



# Creating national governance structures for the implementation of EU missions

## Mutual Learning Exercise on EU Missions implementation at national level

*First Thematic report*

**PSF CHALLENGE**

**HORIZON EUROPE  
POLICY SUPPORT FACILITY**

**Independent  
Expert  
Report**



*Research and  
Innovation*

## **Creating national governance structures for the implementation of EU missions. Mutual Learning Exercise on EU Missions implementation at national level**

European Commission

Directorate-General for Research and Innovation

Directorate A — ERA and Innovation

Unit A.1 — Semester and Country Intelligence

Contact (Horizon Europe PSF coordination team):

Magda De CARLI, Head of Unit A.1

Stéphane VANKALCK, PSF Head of Sector, Unit A.1

Bence BORCSOK, PSF Coordinator of the PSF MLE on EU missions, Unit A.1

Email Magda.DE-CARLI@ec.europa.eu

Stephane.VANKALCK@ec.europa.eu

Bence.BOERCSOEK@ec.europa.eu

RTD-PUBLICATIONS@ec.europa.eu

European Commission

B-1049 Brussels

Manuscript completed in January 2024

First edition

This document has been prepared for the European Commission, however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission shall not be liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse.

---

PDF	ISBN 978-92-68-11337-0	doi:10.2777/724815	KI-AX-24-002-EN-N
-----	------------------------	--------------------	-------------------

---

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2024

© European Union, 2024



The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented by Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Unless otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the European Union, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders. The European Union does not own the copyright in relation to the following elements:

Cover: © ivector #362422833, #235536634, #241215668, #251163053, 2020. © ivector #222596698, #298595650, © Kanyarat #316321194, 2021. Source: Stock.Adobe.com.

# **Creating national governance structures for the implementation of EU missions**

**Mutual Learning Exercise on EU Missions  
implementation at national level**

***First thematic report***

Edited by

Elvira Uyarra

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction and overview of multi-level governance .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.1. Historical background of multi-level governance</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.2. Different types of governance in a multi-level setting</b>	<b>5</b>
1.2.1. Meta-governance	6
1.2.2. Network governance	6
1.2.3. Challenge-centric, adaptive governance	7
1.2.4. Bottom-up, place-based approaches	7
<b>1.3. Summary of MLG and relevance for mission-oriented policy</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2. Navigating multi-level governance for MOIP implementation.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.1. Adapting governance approaches to different mission types</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.2. Governance strategies across levels and stages of MIOP implementation</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.3. Governance strategies across varied country environments</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.4. Identifying common challenges in the governance of MOIPs</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3. Member States' Experiences in establishing governance for EU missions.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.1. Findings from Member State survey of mission governance</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.2. Overview of the First MLE Workshop in Vienna: key discussions summary</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>22</b>

# List of tables, figures and boxes

Table 1: Summary of MLG approaches .....8

Table 2: Governance implications of different MOIP types (adapted from Larrue, 2021) ..... 11

Table 3: Modes of horizontal and vertical coordination for the implementation of EU missions . 17

Table 4: Main challenges and enabling conditions for the implementation of EU missions..... 18

Figure 1: Stylised governance framework for the EU Missions ..... 13

Figure 2: Working group „ EU-Missionen“ .....20

Box 1: Multi-level governance of EU missions in Austria ..... 20

# 1. Introduction and overview of multi-level governance

Multi-level governance (MLG) refers to the distribution of decision-making authority and responsibility between multiple levels and types of governmental, quasi-governmental, and non-governmental groups (Hooghe and Marks, 2003). The European Union (EU), through its Horizon Europe Framework Programme, is tackling grand challenges formulated as the following five missions: Restore Our Ocean and Waters by 2030, Cancer, Adaptation to Climate Change, 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030, and a Soil Deal for Europe. These ambitious, whole-of-government initiatives require a systemic approach that transcends current policy silos and engages stakeholders at all levels, from EU policymakers to regional and local governments. New governance structures are needed, able to support cross-sectoral, cross-departmental and multi-tiered coordination.

This mutual learning exercise (MLE) addresses the question of EU missions implementation at national level, and this first report considers the creation of national governance structures. This first thematic report provides a background sketch of the concept of MLG and related approaches, and discusses the approaches and challenges associated with the multi-level governance of mission-oriented policies, illustrated with examples in several countries.

The report starts with a short review on the concept of MLG and how it has been used. The second part of the report discusses MLG in relation to mission-oriented policies (MOIP), as well as the challenges associated with the setting up of governance structures for MOIP implementation. The third section reports key insights emerging from a survey to Member States. The final section provides a summary of the discussions held at the first MLE country visit in Vienna (AT) in September 2023.

## 1.1. Historical background of multi-level governance

The term governance suggests a shift from centralised, state-based systems of political authority to more dispersed forms of decision-making. There is no consensus around a single definition for the term ‘governance’ and, according to Pierre and Peters (2000:7), it is “a notoriously slippery” concept to precisely define. A commonly used definition is provided by Chhotray and Stoker (2009:3), who see governance as “the rules of collective decision-making in settings where there are a plurality of actors or organisations and where no formal control system can dictate the terms of the relationship between these actors and organisations”. More recently, Ansell and Torfing (2022:4) defined governance as “the interactive processes through which society and the economy are steered towards collectively negotiated objectives”. This latter definition hints at the importance of directionality and the need for interaction to “exchange or pool the ideas, resources and competences that are required for the production of desirable outcomes” (ibid:4).

Academic discussions on this topic, within political science, public administration, sociology, economics and law, have in recent years been marked by debates around a shift from state-centred, bureaucratic government to more fragmented forms of governance. These debates acknowledge the administrative complexity and challenges of policy implementation, the ideas around ‘good governance’ applied to the quality of institutions in terms of transparency, stability, and the rule of law, and the need for more distributed policy action to respond to “wicked challenges” (Chhotray and Stoker, 2009; Ansell and Torfing, 2022).

In the EU, the concept of governance also arose in response to perceived changes in the governance landscape associated with further integration, prompting concerns about a “democratic deficit”, and parallel processes of increasing globalisation, international

cooperation, and regionalism in European states. State powers were seen as being dispersed upwards and downwards but also outwards as new stakeholders, including non-government actors, markets and civil society were becoming more and more involved in policy design and implementation (Bache and Flinders, 2004). Novel forms of governance were also being tested – such as the ‘open method of coordination’ which adopted voluntary goals and standards as a means to stimulate policy change in Member States (Ansell and Torfing, 2022).

It is in this context of seeking to understand the emerging governance forms in the EU that the idea of “multi-level governance” was first introduced (Marks 1993, 1996). Gary Marks used the term to describe changes in EU structural policy following the major reform of 1988<sup>1</sup> and it was subsequently applied to broader EU policy sectors and decision-making processes. Multi-level governance was then defined as a “continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers” (Marks, 1993: 39), stressing the vertical dimension of interdependent governments at different levels, and the horizontal dimension of interdependence between governments and non-governmental actors. In the context of the EU policymaking process, this reflected the wider orientation towards the adoption of network governance in solving “horizontal policy problems” and “vertical (multi-level) interdependence challenges” (Jordan and Schout, 2006).

