

*Mutual learning exercise (MLE) on national practices in
widening participation and strengthening synergies
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Improving networking through participation in EU-level initiatives (Topic 3 Widening)

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The Challenge of widening participation in FP

Country	H2020 contribution (EUR million)	Horizon 2020 contribution		
		Per inhabitant	Per researcher FTE	Per EUR million spend on R&D
Malta	16	36	19,094	230,759
Lithuania	21	7	2,585	54,264
Latvia	22	11	5,978	141,825
Bulgaria	30	4	2,095	68,791
Croatia	32	8	5,042	85,644
Slovakia	50	9	3,492	54,245
Luxembourg	54	94	18,892	80,767
Cyprus	62	73	71,860	768,657
Estonia	66	50	15,767	217,990
Romania	77	4	4,422	98,703
Hungary	109	11	4,298	72,008
Slovenia	109	53	13,848	128,243
Czech Republ	129	12	3,393	39,751
Poland	185	5	1,908	42,743
Portugal	343	33	8,663	149,794
Ireland	356	75	16,610	121,962
Finland	430	78	11,470	70,879
Greece	435	40	12,396	258,158
Denmark	497	87	11,887	61,706
Austria	576	66	13,609	55,170
Sweden	704	71	10,249	48,267
Belgium	965	85	17,518	95,806
Netherlands	1,566	92	20,337	114,857
Italy	1,664	27	13,786	75,991
Spain	1,813	39	14,806	137,627
France	2,097	31	7,812	43,110
United Kingd	3,083	47	10,654	70,251
Germany	3,464	42	9,690	39,735
EU-28	18,953	37	10,426	63,429
EU-13	907	9	3,812	67,524
EU-15	18,046	44	11,423	63,277

Source: European Commission, CORDA data, cut-off date 1 January 2017

The topic

Strategies, mechanisms and schemes developed at national or regional level that aim to improve networking through participation in a wide variety of **EU-level initiatives**, with a view to reinforcing capacities to participate in the EU FP



Addressing the '**closed club**' syndrome



Using networks and joint research opportunities as 'stepping stones' towards EU FP

