walsh C. (2008): Political Science? Strengthening science-policy dialogue in developing countries. Overseas Development Institute. Working Paper 294; Jones, H., Jones, N. Walker D. and Walsh C. (2009): Strengthening science-policy dialogue in developing countries: a priority for climate change adaptation. ODI Background Note, December 2009; Voluntary Sector Initiative (Canada) (2002): A Code of Good Practice on Policy Dialogue; Latta, S., Mulcare, C. and Zacharzewski, A. (2013): In the goldfish bowl: science and technology policy dialogues in a digital world. Sciencewise: Didcot; Bijker, W. E. (2001): RTD through a EU-ACP Policy Dialogue. Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Adler, P. S. and Celico K. P. (2003): Policy Dialogue, www.beyondintractability.org.

4.1. MIRRIIS Policy Dialogue Principles and Main Characteristics

At all stages of the policy dialogue, the advice provided by MIRRIIS has to be

- **relevant** by addressing the policy makers' and stakeholder's key questions
- **credible** by being sound and authoritative in its analytical input
- **legitimate** by developing a fair process
- **timely** to inform the decision-making process in time without creating unnecessary delays.

The following elements characterise the MIRRIIS Policy Dialogue

- **Focus orientation:**
 - the MIRRIIS Policy Dialogue is focussed on a manageable size of relevant stakeholders (n= 15), who are the responsible bearers of the change process aimed to increase participation in HORIZON 2020
 - the scope of the deliberations is focussed on the ultimate task to widen participation in HORIZON 2020; the approaches and interventions to be identified to improve the situation, however, can have different formats, levels and implementers
- **Openness:**
 - content and priorities are amenable to revision during the Policy Dialogue
 - openness of accounting and reporting procedures and styles
 - flexibility to include external experts if requested by the stakeholders engaged in the Policy Dialogue
- **Learning attitude:**
 - level of reflexivity with regards to context (to consider implicit assumptions and limitations in each position, argument or approach)
- **Process character**
 - tolerance for failures
 - regular evaluation of progress and adjustment of goals (feedback template will be provided by MIRRIIS)
 - some flexibility of procedures and reflexivity with regards to processes
 - controlled transparency of the Policy Dialogue (a short summary of contents and progress, agreed by the Policy Dialogue participants will be produced after each Policy Dialogue cycle for public dissemination).

4.2. Things to clarify before starting the Policy Dialogue

MIRRIS cannot and will not provide a pre-fabricated miracle formula to solve the problem of sub-optimal participation of researchers from academia and industry from the EU12+1 partner countries, firstly because there is no such magic formula and secondly, because the structural, organizational and regulatory differences between each country call for tailor-made approaches and specific interventions.

Everybody participating in a MIRRIS Policy Dialogue should, thus, appraise a conflict for possibilities between countries and within a country as a “normal” phenomenon. Issues which are considered problematic by one stakeholder can be seen different by others. Overall interventions which benefit the entire research and innovation system may not be first priority interventions at the level of individual stakeholders.

BOX 1: Things to clarify before starting the Policy Dialogue

- 1) Appraising the conflict for possibilities
- 2) Organising leadership, sponsorship and willingness to convene
- 3) Gaining the participation of key stakeholders
- 4) Designing the Policy Dialogue forum and strategy (based on the available MIRRIS Policy Dialogue framework)

Secondly, MIRRIS will only succeed if the target countries are perceived as partner countries.

If a EU12+1 country is not ready or not willing to convene the Policy Dialogue, MIRRIS cannot assume formal authority and legitimisation, but has to find other means to raise awareness.

In any case, the MIRRIS Policy Dialogue has to be supported through organising leadership, which involves first of all the inclusion of national leadership for the programmed Policy Dialogue exercised by an authoritative institution or person. **Thus, each country should provide an authority who will lend his/her name and leadership.** This authoritative person, who will act as co-convenor of the Policy Dialogue cycles (see next section), has to be committed to search for common ground and exploring break-through solutions.

In our understanding, there are several options for this authorisation of a key contact person depending on the institutional fabric in the respective partner country:

1. a special legitimised unit explicitly implemented through a national nomination process to tackle the issue of widening participation or other configurations with authorisation and legitimisation,
2. the national delegate in ERAC;

3. the responsible ministry;
4. the national science, technology and innovation council.

