

211359 MIRA D1.7 - Reports on the impact of the MIRA project

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Abstract

This is the deliverable "211359 MIRA D1.7 - Reports on the impact of MIRA project". This paper describes the impact of the INCO.Net Project MIRA, aimed at supporting the Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in the field of Research and Innovation.

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1 Introduction

INCO-Net Projects are instruments designed in FP7 to support the political dialogue on issues related to research and innovation cooperation between the EU and other regions of the World. They have been related either to countries, such as China or India, or neighbouring groups of countries, such as the West Balkan Countries, the Eastern European Countries, ACP (Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific) countries, or the Mediterranean Partners Countries (MPC).

This new instrument was initially tested with the increasing policy exchanges between Mediterranean countries and the EC; it rapidly appeared well adapted to the Mediterranean Area due to the previous existence of an institutionalized policy dialogue that was taking place in the Monitoring Committee for Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in S&T (MoCo), created within the context of the Barcelona Process of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (started in 1995). The MIRA project was thus designed as the first INCO-Net, in close connection to the MoCo, with the following particularities:

1. The MoCo was designed as the Steering Committee of MIRA; this was the result of the former experience, where the MoCo proposals had been instrumental in identifying projects that would describe the state-of-art of the EU-MPC cooperation in R&I (projects ESTIME and ASBIMED), support the capacity building to support the EU-MPC cooperation (EUROMEDANET), or identify the common priorities in research (MED7). In this sense MIRA capitalized upon the previous experience and was drafted by persons and institutions previously engaged in the above mentioned projects.
2. The consortium of MIRA was designed by gathering the MPC stakeholders responsible for promoting the EU-MPC cooperation in R&I, i.e., the Ministries in charge of this policy and some Institutions and, even, companies, committed to this objective.
3. The project intended to launch actions that went well beyond bilateral actions; it defined a work program that targeted regional and EU common interests, following the recommendations of the Steering Committee, where most of the MPC partners were present.

2 The MIRA consortium

The composition of the consortium implied some risks, since the MoCo composition incorporates national interests whereas the MIRA Project could only address common regional issues. This apparent difficulty, nonetheless, didnt seem to influence the normal development of the project, and all the partners perfectly assumed its regional character. In this sense, MIRA is an interesting case of creation of a specific policy space, where national interests agree to participate along with, but also separately from the EU entity, by defining a specific agenda both common and different from national agendas.

It is also a very rare case of international relations that engage both national authorities and multilateral arrangements, and created shared governance of research and, to a lesser extent, innovation. We can only underline that the unsuccessful cases of common governance was the result of actions that didnt share the characteristics assumed by MIRA, which we would like to clearly describe in the following pages. MIRA, and its coupling with the MoCo, was not only a good case study: it is a rare example of effective collaboration between MPC and EU.

The paradox has been that science (as well as culture and agriculture) had not been contemplated in the initial drafts of the Barcelona process. It is now clearly apparent that any EU-MPC collaboration will need to rely on the research and innovation experience embodied by the MoCo/MIRA activities.

3 The project life

We can quite certainly mention that the development of the project allowed the partners to visualize the common problems and the need of harmonizing and clustering of efforts. This coordination was not only understood on the grounds of efficiency (tackle issues in a coordinated way that save money and effort), but also as a process of creating a common identity. In the course of the project, there has been a clear evolution from an initial attitude of a "European driven action" (as stated in the Project Technical Annex) to a series of initiatives demanded and supported by MPC partners, whose engagement and expectations have notably increased in time.

This positive evolution has, on the other hand, evidenced the enormous difficulties of the MPC partners to handle properly the funding received from the European projects, and the urgent need to adapt their financial and administrative systems to the reality of international cooperation procedures in the fields of research and innovation. Needless to say that this increase in activity and mobility of the MPC partners was continuously hampered by the Visa policy of the EU MS. This important issue must be solved in the shortest period if we really want to advance toward a Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation Area.

