

# Second Monitoring Report

Experiences with applying model-procedures

Deliverable 1.5.

April 2006

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Version no.: 1.0  
Date of publishing: April 10, 2007  
Drafted by: Walter Wasner, Heimo Kropf (bmvit)  
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Checked by: AD, HK, WW

Deliverable no.: 1.5.  
Project no.: ERAC-CT-2003-10223  
Project acronym: ERA-NET TRANSPORT  
Project title: ERA-NET TRANSPORT  
Instrument: Coordination Actions  
Thematic Priority: ERA-NET  
Project duration: 010104 – 311207

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## Abbreviations

AG	ERA-NET TRANSPORT Action Group
EC	European Commission
e.g.	for example
ENT	ERA-NET TRANSPORT
ENTx	Thematic action group of ENT (ENT1, ENT2,...)
EPTR	European Platform for Cooperation and Coordination in Transport Research
ERA	European research area
ERC	European Research Council
ERRAC	The European Rail Research Advisory Council
ERTRAC	European Road Transport Research Advisory Council
ESF	European Science Foundation
FP	The EU's Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development
IEA	International Energy Agency
LoC	Levels of Cooperation (identified for ENT AGs)
LoI	letter of intent
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
OMC	open method of coordination
STI	Science Technology and Innovation (Policy)
TWS	Targeted Workshop
WP	Work package (+number within the project)

## 1. Introduction

ERA-NET TRANSPORT (ENT) was established to improve trans-national transport research policy and programme coordination among a large number of European member states. Within the first three years of ENT work package 1 has analysed the research programming systems of partner countries, identified barriers for cooperation and prepared guidelines for practical cooperation activities and a first draft of model procedures.

Several ERA-NET action groups (AGs) were pro-actively introduced. The above mentioned model procedures were tested in those AGs in an experimental (“trial&error”) phase regarding different themes for research policy cooperation – identified by work package 2 – and additional groups developed on an interest driven basis by ENT partner countries. A growing demand for organisational guidance became evident in many of these action groups. As a response on this demand a streamlined process model for the action groups was outlined in the previous monitoring report (Del.1.4) as a general process structure (forming, storming, norming, performing phase) with specific tasks to AG support. This organisational model provides a clear reference system to trace the status of the individual action groups.

The experimental phase was explicitly open for distinctive approaches of action groups, in order to generate a broad source of experience, consciously taking into account good-practices as well as the risk of failures. This report is based on two years of experiences with running action groups comprising a comprehensive assessment of the activities carried out by the action groups within this period. The outcome of this analysis and assessment is expected to result in recommendations, which have to be checked for their viability for the remaining time of ERA-NET TRANSPORT, before rules and guidelines can be derived in the upcoming handbook (Del. 1.6).

The report is subsequently structured along the analysis of certain quantitative and qualitative aspects including the strategically orientation of AGs, the observed budget allocation practices and a first classification approach. In a second step AGs are examined from a more organizational and procedural point of view. An extended and refined general process model will be applied and pose as a reference system to relocate AGs. To amend the first set of experiences in the storming phase (Del.1.4) an insight analysis will be carried out and role models of key-stakeholders will be taken into account. First experiences with the implementation of joint actions will be presented.

A table with a comprehensive overview on AG benchmarks will be provided in the annex of this report.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This data was collected by WP1 from the action group support team members in early January 2007.

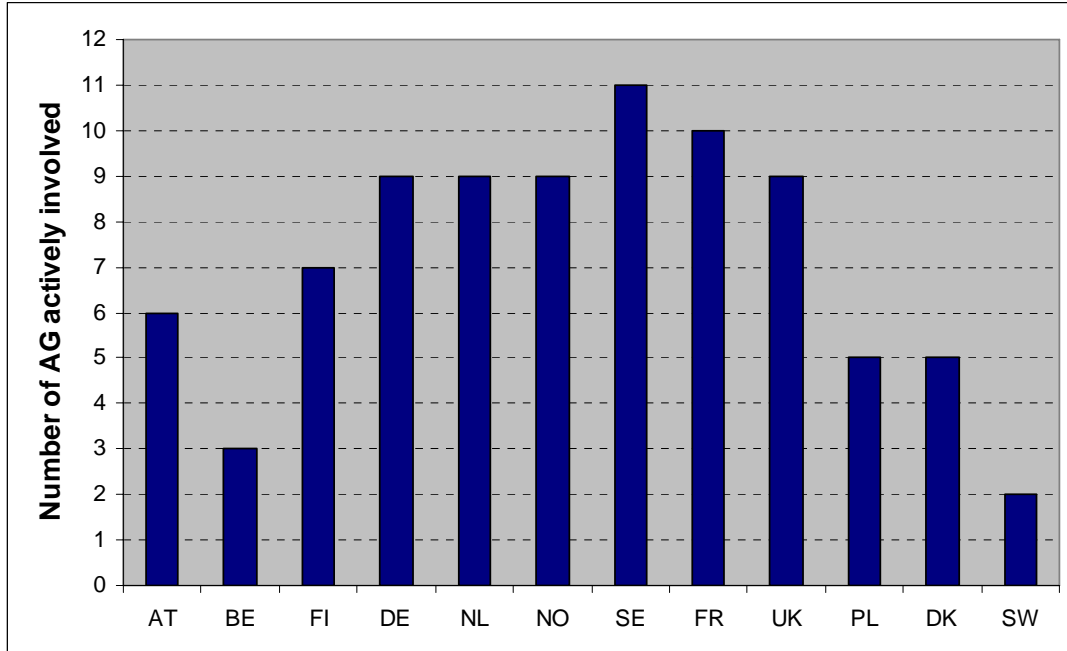
## 2. Quantitative and qualitative assessment of AGs

### 2.1. Overview on action group key indicators

A total number of 17 thematically oriented AGs have been formed within a 2 years period until the end of 2006 (refer to appendix).<sup>2</sup> Most action groups (9) have been launched in the first year of ENT (first and second generation groups) followed up by a third generation of four – and some recently launched groups – in the second year of the action group life cycle. The major part (12) was traditionally derived top-down out of research theme identification workshops (targeted workshops) based on a prior identification process of relevant fields for cooperation (“pro-active approach”). 5 groups were formed by the initiative of one or more ENT member countries (“responsive or interest oriented approach”).

With regards to the ENT AG principle of openness to new partners ERA-NET TRANSPORT was able to involve 12 countries in cooperation activities within first two years, which exceeds the number of ENT member countries at this period (11).<sup>3</sup> The number of partner countries in AGs range from 3 to 9 with an average participation of more than 5 countries per AGs (actively involved partners). ENT partner countries participate in 7 AGs on average, where as some countries are actively involved in 10 or more groups (see figure 1). A clear networking success of ENT AGs becomes therefore evident from a quantitative viewpoint.

Figure 1: Grade of involvement in ENT AGs of ENT partner countries



<sup>2</sup> 16 groups have been launched as such. ENT2 was divided into two groups, as two different topical orientations and aims were derived during the work in this Action Group.

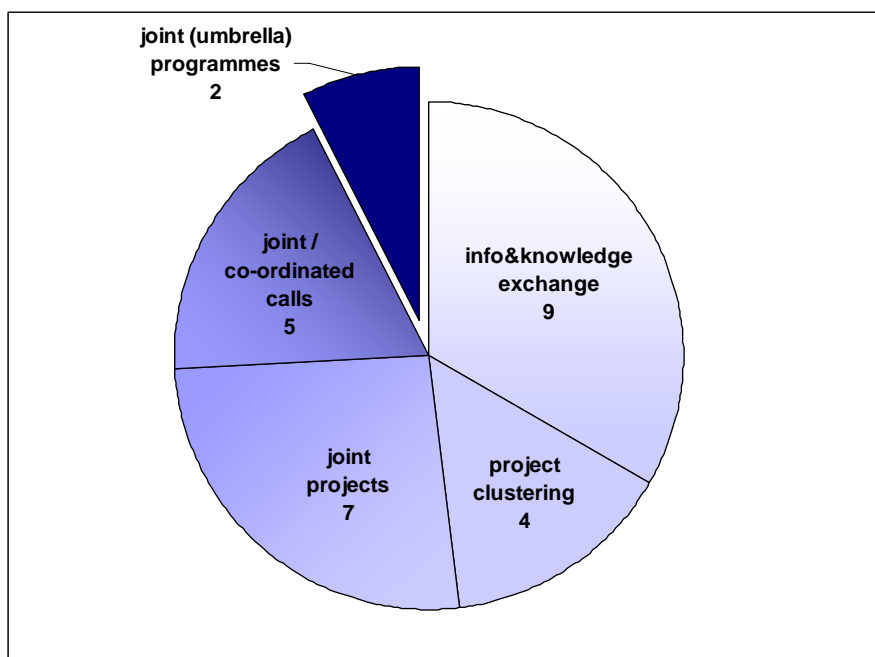
<sup>3</sup> Switzerland joined the ENT consortium officially at the beginning of 2007.