Of course, leadership can also be shared by several of such key institutions. **In order to facilitate communication and to plan the implementation and follow-up of the Policy Dialogue, MIRRIS needs one nominated key contact with decision-making authority in each country.**

MIRRIS project management will meet with the permanent representations of the target countries in Brussels in order to kick-off the identification of the key contact.

Although MIRRIS in its institutional fabric is “only” a project, also MIRRIS has authorisation: it is THE project selected under a highly competitive process to tackle the issue of widening participation in the EU12+1 now and in the forthcoming few years.

“Widening participation” is an issue, which is politically supported by the target countries. Thus, partnering with MIRRIS should be seen as a win-win situation.

MIRRIS also has been awarded by the European Commission to provide financial means and intellectual and procedural capacity to lift the weight of conducting a Policy Dialogue.

An important issue for a deliberate and sound Policy Dialogue is the inclusion of major stakeholders, which are concerned with the issue of widening participation in HORIZON 2020 in each partner country and who also have the capacity to influence and improve the situation.

MIRRIS proposes to include stakeholders from the following three layers:

1. Policy makers
2. Implementing organisations
3. Operational support institutions (if relevant; e.g. NCP coordination).

The MIRRIS Policy Dialogue is not designed as open space consultation process aiming to mobilise many. On contrary, it targets the most important stakeholders only. Thus, the Policy Dialogue should be limited to around 15 stakeholders.

Please find more information about the targeted stakeholders and the process of selection in section 4.5.

As regards the viability and timing of the Policy Dialogue, MIRRIS intends to examine together with the key national contact person the best options (e.g. by taking next elections or existing national dialogue process on the issue of widening participation etc. into account).

When it has been decided, which stakeholders should participate in the Policy Dialogue Forum and once the rough timing for the Policy Dialogue cycles is fixed, the policy dialogue strategy can be implemented (see section 4.3.).

4.3. The three MIRRIS Policy Dialogue cycles

Every Policy Dialogue has a life cycle with a beginning, middle and end. MIRRIS proposes a Policy Dialogue consisting of three cycles.

Each cycle should last one to three days, depending on the complexity of the treated topic in each partner country and the availability of stakeholders. Each cycle is composed of round table debates and deepening workshops and, in principle, always involves the same group of stakeholders, complemented by MIRRIS experts who can provide inputs to specific topics as requested by the Policy Dialogue Forum. Preparatory activities and follow-ups are part of each cycle.

If three cycles are deemed to be disproportionate, the Policy Dialogue can also be broken down into two cycles by combining tasks.

If the Policy Dialogue can be embedded in an already existing national initiative to increase and widen participation in HORIZON 2020, than MIRRIS assumes flexibility to fit into this overarching national process.

Each Policy Dialogue cycle is co-chaired by the national leader and MIRRIS.

For each policy cycle a detailed, but flexible work plan will be established by the national leader together with MIRRIS based on this framework methodology.

A compilation of background materials (including foremost a “country report” which will be prepared by the MIRRIS team separately for each partner country) will be given to the Policy Dialogue participants in advance of the first meeting.

BOX 2: The MIRRIS Policy Dialogue consists of three broad phases:

1. issue focusing and convening (Policy cycle 1)
2. exchange, discussion and assessment (Policy cycle 2)
3. solution-seeking and consensus building (Policy cycle 3)

Policy cycle 1, which is about issue focusing and convening, aims at organising a productive and respectful exchange of information about the constraints to widen participation in HORIZON 2020 in each EU 12+1 country. MIRRIS will provide a motivational input to explain the topic and open up the reflections and discussions. An essential cornerstone of the first policy cycle is “product framing” to clarify “*what do we want to have at the end of the Policy Dialogue*” (e.g. joint policy recommendations; pilot coaching).

Policy cycle 2, emphasising exchange and discussion among the stakeholders, is about pushing the parties to understand the concerns and positions as well as underlying interests and the existing (if at all) remediation strategies of all stakeholders vis-à-vis the “widening” topic. MIRRIS will provide inputs from other countries/organisations about inspiring practices on how to increase successful participation in the FPs. The overall situation for the country should be assessed and a SWOT analysis of the country’s likely participation in HORIZON 2020 should be established.