Hooghe and Marks (2003) further distinguished between Type I and Type II multi-level governance. Type I is characterised by a hierarchical relationship between levels of government, where there is a clear top-down structure. It draws inspiration from federalism, with authority being shared between a limited and relatively stable number of non-overlapping or nested jurisdictions, typically a federal level and one or more subnational levels. Type II governance is networked and flexible rather than durable, where arrangements are focused around particular policy problems (or functions such as transport, education or healthcare) and may change as demands for governance change in order to “respond flexibly to changing citizen preferences and functional requirements” (Hooghe and Marks, 2003: 238).

## 1.2. Different types of governance in a multi-level setting

Following the initial MLG conceptualisation discussed above, scholars have discussed related concepts including meta-governance (Jessop, 2004), network and collaborative governance (Ansell and Gash, 2008), as well as more flexible and bottom-up approaches such as adaptive governance (Chaffin et al., 2014) and experimental governance (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008).

The idea of meta-governance suggests governance occurs at multiple levels and the state can steer and coordinate other governance actors. Network and collaborative governance focus on governance through frameworks of cooperation between state, market, and civil society actors. Adaptive governance emphasises iterative decision-making, learning, and flexibility to manage complex systems. Lastly, experimental governance highlights decentralised local experimentation coupled with central learning and diffusion of best practices. Each of these concepts relate to key aspects of mission-oriented policy, as described below.

---

<sup>1</sup> The 1988 reform included a doubling of structural funding and the introduction of a number of guiding principles for the European Regional Development Fund, including the partnership principle involving working in close collaboration between the European Commission and national, regional and local institutions.

### 1.2.1. Meta-governance

Discussing the governance needs of new-generation innovation policies, Kuhlmann and Rip (2018: p.451) argue for a meta-approach to governance which is more “provisional, flexible, revisable, dynamic and open ... [and] include[s] experimentation, learning, reflexivity, and reversibility” (Kuhlmann and Rip, 2018, p. 450). Bugge et al. (2018) also argued that system change requires the adoption of a form of “governance mix” that would consist of the policy mix (Flanagan et al. 2011) and the meta-governance required to mobilise and orchestrate stakeholders.

The concept of meta-governance, or multi-level meta-governance (Jessop, 2004; Sørensen and Torfing, 2009) can be seen as a way of managing the complex interactions between different levels of government and non-governmental organisations in order to overcome governance failures (Gjaltema et al, 2020). It focuses on the governance of governance itself and refers to the involvement of the state in strategically organising the context and ground rules for governance (Jessop, 2004). This implies setting the overall agenda and ground rules, distributing resources, monitoring the implementation and performance of the governance arrangements, and safeguarding accountability and legitimacy at the lower level.

The success or failure of meta-governance hinges on the ability to strategically plan and guide coordinated action, as well as the government’s ability to efficiently manage critical resources. However, it also poses risks of over-management that stifles autonomy, blurred accountability, high coordination costs, loss of clear leadership, and potential private capture (Sørensen and Torfing, 2009). Effective meta-governance involves striking a delicate balance between leveraging network synergies through central orchestration and preserving room for localised experimentation and participatory democracy across various centres of power.

### 1.2.2. Network governance

Missions also require joined-up governance approaches that span administrative boundaries and geographical territories. For instance Schot and Steinmueller (2018) stress the need to adopt open-ended coordination, which refers to the interaction between different policy domains and levels. This links to ideas of network governance, holistic or joined-up governance, and whole-of-government thinking (Aoki et al, 2022). Debates about these topics emerged in the 1980s and 90s as a reaction to siloed practices in public administration, largely focused on efficiency and performance management. They imply that more coherent approaches, seeking to establish cross-boundary administrative structures and interagency relations as well as policy action across all levels, are likely to have a bigger impact on addressing policy problems, compared to fragmented approaches (European Commission, 2023b).

Network governance involves collaborative action and decision-making through decentralised coordination between diverse state, market and civil society actors (Sørensen and Torfing, 2017). Benefits include cost- and information-sharing, multi-actor negotiation, communication, and brokerage, thereby building trust among key stakeholders (Börzel and Heard-Lauréote, 2009). Effective network governance thus requires significant investment in inclusive participation and accountability structures. Key challenges include high management costs, accountability gaps, weaker consensus decisions, less central control,



and potential exclusion of marginalised groups (see e.g. Sørensen and Torfing, 2017, Aoki et al, 2022).

### 1.2.3. Challenge-centric, adaptive governance

Experimentation, discovery and adaptation are also important in the context of missions (Mazzucato, 2018). As noted by Kattel and Mazzucato (2018), mission-oriented policies imply the selection of multiple solutions using a more bottom-up approach within which spaces for contestation and adaptability need to be created (see also Wanzenböck et al, 2020). The concept of adaptive governance is relevant here, which refers to the evolution of governance institutions capable of generating solutions to problems through the coordinated efforts of users, knowledge, authorities, and organised interests (Scholz and Stiftel, 2005: 5). According to Chaffin et al. (2014: 2), key elements of adaptive governance include acknowledgement of “uncertainty and change in natural systems, integration of local knowledge”, and the inclusion of diverse participants in “polycentric institutional arrangements that facilitate experimentation, and public agencies that view policy as hypotheses and management as learning”.

Based on this understanding, adaptive governance arrangements rest on the assumption that complex policy issues require learning and adjustment which, in turn, requires collaboration and multidisciplinary knowledge. Adaptive governance is thus expected to reduce the mismatch between policy and the changing environment surrounding it. However, it is not without challenges. For instance, insufficient engagement with stakeholders at early stages can lead to expectation mismatches (Allen and Gunderson, 2011). The process of adaptive governance is also time-intensive and must be constantly revisited and readjusted. Co-learning, leadership and direction are also important, requiring extensive political advocacy (Ibid., 2011).

### 1.2.4. Bottom-up, place-based approaches

Other authors have stressed the importance of adopting a place-based “experimentation logic” (Henderson et al., 2023) to missions, arguing that local engagement is also important in ensuring legitimacy and responsiveness to citizens’ needs (Wanzenböck and Frenken, 2020; Uyarra et al., 2023), as well as for securing “small wins” (Bours et al., 2022) eventually leading to transformative change. A growing body of literature on urban experimentation (Fünfschilling et al., 2019) also views cities as innovators, living laboratories, and key actors in addressing sustainability missions within a system of multilevel governance (Bulkeley, 2010).

Sabel and Zeiling (2008) introduced the concept of experimental governance (for a review see Eckert and Börzel, 2012) in an effort to overcome the artificial distinction between top-down policy design and bottom-up execution, recognising that “in the life of society and the law nothing works precisely as designed” (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008: 280-1). They argue that hierarchical “command and control” efforts are likely to fail, leaving actors on the ground to find solutions to common problems through trial and error. In their articulation, experimental governance involves a multi-level architecture with four interlinked elements: 1) setting broad framework goals and metrics; 2) granting broad autonomy and discretion to lower levels when pursuing these goals; 3) encouraging regular performance assessment and reporting by local units; and 4) periodically revising the goals, metrics and decision-making procedures.

Experimental governance promises context-adapted innovation, flexible learning, and inclusive participation which fosters legitimate solutions, and continuous improvement through localised experimentation. However, it relies on local actors having sufficient discretion, resources, and skills to develop localised solutions (Morgan, 2018; Marques et al.,

2023). Building governance capacity across diverse local contexts takes time and effort. Diffusion and the scaling up of place-based solutions can also be challenging, calling for mechanisms to further embed the solutions, replicate/scale/amplify them in other domains, and with other actors or resources (e.g. Lam et al., 2020).

