Future EU – ME cooperation opportunities:

Recommendations for an enhanced EU – ME STI cooperation

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MERID…

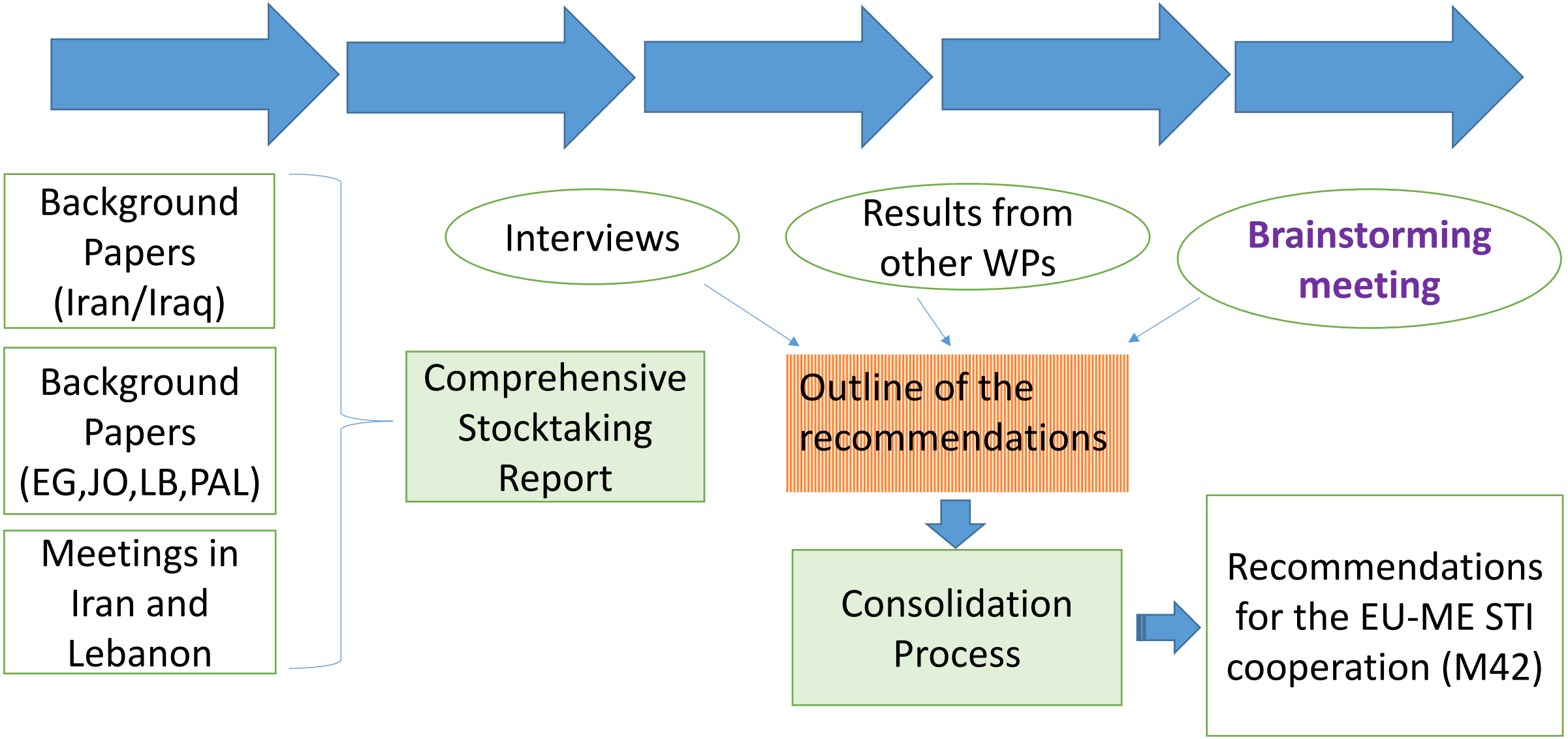
… intensify and encourage R&I cooperation between the EU and the Middle East region

…establishing optimal framework conditions for international cooperation

The Future: Recommendations

The context

- **EU and its Framework Programme H2020**
- **Bilateral cooperation Programmes**
- **Policy dialogue** EU – Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine **in the context of the Euro-Med cooperation (‘90)**
- **Re-establishing and reinforcing the EU – Iran and EU – Iraq STI cooperation**


Background Papers (Iran/Iraq)
Background Papers (EG,JO,LB,PAL)
Meetings in Iran and Lebanon
Interviews
Results from other WPs
Brainstorming meeting
Comprehensive Stocktaking Report
Outline of the recommendations
Consolidation Process
Recommendations for the EU-ME STI cooperation (M42)

Sources for the recommendations:

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- **Task 2.1**
  - -**Background papers** from Iran/Iraq and Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine
  - -Input from the **meetings in Tehran and Beirut**

- Preparation of the ***comprehensive stocktaking report*** on governance systems in the ME region
  - Structure of the report: horizontal approach→ major policies and international cooperation (including H2020 participation)

Sources for the recommendations:

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❖Task 2.3 (b)

Targeted interviews (face to face or skype) with a variety of stakeholders (from the region with experience in STI cooperation such as research organisations and researchers, policy organisations and policy makers, innovation actors and stakeholders)

METHODOLOGICAL DIFFICULTY

☒ **The inherent heterogeneity among the six Middle East countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine ≠ Iran and Iraq)**

✓ **Recommendations valid for all the targeted countries** (particular attention and emphasis to Iran and Iraq wherever necessary)

How to structure the recommendations?