Option: If deemed necessary, policy cycle 3 can be combined with policy cycle 2 or policy cycle 2 with policy cycle 1, but we recommend to separate these issues and leave time between the policy cycles to make each stakeholder reflect about its own concerns and own strategies to improve participation in HORIZON 2020 (e.g. as sort of “homework”). If two cycles are however combined, we suggest assigning this homework always before the next cycle takes place.

Policy cycle 3, finally, which is about solution-seeking and consensus building, aims to support all parties to discover, clarify and create the highest joint gains possible. Recommendations and - based on the recommendations - a joint action plan and roadmap should be established on how to improve the situation, which might include allotted activities distributed to different stakeholders. MIRRIS will assist the parties in making informed choices and by capturing agreements and helping ratify, memorialise, and prepare for implementation of the agreed activities.

4.3.1. The first Policy Dialogue Cycle

The first cycle of the Policy Dialogue aims on finding an agreement on convening and on issue focussing.

4.3.1.1. Convening

As regards finding an agreement on convening, MIRRIS proposes a framework which includes the following issues:

- MIRRIS is responsible for moderation and protocol establishment. Two experts will be provided by the MIRRIS team for this (one moderator and a facilitator).
- MIRRIS will also propose initial Rules of Procedure for the Policy Dialogue. For the following aspects suggestions will be prepared by MIRRIS, which have to be discussed at the first meeting, eventually modified and agreed by the participants. They include (among others, which can also be suggested by the participants):
 - *group decision-making* (MIRRIS suggests unanimity as the target of deliberations and decision-making but in case that no unanimity can be

reached, qualified majority voting [i.e. 2/3 of votes] is suggested by granting space for conflicting arguments)

- *participation by others* (MIRRIS suggests to work throughout the entire policy cycle only with the same group of core stakeholders, but other actors/ experts can be invited ad hoc to attend the Policy Dialogue, to give input, to participate in the discussion but not to participate in decision-making)
- *ground rules for media contacts* (MIRRIS suggests to keep details of the discussions and information exchange confidential; after each Policy Dialogue cycle a press release will be provided to media summarising the main points of discussion and results achieved without naming anyone; for continuative talks with media the national leader acts as contact person or appoints another participating stakeholder as contact person)
- *use of technical information* (technical information provided by MIRRIS is intended to stimulate, structure and enrich the Policy Dialogue. This information, however, is not restricted to the participants of the Policy Dialogue but can also be distributed by them to other parties, if it is deemed supportive for the Policy Dialogue)
- *negotiation manners* etc. (MIRRIS will provide an experienced moderator to conduct the Policy Dialogue, who will ensure that all parties have a say, that conflicting issues are openly discussed, that a good spirit of deliberation, reflection and exchange is established)

4.3.1.2. *Issue focussing*

In terms of issue focussing the purpose of the 1st cycle of the Policy Dialogue is to debate national RTI profiles and challenges and to set the ground for gap analysing as regards the problem of sub-optimal participation in FPs (and probably also HORIZON 2020). The problem, if once shared, should be (re)framed by all participating stakeholders.

Moreover, the 1st cycle of the Policy Dialogue should prioritise further information needs to which MIRRIS should respond and deliver during the 2nd cycle of the Policy Dialogue (e.g. provision of information on inspiring “mirror” practices from other countries).

To substantiate the dialogue, MIRRIS will provide for each country a “Country Report”, which highlights main features of the national system of research and innovation. The Country Report contains facts and figures, but it does neither provide conclusions nor recommendations, in order not to influence the direction of the debates.