### 1.3. Summary of MLG and relevance for mission-oriented policy

To summarise, the approaches referred to above are associated with different benefits and challenges as summarised in Table 1 below. They also provide important insights for the governance of mission-oriented innovation policies.

MLG Governance approaches	Benefits	Challenges	Relevance for missions
Meta-governance (Jessop, 2004; Sørensen and Torfing, 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables policy coordination and coherence across sectors and levels of governance</li> <li>Central oversight and diffusion of best practices</li> <li>Enhance legitimacy through orchestrating stakeholder participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risks over-management and stifling bottom-up innovation</li> <li>Potentially high coordination costs</li> <li>Accountability can become blurred</li> <li>Challenging to retain clear political leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legitimacy, vision and leadership</li> </ul>
Network governance (Sørensen and Torfing, 2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows coordinated action across boundaries and organisations</li> <li>Fosters information-sharing and joint learning</li> <li>Reduces costs via resource pooling across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time for network management and maintenance</li> <li>Consensus risks suboptimal decisions</li> <li>Potential for exclusion of weaker groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration and coordination</li> </ul>
Adaptive governance (Chaffin et al., 2014, Scholz and Stiftel, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows incremental responses to emergent issues in complex environments</li> <li>Promotes learning through experimentation</li> <li>Flexibility to adapt</li> <li>Polycentric structures enable innovation and diffusion of successes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of central control risks uncoordinated responses</li> <li>Time-consuming participation processes</li> <li>Failures arising from experimentation can disempower stakeholders</li> <li>Lack of leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexibility and adaptability</li> </ul>
Experimental governance (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fosters localised innovation and problem-solving adapted to context</li> <li>Flexibility to revise approaches based on emergent learning</li> <li>Stakeholder participation can improve acceptance and legitimacy</li> <li>Diffusion of successful local experiments more widely</li> <li>Ongoing revision encourages continuous improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decentralisation can reduce coherence of overall approach</li> <li>Insufficient capacity and autonomy for local actors to effectively participate or innovate</li> <li>Less developed or peripheral areas may have less ability to engage in experimentation effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion and active participation of place-based actors</li> </ul>

Table 1: Summary of MLG approaches

- Meta-governance emphasises the “governance of governance”, a strategic level of oversight which is crucial in aligning different initiatives and actors with the overarching objectives of EU missions; it emphasises that various governance processes and structures have to be actively designed, steered, coordinated and reviewed; also, meta-governance is about selecting and harmonising different governance modes so that these modes can be combined effectively to address specific policy challenges.
- Network governance particularly emphasises horizontal relationships and interactions among various stakeholders, as opposed to hierarchical or top-down approaches; this focus is essential for fostering collaboration and partnerships across different sectors and levels as silos remain a persistent challenge across various multi-level governance designs as illustrated in the subsequent chapters of this report. Also, network governance provides insights into how they can be leveraged to foster creativity and the exchange of best practices. Lastly, network governance highlights the role of informal mechanisms in coordinating policy actions, which can be more flexible and responsive than formal structures.
- Within the realm of adaptive governance, there is a distinct focus on acknowledging and addressing the evolving, intricate, and time-sensitive nature of societal challenges. This governance model derives its legitimacy from being responsive to these challenges. In this context, adaptive governance necessitates a more flexible and reflexive authority, one that actively engages with and learns from the changing landscape of challenges.
- Place-based experimental governance seeks to democratise policy and improve implementation. The role of the government is to facilitate and empower actors to engage in bottom-up and experimental activities. In the context of EU missions, this approach encourages active participation from diverse stakeholders, including local communities, businesses, and civil society, creating a dynamic ecosystem where bottom-up and experimental initiatives can flourish.

All these modes of governance share a common insight that a well-functioning national governance structure for the implementation of EU missions will have to address and solve the challenges of: high-level *legitimacy*, *vision* and *leadership* to drive transformative efforts; *collaboration and coordination* among a variety of actors at different governance levels; *flexibility* and *adaptability* of governance structures to better respond to dynamic and evolving policy environments; and *inclusion* and *active participation* of diverse stakeholders, including place-based actors, in the governance process to ensure broad-based support and diverse expertise.

The next chapter of this report continues by outlining how governance needs and potential solutions actually differ depending on the type of mission, previous administrative experience of a country, and even phases within the cycle of mission implementation.

## 2. Navigating multi-level governance for MOIP implementation

### 2.1. Adapting governance approaches to different mission types

Studies on MOIP implementation suggest there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to mission governance. The literature has proposed different typologies; for instance a distinction between so-called ideal “accelerator-type” moon-shot missions aimed at narrow, well-defined and generally scientific or technological goals, and “transformer” missions aimed at

addressing major societal problems requiring systemic changes (Fisher et al., 2018; Larrue, 2021; Wittmann et al., 2021). In practice, MOIPs may be a mix of these types, and also change as they evolve or incorporate governance arrangements typical of other types (Janssen et al., 2020, 2023). Wittmann et al. (2021) argue that transformer missions, particularly those that are problem-oriented and seek behavioural change (such as the missions on “mobility” and a “good life” of the German High-Tech Strategy 2025), have higher demands for governance, as they present greater challenges in terms of the scale and scope of the challenge being pursued. Larrue (2021) similarly notes that the more complex, uncertain, and multi-levelled (“wicked”) the challenge is, the more focused and integrated the policy initiative needs to be to enable a more joined-up approach. Based on a review of existing policies, he identified three main types of initiatives with distinct governance needs and challenges: overarching mission-oriented strategic frameworks, mission-oriented thematic programmes, challenge-based programmes, and ecosystem-based mission programmes. These are described briefly below.

*Overarching mission-oriented strategic frameworks* are broad initiatives set up to achieve ambitious, high level, national or trans-national missions. They range from large umbrella frameworks to programmes and strategies with stronger governance. Examples include the EU missions under Horizon Europe, but also other large-scale initiatives such as the Dutch Mission-driven Top-sector and Innovation Policy since 2019, the German High-Tech Strategy (HTS) 2025, and the portfolio of missions adopted by CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) in Australia. Given their large scale and complexity, they present key governance challenges in terms of ecosystem engagement, and vertical and horizontal coordination. The discussion on meta-governance introduced earlier holds particular significance in this context, as a means to establish stability and organise the conditions for governance (Jessop, 2004).

*Challenge-based programmes and schemes* focus on specific and ambitious problems and are generally implemented by agencies. They can also be contained within overarching mission-oriented frameworks. Such initiatives would rely strongly on network-type governance, seeking to build sectoral consensus through strong public-private partnership between triple and quadruple helix organisations, including diverse public- and private-sector actors, as well as universities and civil society representatives, as discussed for instance by IIPP (2021) for the case of Health~Holland in the Netherlands. Other examples include Pilot-E in Norway<sup>2</sup>. These programmes are more focused and less complex than overarching mission-oriented frameworks (and thus governance is less challenging), and they may be better suited to delivering faster solutions to a well-defined problem. However they may face challenges in the innovation chain to scale up solutions, which would require high level political decisions, greater resources and articulation of supply side and demand side policy instruments (Larrue, 2021).