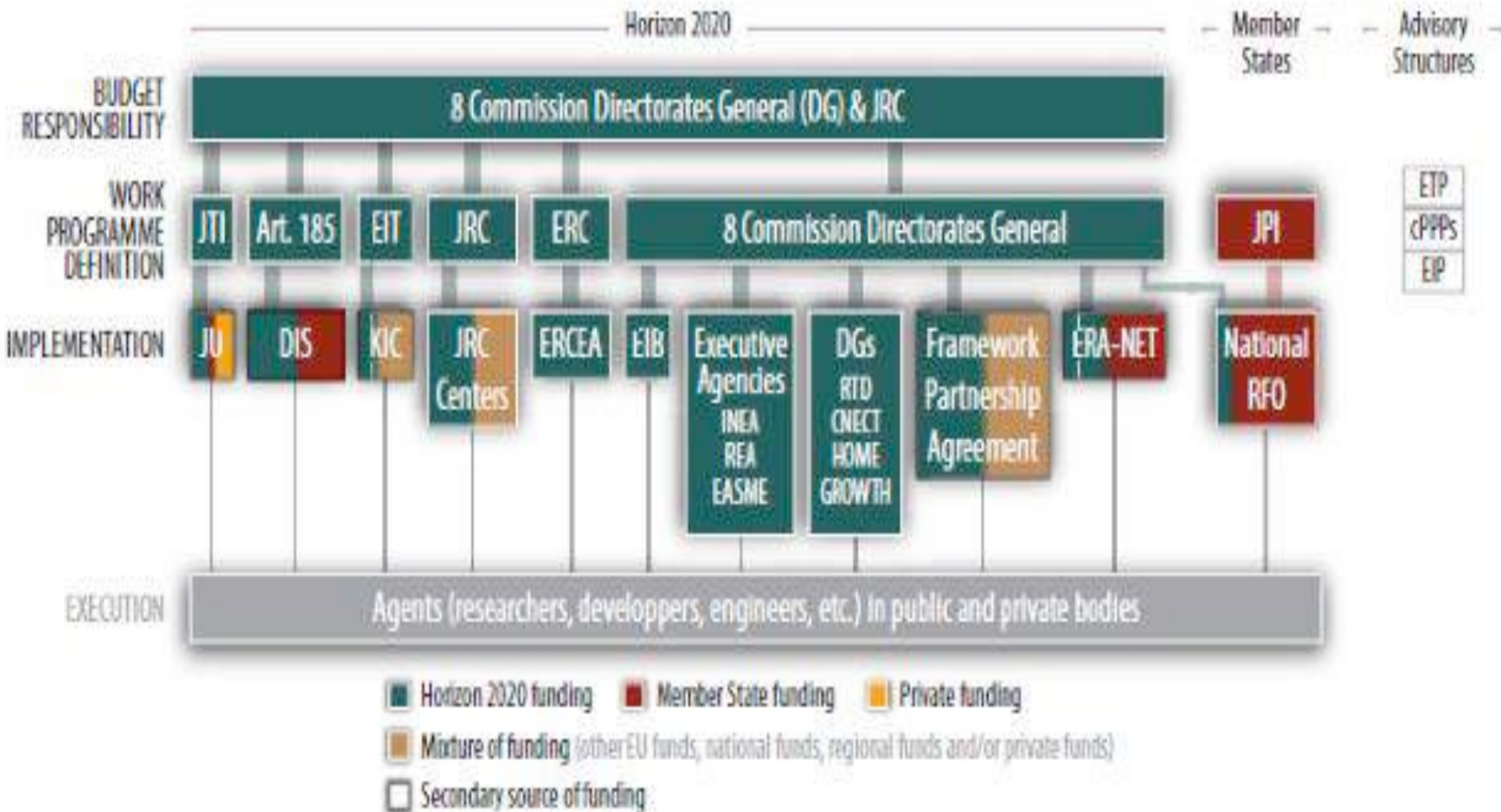
Which EU networks ?



Exploratory issue, no pre-determined list!