MIRRIS suggests that the focus of the debate is on structural factors which might affect the participation and success in FPs, such as:

- RTI funding regimes

- RTI policy mixes
- National ERA governance (incl. support systems)
- Human resources and (industrial/academic) absorption capacities
- Synergies between Structural Funds and RTI/H2020
- ... (other issues can be put on the agenda by the Policy Dialogue stakeholders)

In order to structure the discussions and the information exchange, key questions to which the Policy Dialogue will then seek to develop consensus answers will be developed by MIRRIS, such as

- Why are some countries not performing well in exploiting the opportunities under FPs?
- Why are asymmetries between FP expectations and EU12+1 reality?
 - Are these caused by structural issues such as:
 - excellence
 - leadership
 - country vision: national R&D priorities are different from those of FPs
 - capacity
 - reputation
 - priorities: capturing FP money seems more difficult than consuming ERDF earmarked
 - lack or surplus of national funding or structural funds financing
 - knowledge absorption regarding EU administrative and pre-information
 - or only institutional for instance:
 - lack of access to relevant information
 - lack of capacity of drafting proposals
 - lack of incentive or even structures that provide incentives NOT to participate in FP (e.g. internal organisational promotion schemes which do not take FP participation into account)
 - limited language skills
 - limited administrative capacity
 - lack of possibility to pre-finance proposal preparation
 - lack of involvement in dynamic networks
 - lack of international cooperation practices
 - or a mixture of both?
- Which is the relationship between transition process and country performance?
- Which are the future trends in HORIZON 2020 and what has to be taken into account in order to be best prepared for an increased participation?
- How are the R&D&I performances related to the research environment?

- Which are the main factors influencing (hindering) a better performance? (Institutional reforms? Limited RTI capacities? Conditions for productive collaboration?)
- Which are the different implementation mechanisms at national and regional level?

BOX 3: Suggested Schedule⁷

We suggest the following rough agenda and schedule for the first Policy Dialogue Cycle:

1st Day (e.g. 14:00-17:45)

Start after lunch (which can be included in the Dialogue or not)

Short welcome by the Host and MIRRIS and introduction of the participants (20 minutes)

Explanation of the rationale of the Policy Dialogue (by MIRRIS) (30 minutes)

First round of Q&A (10 minutes)

Presentation of the MIRRIS country report (30 minutes)

First reflection round by all participants (round table) and discussion (60 minutes)

Coffee Break (15 minutes)

First collection of themes deemed as important by the participants (30 minutes)

Presentation about the suggested draft Rules of Procedure for the Policy Dialogue and discussion (30 minutes)

Moderator promises to elaborate a new version of the Rules of Procedure overnight and breaks the first day of the Policy Dialogue.

2nd Day (whole day)(e.g. 9:00-17:00 incl. lunch break)

The focus of the second day is on issue framing by putting central questions, such as those listed in this section in the main text, as well as identified themes of the 1st day for discussion.

e.g. discussion of a main question during the Round Table (e.g. *“Which are the future trends in HORIZON 2020 and what has to be taken into account in order to be best prepared for an increased participation?”*) (60 minutes)

Don't forget coffee breaks as well as the necessity to summarise (interim) results.

Work can be done partly in the plenary round table or in break-out workshop sessions.

Moderator summarises the results and bids farewell until the 2nd Policy Dialogue Cycle (if the process could be concluded sufficiently on the 2nd day).

⁷ As the box title suggests, the proposed schedule serves as inspiration only and can be adjusted according to the requirements, needs and conceptions of the participants.

3rd Day (morning only) (10:00-12:00)

(Continuation and concluding of the 1st cycle of the Policy Dialogue if there was not enough time on the previous day)

Drafting the press release by MIRRIS to be provided to media summarising the main points of discussion and results achieved.

4.3.2 The second Policy Dialogue Cycle

The purpose of the 2nd cycle is on information exchange and discussion, in particular on debating gaps and barriers which prevent the widening of participation in FPs and probably also in HORIZON 2020. Also a SWOT analysis should be jointly developed and – if time allows it – a first reflection on potential solutions can be approached to suggest a portfolio of interventions (although solution seeking and action plan development is mainly the purpose of the 3rd cycle).

During the second Policy Dialogue cycle, the individual stakeholders on the table should also reflect and discuss their own institutional concerns and own institutional strategies to improve participation in HORIZON 2020.

In this Policy cycle a relevant spectrum of viewpoints has to be ensured by the moderator. Conflicting issues could arise and a diversity of viewpoints may emerge, which has to be respected as long as it is committed to disciplined give-and-take discussions. Already in this phase, participants might forge alliances and strongly influence the trajectory of a possible solution to a challenging issue.