*Ecosystem-based mission programmes* seek to delegate responsibilities related to strategic orientation to a relevant community (or ecosystems) of stakeholders in priority or emerging areas. They require adaptive, bottom-up governance approaches. Examples include the Strategic Innovation Programmes (SIPs) in Sweden created in 2013 and the Finnish Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation (SHOKs) that ran from 2006 until 2015. The advantage of such approaches is greater participation and buy in from relevant stakeholders. Each area is self-organised in the governance and the means to achieve its mission. A

---

<sup>2</sup> Pilot-E is a funding scheme run jointly by three agencies in Norway: Research Council of Norway, Innovation Norway, and Enova. It supports R&I projects about green innovation. It is a “fast track from concept to market”, funding specific projects of collaborative consortia, mostly firms.

potential drawback is that they may be more prone to “capture” or influence by existing incumbents in key sectors resisting transformation (Larrue, 2021).

To the MOIPs identified by Larrue we can add *place-based missions or micro-missions* (Henderson et al., 2023; IIPP, 2021), which address specific place-based issues at a sub-national scale. These have been discussed in the context of smart specialisation (the Czech government is adopting a mission-oriented approach in its RIS3 strategy, see Reid et al, 2023b) and the new Partnerships for Regional Innovation adopt the related idea of Challenge-Oriented Innovation Partnerships (CHOIRs) (Pontikakis et al., 2022). The latter are understood as multi-stakeholder, multi-portfolio, multi-level partnerships linked to concrete territorial challenges, requiring governance arrangements that allows them to “actively explore possibilities, engage in experimentation, and continuously learn” (Interreg Europe, 2023:17). Examples of micro-missions include the Shared agendas developed in the Catalan Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3CAT 2030). IIPP (2021) also discusses place-based missions such as the Greater Manchester’s Carbon Neutral Mission and Missions Valencia 2030.

MOIPs types	Examples	Relevant MLG approach	Key governance issues	Main governance level
Overarching mission-oriented strategic frameworks	Horizon Europe’s missions (EU) Mission-driven Topsector and Innovation Policy (NL) High Tech Strategy 2025 missions (DE)	Meta-governance	Framework governance structure and management Stakeholder and ecosystem engagement Vertical and horizontal co-ordination	Centre of government High-level /overarching committees
Challenge-based programmes and schemes	Pilot-E Health~Holland (NL)	Network governance	More traditional scheme/programme governance Coordination of support along the innovation chain Articulation of supply and demand for knowledge	Agencies
Ecosystem-based mission programmes	SIP (SE) Finnish Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation (SHOKs)	Adaptive governance	Platform governance and management Ecosystem orchestration	Agencies, selected coordinators
Place based missions	RIS3CAT 2030 Shared agendas Greater Manchester’s Carbon Neutral Mission  Missions Valencia 2030.	Experimental governance	Coordinating local governance structures while maintaining mission integrity Ensuring distributed ownership and buy-in from local stakeholders	Regional/municipal government agency

Table 2: Governance implications of different MOIP types (adapted from Larrue, 2021)

In relation to EU missions, it could also be argued that a mix of approaches will be relevant for different missions (see figure 1). Adaptive and experimental governance would seem most suited to missions addressing complex systems like oceans, climate, and soil. For instance, the Ocean and Waters mission would require flexibility and adaptive learning to manage the

complex and dynamic marine ecosystems being addressed. In this mission multi-level coordination is organised around area-based '*lighthouses*' which seek to pilot, demonstrate, develop and deploy the mission activities across EU seas and river basins. The Soil mission also seeks to establish 100 living labs and lighthouses to support experimentation and dissemination of soil health management practices. In the Cancer mission, network governance would be crucial to bring together myriad health system, research, patient advocacy, and regulatory actors. This mission mainly works through cancer mission hubs at the national level. In the 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities mission, experimental governance would allow cities themselves to innovate and develop solutions tailored to different contexts. In this mission efforts at mobilising sub-national bodies include the cities mission call for expressions of interest to become a mission city. Lastly, meta-governance oversight and sharing best practices are relevant for all missions.

## 2.2. Governance strategies across levels and stages of MIOP implementation

Governance challenges in MIOIPs also vary across the policy life cycle, requiring dedicated strategic, programming and operational governance bodies. MIOIPs are often represented in relation to three layers or stages, for instance the OECD distinguishes between mission orientation, which involves formulating the strategic direction and coordinating the development of objectives and strategic agendas, policy coordination, which entails aligning plans across actors, enabling funding synergies and budgeting; and implementation, involving staffing, management, monitoring, and evaluation (Larrue, 2021).

At the *overall strategic* level, coordinating mechanisms may include high-level steering committees or groups, governing boards or programme boards, or other formal coordination mechanisms such as ministerial cabinet meetings. At the *mission* coordination level, dedicated governance bodies may be set up for the thematic components, for instance, such as strategy committees with key policymakers and stakeholders, steering boards, or interdepartmental groups for each of the thematic priorities. At the *operational* level of implementation, committees and working groups may be set up, including inter-ministerial and working groups, or specific decision-makers such as programme secretaries, directors, or challenge directors. Some MIOIPs, particularly in the case of overarching mission frameworks, have nested, multi-level governance bodies. The German HTS2025 has layers of governance at the level of the overall strategy, the missions and some of the activities (Larrue, 2021). In some cases, different bodies may have authority over parts or functions of the initiative. In the Mission-Driven Top-Sector Policy in the Netherlands, sectors and challenge areas have their own governance bodies. In the case of EU missions (see figure 1), strategic governance arrangements include dedicated cross-sectoral steering and coordination bodies to support collaboration across Commission services and levels of government, and mission managers and deputy mission managers to steer each mission with the support of mission secretariats. Two waves of mission boards (for design and implementation phases) have been selected to provide strategic advice and expertise. The mission implementation platforms (MIP) and the aforementioned governance mechanisms (living labs, lighthouses, etc.) support the execution of the five missions (Reid et al, 2023a).

