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Report on the impact of the project Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

The project Citizen and Multi-Actor Consultation on Horizon 2020 (CIMULACT) aimed at improving the engagement of citizens in the process of formulation of the research agenda in Europe by providing inputs to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018–2020 and consequently to the preparation of the Framework Programme 9. The CIMULACT project adopted co-creation and multi-actor procedures involving citizens and experts from 30 European countries. In the course of the project a number of intermediate results were gathered in key deliverables targeted to the needs of European and national research policy making. These deliverables included 179 citizens' visions and 48 research programme scenarios finally transformed into the final 23 research topics. This effort was acknowledged in the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 where CIMULACT was mentioned as one example that had been already able to deliver significant inputs to Horizon 2020.¹ This report (D5.3) assesses the impact of the CIMULACT project from two points of view:

- i) The impact on the European research agenda, particularly the use of the project outcomes in the process of designing the recent Work Programme of Horizon 2020 (H2020 WP 2018–2020) and a possible further utilization of its results in the formulation of the Framework Programme 9.
- ii) The impact on the partners of the project, including further uses of the methodology as well as co-creation and public engagement activities.

The first part of the report assesses the impact of CIMULACT on the H2020 WP 2018 –2020. The reference in the general introduction to H2020 WP 2018–2020 confirms the use of the results of the CIMULACT project in its formulation². In order to provide deeper insight into the utilization of citizens' wishes and needs, the assessment proceeds in two ways: a) by comparing the final 23 citizen-based research topics³ of the CIMULACT project with the H2020 WP 2018–2020 topics; b) by gathering opinions of research policy officers from various Commission services (DGs) on the actual use of the CIMULACT outcomes in the formulation of the H2020 WP 2018–2020 by means of an online survey and interviews.

A clear overlap between 15 of the final 23 CIMULACT research topics and 22 topics from H2020 WP 2018–2020 was identified. It means that 65% of the CIMULACT research topics have been covered by the H2020 WP 2018–2020. The majority of the CIMULACT research topics referred to Work Programme s1 (Health), 2 (Food security) and 6 (Europe in a

1 Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 Annex 2. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/archive/h2020_evaluations/swd\(2017\)221-annex-2-interim_evaluation-h2020.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](https://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/archive/h2020_evaluations/swd(2017)221-annex-2-interim_evaluation-h2020.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

2 General introduction of the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018 – 2020. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-intro_en.pdf

3 In this report we worked with the final 23 research topics that were elaborated at the Pan-European conference which was the final phase of the CIMULACT process

changing world). No CIMULACT research topic corresponded explicitly to Work Programme 7 (Secure societies).

This thematic correspondence indicates the similarity between citizens' wishes and needs, and the overall thematic focus of the European research agenda; however, this assessment does not provide any insight into unique contributions from CIMULACT to the final topics, in terms of perspectives not considered before the influence from CIMULACT .

Neither does it reveal to what extent and way the CIMULACT research topics were specifically used in the formulation of the H2020 WP 2018–2020. In order to reveal that, a survey focused on the experience and opinions of research policy officers was carried out and several complementary interviews were conducted.

The respondents of the survey and interviews indicated that the approach of gathering and prioritizing citizens' wishes and needs adopted by CIMULACT was relevant and highly appreciated. They agreed that citizens are competent to suggest directions for research topics. Moreover, research topics based on the wishes and needs of citizens can also help to distinguish between real citizens' problems and political pressure.

Furthermore, interviews proved that the CIMULACT project affected the H2020 WP 2018-2020. It was also found that the CIMULACT results served an important role as a justification of aspects of the most recent Work Programme of H2020. The coverage of issues, their novelty and compatibility with other sources was appreciated.

The availability of the CIMULACT final results ten months prior to the publishing of the H2020 WP 2018–2020 enabled the responsible officer s to ensure or gain confidence that the research agenda of the EU matched with citizens' interest and needs. The CIMULACT results provide support to the overall principle of H2020, that citizens should to have their say towards the focus of the research agenda, by providing a unique input, and while being the ultimate beneficiaries of the invested research funds. This was also proved by the report on the comparison of CIMULACT research topics⁴ with expert oriented foresight studies (Deliverable 5.2).⁵ The Deliverable 5.2 showed that the themes of the CIMULACT topics generally were well represented within expert foresight studies (10 out of 16 studies include one or more references to research topics identified in CIMULACT), but that the CIMULACT topics added new and unique perspectives, especially on societal aspects, which were not represented in expert-based foresight .

The approached policy officers considered the CIMULACT a good and helpful instrument for the engagement of citizens, and the methodology adequate for trustworthy outputs and appreciated benefits of the genuine consultation process. They indicated a high

4 In Deliverable 5.2 the analysis based on 46 topics (23 final topics and 23 potential ones)

5 Deliverable 5.2: Report on comparison of research topics from CIMULACT with those from expert oriented foresight studies. Available at: http://www.cimulact.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/D5.2_Report-on-comparison-expert-oriented-foresight-studies-compressed.pdf

demand for projects like CIMULACT that would gather the views of citizens and build on public engagement processes in a systematic and transparent way.

The survey and interviews confirmed that the CIMULACT project proved to be a highly worthwhile and value -adding experience of public engagement , and the demand for projects with methodology like CIMULACT, based on co-creation and utilising views of citizens, would remain high. The impact of projects like CIMULACT on the formulation of research priorities might increase in the future, particularly if the timing of the project fits with the schedule of the development of a given research agenda within Framework Programme 9 – according to interviewees, CIMULACT outcomes are also relevant for the preparation of FP9. Also, if the new FP supports the public engagement in R&I, projects like CIMULACT should be fully utilised in its formulation. Interviews revealed that projects that have an ambition to influence the formulation of R&I agendas should deliver their results more than a year before the publication of the agenda.