To define and secure the level of information that is needed to work on the issue at hand, also other experts can be invited to this policy cycle.

They will contribute to the discussions during the dialogue workshops complementing the expertise of national policymakers, research managers, programs owners and relevant stakeholders so as to provide a European perspective and inspiring practices how other countries and organisations dealt with the issue of ensuring a successful participation in the FPs to serve as benchmark.

At the end of the 2nd Policy Dialogue cycle all participants should be in a position to understand the concerns and positions as well as underlying interests of all participating stakeholders and a common problem analysis and assessment should emerge. As a final product of this 2nd Policy Dialogue cycle a SWOT analysis about the country's likely participation in HORIZON 2020 should be established.

4.3.3 The third Policy Dialogue Cycle

The purpose of the 3rd cycle is on solution-seeking and consensus building. It should build on the findings and the SWOT analysis of the 2nd Policy Dialogue Cycle. Its result should be recommendations and convictions resulting in an action plan with a roadmap prioritising interventions which should be implemented to ameliorate the participation in HORIZON 2020.

In order to facilitate the deliberations on what should be done, questions like the following can be discussed:

- How to get prepared for better performance? (e.g. how to intensify European RTD collaboration? Is there a need to innovate the funding structures?)
- Can a new entrepreneurial approach affect performance? And if so, how can it be stimulated?
- How can underperforming countries benefit from existing initiatives in well-performing countries and what should be done in this respect?
- Is ERDF funding perceived as investment for future participation in HORIZON 2020 and how could structural funds be better used to improve performance?
- Have R&D stakeholders difficulties to generate a dynamic flow of good ERDF projects? If so, what can be improved?

Moreover, also tactical questions can be raised, such as;

Is it more advisable to

- Feed a maximum of potential applicants with information and "touch-and go advice", betting on the fact that the more organisations are aware a greater number may get funded ("mobilisation strategy")?
- Identify a few excellent organisations not yet involved in EU projects to upgrade their capability to become strong leaders or partners of HORIZON 2020 projects ("key account strategy")?
- Run for every strand of HORIZON 2020 or chose a smart specialisation approach to target only strands for which national stakeholders have recognized expertise ("quality strategy")?

At the end of the Policy Dialogue a clear understanding on what should be done is expected to be reported and delivered. Reporting and roll out should include

- a set of recommendations
- an action plan with a roadmap
- a decision on pilot activities
- an active dissemination and knowledge management procedure (incl. relevant take-away messages for the final conference)

The participants should also identify success indicators in qualitative and quantitative terms.

Finally, the participants of the Policy Dialogue cycles should find an agreement whether or not MIRRIS should provide additional coaching for a pilot intervention which is deemed feasible and manageable to be implemented until the end of the MIRRIS project (May 2016).

4.3.4 The time in-between the 3 cycles

The Policy Dialogue spans across many months and there will be around 3 to 4 months in-between each cycle. This in-between time is important to shape reflections internally among the Policy Dialogue participants, but also to give time to facilitators and conveners for talking with participants between the meetings and to allow MIRRIS to provide tailor-made inputs for the next Policy Dialogue cycle.

The large MIRRIS conference will commence after the 3rd cycle. The time before the conference is the right time that the partner countries think about their key take-away messages which they want to bring at the table for intra-Member States and European level consideration. A conference “Appraisal Document” will be issued, containing key conclusions and recommendations.

4.4. The composition of the dialogue participants

MIRRIS proposes to include relevant stakeholders from the following three “layers” in the Policy Dialogue:

1. **Policy makers** including representatives of ministries of research, technology and innovation; representatives of ministries of enterprises; representatives of regional governments if they are important in this context; owners and managers of the most important STI programmes (e.g. agencies).
2. **Implementing organisations** including research and technology development organisations (such a major universities, the Academy of Science or major governmental and non-governmental research organisations); National Research Councils; (other) funding bodies.
3. **Operational support institutions** (if relevant) such as the National Contact Point coordination (NCP); major regional development agencies; main technology and science parks; major incubator (umbrella) associations; major national promoters of the European Enterprise Network; major technology transfer (umbrella) organisations; major (umbrella) cluster organisations etc.