Nevertheless, as we just mentioned above, the most important impact of MIRA is, perhaps, the functioning of an "ad-hoc" forum of MPC addressing the common interest in drafting national research and innovation systems able to cope with the common problem of valorisation of research for the benefit of national development, and favouring the link, even the integration, of these systems in a possible Euro-Mediterranean Research Area.

In that sense, MIRA acted not only as EU-driven forum, but also as a regional forum of high relevance. It is also a very fragile process, mainly because at all times, the legitimacy of the forum can be challenged by anyone of the members of the consortium. This is also true of the EU Commission, since the whole process is in continuous interaction with Brussels. Increasingly, the membership to MIRA has been understood not as independent European-funded project, but as the policy instrument of the MoCo.

The relation between MIRA and the MoCo has been very fluid and the work program of MIRA has evolved according to suggestions or new demands agreed in the MoCo Meetings. MIRA has confirmed and reinforced its character of arm of the MoCo and instrument executing the policy demands of the MoCo. The latter, acting as Steering Committee of the project, has always endorsed the yearly activity report of the project. It also transformed the membership in the consortium of MIRA as a political statement.

The relations between MIRA and the European Commission has been an interesting exercise of assessment of the INCO-Nets instrument, and the position of this type of project in supporting the international cooperation, the INCO policy, of the Framework Program. The management of the FP7 Projects by the Commission has suffered the inconveniences of a dispersed responsibility. By opening practically all calls and programmes to third countries, international cooperation dissolved into a collection of projects whose impact is difficult to evaluate as a whole. Moreover, the responsibility has been dispersed also on administrative grounds: scientific officers are no more the single entry point for project coordinator in all aspects related to the management of the projects; financial and legal officers, have an increasing share of control on the development of the projects.

This fact, added to the unstable computer-based services provided by the Commission in the name of simplicity in the management, have made the relations with the Commission a cumbersome issue, softened only by the good individual attitude of these officers. Better coordination inside the Commission services and improvements in the ICT facilities might facilitate the life of the Consortium in the execution of the work programme and orient most human contacts to the interesting policy issues instead of spending an enormous amount of time and energy in administrative and financial issues. Finally, the frequent changes of the Commission officers (scientific and others) responsible of the project and the overload of work due to lack of trained personnel, increases the difficulties of managing projects.

Having said that, the attitude of the Officers in charge of INCO promoting the acknowledgment and coordination of different types of projects (notably BILAT, ERA-Wide, and INCO-Net), has created an enormous momentum for a process of integration of activities on all shores of the Mediterranean Basin. This period covered by MIRA, and we dare to say also because of MIRA, has created the framework for a real Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation Space that is a real engagement of the national systems of research.

We support this claim, by noting that MIRA has been organizing the discussions on policy initiatives and has been the adequate forum to test new ideas: EMIS, thematic clustering of projects, measurement of collaborative effort, and the like, have been ideas that were inaugurated and examined in MIRA. The launching of the ERA-Wide Programs, supporting centres of high quality in the MPC in their promotion in the ERA arena and focused in the priority areas of the MPC, has also been another initiative favouring the stronger insertion of research into the innovation system, providing the

ground for Mediterranean-wide networks of high competence in key areas.

The internal functioning of project MIRA has been highly influenced by the internal rearrangements taking place within the partners organizations. However, a progressive engagement in the dynamic of the project by most of the partners has resulted in a sense of appropriation of the project. It ended-up as being identified as an effective Euro-Mediterranean project, with a consolidated team of partners, sharing a sense of mutual trust, and acting as an engine to move forward in the topics of mutual interest. Another important factor appears in the development of the project: the public administration, represented by the Ministries, suffered the (usual) internal logic and dynamic of the political scenario.