Some action groups do consist of more than one national organization. Subordinate agencies to national ministries – or other public authorities linked with transport research funding or policy making – play a role in the context of the AGs. All of them operate rather on a national level. Regional organizations and regional public authorities have not yet been involved as partners in ENT Action Groups.

While the most of the first and the second generation action groups seemed rather retentive to address higher levels of research policy cooperation (LoC)<sup>4</sup> and some of the first generation groups even limited their activities to information and knowledge exchange, the third generation and recently established groups appeared to be more ambitious and directly address higher LoC like joint project funding, even by preparing joint calls in some come case.

Most action groups feel confident to define a portfolio of policy instruments on different LoC instead of a single one. An overview of the addressed LoC is given in figure 2.

Figure 2: Different Levels of Cooperation (LoC) addressed by ENT action groups



Four groups are limited to information and knowledge exchange. At least 5 AGs declared to aim towards joint funding or coordinated calls, some of them even by using other policy instruments in addition. Two AGs (ENT5, ENT14) prepared the introduction of joint research programmes (umbrella programmes) and are therefore on a very good track to address the “ultimate goal of ENT” – the coordination of transport programmes and even the national programming systems.

<sup>4</sup> Different LoCs have been described by WP1 in Del. 1.3.

Within 2 years more than 40 official AG meetings took place. Some AGs organized up to 6 meetings until the end of the year 2006. The average total operation time of AG is about 12 months.

## **2.2. Overview on strategic directions and motivations**

Screening the strategic directions of the operating AGs after a two years period clearly points out, that a major demand for transnational policy cooperation and research program coordination can be identified in strategic topics with a strong long term perspective. Most prominent examples are the holistic program approach on improving the survivability of ships (SURSHIP) in ENT5 or the activity to draft a trans-national strategy for the introduction of alternative fuels, propulsion systems and vehicle technologies in ENT6. Other AGs identified the urgent need for introducing joint architectures and frameworks towards harmonisation and standardization in the fields of:

- Multimodal information (ENT3),
- Environmental performance indicators for heavy duty vehicles (ENT9),
- Policy tools to influence vehicle purchasing behaviour (ENT10),
- Tracking and tracing of hazardous goods (ENT12).

Most of these topics have a pan-European perspective. It is evident that these topics require extended preparation time to prepare inventories on past, ongoing and planned activities and to initiate a consultation process with various stakeholder groups and organizations. These processes do often exceed the national context of the AG members. Joining forces for solving similar problems, the avoidance of overlapping activities or non-interoperable systems and the declining average costs for a joint implementation of architectures play a main role as motivator for countries to focus on these topics. The ENT action groups could pose here as a stimulator for bringing the topic forward and can contribute to ensure that a strong member state mandate is assured in this context. However, it should be reflected, if activities, which do not in particular address only cross-national problem areas but pan-European problem fields, are more applicable to be tackled by other instruments or actors (like the framework programme or European Technology Platforms) as ERA-NET TRANSPORT is an umbrella for cross-national cooperation only.

In any case these activities have a strong target orientation at the policy level. Therefore high level persons with appropriate power in research politics, which often exceeds the opportunities of program managers, have to be integrated in the future.

Shortly formed AGs do also orientate strongly on social missions like:

- Tools for influencing car purchasing behaviour (ENT11),
- Safety and security (ENT13),
- Demographic changes and influence on transport (ENT14).

Two AGs address transport logistic topics and the improvement of intermodality (ENT2b, ENT16). Complementary strengths of research arenas and the sharing of best-practice information on research policy and research programme architectures have been taken into account as motivation and added value to form these groups. One AG is currently aiming towards a long distance demonstrator along a geographical corridor (ENT7).

### ***2.3. Funding budgets for trans-national initiatives and budget allocation practices***

Without taking manpower and insignificant expenses for meetings into account, only a minor number of AGs was able to allocate a particular funding budget for joint activities so far. While all interest driven action groups succeeded to earmark national budget shares, the pro-actively founded action groups failed till today to allocate funding resources for joint trans-national (research funding) activities.

The national earmarking processes showed two major practices, namely either earmarking of trans-national funds as a part of the national call budget or providing funds for trans-national calls only. But even a combination of both was tried out for example within ENT2b. Furthermore two differences regarding the funding volume are visible. Some countries theoretically opened up the whole national funding budgets for trans-national projects while others granted access to smaller lump sums exclusively for trans-national projects in the first “experimental” stages.

Many countries have dedicated rather lump sums of their national program budgets (amounts about 1 Mio.€ or below) for trans-national cooperative actions. These sums do not have meaningful effects when being spent on isolated national research activities, but could be accumulated to a noticeable funding budget for transnational research projects. It seems to be more likely that a national funding budget share can be reserved exclusively for trans-national activities in the later case (“lump sums for pilot projects on transnational cooperation”). The effective available national funding budget share per country for trans-national activities can therefore be expected within a range from several hundred thousand Euros to a few millions Euros per country.

A combination of the above described approaches – structurally and monetarily – is clearly visible in ENT2b. Germany provided access to a meaningful national funding budget (over 12 Mio.€) in the frame of a national call. Austria provided 600.000€ for trans-national projects only. The German funding budget has not been exclusively dedicated for trans-national project funding. Austria opened up a separate trans-national call. This experience showed that even a very diverse architecture of a joint activity is able to perform – even if the very most financial resources are expected to flow into national research project funding in one partner country – when the responsible persons are willing to exhaust the national framework conditions.

Although no legal barriers for the funding of non-resident research organizations do actually exist in most countries, political and administrative hindrances for the establishment of common pot models are evident. Several AGs were at the beginning very apprehensive towards this approach. As a matter of fact the first trans-national call of ENT2b was based on a virtual pot model. But recent discussions in action groups give evidence, that other allocation models, like funding of non-resident research organizations in exceptional cases to enable promising

projects if opportunities for virtual pots are depleted, or even common pots could possibly be introduced for future calls (e.g. within ENT14, ENT16).

First practical experiences with the funding of non-resident organizations have already been generated by the realization of joint projects within ENT5 in a non-competitive frame of contract research. Advantageous projects for a country, which demand contributions of non-resident research organization, have been successfully initiated and financed by national funding resources under the SURSHIP umbrella (ENT5).

#### ***2.4. First classification and assessment***

In order to get a first impression of the action group performance a rough classification into three performance stages of the 15 groups<sup>5</sup> has been introduced in autumn 2006, which is sketched out here:

- **Category A:** The group is characterized by a clear target formulation, concrete work plan, fast progress and good team performance. Joint actions towards research policy and research program coordination have either been already achieved or chances for success can be considered as very promising.
- **Category B:** The group was not yet able to agree on a joint agenda, a way towards realization of action group targets or concrete outputs are still missing. In some cases the mission of the AG is not clear and the AG is progressing slowly.
- **Category C:** For certain reasons a continuation of the action group can not be considered as beneficial from the actual point of view. The scope for the support of the action has to be reassessed.

Two of in total four category C groups realized, that their planned or progressed activities do not generate an added value to other projects funded by FP6 with similar objectives. ENT1 was terminated for this reason already in the initial phase. ENT11 was temporarily set on standby until a clear distinction or added value to a related FP6 initiative can be guaranteed to avoid overlapping actions. A careful and comprehensive screening in the forming phase, as a pre-requisite for approval of new AGs, or a tight coordination with other closely related initiatives can contribute to avoid similar experiences in the future. Other category C groups were lacking of personal resources to continue their work due to changed priority settings (ENT2a) or a lack of interest (ENT8).