These three layers should ensure continuity, a holistic approach, and the necessary power to mobilise and initiate change.

The MIRRIS Policy Dialogue targets the most important stakeholders only. Thus, the Policy Dialogue should be limited to around 15 stakeholders.

Minister(s) are welcomed to join the Policy Dialogue, but it is important to take into consideration if the availability of the minister throughout all MIRRIS Policy Dialogue cycles

can be secured⁸. The aim of the MIRRIS Policy Dialogue is to give a forum for reflection, discussion and programming for selected stakeholders **who are participating in ALL three cycles**. Non-recurring attendance of stakeholders should be avoided. Nevertheless, the Policy Dialogue composition will slightly change from one time to the other, because different external experts can be involved ad-hoc according to the process demands and their particular expertise.

As regards the selection of Policy Dialogue participants, the MIRRIS consortium prepares a first list of potential invitees. This list should be cleared up with the national key contact point. It can be complemented and modified. With the approval of the national key contact point, MIRRIS staff will then contact the suggested stakeholders. At the very end, around 15 committed stakeholders represented by nominated individual high-level experts/positions should declare their readiness and availability to participate throughout the Policy Dialogue Cycles.

4.5. Roles of the team members and venue

As regards the process team and the roles of the team member, MIRRIS will provide each Policy Dialogue with a moderator and a facilitator/rapporteur to help moderating and organising the process.

While the moderator will be focussed on the deliberation process, the facilitator will provide logistical support and will draft a first version of the minutes and the press release.

The Policy Dialogue forum will be co-organised by the key contact person in each country together with the moderator provided by MIRRIS and officially hosted and chaired by both parties together.

The venue for the forum meetings will be comfortable and business-like. It is suggested to have all three cycles at the same place, but one can also change the venue (e.g. go once to a region if this is perceived as advantageous).

The venue should provide one appropriate room with a U-shaped round table composition with additional space for brain-walking, constellation analysis or other activating formats as well as two additional rooms for break-out sessions. It would be nice to have also the possibility to relax in a garden or park.

The venue should not be too close to the working offices of the participants, but rather at the city periphery (but still within reach of public transport).

Catering will be provided at the spot. Place and exact timing will be agreed between the key national contact and MIRRIS. In general, MIRRIS will take care about the financing, but a

⁸ If the relevant Minister(s) cannot participate (which is most likely the case), it would be of course welcomed if the Policy Dialogue is under the patronage of the Minister(s) and if he or she gives a short welcome address at the beginning of the first policy dialogue cycle.

contribution from the national host organisation is always welcomed and shows also a sign of commitment to the participating stakeholders.

4.6. Negotiating and mediation techniques

During the Policy Dialogue different negotiation and mediation techniques will be employed by the process moderator according to his or her experiences and preferences as well according to necessity, adequacy and acceptance by the involved stakeholders. These include

- strategies for bringing multiple viewpoints to the table to **ensure a rich diversity of ideas**
- methods for **problem naming and “framing”**, i.e. structuring the way controversial issues are stated
- critical inquiry tools that foster the **examination of data**
- procedures for **grappling with divergent values, worldviews and ideologies**
- creativity and robust **brainstorming** methodologies
- **strategies for problem “taming”** and exploring alternative pathways in the **search for applied solutions**
- **consensus-building and agreement-making** methods that bring about specific joint decisions

A variety of workshop methods⁹ should be exploited, including “classical” methods activating logical-analytical deliberations, such as

- Information retrieval and call
- Two- or four-field tables (e.g. for the SWOT analysis)
- “theme storehouse”
- Dialogue in the spirit of David Bohm¹⁰ etc.

as well as more creative and analogues methods activating also emotions, supporting holistic views and elaboration of new themes, ideas and solutions such as

- Brainstorming incl. Osborne’s checklist¹¹
- brainwriting, brainwalking
- mind-mappings
- fantasy journeys
- systemic constellations.

⁹ See for instance Lipp and Will (2008); Hartkemeyer, M., Dhority, J. and Freeman, L. (2010).

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bohm_Dialogue

¹¹ See for instance: http://www.mycoted.com/Osborn%27s_Checklist

5. Literature

The following literature has been consulted for this MIRRIS Policy Dialogue Methodology:

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