Even though the personal engagement of partners has been strong and loyal to the project and its objectives, their capacity to interact within the roadmap of the project is limited by their own political agenda. Nonetheless, their presence in the project is the guarantee that actions will be motivated by a real national demand and outputs will be useful for the scientific and innovation communities. Having said that, the political actors need to rely on institutions that are less engaged in the political dynamic, if we want to implement activities in favour of the above mentioned communities. The MIRA project has shown that a balance of political and implementation actors inside the consortium could be an effective manner to cope with this inherent contradiction in supporting a common EU-MPC research agenda. It might be, that the actual evolution of MIRA, into a more politically sound forum, has been a way of solving this contradiction.

At a time where more transparency and accountability is demanded, a political response could well has been to mingle more closely the policy personnel and the more technically-oriented personnel. The way to do this interconnection is to accept each other and claim no absolute truth; in this sense, MIRA has been a great lesson in trimming pretensions of expertise and fitting science and policy in a common future.

The activities of MIRA have been quite diverse: they cover from training on participation in the FP (awareness on calls, writing of proposals, etc.) to quantitative and qualitative analysis of the EU-MPC cooperation in R&I, as well as the identification of thematic priorities, opportunities and obstacles for such cooperation. As a tool to support the cooperation, an Observatory on such activity was drafted as a key activity of the project. Soon after the launching of the project, the difficulties for this objective began to appear. No one contested the need and opportunities of such an initiative; however, there was a certain mismatch between this regional initiative and projects to create National Observatories on the matter.

In fact, in some countries there was a competition between institutions to host the Observatory, while in other countries established Observatories was disbanded after a change of government. The actual experience of setting-up an observatory has been a difficult one, both on political grounds and on more "technical" grounds. Moreover, there was no accepted set of indicators that could provide a regional vision. This issue was addressed by MIRA and a consensus was reached about a minimum number of common

indicators to describe the evolution of the cooperation between the EU and the MPC in the R&I domain.

However, other problems are still pending to be solved, such as the establishment of data repositories at national level, the quality control of data, and the swiftness in sharing these data. The only sources that up to now provide significant insights on the cooperation are statistics linked to publications and patents, making it possible to measure the domains of specialisation, and assessing the number of publications and affiliations of authors in international refereed co-publications. The limits of this exercise have been also examined in the MIRA project and alternatives have been proposed, all of them part of a "White Paper" (in the pages of this issue).

On the other hand, the good quality of engagement and participation of the MPC partners in capacity building activities in favour of the research community in their countries must be emphasized. Some activities, such as the training in writing of proposals and the management of projects, have been great success, with repetition of training seminars on demand from the MPC partners. Similarly, some other un-programmed activities, such as the training of MPC legal and auditing experts were very successful and the material is now being used by other projects.

4 The Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Space

The support to the Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Space (EMIS), a long-term engagement, marked as a key activity of MIRA has been one of the most important focuses of activities (and positive results). The point of departure for this activity was to go beyond a definition exercise on what should "innovation" consist of. Instead, the activities have been very much defined in a pragmatic way, by addressing the issues as seen by multiple stakeholders.

Positive interactions with DG Enterprise and its program on the "Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise", the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Network AN-IMA and other stakeholders in this domain, were of the outmost importance. The most important deficit found in the evaluation of the impact of research in innovation within the productive system was the lack of proper instruments of Technological Transfer (TT) from the knowledge creation system to the productive system.

MIRA focused its activity in this important domain, organizing Workshops on TT, training of experts, organizing Thematic Fora to provide a platform of interaction between the MPC productive and academic worlds. Two of the most important domains were chosen: water and waste water management (Casablanca, December 2011), and renewable energies (Tunis, June 2012).

Other activities such as the promotion of Research Driven Clusters at regional level or the promotion of a Thematic Network of Metrology Laboratories and Medical Tech-

nologies Laboratories complete the fruitful results of this activity of MIRA and provide a "portfolio" of experience to support the deployment of a Mediterranean-wide Innovation strategy. Here, as in other domains of activity, the engagement of the MPC MIRA partners has been very intense and, in some aspects, has been a driver to launch or support a national debate on the coupling of the research and innovation activities.

