



Forward Visions on the European Research Area

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Acronym: VERA

Project Reference: 290705

Start Date: 2012-02-01

Duration: 30 months

Project Cost: 1.94 million euro

Contract Type: Support actions

End Date: 2014-07-31

Project Status: Execution

Project Funding: 1.46 million euro

Project Homepage: www.eravisions.eu

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The **VERA project** aims to provide relevant strategic intelligence for the future governance and priority-setting of the research, technology, development and innovation (RTDI) system in Europe and for better adapting science, technology and innovation policy to the shifting global environment and upcoming socio-economic challenges. For this purpose VERA carries out an in-depth stocktaking of RTDI related forward looking activities in Europe and internationally and a thorough review of trends and drivers of *long-term change of European RTDI governance*. On the base of these insights VERA develops scenarios on the evolution of the European Research Area, assesses the critical issues for the ERA's future capabilities emerging from these scenarios, explores subsequent strategic options and ultimately generates a set of policy recommendations for responsive and future oriented multi-level, multi-domain RTDI policy strategies.

VERA is conceptualised as a continuously progressing two-way communication process among ERA actor groups from society, industry, academia and policy across domains, levels and regions. It is setting up a strategic conversation between these stakeholders that evolves through several carefully tailored stages in

order to jointly discover shared visions and strategic options around the ERA's future perspectives towards 2020 and far beyond. VERA is exploring *gradual* evolution following from current patterns of change but is also explicitly embracing transformative and *disruptive* developments with a long term horizon.

The VERA project is being proposed by a consortium of ten internationally renowned institutes from nine EU countries involving a team of more than 20 researchers with outstanding expertise both in terms of relevant knowledge and forward looking methodology and excellent contacts with RTDI stakeholders in Europe and the world.

VERA is based on a well-defined work programme with clearly defined steps and measurable outcomes that are targeted to specific user groups and purposes. The backbone of the process is a communication strategy that is coordinating the stakeholder engagement in a systematic manner. Substantial efforts are dedicated to go beyond unspecific propositions and to co-create relevant strategic intelligence together with the key target groups.

WORKPLAN

As shown in the graphical presentation below, the VERA workplan comprises six supporting workpackages which are interlinked through well defined interfaces. VERA is conceptualised as a continuously progressing communication process engaging a growing number of actors in the strategic conversation on ERA. Accordingly, the communication strategy set up by **Workpackage 6** that coordinates the physical and web-based stakeholder engagement in all WPs is the backbone of the project. WP6 activities will make sure that relevant users and stakeholders are engaged in an appropriate manner and international perspectives are integrated as required. **Workpackage 1** will take stock of forward looking activities on research and innovation inside and outside of Europe and assess their usefulness for policy making and implications for ERA.

Workpackage 2 further investigates trends and drivers in the evolution of ERA through a semantic analysis of European and international discourse on ERA and STI governance as well as interviews with outstanding thinkers inside and outside the ERA that will provide fresh and challenging perspectives beyond the mainstream discourse. WP2 concludes with an interactive stakeholder workshop where the factors to be taken into account in the scenario building will be selected.

The decision on the ERA key factors forms **Milestone 1** of the VERA project.

Workpackage 3 is dedicated to developing scenarios of different trajectories for the governance of ERA through a series of two interactive workshops each with tailored stakeholder and expert participation. The scenarios will embrace not only gradual evolution but also possible radical and systemic transformation. They will be documented in a visual format suited to foster strategic debate in different contexts.

Workpackage 4 will assess the scenarios with respect to the ERA Vision 2020 and in particular discuss the consequences of different ERA scenarios for the capability of ERA to make Europe more innovative and more capable of solving the challenges ahead. This will be done on different levels and for different sectors.

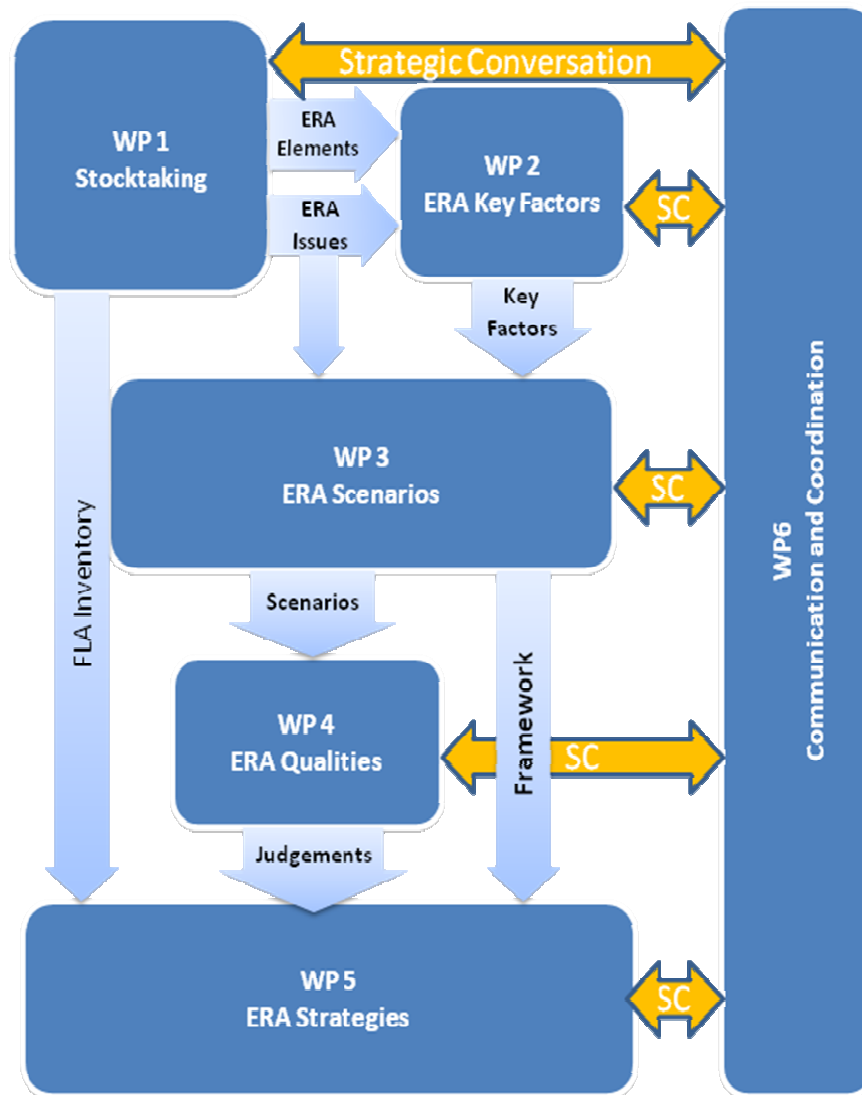
The assessment will lead to a decision on the key strategic debates to be set up in WP5 (**Milestone 2**)

Finally, **Workpackage 5** is dedicated to spelling out implications for EU level research and innovation policy. In addition it will offer support to different processes and actors in translating the collective anticipatory

intelligence emerging from WP1-4 into their own specific decision making context and deliberative structures. In particular, WP5 will support activities for joint action of all sorts, including – among many different options that might emerge in the process – the pooling ERA resources around certain societal challenges through joint programming initiatives. For this purpose a series workshops focussing on different strategic aspects are foreseen.

Workpackage 6 oversees the project management and financial reporting as well as the quality control through the internal board and external reviewers. Both Milestones will be reviewed by three external advisors.

Graphical presentation of the componets showing their interdependencies





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FURTHER INFORMATION

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