Three groups can be clearly classified as category A with very good progress and can pose as first good practice examples. Furthermore the major monitoring focus should be given on the 8 category B groups, which partly seem to be stuck in negotiation processes or which were not yet able to find the right track towards the objectives of ENT. This category complies both of groups with a certain potential for successful transport research program and policy coordination on the one side, as

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<sup>5</sup> Due to the short observing period the new AGs (ENT15, ENT16) can not yet be classified.

well as of groups with a high demand on manpower and financial support on the other, where a continuation prospectively might not be justified by taking success chances and possible input/output ratios into account. However it has to be clearly stated, that ENT does not consider action group activities as failures, when less or no visible impacts on permanent national programme coordination could have been achieved so far. The focus of this first experimental phase was to observe a broad variety of approaches as a crucial basis for policy learning. In light of that all kinds of experiences have to be assessed as very valuable. Nevertheless a more selective approach is necessary before launching new joint activities or AGs in the future. This is particularly important regarding the allocation of efficient supporting resources within ENT but also regarding the expectation of the participating national organizations.

For a more distinctive picture of particular action group performance an extended insight analysis will be further carried out in this report. A closer qualitative analysis on hindrances or barriers in some category B groups is necessary to improve and sharpen the focus for support activities and to avoid similar problems in future action groups.

With the help of the recommended general process model introduced in deliverable 1.4 the progress of the AGs can be further analysed, variations from the designated way can be identified and clear obligations to meet future requirements can be formulated. This process model will therefore amend the prior classification as a clear operative reference system of the full life-time cycle of ENT action groups. It could be considered as a permanently evolving collection of “model procedures”, which are referring to the different process steps and levels of cooperation.

### **3. Organizational and procedural experiences**

#### ***3.1. Refinement and extension general process model towards a scaleable cooperation architecture***

Since the first attempt to complement the policy cycle model with a more linear team-building model for action groups in our first monitoring report (Del. 1.4) the rough procedural structure for team-building in AGs was subsequently refined and extended. The appropriateness of the team-building model is the meanwhile well approved according to the specific needs of action groups – e.g. to efficiently lead them through the policy agenda and determination phase (storming).

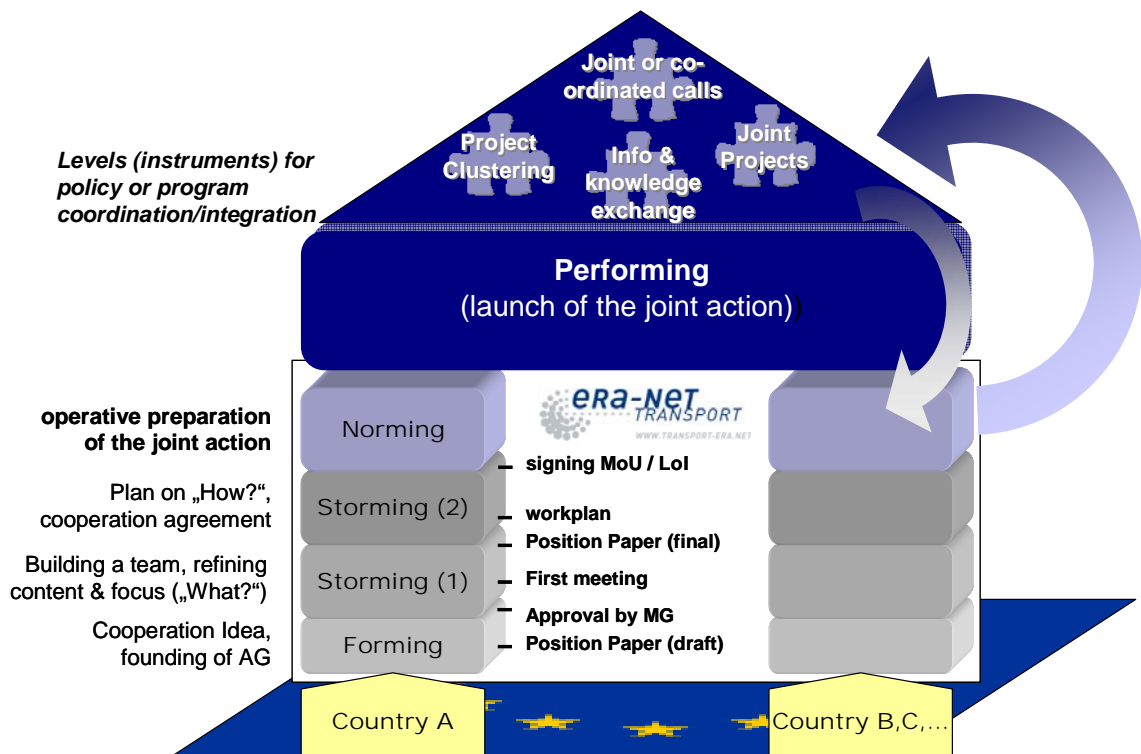
The storming phase has been divided into two sub-phases. This is necessary to emphasise the importance of deliberation and agreement on a common agenda on “what” the topic should cover (storming 1), before further planning steps on “how” the action could be carried out and a formal acclamation of the policy or programming coordination – as declaration of the backing from national side of politics – has to be achieved with a cooperation agreement (storming 2).

Milestones and required outputs (see figure 3) and detailed process support elements have been defined for all phases to focus and facilitate the work in the groups. Preliminary results of WP1 are included in the revised AG handbook which

was published in spring 2007.<sup>6</sup> Further refinements will be carried out according upcoming experiences, until a final task list will be released in the handbook for model procedures and rules (Del. 1.6).

After the strongly political oriented storming stage (storming 1 + storming 2), which is completed with – a preferably written – agreement to coordinate programming instruments and/or to align national policies, operational preparations towards the implementation of the joint action (norming) have to be worked out and set into action (performing). The assumption here is that a further process extension seems to be beneficial. It is recommended, that a stepwise task description should be specified distinctively by addressing different LoC. For example processes towards “competitive research projects” brought forward by one joint or several co-ordinated calls<sup>7</sup> require different procedural preparation steps at the norming stage than for example “project clustering” (the clustering of ongoing projects) or “joint projects” (contract research).

Figure 3: General process model for AGs (reference system) with scaleable cooperation architecture



As shown in the figure above all action groups have to pass through the four major steps (forming, storming, norming, performing) of the organizational process model. Within every of those steps different questions have to be discussed, negotiations have to be carried out towards consensus and designated milestones have to be reached subsequently to avoid misunderstandings in a later stage. Running through

<sup>6</sup> ERA-NET TRANSPORT: Cooperation Action Handbook, Wasner W., Gravesen R., Huchon A., March 2007

<sup>7</sup> We do consider separate but (in respects of content, timeline, etc.) harmonized calls, which refer to different national programming bases, as “co-ordinated” calls.

that general procedure provides a solid base for all coordination or cooperation activities regardless of the foreseen “levels of cooperation”<sup>8</sup> (LoC). Furthermore, the linear organisation process model is accompanied by a circular scaling element (see figure 3), to give the opportunity to subsequently aim towards higher levels of policy or programme coordination without the necessity to start on a high level of cooperation right from the beginning (scaleable cooperation architecture).

It is obvious that a very well organised preparatory exchange of national policy and programme information between the AG participants – before and in the forming phase – is crucial for the further success of the AG. Furthermore, it has to be differentiated clearly between the preparatory information exchange (in storming) and the LoC “information and knowledge exchange” as such. The preparatory work is the basis for the further work in the AG. The chosen LoC of an AG indicates the agreed result or “product”, the AG wants to bring forward. For example; the result of the LoC “information and knowledge exchange” could be a yearly seminar for programme owners and managers. The “product” of other LoCs could be joint projects or a coordinated trans-national call for proposals. Based on that it has to be stated, that the additional preparatory efforts depending on the envisaged final product of the respective LoC. Furthermore we recommend complete the process steps for every new aimed target of a joint activity were applicable right from the beginning, regardless if a well performing AG wants to extend the LoC or if an AG wants to launch a second call with minor changes to the previous one. The reason for that is the necessity to get the national approval and signatures currently on a case by case basis.