However, this effort is still at an early stage, and the effective outcomes will depend on numerous decisions, legislative activities, accumulated experience and profound changes needed in the productive systems. Nevertheless, an interesting output has been the perception of common problems of all the countries of the region and the need to cooperate and share experiences in a process of mutual learning. This particular area of activity of MIRA, where research meets innovation and production, where the research system and the economic system need to complement each other, has interested other INCO-Net projects, and some joint activities on Innovation issues were devised with neighbouring regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and the West Balkan.

5 The interaction of MIRA with other Euro- Mediterranean policies

The connection with other EU policies has been a main objective of MIRA, as mandated by the MoCo. Among these activities we can highlight, besides the focus on innovation issues, the high interaction with the Program Horizon 2020 of De-Contamination of the Mediterranean, where the activity of MIRA has produced a recommendation of a Joint Research Agenda on this issue, to support the implementation of the program.

The Euro- Mediterranean Conference on Research & Innovation held in Barcelona last April 2012 represents an interesting turning point in the European Policy of research cooperation with the MPC. The stated objective was to intensify the relations between the EU and the MPC following the wave of the Arab spring. New principles of co-design, co-funding and co-ownership in this collaboration were announced. Up to a certain point most of these concepts emerged in the continuous policy dialogue of MPC members and EU officials inside both the MoCo and MIRA. Some of these concepts can be easily traced back to intense policy discussion in setting-up specific funding, shared funding programmes, some successful and some less so, but always in maintaining the link on both sides.

This opened the discussion on instruments and funding from the EU to support this EU-MPC cooperation or partnership, as it has been labelled in Barcelona in 2012. The year 2012 will be known as the opening of a discussion and negotiation process to create a common instrument to handle this co-responsibility and partnership on an equal foot. MIRA organized a Working Group to extract from the conclusions of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Research and Innovation, the MIRA Thematic Workshops recommendations and other relevant policy and technical documents agreed in a multinational EU-MPC partnership, a Common Research and Innovation Agenda to be discussed in the coming Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference of Research and Innovation.

6 Communication and delivering issues

Another fact observed along the project is the increased use and impact of the website (www.miraproject.eu). The original expectations of this website were the design of an INTERNET management tool and discussion platform; unfortunately, they have not been fulfilled. Most interaction has been less virtual and more related to face-to-face meetings. In fact, opportunities to meet were numerous during the project.

The Management Boards or any of the numerous Workshops, Seminar or Conferences organized, were lively discussion forums. On the other hand, the functioning of the website as a portal for Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in S&I where all partners posted their information has not been as fruitful as expected.

The site acted more as a tool for management by the Coordination of the Project than as a point of collective information gathering and posting, as most of the uploaded material was gathered by the coordination team. These facts teach us some lessons: the debates in the Mediterranean cultural environment need the physical presence of the actors, and the management of information needs a centralized structure well connected with the sources, perhaps a higher use of the social networks will be more efficient in improving the information exchange. Moreover, the virtual tools in the management of projects have still not been sufficiently tailored to fit the actual needs and capacities of the partners.

Formally, MIRA has achieved most of the expected Deliverables and Milestones. It worth mention, among others, some key Deliverables and Milestones scheduled in the MIRA Technical Annex or resulting from non-scheduled specific demands of the MoCo, Steering Committee of the project, such as:

