

14.4. Propose a policy coordination mechanism on public engagement practices, including citizen involvement in scientific processes

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description 	<p>[Scope]</p> <p>The action consists of putting together a proposal for a mechanism that will support the mutual learning and the formulation of common policy recommendations on good practices for engaging the public in the ERA.</p> <p>Public engagement include the engagement of citizen groups and civil society in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – co-design activities to develop R&I agendas, e.g. involvement in discussing challenges and implications related to research and technology development; – co-creation activities, such as citizen science, to develop new knowledge or innovations, e.g. involvement in data collection and data analysis; – co-assessment activities, such as experimentation and evaluation, to help ensure interaction on the quality and utilisation of R&I outputs; – activities following through to innovation deployment and uptake and use of R&I outputs. <p>Mutual learning and common policy recommendations are the target outcomes of the action – seeking coherence between policies and initiatives across the ERA, between countries and between national and EU levels.</p> <p>[Problem]</p> <p>Today, ERA countries are at different stages of policy development for public engagement in R&I – from national strategies in place since years, to no specific strategy.</p> <p>There has been little sharing of information, experience, lessons learned and good practices in public engagement in R&I across the ERA. When practices have been shared, their replication/transfer is not straightforward due to differences in national/sub-national systems and processes.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are issues in following through from public engagement in research actions to public engagement in deployment and uptake actions, as well as in policy development.</p> <p>Finally, success in stimulating public engagement practices also depends on related research policy developments and framework conditions, such as incentives and rewards schemes, institutional and infrastructural support, training, skills development and competence building for researchers.</p> <p>[Objectives]</p> <p>A step change in sharing and debating experience and good practices should lead to greater mutual learning and common policy recommendations.</p> <p>This would make national and European policies and initiatives for public engagement in R&I sharper and more impactful, as policy makers see what</p>
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	<p>framework conditions need to be in place, what actions have worked and what have not worked in other countries, and what strategies and actions could be transferrable.</p> <p>It could also lead to greater coherence and possibly more synergies, especially for initiatives that cross borders and/or cross disciplines, or for considering when initiatives could benefit from scaling up to transnational or European level.</p> <p>Finally, it could lead to better leverage of what is done in research policy for more engagement of societal actors, on what is done in sectoral policy areas, in their deployment programmes, and in their actions for ensuring uptake of innovation, and also for stimulating behavioural changes.</p> <p><i>[Means used]</i></p> <p>The first discussion in the ERA Forum on this Action identified two possible means of implementation, both leading to mutual learning and common policy recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE) under the Horizon Policy Support Facility (PSF) that aims to identify good practices, lessons learnt and success factors between several volunteering countries. It combines learning between peers and expert advice and assistance. The MLE would have to be complementary to the discussions and outcomes of the ongoing MLE on Citizen Science. - A MS/AC-led network of exchange, connecting those responsible for policies for public engagement in R&I at national level, to share information on the latest developments at national level, to discuss differences and similarities, and seek synergies and collaboration. <p>Both means of implementation are activated by a proposal from one or more MS/AC, typically in the form of a concept note, developed in collaboration with interested ERA Forum members.</p> <p>The concept note would suggest the objectives, scope, priority topics, focus areas and targeted outcomes, as well as the working approach. Links with Horizon EU Mission areas were suggested as possible ways to prioritise and focus and/or as case studies. Importantly, stakeholders must also be involved, both for contributions and for learning.</p> <p><i>[Relevant ongoing actions]</i></p> <p>The concept note should take account of a number of ongoing actions, initiatives and platforms, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National initiatives on public engagement in R&I - Citizen Science MLE under the PSF (January-December 2022) - COST action on Citizen Science across the ERA - ‘Plastic Pirates – Go Europe’ initiative - EU-Citizen.Science platform - ECSA-European Citizen Science Association; EUSEA-European Science Engagement Association; ECSITE-European Network of Science Centres and Museums; EUPRIO-European Association of Communication
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	<p>Professionals in Higher Education; Falling Walls Engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JRC Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy - Conference on the Future of Europe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actors 	<p>Interested MS/AC, with input from the ERA Forum including the EC and stakeholders such as universities and other research performing organisations, should draw up a concept note for an MLE or a network of exchange.</p> <p>A proposal for an MLE is first discussed with the EC's PSF Team (to clear budget and timing issues) and then presented to ERAC Delegates with an invitation for feedback and nomination of national representatives. Implementation involves nominated national representatives, stakeholders such as universities, research institutes and CSOs, experts and public engagement knowledge centres, and the EC.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing and milestones 	<p>2022: Concept note finalised and presented to ERAC / interested MA/AC.</p> <p>2023: Mutual Learning Exercise / MS/AC-led network of exchange launched.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding 	<p>An MLE would draw on the 2023 budget of the Policy Support Facility, financed from the WIDERA Work Programme under Horizon Europe.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater mutual learning and common policy recommendations - Sharper and more impactful national and European policies and initiatives - Increased coherence and more synergies, especially for initiatives that cross borders - Better leverage of societal engagement in research on initiatives in sectoral policy areas for effective deployment and uptake
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring 	<p>Following the launch of an MLE / MS/AC-led network of exchange in 2023, first sets of common policy recommendations should emerge later in 2023/2024, as well as new/enlarged initiatives involving public engagement practices as a major objective.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication 	<p>To be completed.</p>
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