Recapitulating, every level of cooperation – even “information and knowledge exchange” – could have been chosen as a main aim for joint actions as such in the experimental phase, although a limitation of justified LoCs to research funding measures might be beneficial in the future. Each LoC could also be considered as meaningful preparation for further coordination actions to address higher LoC at a later stage, but the major steps of the process model have to be passed each time. Moreover, both the policy related stages of the process (forming, storming) as well as the more administrative and operative oriented implementation stage (norming and performing phase) have to clearly focus either on the co-ordination (or integration) of national transport research programs or on coordination of national STI policies, in order to meet the original aim of ERA-NET TRANSPORT.

### ***3.2. Re-location of Action Groups to the reference system and insight analysis***

The grade of progress in the action groups can be assessed according to the ideal organisation process model (reference system) to pick out performance and success criteria. Although AGs were not yet instructed to stick on to the ideal process elements, whereas milestones (position paper, work plan and written cooperation agreements) have not been processed by all groups and hard transition diversion criteria can not apply in each case, the relocation to the reference system by comparing the orientation of the group and their major achievements with the

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<sup>8</sup> Levels of cooperation in ERA-NET TRANSPORT are: „knowledge and information exchange“, „project clustering“, „joint projects“, „coordinated programming“ and „integrated programming“

main aims of the process phases is yet already possible (refer to annex). As the general process structure has been applied for youngest AGs right from the beginning a re-location is there an easier task. Particular reasons for the actual status and possible observed problems in the orientation of former AGs will be analyzed with the help of some examples.

Two AGs managed to operatively launch transport research program coordination activities until end of year 2006 and stepped successfully into the performing stage. The SURSHIP initiative (ENT5) completed the storming phase by signing a letter of intent (LoI) in mid of 2006; several joint projects were launched shortly after. ENT2b launched a coordinated call between Austria and Germany in September 2006. In this case many informal acclamation papers were produced, but no formal cooperation agreement was signed.

More recently ENT14 launched the first joint call after completing the storming and norming phase within less than 12 months. The call is embedded in an umbrella program released by this action group. A series of follow up calls regarding different topics in the thematic field "changing mobility demands" are planned till 2009.

Both ENT5 and ENT14 more or less combined activities for storming phase 2 (preparation of an official agreement for the cooperation) and further preparations to set the cooperation into action (norming). The cooperation agreements (e.g. LoI) do already comprise the architecture for the joint umbrella programme.

All category C groups got stuck somewhere in storming phase 1 or 2 for reasons already discussed (see classification approach). Category B groups are still busy working out their agenda (storming phase). Several of these action groups had long periods with less or no activities after an ambitious start. Most 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation action groups worked out a position paper with an agreed joint agenda to clearly identify the thematic area for a joint action until the end of the year 2006, although several action groups are not heading towards a cooperation action to initiate joint R&D project funding, but they concentrate on drafting a shared strategic research agenda (e.g. ENT3, ENT4, ENT6). A work plan as basis for a cooperation agreement is actually in progress in some of the category B action groups.

Especially first generation AGs, like ENT3 and ENT4, started to work out activities, which are first of all strongly characterized by research coordination actions themselves, than by research **programming or policy** cooperation activities. Even after a period of 2 years a concrete measure on the coordination of national policies or programmes can not be observed. In the case of ENT4 an extensive information exchange on business models and data collection and the use of these models has been started, to identify bottlenecks and barriers regarding the diffusion of these business models. Questionnaires have been developed and experts were invited to present and discuss their insight view. A clear message how ENT 4 wants to address a coordinated research policy action is still missing. Taking the complete policy cycle into account the strategic objective of this action group can be probably assumed as an attempt to improve cooperation at the end of the policy realization phase (dissemination and diffusion of projects results).

In case of ENT3 project clustering of currently ongoing national research projects, or setting up new joint research projects regarding the architecture of multi-modal information systems, have been formulated as strategic objectives of the action

groups. After a while it turned out, that proposals for a standardized European multimodal information system architecture has to be worked out at first, before joint research projects are considered to make sense. The results of these information exchange activities and reflections are planned to be presented to the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (DG-TREN) and the Research Directorate-General (DG-RTD). A plan how to coordinate national policies on this topic as major step in storming phase 2 has not been worked out yet and the planned policy document on guidelines for multimodal information system architecture is not available yet.

Also some of the 3rd generation and very recently launched action groups were not yet able to clearly describe their approach, how to address actions for national research policy or programme coordination:

- ENT9 is collecting information on ongoing research in the field of performance indicators for heavy-duty vehicles for a knowledge basis to develop a harmonized system for measuring the impact of heavy duty vehicles to stimulate awareness for this problem field.
- ENT12 was heading towards a joint corridor project in the first step, where national programming aspects took only a minor role. After an extensive discussion process it turned out, that a common framework architecture for a system to track and trace dangerous goods in Europe is necessary, to avoid the funding of non-interoperable projects with national programmes in the future. The group has here to prove in the next months, how this could be addressed by a joint activity and how this action will address the coordination of national programmes and policies.
- ENT15, as a “pure researcher group”, started with the strategic objective to bring the problem of sleepiness at the wheel on the trans-national research agenda. It was an experimental step for ENT to start this group, as the exchange of research results is not the mission of an AG. But recent developments in ENT15 might lead towards the integration of programme managers.

Other action groups still situated at the forming or the storming stage 1 were able to point out more clearly, that their action is very much focused on national policy or programme coordination.

These experiences give evidence, that for many action groups a clearer focus towards the objectives of ENT has to be directed and a more dedicated procedure with compulsory milestones has to be applied to enhance the process transparency.

### ***3.3. Role of key-actors in the deliberation process***

Every action group had to nominate an AG leader, who is in charge to guide the action group members through the process. To assist the group – and especially the action group leader in terms of procedural and strategic support – a support team from the frame of ENT was nominated for each action group.

Following the forming phase, which is often characterized by enthusiasm, high optimism and ambitious plans, a sudden decline of activities can be surveyed in many action groups. This occurs, when it turns out, that the work might be more complex and much more resource demanding than expected before. Longstanding negotiations to tailor the topic down to a concrete action have to be started and first

conflicts as well as a lack of national backing have to be faced in many cases. To overcome this weakening of activities AGs need a clear team orientation of the members and a AG leader, who is able to direct the group straight forward with the assistance of the support team.

The importance of an active leadership was already highlighted in deliverable 1.4. As the cooperation is based on the principle of voluntaries, task directions will only work out in the frame of conviction and growing acceptance of the leader in the group. The action group leader should therefore be aware of and willing to take over extended workloads especially at the first part of the storming phase. If a team spirit appears and action group members find their roles and duties, a better task sharing will develop. The support team can only temporary compensate missing initiatives of the leader and the action group members by taking over operative work tasks, but should rather focus on the structural guidance through the process and on tasks to provide an optimal working space for the group.

Due to the fact that only initial cooperation procedures instead of the above described comprehensive and structured organization process, with detailed task descriptions, timelines and sufficient support, was available for the first experimental period of ENT, the first AGs had to rely on their past experiences and their creativity to explore possible coordination and cooperation practices in the field of transport research. After that ENT identified best-practice solutions, which resulted in a refined organization procedure as a general process model. The support teams should now take the responsibility to introduce this general process model in the ongoing action groups. In the following section certain aspects of the deliberation and negotiation processes in action groups are described and opportunities for future improvements are reflected.

According to the first proposals of procedures extensive stakeholder processes – both with program owner/managers – were started within the first and second generations of AGs. ENT partners and national program managers where asked to conjointly deliberate and shape joint activities, partly together with the particular research communities, according to certain topics identified by WP2. These first AG meetings were challenging because of the role conflicts among the diverse stakeholders. In some cases very ambitious ideas and strategic objectives resulted. But it became obvious very soon, that political agreements in a first step and the allocation of national funding budget share in a second step still stayed in far distance. Political legitimacy and bureaucratic backing for shaping and reshaping national funding instruments towards the ERA-NET idea was not easy to achieve. In common the rationales of program owners and -managers do significantly differ from the rationales of research communities.