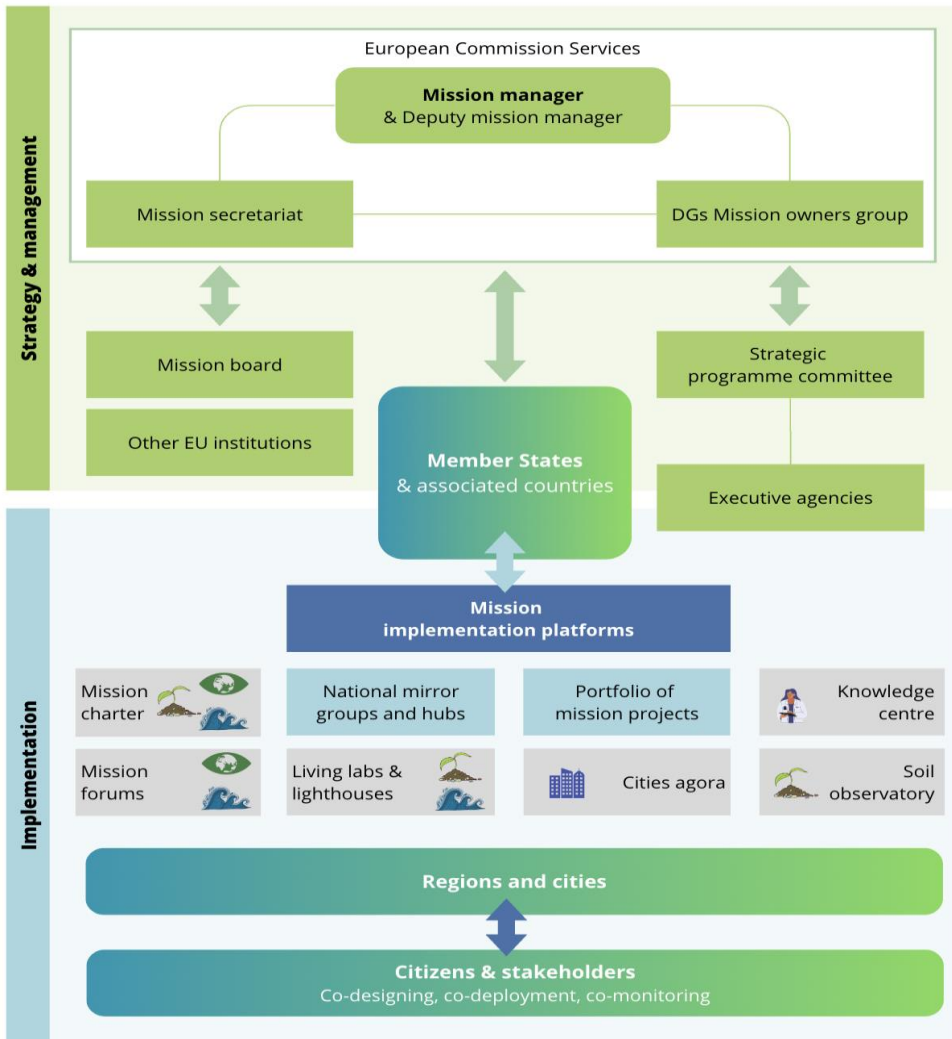


Figure 1: Stylised governance framework for the EU Missions

Source: Reid et al (2023a)

### 2.3. Governance strategies across varied country environments

Governance challenges also vary according to national institutional settings and previous policies. How missions are implemented is very much dependent on the existing structures and trajectory of the respective political systems, as will be discussed in section 3. Due to policy path dependencies and the need for missions to command widespread legitimacy and political alignment, new policy approaches are more likely to sit alongside existing structures.

National governments are then unlikely to develop a dedicated structure of governance when implementing MOIPs (OECD and DDC, 2022). They may build on pre-existing structures and instruments and gradually shape them to be more challenge-oriented or progressively add another layer to coordinate the different interventions. For instance in the Netherlands, the flagship Top-Sector Policy supporting nine economic areas, including agriculture, logistics, high-tech systems and materials, was restructured and repurposed to contribute to four grand societal challenges (IIPP, 2021). The TRAMI (2023) mapping analysis found that, when

implementing EU missions, several countries have benefited from already established (strategic) coordination structures. Examples include the network of cities initiated in Austria, the network of Danish municipalities (Climate Plans for Denmark), and coordination mechanisms for stakeholder involvement in the context of existing national climate adaptation plans in the Netherlands.

## 2.4. Identifying common challenges in the governance of MOIPs

Various studies and emerging evidence on the governance of MOIPs, including EU missions, have pinpointed several critical challenges, including managing costs effectively, addressing the issue of inadequate leadership, ensuring the integration of existing structures, and effectively combining both bottom-up and top-down approaches. These are summarised below.

**Holistic coordination:** MOIPs require a comprehensive approach that transcends Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) policies, overcoming the limitations of policy silos. As highlighted by Larrue (2021), avoiding the “STI policy trap” and ensuring active participation from sectoral ministries directly addressing societal challenges remains a recurring challenge in the context of MOIPs. Recent evidence from EU missions indicates that while STI policymakers and research actors primarily drive policy implementation, sectoral policies are engaged but still not fully mobilised (TRAMI, 2023, Reid et al., 2023a).

**Cost:** The complexity and cost associated with coordination (Larrue, 2021) is another challenge. This is particularly relevant in the case of larger overarching national mission frameworks with a more complex MLG structure, which can be perceived as very demanding and overly bureaucratic. Efforts towards holistic coordination may lead to greater governance complexity and coordination costs. For instance, the governance system of EU missions tends to be perceived by stakeholders as too cumbersome and complex, according to a recent EC Communication on the review and assessment of EU Missions (European Commission, 2023a). Another finding is that governance of EU missions is overly focused on implementation, with insufficient space for high-level reflection – relating to progress, instrument design and policy development – and re-orientation if required.

**Leadership:** Leadership, whether from individuals or teams, is also pivotal in coordinating policy bodies across silos and government levels. Larrue (2021) emphasises the crucial role of effective leadership in ensuring inter-ministerial coordination and fostering collaboration between science and industry. Examples from successful programmes, such as Japan’s SIP and Norway’s Pilot-E, illustrate the efficacy of having dedicated programme managers (ibid.). Alternatively, a challenge-owning ministry can act as a champion, providing legitimacy in addressing societal challenges, as demonstrated by the MTIP policy in the Netherlands (Janssen et al., 2023). The aforementioned European Commission (2023a) Communication similarly highlighted the need to strengthen political leadership for the steering of EU missions, arguing that this “should act as a clear signal to facilitate access to resources (including funding) and actions to progress towards the Mission objectives”.

**Effective anchoring of MOIPs in national governance systems** is another challenge. Mission-oriented innovation policies do not operate in a vacuum but within existing institutional and MLG structures (Fisher et al., 2018). Legacies of earlier policy approaches and system structures may enable or hamper new mission approaches. As Larrue (2021) notes, while pre-existing structures may benefit implementation, they can also constrain the transformative potential of programmes. On the other hand, the analysis of EU mission implementation by TRAMI (2023) suggested that having a young and more flexible innovation ecosystem can sometimes be an advantage in the implementation of missions because



momentum can build faster with fewer conditions imposed by established R&I instruments and structures.

**Bottom-up/top-down integration** and mission implementation presents another challenge. As the definition of grand challenges is made at the supranational level, e.g. the EU, it is naturally broad. In this respect, the translation of universally defined missions to local contexts (cross-level translation) begs the question of the “cognitive operationalisation” of missions (i.e. shared understanding of the mission’s meaning) versus local articulations (mission priorities for a city/region) (Wanzenböck and Frenken, 2020, Uyarra et al., 2023). Moreover, bringing locally generated solutions upwards to the EU remains difficult due to their highly contextualised features.

### 3. Member States' Experiences in establishing governance for EU missions

#### 3.1. Findings from Member State survey of mission governance

The sections above underscore that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to mission governance and the need for strategies that are adaptable to the specific demands of different missions, the unique institutional contexts, and various stages of the mission cycle. A survey was circulated in September 2023 to the Member States participating in the MLE, with the objective to: (1) assess the progress of individual countries in establishing governance structures for EU missions, (2) discern the salient elements of these structures and the differences across missions, (3) identify perceived challenges in the multi-level governance for missions, and finally, (4) to gather insights on effective practices in EU mission governance, along with the factors contributing to their success. Overall, the survey received responses from 18 countries.

Responding organisations were mainly public bodies involved in governance, policymaking and supporting research and innovation activities in their countries. Specifically, they included national ministries overseeing research, innovation, science and education portfolios (including ministries from Germany, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Greece, Lithuania, Slovakia, France, Malta, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechia, Austria, and Romania), government agencies/offices such as the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science, the Slovak Research and Innovation Authority, and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG); national innovation agencies such as the Portuguese National Innovation Agency (ANI); and research funding bodies such as the Flemish administration’s Department of Economy, Science and Innovation in Belgium.

The survey revealed that most countries are in the process of implementing or developing governance structures, and that only a few countries currently lack both a structure and plans for one. Specifically, countries fall into a few categories in terms of progress in setting up a governance structure:

- **In place, partly implemented:** Germany, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Lithuania, Romania and France have governance structures in place, such as working groups and committees, but they are still in the process of fully implementing them.
- **In place, not implemented:** In Poland, core elements such as a coordinating ministry are in place, but implementation through establishing hubs has not occurred yet.