- Screening Conference of the State of the Art in the EU-MPC cooperation in S&I.
- Recommendations of the Thematic MIRA Workshops on identifying common research priorities EU-MPC, which were used as key elements in the setting of Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICA) of the Thematic Priorities of FP7.
- The results of the Training Seminars on FP Projects writing and management, organized for scientist and administrators of the MPC, which are being used now as reference material in the BILAT Projects. In this line it also worth mention the evaluation of the MPC NCP and the Training Seminar for Auditors.
- The consensual agreed list of Indicators of International Scientific Cooperation to be used in the description of the EU-MPC scientific cooperation.
- The "portfolio" of the Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Space (EMIS-MIRA WP8) activities promoting research driven innovation capacities building in the MPC, such as Technological Transfer training, setting Networks of Laboratories (Metrology and Biological testing), promoting Research Driven Clusters, organizing Thematic Forums (Water and waste water, Renewable Energies) with Industry, Administration and Academia participation.

- The Documents of the "Horizon 2020 Program of De-Contamination of the Mediterranean Research Agenda" and the "Common Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation Agenda (CRIA)" created by EU and MPC Groups of Experts, on behalf of the MoCo demands.
- The promotion of a Mediterranean ERA.Net proposal.

However, some of the targeted objectives have not been attained by different reasons; we can highlight for their importance the following:

- Setting of a Euro-Mediterranean Observatory of Scientific Cooperation. MIRA found enormous difficulties due to internal reasons to promote single national Observatories in the MPC, to be federated into a regional one.
- The creation of the MIRA Internet Forum and the Political Dialogue Platforms through the MIRA Web-site, were not up-taken by most of the MIRA partners and the communication within the project was done, unfortunately, via e-mail messages, instead of using the Web facilities, which produced a considerable cross-crossing of multiplied messages and replies, making difficult the evaluation of the real engagement of partners in the development of the project as measure by their contribution through the Web2 .
- The dialogue with other EC DGs. was limited to the issue of the Horizon 2020 De-Contamination of the Mediterranean and DG Enterprise. The expected Workshop of the MoCo with different DGs. to be organized by MIRA has, unfortunately, not being yet organized.

7 Lessons learnt and future expectations

The experience of MIRA provides some Lessons Learnt and insights on the future of the EU-MPC scientific collaboration expectations that we can list as a conclusion of the exercise of auto-evaluation:

- A fluid cooperation dynamic has produced a demand for moving from a, somehow, unidirectional setting of the scenario and decision-making process to a partnership with co-ownership of programmes on all aspect of this collaboration.
- This new scenario is being assumed by most of the MPC, but it is highly dependent on political difficulties, on both sides of the Mediterranean; Networking of thematic parties from the EU and the MPC, including Technological Platforms, must be promoted and maintained for the mutual interest. A structure providing a minimum management of these networks should be created and co-owned.
- The political debate structured by the MoCo and the Ministerial Conferences need to build a shared instrument in order to execute the actions needed to impulse and improve the quality and focus of the cooperation. This instrument must be co-owned by all parties.

- The identification of demands should be the result of analysis, debate and, if possible, consensus. No common shared agenda will ever be the result of a purely national dynamic. Also, no agenda can ever be built uniquely on political discourse: experts need to be enrolled from all sides of the Mediterranean in actual projects that assess the cooperation potential, the issues open to research and development and the instruments to be mobilized. The shared partnership cannot be made at the expense of a documented analysis.
- The debates in the Mediterranean cultural environment need the physical presence of the actors, and the management of information needs a centralized structure well connected with the sources.
- The political actors need to rely on institutions that are less engaged in the political dynamic to guarantee the long-term sustainability of scientific cooperation.
- MPC partners have had enormous difficulties to handle the funding received from the European projects. There are urgent needs to adapt their financial and administrative systems to the context of scientific cooperation. May be the use of third parties and/or an independent co-owned structure to cope with the handling of the EU-MPC cooperation in R&I could be a solution.
- The MPC scientific community is claiming for a better research environment: less bureaucracy and more linkage to the societal challenges of their countries. The actions will look for more involvement with the industrial sector/SMEs. Duplicating actions from other regions is not a solution.
- The participation in research and innovation activities must be better rewarded. The EU-MPC cooperation must address this as a common challenge, research needs to be given a strong footing inside the EU-MPC relationships, innovation has to be part of the political agenda and not be relegated to some subaltern activity. Innovation activities must be associated to most of the actions launched by the international cooperation in research.
- Finding success stories and best practices in South-South cooperation and transform them in initiatives will help to mutual learning between actors sharing similar challenges. Look at neighbors before asking to the supposed advanced countries.
- Innovation push needs a joint action plan for the creation of an international platform to cooperate on the technology transfer area. MoCo should support the constitution of this platform/network on technology transfer and innovation as a priority for achieving a Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation Space
- Big investment supported by political decision should follow, not precede, an innovation and research strategy centred in improving human capacities, building or improving the innovation and research environment adapted to the national circumstances, and guaranteeing the sustainability of the investments and the job security of the actors. Research needs a long term strategy, a continuous effort, with priorities linked to national and regional challenges on social, economic and environmental demands.