More recently especially action groups driven by a responsive approach neglected extensive stakeholder dialogues and did more successfully start directly with policy and program coordination with public policy partners, which have the mandate and are directly involved into national research programming activities. Political legitimacy and bureaucratic backing was in these action groups existing already right from the beginning. Researches were only included in the role of advisers in case of a specific demand for expertise.

In some other action groups the cooperation is driven very strongly by a group of researchers. Some of these action groups do consist of researchers only (ENT9) or

were initiated by researchers from the very bottom (ENT15). There is no doubt, that their initiatives address promising topics for trans-national research coordination needs. But the capability of this approach to motivate national research programme managers and programme owners to pick up the researchers needs for a program coordination action seems quite limited and has yet to be proved.

From an operational point of view the continuous participation of the same representatives is important for the progress in the action group. The observation of AGs has shown that the alternation of group members, or the entry of new countries representatives to the group, led to longer preparation and working periods. To avoid delays in future new AG members should commit themselves to previous group decisions. Furthermore, the action groups should define, up to which stage or und which new partners can be involved or what criteria has to be fulfilled, to avoid bounce-backs. Both the AG leader and the support team are responsible to prepare an adequate work documentation of the action group, as a perquisite to keep the outer world and potentially interested new members informed and to allow an efficient integration of new partners.

At the start of an action group the screening of similar or related programme activities and policy initiatives at all policy levels (regional, national, trans-national, trans-European) is very important. This analysis contributes to an identification of the added value and role of the action group in the trans-national research policy context and helps to avoid e.g. overlapping programme activities at a later stage. This screening has to be completed by all AG members at the end of storming phase 1. Furthermore, in the quite political storming phase 2, programme owners have to be aware, that it is in their responsibility to achieve the national backing for their initiative. Lack of national accordance is often suspected and the necessary national funds can not be earmarked for joint actions, what hinders action groups to proceed. Certain milestones within the organisation process structure, a deadline for consultation periods and a restricted number of meetings can push the process forward and lead to a better progress in the storming phase. General guidelines on the earmarking procedure for national money can not be given due to distinctive national practices.

In the norming and performing stage, where activities focus strongly on administrative tasks, subordinate state agencies do play an important role or will be completely in charge of carrying out major tasks. This leads to a role modification for the programme owners in action groups from operative to accompanying and steering tasks.

Past experiences show, that the ENT support team can be an effectual coach to success for the action groups. An organization process structure is now available to better direct the action groups, but the role of an active support does exceed the function of organizational and operative support duties at some stages. The support team can mediate between different personal viewpoints and among national viewpoints and put emphasize on transnational perspectives and benefits. It has as well turned out to be very beneficial, that the support team is able to shape the awareness in action groups for possible hindrances and highlight possible coherences regarding the thematic context of the group. Many alternative routes and dead ends can be avoided, if the support team has specific knowledge regarding related European activities and initiatives as well. This could be achieved

in future e.g. with the specialization of ERA-NET TRANSPORT support teams regarding particular thematic fields or scopes of cooperation.

The support team has also the role of a “think tank” for mutual learning regarding the cooperation process itself and to link the information flow between the AGs and ERA-NET TRANSPORT. Productive information exchange and support preparation meetings between the support team members of AGs have been initiated and will be continued. The support team has with that as well the role to ensure the knowledge and experience transfer to ENT and further upcoming action groups, even though no active support is demanded from the particular action group anymore.

### **3.4. Summary of success factors in the storming phase**

Summarizing the success factors for AGs already pointed out in deliverable 1.4., the following findings of the support team workshop in Cologne and further reflections within this monitoring report the following indicators can be identified, which contribute to a successful completion of the AG storming phase:

Storming phase 1:

- Extensive screening phase concerning all related other existing and planned trans-national and national programme activities, the **window of opportunity** for the planned activity and the added value of a joint action. If there is no window of opportunity insight a continuation will be a waste of resources.
- Concentrate on the involvement of **programme owners** or on persons which have a clear mandate in national research programming.
- Set up a team spirit and **clarify roles and duties in the action group**. The AG leader has actively to push the process forward.
- A **common understanding and commitment** on the purpose and aim of the joint action has to be found, before further plans (storming 2) can be made.

Storming phase 2:

- **Clear formulation**, how the joint action can achieve either the coordination of national research policies or the coordination of national research programmes (address one or more levels of programme coordination).
- **Early earmarking of a national funding budget** share by taking into account the financial practicability of the planned action.
- **Flexibility and patience** in accomplishing a national standpoint by being aware of different national policy approaches and taking, as well, the long-term perspective into account. The willingness for broader acknowledgement can often not be achieved in the first but in the 2nd or 3rd cooperation action on basis of **trust and understanding**.

- Focus on the **political acclamation of the action**; deliberation of a work plan and a cooperation agreement at first, not on operative or administrative preparation of tasks (norming) or on doing a research activity itself (which is not the mission of and ENT action group!).

The following complementary factors are essential to increase the success potential:

- Focused and **transparent work along the general organization process structure** under consideration of the defined steps and milestones. All milestone products (position paper, work plan, cooperation agreement) have to be worked out.
- **Meetings should be** hold sparingly and **focused** on discussion and acclamation tasks. Extensive preparations have to be done prior or between, not in the meetings. This applies especially on draft versions of defined milestone products but also to essential duties of AG members, like the national screening of the thematically field, interviews with national key-stakeholders and experts, national acclamation, etc.
- An **active support team**, both **within a supporting and restrictive role**, to avoid detours and dead ends in action groups.

### ***3.5. First AG experiences with the implementation of joint actions (norming and performing phase)***

While a broad set of experiences regarding the storming phase do exist after a two years experimental trial and error period, the existing practices in the norming and performing phase can only be examined in a limited number of action groups yet.

Among the most advanced action groups three different designs for programme implementation can be observed:

- A co-ordination of two calls for transport technology research funding projects with the option for project clustering (ENT2b)
- The development of a joint transport research programme addressing national and some specific joint transnational research projects (ENT5)
- The development of a multilateral framework program with a joint call and national calls for research funding projects (ENT14)

The experiences generated from these action groups can be considered as valuable knowledge base to avoid problems in upcoming cooperation activities and to utilize first best practice solutions. The following section will provide an insight view regarding the above mentioned actions.

#### ***3.5.1 ENT2b: Co-ordinated call on "Intelligent Logistics"***

In autumn 2006 the first pilot project on a coordinated call between Austria (BMVIT) and Germany (BMWV) was launched. Sweden observes this cooperation and

provides a funding budget share for project clustering, depending on the positive evaluated projects.

#### Strategic objectives and design of the initiative

The Intelligent Logistics call addresses co-operative R&D projects focused on organizational solutions, concepts and demonstrations for freight transport and innovative logistics in the frame of the German programme "Mobility and Transport" and the Austrian programme „Intelligent Transport Systems and Services (IV2S)“.

Eligible projects are trans-national cooperative R&D projects with at least one partner in each country (Austria and Germany). In addition the information exchange and networking activities between ongoing and recently finished public funded research projects in this area (project clustering) can be founded by Austria and Sweden.

The call is organized in a two-step tendering procedure. The first phase of the call was opened in September 2006. Within a three months period research organizations were asked to hand in a project pre-proposal, which was nationally evaluated. A common recommendation to hand in a full project proposal was given based on the national jury results, if the project tender seemed to meet the coordinated list of evaluation criteria. Obligations for the full proposals could be formulated by both countries. A time window of 6 months is scheduled for phase 2, which is supposed to end with a final project evaluation and funding decisions.

The two step procedure was designed to give the project consortia enough time and flexibility to set up and reshape project ideas according to the needs of funding bodies with the additional burden of trans-national coordination requirements. For project clustering (of ongoing or recently finished projects) a tailored procedure was foreseen and the possible financial contribution was limited by 25.000€ per networking project. A funding decision will be already taken after the first phase for clustering projects.

The funding practice is based on a virtual pot model. Austria provided 600.000€ completely for funding trans-national projects (both new R&D projects and project clustering). The national funding pot of the German programme (> 12 Mio.€) was opened for trans-national projects, although not exclusively for trans-national projects. Sweden dedicated a pot of about 100.000€ for possible project clustering actions.

Eligibility rules demanded that every partner of the transnational consortia had to hand in a proposal at his national funding agency according the national funding rules.