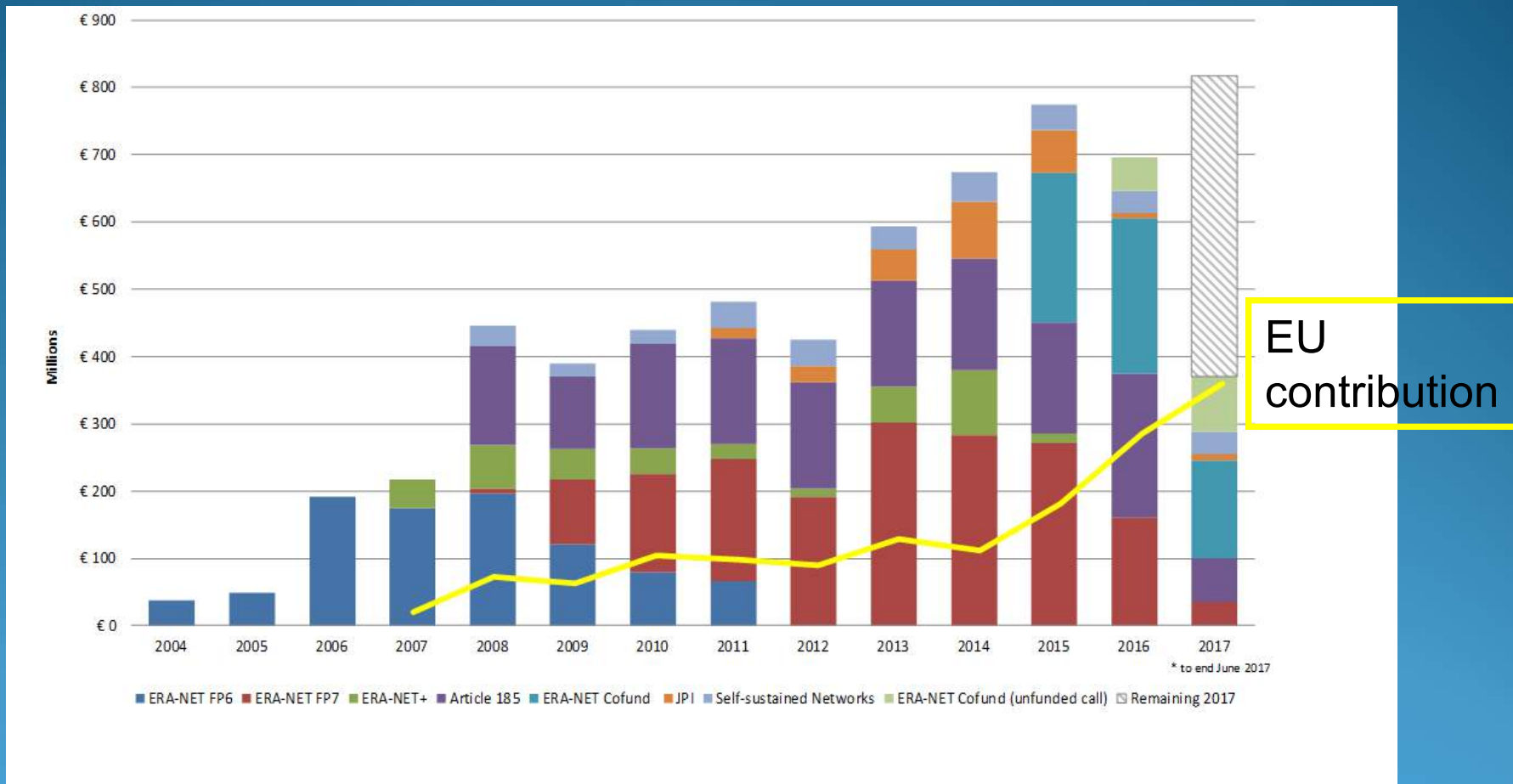
- Public-public partnerships (P2Ps): ERA-NETs and ERA-NET Cofunds; Article 185 initiatives; Joint Programming Initiatives;
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): European Technology Platforms (ETPs); Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs); Contractual Public Private Partnerships (cPPPs);
- European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST);
- The Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) of the European Institute of Technology (EIT);
- Macro-regional strategies and Interreg programmes;
- Vanguard initiative, S3 Thematic partnerships.

Landscape PPPs & P2Ps (= 25% H2020!)



P2Ps have created a significant playground for developing EU-level research partnerships

National joint call commitment (with EU contribution for cofunding of calls overlaid) for all calls closed 2004-2017, by network type



Developing national strategies for participating in EU networks /programmes

- Complex landscape of EU networks/programmes
- Lack of synergies PPPs-P2Ps
- Scarce « free » money to fund participation



Need for national prioritisation strategies

Developing national strategies for participating in EU networks /programmes (cfr. ERA National Action Plans)

- Adopting a national research and innovation policy that includes a well-articulated **international/ERA dimension**;
- Engaging **various Ministries** beyond the Research Ministry, at both a high political level (to increase political commitment) and at operational level;
- Implementing effective criteria and processes to **prioritise** national participation in the various EU networks/programmes; **RIS3**
- Ensuring appropriate **budgetary sources** to participate in EU-level programmes and developing rules for interoperability; **Ring-fenced €**
- Using suitable mechanisms to bring in **stakeholders** (including those outside of the research community) at the implementation stage; **Mapping**
- **Monitoring** and **evaluating** participation in Joint Programmes

Financial incentives for participation in EU networks/initiatives

1. Grants to support research performing actors to submit or participate in EU projects (e.g. Andalucia for SMEs, Estonia for PROs in ERA-NETs and KICs)
2. 'Seal of excellence' schemes for participants in EU networks (e.g. Andalucia for SMEs in ERA-NETs, JTIs, JPIs)
3. Support for complementary projects to those accepted under JTI (e.g. Andalucia for SMEs)
4. Initiatives from HEIs to support joint participation with other HEIs in EU programmes (e.g. Central Europe Leuven Strategic Alliance, University of Leuven)

ERA-NETs??