H2020 is ending in 2.5 years	→	**Short -term**
But EU – ME STI cooperation is <u>not</u> only H2020	→	**Mid- Long- term**
Policy dialogue EU – [EG, JO, LB, PAL] exists since long; not with Iran and Iraq	→	**Policy Dialogue EU-Iran; EU-Iraq**

RECOMMENDATIONS WITH SHORT-TERM IMPACT

→**To influence participation in H2020** (last Work Programme 2018 – 2020; fall 2017; approx. 30 billion Euros)

- **Role of NCPs**
- **Series of targeted & proactive measures at national level**

→ ***To overcome the major barrier: participation in a consortium***

Role of NCPs

- **A service provider towards the research community**
- **Necessity to setup a robust NCP structure in every ME country adapted to the country's potential and expectations**
- **Better to setup a smaller structure of well trained persons able to travel in EU than trying to 'mirror' large EU NCP structures**
- **To provide: General info on H2020 (+ ERC, MSCA) plus Legal & Administrative support** (for proposals and grants)
- **Not a priority:** to be too specific/thematic; train in 'writing'; partner search tools…
- **In other words: to privilege LARGE H2020 dissemination,** instead of thematic/specific, **in order to inform and trigger the interest of a broad spectrum of researchers (including young!)**

Targeted & proactive measures

They can include:

- Identification of scientific excellence in ME as a target group for proactive H2020 info dissemination and support
- Identification and exploitation of the Scientific Diasporas in EU as potential 'entry points' or 'bridges' to H2020 consortia
- Participation in networking activities and especially in COST Actions
- Participation of ME countries in ERA-NET Cofund schemes
  - **No need for large commitments** (100.000 Euros or even less)
  - **The funds remain in the country**
  - **Increased success rate in applications under such schemes**
  - **Often a '*passport*' for joining broader H2020 consortia**

Targeted & proactive measures

They can also include the development of a national system of incentives for H2020 participation (travel grants for proposal preparation; bonuses and awards for H2020 applications; etc.)

➢**No need of huge commitments; on a competitive basis**

Grants for proposal preparation *versus* awards for H2020 applications

➢**What to privilege?**

When considering the **participation in a consortium** as the major **barrier** for H2020 applications, the choice is in favor of the **Grants**

RECOMMENDATIONS WITH MID- AND LONG-TERM IMPACT

To reduce the observed gaps between EU and ME/Iran/Iraq (knowledge production, knowledge utilization; etc.) **through capacity building activities in the targeted countries**

- **Through sharing of the considerable *EU expertise* in that field, in a mutually beneficial exchange**
- **Under H2020 or other more appropriate instruments**

RECOMMENDATIONS WITH MID- AND LONG-TERM IMPACT

- **Proposed activities** (1/2)**:**
  - **Implementation of Peer Reviews of the STI systems, which could focus on:**
    - Governance and funding of the STI system, with emphasis on competitive funding;
    - Innovation framework conditions and industry-academia cooperation;
    - Internationalization of research;
    - Human resources and attractiveness of research carriers
  - **Trainings for STI policy makers**
    - *STI policy design and delivery; programme and project evaluation techniques; performance assessment of research organizations; innovation support instruments and innovation measurements; open data, open science, open access; IPR; benchmarking and foresight exercises; internationalization of science;*

RECOMMENDATIONS WITH MID- AND LONG-TERM IMPACT

- **Proposed activities** (2/2):
  - **Improvement of the innovation capabilities (ETPs, EEN, etc.)**
    - **Cooperation with European Technological Platforms** (*'industry-led stakeholder fora recognized by the European Commission as key actors in driving innovation, knowledge transfer and European competitiveness');*
    - **Cooperation with Enterprise Europe Network** (*'world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions'):* EG and JO are already in, opportunities exist for the other countries
  - **Improvement of the IPR framework**
    - Training activities for researchers; assistance in setting-up national structures and procedures
  - **EU-ME cooperation in the field of large Research Infrastructures (RIs)**
    - Access to RIs in EU; development of standards for data exchange; 'distributed' RIs; development of national and regional Roadmaps for RIs

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EU-IRAN AND EU-IRAQ STI POLICY DIALOGUE

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The context

- **The '*EU-Iran Working Group on Science, Research and Innovation*' has been setup and held its first meeting in Brussels (September 2016) and the second in Tehran 2 July 2017**

- **STI policy dialogue with Iraq not yet initiated**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EU-IRAN AND EU-IRAQ STI POLICY DIALOGUE

Recommendations:

- **To maintain sustainable policy dialogue fora in STI:** organize regular annual or preferably bi-annual meetings. To continue with Iran and to initiate with Iraq
- **To provide visibility to the renewal of the EU-Iran STI cooperation**
- **To use intermediate organizations in Iran for promoting and implementing the EU-Iran STI cooperation in a more flexible way**
- **And last but not least: To support with adequate tools jointly agreed priorities** (e.g. in the last parts of the Work Programme 2018-2020)

IN CONCLUSION

- **There is still** (but certainly limited) **time for increasing the participation in H2020**
  - **Here the role of NCPs can be instrumental**
  - **Especially if combined with targeted and pro-active measures from the interested ME countries** (incentives/grants; mapping excellence and diaspora; COST actions; ERA-NET co-fund schemes)
- **In parallel, capacity building activities** (peer reviews; trainings; innovation; IPR) **can improve the framework conditions for the EU – ME STI cooperation in a mutually beneficial way**
- **A sustainable STI policy dialogue with Iran and Iraq is necessary for steering the renewal of the cooperation and for providing visibility to it**

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