- **Building block under development:** Denmark, Portugal, Slovakia, Belgium (Flanders) and Czechia do not yet have formalised governance structures, but they are working to develop the building blocks, through stakeholder consultation platforms and other activities.
- **Not in place:** Respondents in Greece, Malta, and Bulgaria reported not yet having a governance structure in place or concrete plans to develop one.

Responses indicated that different European countries have adopted varying *governance structures and processes*, including distinctive mechanisms for vertical and horizontal coordination. While there is a shared objective of aligning with the EU missions, it is evident that countries have customised their governance structures to best fit their national contexts and administrative frameworks.

For instance, Germany uses a Steering Forum for overarching exchange, complemented by specific coordination groups for each EU mission. Austria has a well-defined structure, including a Working Group on EU Missions, Mission Action Groups, international advisory boards, Mission Management Group, and an agency (FFG) to act as a secretariat (see box 1 below). Denmark relies on informal hubs or stakeholder groups, emphasising the sharing of mission-related information. Many countries, such as Finland and Lithuania, build upon the Horizon Programme Committee structure. In Slovakia and Czechia, the mission approach builds on the established and agreed upon foundations and stakeholder groups for RIS3.

Table 3 below illustrates some cross-sectoral and multi-level mechanisms adopted in different countries. For instance, efforts to ensure *horizontal coordination* range from inter-ministerial working groups, steering forums and mission platforms to more flexible collaboration initiatives. In many countries coordination across ministries is sought both at a high strategic level, and within mission action groups and mirror groups at an operational level. These arrangements can be formal or less formal, such as in Sweden where individual mission working groups use their networks to initiate horizontal collaborations. In relation to *vertical coordination*, mechanisms range from formal steering groups to emergent, bottom-up processes. For instance Portugal utilises an Inter-ministerial Coordination Group involving multiple ministries and regional authorities. Stakeholders in Finland and Sweden noted that there is no formal top-down vertical coordination as such in their countries and that coordination is done informally and/or in a bottom-up and emergent way. Lastly, as mentioned, Slovakia and Czechia rely on RIS3 structures to ensure vertical coordination. However, effective vertical coordination was noted by some countries as a persistent challenge.

Type of coordination	Modes	Example
Horizontal (cross-sectoral)	Inter-ministerial working groups/meetings between national ministries (Germany, Portugal, Lithuania, France, Austria)	Lithuania's Strategic Configuration Group for Horizon Europe includes representatives from various sectoral ministries.
	Inter-agency collaboration platforms (Sweden, Czechia)	Sweden's mission working groups have initiated some horizontal collaborations in areas such as food systems.

	Stakeholder consultation across sectors (Slovakia, Belgium)	Slovakia engages a broad array of R&I stakeholders from various sectors.
Vertical (multi-level)	Federal-state working groups (Austria)	Austria has started discussions between national and regional partners through platforms such as the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning.
	Alignment with regional smart specialisation strategies (Czechia, Slovakia)	Czechia's national RIS3 strategy ensures resources from regional levels support priority areas.
	Emergent bottom-up regional mission activities (Sweden, Ireland)	In Sweden, the Blekinge region independently initiated work on climate change adaptation which now links with EU-level platforms.

Table 3: Modes of horizontal and vertical coordination for the implementation of EU missions

Further, governance structures and processes vary strongly across missions. While central coordination bodies are often responsible across missions, coordination mechanisms, responsible authorities, geographic coordination levels, and alignment with national priorities tend to differ from one mission to another. The Cancer and Climate Adaptation missions seem to leverage more mature national structures. For instance, in Norway the Cancer mission has the most comprehensive national coordination group and respondents in Germany reported more advanced links to national initiatives for health/cancer and climate adaptation. In terms of vertical coordination, Germany, Ireland and Belgium reported that efforts to build regional links are particularly salient in the Cities and Climate Adaptation missions. In Austria, the EU Cities mission builds on several years of coordinated interventions in the area of smart and sustainable cities.

When asked about the main issues associated with governing EU missions, a number of key common challenges emerged (see table 4). These included organisational and systemic coordination challenges, such as insufficient strategic political backing, operational delivery capacity, and institutional barriers including low levels of institutional trust and lack of visibility of missions.

Despite these challenges, a number of countries provided examples of good practices and enabling factors, although they also recognised the difficulty of discussing best practices when still in the process of building the governance infrastructure for EU missions. These include aligning missions with national priorities, iterative governance processes engaging top-down and bottom-up leadership, multi-level participation combining centralised and decentralised action, and embracing uncertainty.

## Key challenges

- Ensuring coordination and buy-in across different national ministries, agencies and governance levels
- Limited resources and capacity for establishing governance structures
- Integrating input from wider groups of stakeholders beyond traditional R&I actors
- Aligning timeframes and priorities across EU, national and regional policies and funding programmes
- Adapting traditional linear governance with more agile, experimental and iterative approaches needed for missions
- Monitoring progress and assessing impact with longer-term broad goals of missions
- Communicating and keeping the visibility of missions high among national stakeholders not familiar with them
- Securing political commitment and public buy-in for prioritising missions on the ground

## Good practices and enabling conditions

- Strategically embedding missions in national research and innovation plans to formally engage stakeholders
- Pursuing pragmatic learning-by-doing in governance through ongoing revision rather than over-planning upfront
- Bottom-up initiatives by cities, regions and researchers to complement central structures
- Using existing bilateral coordination platforms between national and sub-national partners
- Drawing governance approaches from prior experience with cross-sectoral coordination and stakeholder engagement
- Tailoring coordination to variable geometry – composition and format based on local priorities
- Allowing for ambiguity and tensions during structural changes in complex systems
- Independent advisory mechanisms aiding strategy design without getting entrenched in system inertia

Table 4: Main challenges and enabling conditions for the implementation of EU missions

### 3.2. Overview of the First MLE Workshop in Vienna: key discussions summary

In the context of the PSF MLE on the national implementation of EU Missions, the first topic of governance was discussed on 28-29 September 2023 in Vienna. The objectives of the two-day workshop were to build connections between participants, establish a community of practice, introduce the learning process and group structure to facilitate peer learning, provide knowledge exchange with experts on mission-oriented governance, and have participants share lessons learned on governance for EU missions implementation. The workshop included a presentation by the topic expert, panel discussions, a site visit related to the EU mission on Ocean and Waters, and breakout sessions for active listening exercises and reflection.

The presentation by the topic expert unpacked the concept of governance and characterised several approaches, noting that there is no one-size-fits-all governance solution, and that countries can benefit from pre-existing structures but also experience rigidities due to past structures if incumbents resist change. The ensuing discussion focused on the practical realities of securing stakeholder support, resources and legitimacy for mission implementations.

A panel comprising OECD and Austrian experts discussed the Austrian experience in developing governance structures to achieve EU missions (see Box 1). A key issue raised by the panellists was the lack of readiness within public administrations and governments to drive large-scale transformative agendas such as EU missions. There are huge expectations for the public sector to “save the world”, yet it lacks the capabilities, skills and resources to deliver on this. Researchers also often lack abilities to work across policy and public domains. Panellists emphasised the need to reinvent governance capacities, change incentive structures such as academic career frameworks, create regulatory “sandboxes”, and nurture intrinsic motivation. Mission implementation requires new orchestrators and mediators – and likely more funding. The OECD’s framework on diagnosing key factors of “mission strength” can indicate if governance is evolving appropriately. But a systemic perspective is needed, not just adding governance layers. More fundamental institutional and cultural shifts are essential to realise the promise of missions, according to the experts.

