

## Practice Abstract #36

### The need for more balanced networking in multi-actor projects

The EUREKA project ([www.h2020eureka.eu](http://www.h2020eureka.eu)) analysed the geographical scope of - and interconnections between - over 100 multi-actor projects (MAPs) funded under the EU Horizon 2020 programme. It was found that partners in these projects form extensive network connections through their participation in the projects – around 70,000 bilateral connections amongst partners in over 100 projects.

Partners from larger countries tend to have larger networks notably those from France and Italy (for Research and Innovation Actions), the UK (Coordination and Support Actions), and Spain (Innovation Actions). Some smaller countries such as The Netherlands or Belgium also have partners with long experience of EU-funded research (e.g. universities and research institutes) and these inevitably also have extensive networks.

Such networks are of obvious benefit to individual partners, but overall they could be better balanced in order to enhance the accessibility and exchange of experience and knowledge, and thereby increase the dissemination and uptake of innovation.

There are several countries which need support to better connect with research and innovation at EU level. Some of the newer Member States especially are “lagging behind” in their participation in Horizon multi-actor projects.

The number of network connections developed via EIP-AGRI Focus Groups (FGs) financed under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was significantly lower when compared to MAPs, only reaching about 16,000. However, in contrast to the uneven networking within MAPs, the participation of the different EU countries in the FGs is significantly more homogeneous. This is likely because the participants are selected to ensure even geographic participation.