- The building of trust between cooperating parties results from the engagement in well drafted actions that engage all parties. Prejudices do not resist the proof of cooperation in topics of mutual interest

8 Strategic impact

The creation of the UfM and its implication in the regional dialogue EU-MPC on S&T together with the positive evaluation of the results of the INCONET Projects in their first two years of existence, has urged the Commission to support the enlargement of the timing and content of these projects. In the case of Project MIRA, the new political scenario created by the signing of the UfM and the bilateral EU-MPC agreements have introduced the need to reorient some of the target of the project toward a consistent support of the research agenda included in the programmed objectives of the MPC.

It is clear that this new orientation of MIRA enhanced the impact of the EC Research Policy, mainly the 7th FP, in the consecution of the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration adopted and reinforced within the new frame of the Mediterranean Partnership established under the UfM convention. The uptake of the scientific advice and the close cooperation of the working groups established under the Working program of MIRA, have improved the quality of the governance of the Projects agreed in the MPC.

Moreover, it was intended to take benefit of the work already performed under the actual and previous FP and the results of different Bi-lateral EU-Partner Country Programs, the EU MS cooperation programs, the national research programs and other research activities, to use the stock of knowledge, the identified common research priorities, the national and regional innovation strategies, to organize a more efficient participation of partners from the MPC in the FP, organize activities targeting the promotion of "International Research Driven Clusters" which included business, academia and administrations, i.e, targeting the promotion of the Knowledge Society in the Mediterranean on the basis of common interest and scientific and business collaboration. In short, looking for a public impact that goes beyond the pure academic collaboration.

The creation of the Observatory of MPC RTD cooperation, and the gathering of relevant information and the identification of stakeholders in the fields of Research and Innovation, facilitated the organisation of Innovation Fora on concrete fields, such as Decontamination of the Mediterranean and Waste Management, where the scientific assets, the technological offers and the political agenda (priorities of action within the UfM and the ENPI) met and reinforced the targeted creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Space.

Moreover, it should be emphasized the impact of the results performed up to now: reinforcing the capacities of the IP, creating an IP in Palestine, training administrators and possible participants in the writing and management of FP proposals, identifying research priorities of common interest for all countries of the MPC that are being incorporated in the coming FP7 Work Programmes, etc. We must continue the good work

done up to now that will raise the visibility, efficiency at the local level, the interest for the FP in the MPC and, last but not least, will increase the political impact at the level of the MPC of this structuring project.