#### Assessment of the initiative

Eight fully eligible and corresponding project proposals for R&D projects were handed in the first phase of the call. No clustering proposal between Austria and Sweden has been received, although inquiries have been recognized in the opening period. One clustering proposal between Austrian and German research groups was accepted by Austria. Germany is not funding this clustering activity. A joint

recommendation for handing in a full proposal has been given for 3 project tenders at the jury meeting between Austria and Germany. 5 project tenders were rejected.

Achieving a coherent decision on which trans-national projects should be pre-qualified for funding, based on the combination of evaluations from the national viewpoint, turned out not to be an easy task. Peer-review results in fact turned out to be quite contra dictionary, although the same criteria have been applied. One reason for is that Germany was very much focused on transport related effects (transport policy view), while Austria was trying to take more a technology policy perspective. A more consensual evaluation view has to be pre-assigned for future cooperation.

Experiences show, that the trans-national added value of projects can not be assessed by national criteria only. "Debatable" projects showed up, which are clearly considered as being beneficial for country A, but are of minor interest for country B in comparison to other projects and country B is therefore nor able or willing to finance non-resident researchers in this project. In these cases a "bonus" or an enhanced funding agreement for trans-national projects has to be examined. An opportunity would be to change to a "mixed funding mode", where country A possibly deviates from the principle of exclusively funding of resident research organizations.

The problem of incoherent trans-national funding recommendations has arisen also out of the non-exclusive funding pot for trans-national projects in Germany. Taking evaluation results into account only from the national viewpoint trans-national projects over all appeared at the lower end of the ranking list compared to national projects. This fact pretends that trans-national projects are not competitive to national projects regarding national viewpoints, which was possibly only the case in this specific call. As one option to solve this, in future cooperation the trans-national perspective could be stronger weighted, as national evaluation criteria fail to take this perspective into account. Anyway, a non-exclusive pot of one country might cause an uneven risk sharing for the success of the call. Under the evaluation framework described above it could happen in worst case, that no funding decision will be taken by the country with a non-exclusive pot for trans-national projects (but the pot will be utilized by national projects properly). Trans-national projects fall back in ranking behind national projects, although the partner countries with exclusive pots consider all projects as beneficial. The political legitimization of the call can be questioned in this case and certain hindrances for further cooperation can derive. In this constellation countries with exclusive funding pots are carrying the major risk for the success of the call. Missing incentives to stimulate trans-national project submissions – and support in the preparation phase for trans-national projects – might be applicable for countries with non-exclusive funding pots.

Experiences show, that the same criteria list and weighting factors is no guarantee for coherent peer-review results. Maybe a framework criteria list, focusing on cornerstones for evaluation only, gives countries more liberty of action for negotiating a coherent transnational funding decision than strict sets of evaluation criteria. It also turned out, that same refined evaluation criteria for R&D projects and clustering proposals can not be applied, because comprehensive descriptions required for extended assessments are obsolete or simply not possible for clustering proposals.

From the organizational viewpoint this cooperation was set up in very short time. An extensive preparation phase has not been carried out and storming 2 as well as norming tasks were reduced to a minimum compared to the process model. A very high degree on trust between the participants and the same language enabled this coordinated call without an official (and written) cooperation agreement. However, a higher potential for misunderstanding or misinterpretation of decisions being made is obvious following this approach.

### *3.5.2 ENT5: SURSHIP - setting up a joint research initiative*

#### *Strategic objectives and design of the initiative*

The strategic European Research Cooperation on Maritime Safety (SURSHIP) has the following three strategic objectives:

- Development of a holistic maritime safety concept,
- Strengthening of the competitiveness of the European maritime industry,
- Improvement of sustainability and safety of ships and marine environmental protection.

The activity is structured as a kind of umbrella project with numerous coordinated national sub-projects divided into eight themes (work packages). Six themes are characterized by the field of “Improvement of technologies“ (including safety assessment and evaluation, ship structural design, survivability in damaged conditions, fire prevention, passenger and crew survival). Two deal with “Application of knowledge“ (including decision support systems, rule making and design).

The focus of the SURSHIP project is on improved standard setting regarding passenger ships such as ROPAX and Cruising ROPAX vessels. Improvement of technologies for prediction of safety and security performance of ships and the application of new knowledge in this area are important aspects. Recommendations will be prepared for the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The SURSHIP action is expected to go on until the year 2009.

The official launch of this initiative was the signing procedure of the Lol in mid of 2006 by 8 countries. With the signing of the Lol the signatory states declared their willingness to participate in this cooperation with the strategic objective to develop methods, technologies and rules for practical application, which will significantly improve safety and survivability of ships as well as advance risk prediction. Each country takes the lead for one of the work packages and the derived sub-projects.

SURSHIP runs under supervision of National Focus Points (NFP) with representatives of each country and is supported by the SURSHIP Secretariat. Representatives of the participating countries have been appointed and authorized by the respective ENT contract partners. They come from public administrations as well as from the research community. On a second level the action group is responsible for the overall scientific concept of SURSHIP and for the recommendation of specific subprojects for national funding. The AG also gives



However, the funding scheme in SURSHIP is so far based on contract research financing, which is possibly also a necessary approach. It might be doubted, that the actual SURSHIP working structure would be suitable for a competitive research funding scheme with joint calls, due to the active role of the scientific community in the organization of the SURSHIP programme.

The activities of SURSHIP before signing the Lol can be relative clearly related to the storming phase of the general organization process structure. After the signing procedure a combined norming / performing phase was started with the preparation and launch of first joint actions. According to the foreseen work structure a steady process of amending the work packages with new projects, for broadening the knowledge base, is foreseen and the decision of taking up new projects into the work plan is jointly be taken by all partners. SURSHIP can therefore not be compared with other AGs aiming towards the launch of one single joint action.

In other AGs the role of the action group is focused on setting up cooperation. The role of AGs loose importance in the norming and performing phase, as operative tasks are taken over by program mangers and funding agencies with limited support needs from ENT. In SURSHIP the working structure foresees a very active involvement of ENT partners and a strong role of the AG over the whole life cycle of SURSHIP. Future discussions have to clarify, which kind of support is adequate and aligned by ENT.

The activity also deviates from the recommended process on earmarking a funding budget share beforehand in the storming phase, as the estimated overall funding budget of 7-9 Mio.€ for carrying out the full programme is not available yet. The future will show, if further funding shares can be provided to address all research themes in the SURSHIP work program sufficiently.

### 3.5.3 *ENT14: Joint framework programme "Keep-Moving"*

#### Strategic objectives and design of the programme

The Keep-Moving programme was designed to comprehensively address the thematic field "Demographic change and transport" with a policy oriented intergovernmental research programme. Strategic objectives like

- identifying research issues of intergovernmental interest in the thematic field of demographic change and transport regarding knowledge creation as well as ideas for technologies and new services,
- providing knowledge and information for national transport policies and transport research policies
- and developing information input for the discussion at the European level

are the major focus of this joint action supplemented by identified particular policy and research objectives of the participating countries.

The programme includes 6 thematic research areas, which will be subsequently covered by a series of joint calls until the year 2009. Four countries agreed on this framework by signing a Lol in February 2007 in order to allocate research funding resources and to launch joint research projects.

### Assessment of the programme

As a first implementation step of the joint framework programme the first joint call has been launched in spring 2007. The call is restricted to the topic of "Mobility for the elderly" (subset of the thematic research area one) and to horizontal issues on improving the knowledge base on the topic. Eligible research questions for research proposals are

- Future needs of elderly (item A)
- Innovative transport solutions and services for mobility of elderly (item B)

The joint call relates to several national calls and programmes in the partner countries. The first phase of the call is still open while the preparations of this report will be finished, a more detailed analysis of the submission phase can not be provided.


From a procedural point of view this multilateral framework programme has been set up in a remarkable time period, combining some operational activities (norming) with the storming phase. Therefore the group was able to complete the norming phase to come to a first call in a very due time.

