

POLICY RESEARCH DIALOGUE ROUNDTABLE 1 – KEY RESULTS

Towards a pan-European trial and validation framework to support a pan-European approach to capability development and innovation management in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and Crisis Management

The DRIVER+ project organized its first Policy Research Dialogue Roundtable (PRDR) in Brussels on 28 February 2019. Aiming at fostering a dialogue on how a pan-European approach to capability development and innovation management in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) and Crisis Management (CM) can be supported through a common trial and validation framework, this first PRDR was particularly concerned with collecting thoughts and perspectives on three topics:

- The development of an innovation eco-system in the field of DRR and CM
- The improvement of information and results exchange between research projects, practitioner and knowledge networks
- The introduction of a Pan-European trial and validation framework into the research programming of Horizon Europe

Together with an expert audience involving several EC DGs, international organisations, national civil protection authorities from the Member States and representatives from selected Research & Innovation projects, the discussions led to the following key results.

Innovation eco-system in the field of DRR and CM

How to best facilitate an innovation eco-system in the field of DRR and CM, and the challenges in this respect.

- An innovation eco-system should be practitioner-driven to ensure:
 - Practical outputs
 - Systematic tests and trials
 - A service-oriented approach
- European funded projects can result in innovation that not all stakeholders are ready to receive, including the project's partners. Despite an exploitation agreement, uptake may not be happening. Furthermore, not all consortium partners may be interested in, or are relevant for, facilitating the market uptake or results.
- There is a temptation to expect big solution from big projects and DDR is a huge area. Manageable outputs and milestones have to be considered to allow a sensible measurement of achievements.



- Engagement should be multiple-stakeholder-based but the perspectives of practitioners, researchers and end-users on what a “good” result is are very different. There is a need to understand the varied perspectives from the different stakeholders to ensure that a result can be obtained. A co-creation process and involvement of end-users from the very beginning of the project is essential.

Information and results exchange

What are requirements for a better information and results exchange between research projects, practitioner and knowledge networks.

Requirement 1: Enhancing the current research funding framework

Joint collaboration of projects:

- Projects funded under the same calls, same topics, should be required to collaborate in order to reach one or a few common results, rather than many separate results dealing more or less with the same thing. For instance:
 - joint starting event, in order to align events and potentially the delivery of results
 - Joint final meeting
 - Production of a joint position paper

Enriched and easy to manage research project database:

- Even if CoU and practitioner networks are helpful in being updated about the community, there’s a need for an enriched and accessible online platform about funded projects, and to support exchange of information in between meetings.
- Central EU repositories (CORDIS/Projects Explorer) should be improved and include:
 - all the relevant publications
 - key documents and deliverables of the project
 - enriched abstracts
 - videos
- Project coordinators should be able to upload info themselves and proactively provide updates about recent developments in the field/project

Requirement 2: Improving the engagement of national institutions

Role of institutions:

- DRR/DRM institutions that are mandated by the country need to be on board of research / test-bed
- National institutions are often fragmented across different line ministries leading to poor communication and lack of cooperation
- Policy-makers should take ownership of the results. If they call for specific topics/research, they should feel responsible for implementing the results (or facilitating its implementation)
- Importance of identifying most suitable participants in user groups (e.g. one lead (CP) organisation per country, integration of national platforms for DRR and CCA)

Implementation of results:

- Important to put the solutions “out there” and give something for free
- IPR issues can hinder the uptake of products developed

Requirement 3: Better understanding the gaps and needs of the target group

Target the needs:

- Make sure that efforts are invested in what is really needed, and not only in what the researchers want to generate

Leverage the knowledge base of practitioners:

- Need to upgrade the knowledge level of practitioner organisations on research & innovation, and on Public Private collaboration otherwise they will not be able to receive / appreciate / understand the messages conveyed by research
- Need to change the culture of practitioners, so they can understand and “receive” innovation (“firefighters are not trained to innovate”); this goes along with the need to reduce uncertainty about innovation management (e.g. Whose responsibility is it to generate innovation?)

Requirement 4: Refining the communication approach

Apply a dynamic and inclusive approach:

- Agile information exchange
- Inclusion of all different actors in DRM cycle to ensure connectivity and learn from other actors
- Learning from existing virtual platforms (e.g. provided by DEVCO) to support the establishment of communities to improve accessibility to information
- Use of a common and simple language, preferably in their language
- Sharing of practical messages and information

Demonstrate the EU added-value:

- EU level has to bring added value; otherwise local and national levels are the right levels to operate
- Development of a narrative about the European added value

Pan-European trial and validation framework

What are requirements for introducing a Pan-European trial and validation framework into the research programming of Horizon Europe

Explicit trial and validation methods:

- Need to make use of a standardized methodology for trialling and validation, or at least the requirement to clearly explicate the trial and validation methods to be used
- Obligation should be made to every project to explain in their proposal their trial/test methodology

Definition/adoption of standards:

- Standardisation, is an important method to define a minimum level of service to be provided to end-users; they could act as the “glue” between the various practitioner networks

Validation requirements:

- Validation should be related to the real needs of the Member States, the latter being responsible for validating whether their needs have been addressed.

- Critical for validation process is to take into account the local context
- Need of so-called reference scenarios (linked with standardization) for validation. These reference scenarios should be used across several domains and take national legislation into account.

Follow up

Two more PRDRs will be organized in Brussels and reported upon via brief position papers feeding into upcoming CoU meetings.