Participants had the opportunity to visit the newly-created BOKU River Lab, part of the EU mission on Ocean and Waters, led by Professor Helmut Habersack (Head of the Institute for Hydraulic Engineering, Hydraulics and River Research at BOKU). By recreating a river passage, the Lab is able to undertake ground-breaking research into key aspects such as the movement of water and sediments, ecology, flood risk management, river (re)construction, renewable energies, etc.

#### Multi-level governance of EU missions in Austria

Austria has been recognised as one of the leading countries in terms of engagement in EU missions. Its participation in the five EU missions is defined in the Austrian RTI Strategy 2030 and the RTI Pact 2021-2023, which aims to embed the EU missions in the Austrian RTI policy framework. The national implementation framework for EU missions in Austria is led by the EU Missions Working Group, which is co-chaired by the Ministry of Education, Science and Research and the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation, and Technology. Five working groups (Mission Action Groups or MAGs), one for each EU mission, plan and coordinate activities in the respective EU missions. They are co-chaired by a sectoral and an STI ministerial official and involve a total of about 300

Austrian stakeholders in the fields of the EU missions. In 2023, the governance structure was complemented by a Mission Facility to support monitoring and evaluation of the missions, and a Mission Management Unit was established to support the implementation of the Action Plans for each of the missions.

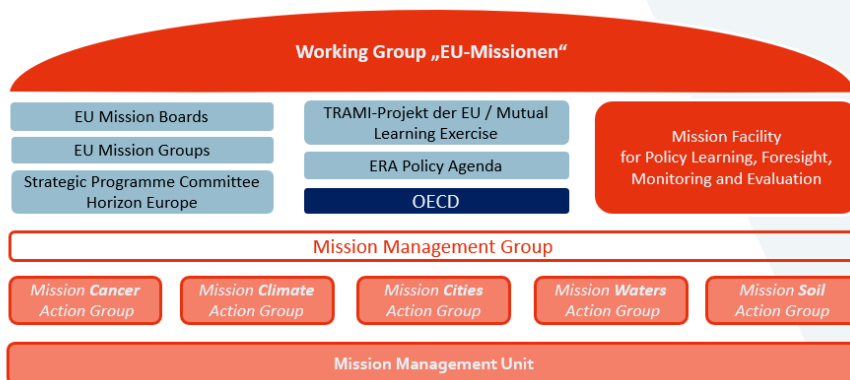


Figure 2: Working group „ EU-Missionen“

Although not yet consolidated, these efforts demonstrate how Austrian EU missions have sought to institutionalise linkages across political, policy and administrative areas. Further, while the OECD Mission Action Lab (2023) acknowledged that fully systemic missions are still rare in Austria, it identified good examples of alignment across challenges, activities, geographical levels, and innovation stages.

Box 1: Multi-level governance of EU missions in Austria  
Source: BMBWF and BMK, 2022

During the learning group discussions, the creation of learning communities and clear strategies for moving forward with the missions was highlighted as a priority. This included ensuring that there is a “hub” to coordinate the mission, a steering committee to oversee governance, and a “champion” to advocate for the mission. Mechanisms must be put in place to adapt the missions to fit with national environments, policies, and plans. Additionally, value alignment among stakeholders was highlighted as important, ensuring that the mission holds the same meaning for everyone involved, and that it addresses the challenges with vision and institutional agility.

Participants from Austria shared how the EU missions have already systematised and institutionalised linkages across political, policy, and administrative siloes, providing a potential model for the future. The missions have also created a space for involving various ministries and agencies in a cross-sectoral setting. The importance of timing and political momentum was also emphasised. It was argued that missions require a mix of urgency and at the same time to slowly change the system from within (“hurry, but slowly”).

Participants highlighted the importance of building on existing structures and culture, as well as the need for strong governance and individual leaders or ambassadors for each mission. The proactive involvement of Austrian professors was particularly praised as an example of the importance of involving people for the success of missions.

In terms of capabilities and capacity, the need for both individual and collective efforts was discussed, with an emphasis on the importance of education and training to develop new

ways of conceiving public actions. The need to rebuild public capacities was noted, with participants stressing the tension between current policymaking realities and a sudden expectation by the state to “save the world”.

The role of research and innovation (R&I) in driving missions, and the persistent challenge of engaging sectorial ministries (avoiding a STI policy trap) in practice were also highlighted. The potential for future workshops to share good practices and engage citizens, business, NGOs, and politicians was also suggested.

The importance of continuous support for evolving governance structures was highlighted, including learning from proven practices (avoiding blind imitation), and accommodating the varied approaches of different nations (paying attention to their “mission readiness level” as some participants put it, namely how they place themselves on the journey).

Furthermore, the discussions underscored the need for different tailored approaches to missions, with clear next steps and key performance indicators to measure impact. It was argued that missions will need to show “systemic added value” or “double additionality”.

## References

Ansell, C. and Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 543-571.

Ansell, C., and Torfing, J. (Eds.). (2022). *Handbook on theories of governance*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Aoki, N., Tay, M. and Rawat, S. (2023). Whole-of-government and joined-up government: A systematic literature review. *Public Administration*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12949>.

BMBWF and BMK (2022), More quality of life and sustainability through research and application, Implementation framework for the EU missions of Horizon Europe in Austria.

Börzel, T.A. and Heard-Lauréote, K. (2009). Networks in EU Multi-Level Governance: Concepts and Contributions. *Journal of Public Policy*, 29(2), 135-151.

Bours, S., Wanzerböck, I. and Frenken, K. (2022). Small wins for grand challenges: A Bottom-up governance approach to regional innovation policy. *European Planning Studies*. 30(11): 2245-2272.

Bugge, M. M., Coenen, L., and Branstad, A. (2018). Governing socio-technical change: Orchestrating demand for assisted living in ageing societies. *Science and Public Policy*, 45(4), 468-479.

Bulkeley H. 2010. 'Cities and the Governing of Climate Change.' *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 35(1): 229-253.

Chaffin, B. C., Gosnell, H., and Cosens, B. A. (2014). A decade of adaptive governance scholarship: synthesis and future directions. *Ecology and Society*, 19(3).

Chhotray, V. and Stoker, G. (2009). *Governance Theory and Practice: a Cross-Disciplinary Approach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Eckert, S. and Börzel, T.A. (2012). Experimentalist Governance: An Introduction. *Regulation and Governance*, 6(3), 371-377.

European Commission (2023a) *EU missions two years on: assessment of progress and way forward*. COM (2023) 457.

European Commission (2023b) *Mutual Learning Exercise on the Whole of Government Approach in Research and Innovation*. First Thematic Report: Introduction and overview of the Whole of Government Approaches in Research and Innovation.

Fisher, R. et al. (2018) *Mission-oriented research and innovation: Inventory and characterisation of initiatives: final report*. Brussels: European Commission EC. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2777/697082>.

Flanagan, K., Uyarra, E., and Laranja, M. (2011). Reconceptualising the 'policy mix' for innovation. *Research policy*, 40(5), 702-713.



Fünfschilling, L., Frantzeskaki, N. and Coenen, L. (2019). Urban Experimentation and sustainability transitions. *European Planning Studies*, 27(2), 219-228.