- ☹️ R&D intensive countries participate more in ERA-NETs
 - 😊 Except: Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Turkey
- 😊 ERA-NETs may act as intermediary layers between national programmes and FP participation (eval.FP6)
- 😊 ERA-NET Cofunds: specific measures to encourage the participation of Widening countries
 - brokerage support and partner search tools
 - WPs dedicated to capacity building for new members
 - favouring addition of EU13 participants, at start or later
 - EU13 dedicated calls

Article 185??

- 😞 High entry barriers for low R&D -performing countries: lack of co-funding, lack of influence on agendas
- 😊 Success rate (23%-34% higher than H2020 -12%)

European Technology Platforms (ETPs)??

Participation helps shaping the EU research agendas

- 😞 Accessible for strong and large actors from R&D intensive countries only?

JTIs??

- 😞 Closed clubs? Not eager to attract new partners?
Expensive entry ticket? Calls open to non-members are the exception
- 😊 Clean Sky & Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertakings :
stimulate complementary ESIF-funded activities;
MoU with regions based on S3

Contractual Public Private Partnerships (cPPP)??

- 😞 Huge concentration of funding on more research-active countries

COST??

- 😊 Strategic goal of 'inclusiveness', 'COST Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs), Half of the COST budget to be dedicated to activities for the benefit of ITC countries
 - 😞 The latter goal is only partially met
- 😊 Fully open and bottom-up approach through establishment of a single Scientific Committee; all researchers have equal access to COST
- 😊 Special support targeting research administrators from EU-13 (BESTPRAC project)

KICs??

- 😞 Closed clubs: large concentration of funding on most research-active countries (5 MS=73%, only 2 EU13)


EIT Regional Innovation Scheme: opening participation to

- 😊 'modest and moderate innovators' countries, targeted support to benefit from KICs' activities; 10 % of the annual competitive EIT contribution allocated to this scheme.


Vanguard and S3 platform partnerships??

- 😊 No formal entry barrier (only capacity)!
'Stairway to Excellence' : dedicated support for Widening countries




Macro-regional strategies and Interreg??

-  Anecdotal evidence of projects as stepping stones to FP
Easier access, less competition
Partners in the neighbourhood

Unexploited potential

-  Interreg not geared towards private sector
Projects are not sustainable beyond Interreg funding
Lack of strategic drive of programmes, little complementarity with mainstream programmes

Conclusions

-  Many EU networks have features of 'closed clubs'
The landscape is too complex
-  KICs & COST, and some JTI & ERA-NETs implement 'openness mechanisms' to challenge the 'closed club' syndrome
-  Interreg-funded networks and bottom-up partnerships around S3) are not characterised by 'closed club' features: there might be unexploited potential

Questions for discussion

Q1: Lessons learned from national **ERA strategies that** prioritise participation in EU networks ?

Q2: National instruments to facilitate engagement into EU level networks: financial incentives? Mapping ? Evaluations? Communication?

Q3: Inclusiveness instruments in EU-level programmes: preferential treatment for EU13 countries? Quota systems ? Capacity building support? Lessons learnt from the 'COST inclusiveness strategy' and the 'EIT Regional Innovation Scheme in KICs'?

Q4: How to ensure that Managing Authorities of **Interreg** programmes give priority to strategic R&D&I partnerships in Operational Programmes?