The call and project proposal evaluation procedures look at the first view similar to the two-step procedure of the "Intelligent Logistics" call (ENT2b). But project ideas must be submitted to one defined contact point (step 1) comprising a national and a joint evaluation step and full proposals have to be carried out on the basis of invitation for the second phase of the call. An intergovernmental proposal evaluation group will be installed in order to find a coherent funding decision. Due to the accelerated process the opening periods for the national calls have been coordinated rather roughly which needs to be improved in following calls.

Basically a virtual funding pot model will be applied, but an extension towards a "mixed-mode funding (funding of non resident research organizations in special cases by national funding budget) is planed by a case-by-case decision.

The rules to receive funding out of earmarked budgets share varies significantly regarding the national preference on thematic orientation, research approach (studies or applications) and the actual funding scheme. France and Germany opened access to larger funding pots (*DE: up to 2 Mio.€ exclusively for trans-national projects, FR: up to 10 Mio. € non-exclusively for trans-national projects*), while Sweden and France provide smaller funding budgets (NL: 150.000 €, SE: 200.000 €).

Germany restricts research funding to application-oriented research (no studies) with topics covering item B only, while Sweden has the preference to fund projects covering item A. This does not necessarily have to be an obstacle for cooperation as



basic-oriented research and application-oriented research can be very well combined as experience shows.

Both Sweden and the Netherlands focus on the funding of basic studies by having rather the research policy perspective in eye. Applied research projects are partially funded require a certain co-funding share. Studies will receive 100% financing.

The practical experiences of this call will point out, if the incoherence of the funding strategies and rules of the partner countries will lead to coherent funding decisions. However, cooperation opportunities for researchers seem to be restricted due to the different funding rules applied. If joint projects will be established 100% funding and partially project funding with co-funding in other countries, it will be especially interesting to observe how intellectual property rights and authorship will be dealt with.

ENT14 explicitly described a joint dissemination strategy in their LoI, which foresees conferences and publications as well as using the ENT web page. This approach could be a good example to be recommended also for other action groups.

KEEP MOVING also established a secretariat with responsibility of ENT for providing support for the AG as well as financial contributions regarding the organization of meetings, workshops and joint communication matters. If and to which extend ENT can provide financial resources within a permanent structure over the whole performing phase of the programme is a principle issue for the ENT II.

## 4. Summary and conclusions of monitoring findings

Observing all 17 ERA-NET TRANSPORT action groups over a period of two years gives clear evidence of interest and demand for trans-national programme and policy coordination. A broad spectrum of themes were addressed within a high degree of integration regarding the participation of member states. Diverse approaches of AGs in the experimental (trial&error) phase with limited procedural guidance have been welcome and essential to establish a broad basis of experience. Optimized procedures and concrete task descriptions can now be provided for AGs, subsequently optimized and adapted to future needs along the general process model (forming, storming, norming, performing).

All well progressing groups, which successfully reached the policy implementation phase (norming and performing stage) so far, were derived out of an interest driven approach. As these initiatives can already refer to a higher priority on the political agenda, difficulties to archive national backings and complicated earmarking procedures could have been widely avoided or fixed in due time. Lump sums of national budgets were accumulated to meaningful research funding pots or access to full national programme budgets has been provided non-exclusively for trans-national calls on a virtual pot principle only. Other allocation models have been taken into account previously. First practical experiences with the funding of non-resident organizations are already available in the frame of contract research (joint projects).

Some joint actions do not only comprise singular programme coordination measure but also continuous activities with a long term perspective, like joint research umbrella programmes. It will be interesting to observe in the future, how the umbrella programmes will affect national programmes and policies, as partner countries are only loosely bounded to the documents with letters of intention (LoI) at present. Therefore initiatives like SURSHIP or Keep Moving might be exposed to the risk of missing national contributions in the context of changing stakeholders and political calculus in a later stage. Nevertheless, the content of the umbrella programme could be subsequently incorporated in national programmes in a next step to assure a higher degree of liability for the cooperation.

At least as valuable as the experiences derived from the successful groups described above is the analysis of a larger number of AGs, which were not yet able to successfully pass the very political storming stage by agreeing on a definite programme or policy coordination action. An insight analysis shows that some AGs rather worked towards preparing – or even carrying out – research actions themselves than on programme or policy coordination as a strategic framework for research funding. This strategic orientation can hardly be brought in line with the original aim of ERA-NET TRANSPORT and a refocusing seems here to be necessary. Some AGs consist mostly or only of researchers. As ENT does not have the mission to start research projects the role of researchers in AGs can only comprise policy advisers or stimulator for coordination needs at the beginning of the process. The process has to be taken over by programme managers (or persons with a clear mandate to shape national programming) to allow an effect on the policy level.

From the operational point of view AG meetings are important, but a large number of meetings are no guarantee for quick process or for successful joint actions. A target oriented management and working structure has to be developed, which foresees major preparatory tasks between the meetings on the one hand and well organized meetings for acclamation and discussion on the other. The experiences also point out, that AGs with extended preparation times (even two year of duration) are not more likely to bring forward concrete results. A greater number of partners in action groups can slow down the negotiation process but other criteria, like complex themes with many stakeholders involved on different levels, missing national acclamation, lack of motivation and team orientation, missing organizational and procedural orientation of the group are much more significant for the progress of an AG. There must be awareness of the group members (especially of the AG leader), that certain tasks have to be worked out. A process model with clear milestones has to be applied to guide the group and profiles of different stakeholder roles have to be clarified, to avoid disappointments and minimize the risk of AGs to get stuck in the storming stage. A comprehensive cooperation agreement (Memorandum of Understanding, Letter of Intent) signed by budget responsible persons has proved to be a very important milestone to complete the storming stage, in order to avoid misunderstandings on further proceeding and give the cooperation a formal touch. The support team plays a crucial role to guide the group to this point and has now a solid process structure and reference system in hands.

A missing window of opportunity in connection with lack of national backing preserves to be another major hindrance for joint actions. Successful cooperation as good-practice examples can here contribute to the long term process of trust building in trans-national programme or policy coordination activities. This trust building process can be facilitated by a strong, visible ENT label with quality criteria in the future, in order to improve the reliability on trans-national program coordination activities.

## **5. Recommendations and requirements for further optimizations**

### ***5.1. Implementation of the process structure and cut-off criteria for ENT support***

The experiences of the experimental phase show, that even higher levels of cooperation can be successfully achieved in manageable time periods with a limited number of meetings. Action Groups with missing windows of opportunities or with lack of engagement of participants does not seem to be able to archive these results even after many meetings and years of AG duration. In that case not only resources from the participants are unproductively bound, but also manpower and financial resources are withdrawn from ENT, which could be more efficiently used for other activities. A restricted period of 12 months duration and the limited support of 4 meetings could be sufficient for an AG, to pass the storming phase. Therefore WP1 recommends the management group to stop support team activities and reimbursement procedures of new AGs meetings, if a cooperation agreement can not be achieved within this frame. This cut-off criteria give the AG a clear framework for self organization with concentrated and target orientated support of ENT on the one hand and saves support resources of ENT for other action groups due to the opportunity of an active resource management by making the extend of support more calculable.

The general process structure provides guidance and poses a reference system to trace the status of the AGs. AGs should link in (existing AGs with storming status) or start their work along the defined process structure (new AGs) and prepare the designated milestone products in a certain sequence (position paper, work plan, cooperation agreement). To establish transparent working processes in the AGs minutes have to be kept for every meeting. Final versions of the milestone products and meeting should be available on the ENT webpage to utilize its capabilities as a working and monitoring tool. The compliance of the work in AGs with process structure and all accompanying obligations should be surveyed by the support team.

According to the original aim of ENT (stimulating and preparing transport research policy and program coordination) the financial support for actions should primarily be concentrated on the storming phase. Operative preparations in norming (e.g. reimbursement of meetings) – and even more definite – operative costs for carrying out the action itself, should be financed by national budgets in future action groups in order to avoid “hidden research funding”. However, a certain degree of support, coordination and observation of ENT might be important to be perceived and is therefore subject to the role discussion of ERA-NET TRANSPORT.