Gjaltema, J., Biesbroek, R., and Termeer, K. (2020). From government to governance... to meta-governance: a systematic literature review. *Public Management Review*, 22(12), 1760-1780.

Henderson, D., Morgan, K. and Delbridge, R. 'Putting missions in their place: micro-missions and the role of universities in delivering challenge-led innovation.' *Regional Studies* (2023): 1-12.

Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2003). Unravelling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-level Governance. *American Political Science Review*, 97(2), 233-243.

IIPP (2022). *Mission-oriented Innovation in Action Case Book 2021*. UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose. London, **19 January 2022**.

Interreg Europe (2023: 17) *Regional missions: A Policy Brief from the Policy Learning Platform on Research and Innovation*. European Commission, June 2023.

Janssen, M. J., Torrens, J., Wesseling, J.H. and Wanzenböck, I. (2021). 'The Promises and Premises of Mission-Oriented Innovation Policy – A Reflection and Ways Forward'. *Science and Public Policy* 48(3): 438-444.

Janssen, M., Wanzenböck, I., Fünfschilling, L. and Pontikakis, D. (2023). *Capacities for transformative innovation in public administrations and governance systems: Evidence from pioneering policy practice*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union,

Jessop, B. (2004). Multi-level governance and Multi-level Meta-governance: Changes in the European Union as Integral Moments in the Transformation and Reorientation of Contemporary Statehood. In: Bache, I. and Flinders, M. (Eds.), *Multi-level Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 49-74.

Jordan, A. and Schout, A. (2006). *The Coordination of the European Union: Exploring the Capacities of Networked Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kattel, R., and Mazzucato, R. (2018) 'Mission-oriented innovation policy and dynamic capabilities in the public sector.' *Industrial and corporate change* 27(5), 787-801.

Kuhlmann, S., and Rip, A. (2018). Next-generation innovation policy and grand challenges. *Science and Public Policy*, 45(4), 448-454.

Lam, D. P., Martín-López, B., Wiek, A., Bennett, E. M., Frantzeskaki, N., Horcea-Milcu, A. I., and Lang, D. J. (2020). Scaling the impact of sustainability initiatives: a typology of amplification processes. *Urban Transformations*, 2(1), 1-24.

Larrue, P. (2021). *The design and implementation of mission-oriented innovation policies: A new systemic policy approach to address societal challenges*. OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers no.100. Paris: OECD.

Marks, G. (1993), 'Structural policy and multi-level governance in the EC,' in A. Cafruny and G. Rosenthal (eds), *The State of the European Community: The Maastricht Debate and Beyond*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, pp. 391-411.

Marks, G. (1996), 'An actor-centred approach to multi-level governance', *Regional and Federal Studies*, 6 (2), 20–40.

Marques, P., Gonzalez, H., Corona, C., Garcia Melon, M., (2023) Experimental governance in places with weak governance? What can and cannot be done in Europe's peripheral regions. *Ekonomiaz*, 104.II/2023, 36-55.

Mazzucato, M., 2018. Mission-oriented innovation policies: challenges and opportunities. *Industry and Corporate Change* 27, 803–815.

Morgan, K. (2018). *Experimental Governance and Territorial Development*. Paris: OECD.

OECD (2023). *Leveraging EU missions in Austria: Draft final report*. 4 July 2023 Mission Action Lab, Paris.

OECD and DDC (2022). *Mission-oriented innovation needs assessment survey: Highlights and insights on mission work*. [https://oecd-opsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/OECD-DDC\\_Results-Mission-Needs-Assessment-Survey-2022.pdf](https://oecd-opsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/OECD-DDC_Results-Mission-Needs-Assessment-Survey-2022.pdf) (Accessed 25 August 2023).

Pierre, J. and Peters, B.G. (2000). *Governance, Politics and the State*. New York: St. Martin Press.

Pontikakis, D., Gonzalez Vazquez, I., Bianchi, G., Ranga, L., Marques Santos, A., Reimeris, R., Mifsud, S., Morgan, K., Madrid Gonzalez, C. and Stierna, K., (2022) *Partnerships for Regional Innovation Playbook*, Publications Office of the European Union. Belgium.

Reid, A., Rantcheva, A, Krūminas, P. (2023a) *Study supporting the assessment of EU Missions and the review of mission areas: final Report*. European Commission

Reid, A., Steward, F. and Miedzinski, M., (2023b) *Aligning smart specialisation with transformative innovation policy*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, doi:10.2760/359295, JRC134466.

Sabel, C.F. and Zeitlin, J. (2008). Learning from Difference: The New Architecture of Experimentalist Governance in the EU. *European Law Journal*, 14(3), 271-327.

Scholz, J. and Stiftel, B. (2005). The Challenges of Adaptive governance. In: Scholz, J. and Stiftel, B. (Eds.) *Adaptive Governance and Water Conflict: New Institutions for Collaborative Planning*. Resources for the Future Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 1-11.

Schot, J., Steinmueller, W.E., 2018. Three frames for innovation policy: R&D, systems of innovation and transformative change. *Research Policy* 47, 1554-1567.

Sørensen, E., and Torfing, J. (2009). Making governance networks effective and democratic through meta-governance. *Public administration*, 87(2), 234-258.

Sørensen, E., and Torfing, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Theories of democratic network governance*. Springer.

TRAMI (2023) Mapping analysis report. TRAnsnational cooperation on the MIssions approach, European Commission.

Uyarra, E., Flanagan, K., and Wanzenböck, I. (2023). The spatial and scalar implications of missions: Challenges and opportunities for policy. MIOIR Working Paper, No. 2023/4.

Wanzenböck, I., and Frenken, K. (2020). The subsidiarity principle in innovation policy for societal challenges. *Global Transitions*, 2, 51-59.

Wanzenböck, I., Wesseling, J. H., Frenken, K., Hekkert, M. P., and Weber, K. M. (2020). A framework for mission-oriented innovation policy: Alternative pathways through the problem-solution space. *Science and public policy*, 47(4), 474-489.

Wittmann, F., Hufnagl, M., Lindner, R., Roth, F. and Edler, J. (2021). 'Governing Varieties of Mission-Oriented Innovation Policies: A New Typology', *Science and Public Policy* 48(5): 727-738.

## **GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE EU**

### **In person**

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you online ([european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us_en)).

### **On the phone or in writing**

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696,
- via the following form: [european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/write-us\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/write-us_en).

## **FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU**

### **Online**

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website ([european-union.europa.eu](https://european-union.europa.eu)).

### **EU publications**

You can view or order EU publications at [op.europa.eu/en/publications](https://op.europa.eu/en/publications). Multiple copies of free publications can be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local documentation centre ([european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us_en)).

### **EU law and related documents**

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex ([eur-lex.europa.eu](https://eur-lex.europa.eu)).

### **EU open data**

The portal [data.europa.eu](https://data.europa.eu) provides access to open datasets from the EU institutions, bodies and agencies. These can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes. The portal also provides access to a wealth of datasets from European countries.

This thematic report addresses the question of how to use multi-level governance (MLG) approaches to the implementation of EU missions. The report provides a short background sketch of the MLG concept and discusses the related approaches and challenges with its application in mission-oriented policies, illustrated with examples in several countries. Lastly, the report analyses the results of a survey on mission governance in 18 countries and summarises the discussions at the first MLE meeting in Vienna, held on 28-29 September 2023.

*Studies and reports*