Generally, to increase the actual use of the project results, it is also necessary to put great effort on dissemination among, and close collaboration with, the policy makers and relevant EC policy officers. Although the overall outreach of the CIMULACT project has been large, its outcomes were disseminated among the Commission services, and events were organized by the responsible project officer and CIMULACT partners, the awareness of the 23 CIMULACT research topics was limited likely due to lack of understanding of their high relevance to the research agenda in preparation. It is important to develop ways to ensure that the relevant policy officers can be reached in time to increase the impact of projects like CIMULACT. For this purpose, the project officer and associated POs need also be willing to put an effort into this task as the project partners only have access to the EC policy officers through their own project officer.

The second part of the report focuses on the assessment of the project procedures and their impact on consortium partners. The assessment is based on feedback obtained from participants of the events and from “impact-targeted” questions regarding the actual and further use of co-creation/public engagement approaches, as well as partners’ experience with stakeholders’ familiarization with the methods and results.

Citizens themselves, experts, national stakeholders, and policy makers confirmed that citizens were able to provide interesting, valuable, and plausible ideas about future and corresponding research needs.

CIMULACT developed 11 new or adjusted participatory methods (summarized in an Inspiration catalogue⁶) that proved to be adequate during the project. These methods have already served as an inspiration as well as practical tools for researchers and other institutions interested in co-creation and public engagement.

⁶ Deliverable 5.1: Inspiration catalogue. Available at: http://www.cimulact.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/D5.1_Inspiration-Catalogue-for-consulting-different-groups-compressed.pdf

Consortium partners gained valuable new experience in co-creation and public engagement. They had an exceptional opportunity to experiment with various methods under the guidance and supervision of experienced partners. At least half of the project partners have already adopted the methods used in the course of the CIMULACT project and some of the partners have even applied whole methods, or some of their aspects, in their other work activities. Improved methodological knowledge, networking, acquirement of new recruitment approaches, and facilitation skills belong among “other” benefits that the project brought to the consortium partners.

CIMULACT brought together citizens and experts in a close collaboration. It was an important experience particularly for initially skeptical scientists. New links and shared interests have emerged among project partners, resulting in new collaboration opportunities as well as in cooperation with various stakeholders.

Last but not least, the project paid important attention to dissemination and promotion in order to increase the impact of the CIMULACT project and its results. Effective dissemination activities helped enhance interest of the project beneficiaries about co-creation/public engagement approaches. The CIMULACT project was presented on many occasions at the regional, national, and European levels (e.g. STOA Panel of the European Parliament or The 3rd European Technology Assessment Conference). OECD chose CIMULACT as a good practice case for the engagement of citizens in an open science agenda setting⁷. These activities helped to share the acquired knowledge on the practicality of co-creation/public engagement approaches with the research community and policy makers. They resulted in the establishment of new networks capable of pursuing co-creation/public engagement activities in the areas of R&I in the future.

Table 1: A selection of the achievements of the CIMULACT project

The reference to CIMULACT in the General introduction of the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018 – 2020 as an input to the H2020 WP 2018 – 2020 and as an example of FP project enabling direct interactions with citizens

CIMULACT presented in the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 as a project that had already produced significant inputs into Horizon 2020
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15 of 23 research topics with thematic overlap in 22 topics of the H2020 WP 2018 – 2020

⁷ OECD Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Papers. No. 50. December 2017. Available at: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/74edb6a8-en.pdf?expires=1522742677&id=id&accname=quest&checksum=EEE39CAC6D6E363C36C104B2DA16741F>

The CIMULACT project affected the H2020 WP 2018 – 2020 and in some cases CIMULACT research topics led to a concrete WP 2018 – 2020 call or specific parts of the call (findings based on interviews with policy officers)
CIMULACT has added important aspects to the EU research agenda by providing new future-oriented perspectives to themes under the Grand Challenges
The CIMULACT citizen-based topics had unique qualities as compared to expert foresight studies (findings from Deliverable 5.2)
CIMULACT was chosen by OECD as one of a good practice case for engagement of citizens in Open Research Agenda Setting
CIMULACT outcomes remain relevant for the preparation of Framework Programme 9
CIMULACT developed 11 new or adjusted participatory methods (summarized in the Inspiration catalogue)
Most of the CIMULACT Consortium partners already adopted new/adjusted participatory methods in their working activities
Consortium partners gained or improved skills in areas of methodological knowledge, acquirement of new recruitment approaches and facilitation
New (working) networks within the consortium and between individual partners and national institutions, stakeholders were established
Large overall outreach of the CIMULACT project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - around 902 dissemination activities of consortium partners - 4 reviewed scientific publications - 126 presentations at workshops and conferences
Two presentations at an OECD workshop on Open Science (June 2017, Seoul): 1) methods and experience with Open Agenda Setting; 2) the CIMULACT project
CIMULACT presented within intro to the session on The Future of Science through Citizens Engagement at the STOA Panel of the European Parliament (March 2017, Brussels)
CIMULACT presented within session on Responsible Research Agendas at The 3 rd European Technology Assessment Conference (May 2017, Cork)
CIMULACT presented at a conference on the Future of the Research System to 450 Norwegian research administrators, politicians and university representatives (March 2017, Oslo)