### ***5.2. Re-focussing of existing ENT Action Groups***

All experiences from the different ERA-NET TRANSPORT action group approaches are very valuable and provide the basis for future transport research programme coordination. Regardless of that we recommend structural obligations to some of the AGs as well as a request for concrete results in due time. This has to be done jointly by the action group leaders, the ENT support teams and the ENT consortium as national representatives to bundle efforts and to achieve satisfactory results for all

participants. In hand with that a clear decision basis and decision rules have to be established by ENT in order to facilitate a transparent and equal AG support for new action groups. These obligations and refinements would also help the running AGs' process towards a clear orientation – even after a longer AG duration within the experimental phase – to meet the main aims of ENT. Nevertheless, the ENT management group has to discuss these obligations on a case by case basis.

Following obligations must be fulfilled:

- AGs must be able to explain how “their” joint action leads to a coordination of national transport research policies/programmes or transport STI policies/programmes. The purpose of an AG is not to prepare or work out a research project.
- The AG can address one or more of the formulated levels of cooperation regarding program coordination (info&knowledge exchange, project clustering, joint projects, co-ordinated or joint calls). But as far the LoC of “information and knowledge exchange” is concerned it has to be clarified, that this is not meant to be as a task of exchange of research results or exchange of researcher experiences only. The knowledge exchange of programme managers/owners, their subordinate agencies or other persons with the mandate to shape national programmes/strategies is a legitimate aim of AGs, but joint research funding activities have to result.
- Researcher driven AGs have to bring programme managers on board in due time, which are able and willing to work out a joint action with policy relevance.
- The added value and purpose for cross-national coordination has to be pointed out, especially if the problem could also be addresses on trans-European level. Clear delimitation from other transnational activities or initiatives is necessary

For a most pragmatic approach a certain time buffer should be defined, within that AGs have the opportunity to proof that they are in line with these obligations and certain milestone documents (e.g. work plan, cooperation agreement) can be deployed.

### ***5.3. Further development of procedures support tools***

The monitoring experiences show, that potential areas for mistakes and traps are hidden within the norming and performing stage, which could be avoided from oncoming groups with clear guidelines and support tools. Co-ordinated and joint call can be considered as especially complex tasks. We therefore recommend the preparation of procedures special focus on this level of cooperation. Most important fields to be covered are from the actual point of view

- Models and guidelines for joint evaluation procedures,
- Reminders (and probably checklists) for necessary preparatory tasks,

- Collection of experiences on how countries have to deal with intellectual property rights within transnational projects,
- New support tools are necessary to enable efficient work in AGs (programme and persons data base),
- Support tools to facilitate the proposal and evaluation procedures (e.g. networking platforms for researchers and web based proposal transmission).

The challenge will be to develop recommendations, tools and procedures which will be eligible according to the different national provisions. Furthermore we learned, that some fundamental decisions, which have been taken by AGs in the norming and performing stage, would be more suitable for being defined in the storming 2 stage already (e.g. agreement on a refined evaluation procedure, alignment of national funding pots, ways for dealing with “debatable projects”). These important operative tasks will therefore already have to be taken into account in the storming stage and lead to an updated task list from the actual version in the Action Group Cooperation Handbook for Deliverable 1.6.

A special consideration for procedural extensions has also be given to the fact, that certain tasks have to be transferred to subordinated agencies in the norming and performing stage, to allow a smooth interaction between all stakeholders. A clear role description should be derived by also taking dissemination strategies and continuous procedural learning into account.

#### ***5.4. Mid and long term prospectives for Action Groups***

The original idea of ENT was to initiate transport STI policy coordination for a coherent ERA via the coordination of national transport research programs as a preparatory step. Three years of ENT and two years of ENT action groups give evidence, that this approach might not comprehensively enough to affect certain problem fields. Some AGs started to act as strategically groups, which aim to influence both national and European strategies, without directly addressing instruments for program coordination in order to achieve necessary political backing. Limited success might be a risk, if these groups fail to engage high level persons which are in charge of influencing national and European policies. The demand for strategically “high level” groups to facilitate or pave the way for programme coordination has to be taken strongly into account for the further continuation of ENT. Apart from that ENT member countries have to clarify, if AGs can have the mission to work towards trans-European standardization and how far their initiatives could reach in this context.

Past coordination activities of ENT are limited to the national level. New approaches have to be found to include regional authorities in cooperation, stimulate and utilize their research and innovation potentials towards extended coherency of ERA.

Another point for discussion is related to the initiation practice for AGs and the earmarking process of national money. To enable continuity of cooperation processes opportunities for earmarking fixed yearly budgets for transnational cooperation should be taken into account. In this context a third forming approach

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for ENT action groups (besides the pro-active and responsive approach) towards a continuing cooperation platform can be discussed.

## Appendix

### Overview on Action Group key benchmarks (status: January 2007)

ENT	AG Title	Category	Status	no. of count. involved	partner countries (act.)	aimed level of cooperation (LoC)	earmarked funds	founding date of AG (TWS or other initiation date)	forming approach of AG	no. of (official) meetings (until end of 2006)	duration of AG (months until end of 2006)	status related to the process structure (end 2006)
ENT 1	E-Call "PLUS" / Service Platform	C							terminated			
ENT 2a	real-time data collection: overview of sensor research	C	standby	7	AT,BE,FI,DE,NL,NO,SE	Info Exchange, project clustering, joint projects towards a co-ordinated prg.		30.11.2004	pro-active	3	25	storming 1
ENT 2b	Intelligent Logistics	A	operating	2	AT,DE,SE	Coordinated call	AUT: 0,6Mio€, GER:12Mio€ (not exclusively for t-n activities)	29.03.2006	responsive	1	9	performing
ENT 3	Transnational Architecture for Multimodal Information	B	operating	5	FI,FR,NO,SE,DE	Info exchange		30.11.2004	pro-active	5	25	storming 2
ENT 4	Business Models for data collection and use	B	operating	6	NL,NO,FI,FR,PL	Info exchange		30.11.2004	pro-active	4	25	storming 2
ENT 5	Surship (Maritime Safety)	A	operating	8	DE,DK,FI,FR,NL,PL,SE,UK	Info Exchange, project clustering, joint projects towards a joint programme	up to 7Mio€ (proposed)	30.11.2004	responsive	4	25	performing
ENT 6	Alt. fuels, propulsion systems and vehicle technology (strategy)	B	operating	8	NL,UK,AT,PL,NO,SE,DE,FR	Info exchange, joint strategy		14.06.2005	pro-active	3	19	storming 1
ENT 7	Alt. fuels, propulsion systems and vehicle technology (demo projects)	B	operating	5	AT,NL,NO,DE,UK (observing FR,SE)	Joint demonstration projects		14.06.2005	pro-active	1	19	storming 2
ENT 8	Improved understanding on noise effects	C	standby	4	FR,DK,PL,NO			14.06.2005	pro-active	6	19	storming 1
ENT 9	Environmental performance indicators for heavy duty vehicles	B	operating	3	FI,UK,SE	Info exchange, Clustering of Projects, Joint Projects		14.06.2005	pro-active	1	19	storming 2
ENT 10	Policy Tools to influence vehicle purchasing behaviour	B	operating	7	DK,FR,BE,DE,NL,NO,UK,PL,SW	Info exchange, joint strategy		09.02.2006	pro-active	1	11	storming 2
ENT 11	Driver Support Systems	C	standby	9	DK,FR,FI,DE,NL,NO,UK	Clustering Projects, Joint Programming		09.02.2006	pro-active	2	11	storming 2
ENT 12	Hazardous goods – tracking and tracing	B	operating	4	FR,NL,SE,AT	Info Exchange, Joint Projects		09.02.2006	pro-active	1	11	storming 1
ENT 13	Safety and security across modes	B	operating	4	NO,FR,DK,UK,SE	Info exchange, Joint Project		09.02.2006	pro-active	2	11	storming 1
ENT 14	Demographic Changes and Transport	A	operating	5	NL,UK,SE,DE (interest from AT and UK)	Joint Programming with joint calls	up to 12Mio.€ (not exclusively for t-n activities)	16.03.2006	responsive	6	9	norming
ENT 15	Sleepiness at the wheel and attention disorders	new	operating	5	UK,BE,SE,FI,FR	Joint project and joint calls	60.000€ (FR)	01.09.2006	responsive	1	4	storming 1
ENT16	Intermodal freight transport	new	operating	3	AT,SE,SW	co-ordinated call	up to 2 Mio.€	15.12.2006	responsive	-	1	forming







