

REPORT – TAKEAWAYS

The Joint Technology Initiatives towards Horizon Europe

In its proposal for Horizon Europe, the European Commission has ensured to «take a new and more impact-focused approach to partnerships», in order to rationalise «the current plethora of European Partnerships [...] so that they can continue in simplified forms that are open to all (such as academia, industry, Member States, and philanthropic foundations), while ensuring that they can effectively contribute to the general and specific objectives of Horizon Europe».

This report follows up on the workshop “European R&I Partnerships Initiatives Programming, operational and strategic alignment of Joint Technology Initiatives towards Horizon Europe” (23 October 2018). The workshop – organized by APRE, the Italian Agency for the Promotion of European Research, in collaboration with ENEA, the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development – aimed at taking stock on the European Partnerships initiatives landscape, with a focus on the Joint Technologies Initiatives, to better understand their governance, activities and strategies in view of the preparation of Horizon Europe and its strategic planning process.

The workshop was structured in two main sessions. The first part was aimed to benchmark the currently existing JTIs landscape. A quick insight on the Technopolis report, illustrated the main subjects and their set of recommendations following the mid-term review drafted by the European commission. Through a standardized format, panelists were invited to present the governance of their concerned JTIs especially in terms of procedures, programming, call topics and priority setting, resource allocation and implementation. This helped the participants to have a comprehensive idea about the JTIs, and served as a starting point for the discussion between stakeholders and policy makers from the European Commission. During the second session, the Commission expressed its point of view, and explained to participants what the policy will be in terms of partnerships in the next European R&I framework program – Horizon Europe. Finally, the audience was invited to contribute to the discussion taking the opportunity to interact with both JTIs and European Commission representatives.

“What should be changed and what should be preserved in perspective Horizon Europe?”



JTIs operational model perspective

Priority setting & work programme preparation, Governing board interaction, Openness and Stakeholder outreach

JTIs project perspective

Schemes/initiatives with potential to be standardized and replicated across JTIs;
Schemes/initiatives to ensure Technology Readiness Level (TRL) advancement;
Monitoring impact/results and corrective actions;

JTIs Towards Horizon Europe

Vision	Project perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future value proposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardization process across JTIs • Schemes bridging with JTIs to ensure Technology Readiness Level (TRL) advancement • Better strategies on Impact and Results
Operational model	Policy perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority setting & work programme preparation • Governing board interaction • Openness and Stakeholder outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JTIs role on the new Mission concept • Synergies among Clusters and the Open Innovation Pillar (EIC, EIT) • JTIs and future HE Programme Committees

Main concerns:

- JTIs moving towards Horizon Europe, i.e. under the new approach proposed by the EC, the current JTIs will be the public-private branch of the institutionalised partnerships: what can be maintained and what changed in view of HE?
- Financial - About the 25% of Horizon 2020 budget (€19bn ca.) is allocated to partnerships' instruments – 8.5% to JTIs (€6.6bn)¹> Which portion of the HE pillar II will be allocated to partnerships instrument and to public-private institutionalised partnerships?
- The Commission, with full support of Member States, has revised the policy approach for partnerships and is currently taking the necessary steps to identify priority areas for future European Partnerships, and start their preparation. It will include, as soon as politically opportune, the launch of impact assessments and eventually the preparation of legislative proposals for Article 185 and Article 187 initiatives. All along, the Commission will work with the relevant private and public sector partners to

¹ Increased coherence and openness of European union Research and Innovation Partnerships – Final Report – technopolis [group] June, 2017

develop partnerships that meet the expectations, ambitions and conditions set out in the Horizon Europe proposal.



Partnerships in Horizon Europe

Takeways from the event:

There are inherent differences among JTIs with regard to: areas, industry sectors, innovation lifecycles and business models. A *one-size-fits-all* model is to be avoided, though lessons learned from all JTIs can help improving harmonisation. This is mostly due to the differences among the industry sectors and in the composition of partner members.

PPPs/JUs seems to be the right framework and ecosystem to co-design an industrial strategy and pool industrial investments and EU support to a common R&I roadmap. In general terms, the governance and openness of the concerned JUs seem to work well but a lean governance must be ensured for the future, avoiding unnecessary comitology and complex PPP decision-making process (Clean Sky2, Shift2Rail). In some cases, in particular where research is more science-driven than technology-driven (e.g. BBI/BIC, IMI2) the importance of a strong Scientific Committee has been highlighted and its involvement in providing input to the vision, priorities and topics (i.e. SIRA, WPs) is fundamental.

The key value of "working together" in and through partnerships might make the difference. JUs are very strong in their specific sector and their ambition is to have the whole research community and the private sector close to working together (e.g. ECSEL, BBI/BIC). Furthermore, cross-sectorial integration must be reinforced seeking the participation of companies from other sectors (IMI2, Shift2Rail, BBI/BIC, FCH2). A better collaboration between JTIs (e.g. joint calls) and with other parts of the FP (e.g. other PPPs, EIPs, KICs, Missions, EIC) should be implemented in order to have a full strategic development, i.e. not only project (all JUs).

Industry role in the lead position for priority setting and work programme preparation is to be preserved (all JUs), since it ensures shorter time to market and may attract private investments. The need for reactivity and speed (time from idea to project) is critical to industry and SMEs for all JUs.

At project level, TRLs should not be prescriptive (ECSEL). Despite the fact that JTI focus on deployment (higher TRLs) and setting up innovative value chains, programming should encompass R&I along the whole chain, including low TRLs (BBI/BIC, Shift2Rail and Clean Sky2), given the importance of incremental research in the field (e.g. for BBI/BIC, the primary sector should be involved since the beginning). The feasibility of a stop-and-go decision within a project, based on the achievement of specific relevant milestones, has been object of some controversial discussion.

With the exception of some specific case, cash contribution (from the private sector) did not work well neither at programme level nor at project level (e.g. BBI/BIC). Friendly reporting system and procedures to certify contribution must be pursued. In general terms, more realistic and transparent rules should be provided to members and non-members.

Synergies must be exploited with different funding instruments and programmes. Several JUs (e.g. ECSEL, BBI/BIC, IMI2, SESAR, Clean Sky2) manifested the need to explore and widen financing instruments (e.g. SME instrument type, prizes, procurements, loan, cascade, blending) that could be implemented under their legal mandate, with the requirement to manage these efficiently to minimise the administrative burden.

Close links to policies (at national, regional, EU and international levels) should be enhanced (SESAR, Clean Sky2, Shift2Rail, ECSEL). Some JUs (Clean Sky2, BBI/BIC, FCH2) are exploring cooperation with Regions (S3) and already experienced exchanges at upstream levels on strategies/priorities to align roadmaps and co-design/complement funding mechanisms at national/regional level (e.g. CleanSky and FCH2 have MoU with several Regions). Maintain links to global challenges (e.g. SDGs) is another requirement (SESAR, BBI/BIC).

Conclusions / Recommendations

- R&I partnerships, as a whole, must be an added value of Horizon Europe and are therefore required to be strongly committed to an ever more important impact-oriented viewpoint for socioeconomic ambitious goals (EC / Technopolis report);
- A unique/common (one-catches-all) model for partnerships is not a possible option; same principle as for the Milestone over decision approach;
- TRLs should not be prescriptive; programs should encompass R&I along the whole innovation chain;
- Cooperation with Policies; helping in addressing the main goal at European, national and regional level. When possible, partnerships should contribute in co-designing right instruments, case-by-case;
- The overall system (and concept) of R&I partnerships works. Hence, **it is not to be dismantled**: any room for changes must safeguard the partnerships principle.