8.1 Expected impacts listed in the work programme

The Impact of MIRA must be evaluated in accordance with the strategic objectives of the INCO-Net actions, which act as indicators of performance. The Work programme of MIRA covers the following actions addressing strategic objectives:

8.1.1 Dialogue

- Creation of tools and associated activities regarding the exchange of views between MPC stakeholders, and the work of the MoCo, as the Senior Officers Meetings in charge of the Ministerial Agenda of the MPC (WP5).
- Seminars and Workshops to transfer knowledge and analyze issues of common interest. S&T Cooperation dialogues linked to the broader external Community actions. Including actions carried out by other EC General Directorates (WP1 and WP4).
- Identification of common objectives on global issues and face jointly the challenges and opportunities of the European Research Area (ERA) and its partners linked to the thematic programmes of the 7th FP and other programmes. As part of this activity an analyse was done on the difficulties found for the MPC Partners to participate in FP7 (WP3).
- Identification of areas with potential for enhanced co-ordination within the MPC leading to the setting of new priority areas of research cooperation based on mutual interest and benefit.
- Setting a Platform for the dialogue about the Innovation policies, the identification of stakeholders and the feasible activities to advance toward the Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Space (EMIS)

8.1.2 Implementation activities

- The setting up a platform within WP4 for strategic analysis and anticipation with a focus on connecting global trends and issues to regional specificities. This platform, together with other elements from the rest of WPs, was a crucial element of the planned MPC Portal.
- Elaboration of articulated recommendations prioritising issues for international S&T cooperation; (WP2)
- Setting regional networks/fora with all relevant stakeholders addressing areas of actual interest such as the networking of research institutions or the networking of Technology Transfer Units; (WP8)

- Increasing the MPC capacities to participate in the FP7.
- Increase awareness and dissemination of the MPC objectives and activities, the FP7 actions, and other tools to support the RTD collaboration within the MPC, their goal and tools;
- Developing the scientific support for the implementation of the MPC Project "Horizon 2020" aimed at decontaminating the Mediterranean (WP7)
- Organizing the EMIS Fora and the Brokerage Events (WP6 and WP8).

8.1.3 Monitoring and review

Creation of a list of indicators on International Cooperation, forming experts in monitoring and setting a networks of expert in all the MPC, to monitor the S&T&I cooperation in the Mediterranean region. This activity has already been done, and now it is needed to gather information about the MPC policies and systems, the results of their national RTD program and those financed by the FP and other European programs (WP2). Continuous monitoring and review of ongoing cooperation activities were be included in the tasks with a view to provide feedback and updating of the policies and priorities for international cooperation. Also the IP activities were monitored aiming to improve its functioning and efficiency.

9 Spreading excellence

Spreading excellence, exploiting results, disseminating knowledge... MIRA has been a launching platform to support the EU-MPC cooperation in RTD, promoting new initiatives of cooperation in the EU-MPC Area, and created synergies with other running projects. Moreover, a detailed Plan for the use and dissemination of foreground is included in Work Package 6 "Awareness and dissemination activities in the MPC cooperation" has been created.

The strong link of MIRA with the MoCo, that has endorsed the orientation of the project, and the composition of the Consortium, including existing networks of universities, Ministries responsible of RDT, Research Organisations, Information Points in the MPC, etc., and the objective of MIRA, aiming at creating networks of research institutions and actors and providing support to the governance of the MPC and the EC INCO policy, guaranteed a sounded dissemination of the achievements and activities of MIRA inside and outside the Consortium, and its impact in the EC and MPC scientific programming. Moreover, the dialogue instruments that has been created could facilitate the integrations of actions from several different sources to improve the MPC cooperation in S&T in the consecution of common objectives.

One of the main goal of this project was to raise awareness of the opportunities of the FP among the possible beneficiaries of the MPC. Therefore, the effort of dissemination, as described in WP6, has been one of the main activities of this project. The opening of the MIRA web site and KM-CoP system to the general public and the creation of

a linkage between the MPC IP-NCP, together with the setting of a consistent tool for partners search, provided elements to expect successful outcomes from this project.

The planned Fora, brockage events and other scheduled conferences and meetings have been used to exploit the results of MIRA, to create new structure such as the Research Driven Cluster and to disseminate the opportunities offered by the EU-MPC cooperation programme and the knowledge created by the previous and running projects.