



ReSOMA:
Research Social platform On Migration and Asylum

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D5.11 – Council Presidency European Workshop @M12

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1 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Abbreviation	Definition
AMI	Asylum, Migration, and Integration
CEAS	Common European Asylum Service
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
H2020	Horizon 2020
KO	Kick-off
AB	Advisory Board
Y1-Y2	Project Year 1 – Year 2

2 INTRODUCTION

The Council Presidency European Workshops @M12 and @M18 (henceforth “The Presidency Workshops”) are key outputs of ReSOMA as they aim at disseminating mid-term project results among a specific target audience, with particular attention given to policy makers. To ensure that the overall project activities and outputs bring together research and stakeholder evidence, these workshops are to be organised in the framework of the evolving EU policy agenda and taking into account the two consecutive EU presidencies. Because ReSOMA started in February 2018, the first workshop coincided with the Council Presidencies of Romania (first half 2019) and the second Finland (second half 2019).

3 THE COUNCIL PRESIDENCY EUROPEAN WORKSHOPS @M12

3.1 PRELIMINARY TALKS AND ORGANISATION OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY WORKSHOP

Talks on the Presidency Workshop @M12 started very early in Y1. During the KO Meeting (12-13/02/2019) partners shared their information on the agenda of the three different Council Presidencies that would likely fall into the first half of the project timeline, namely during Y1: the Bulgarian Presidency (Jan-Jun 2018), the Austrian Presidency (Jul-Dec 2018) and the Romanian Presidency (Jan-Jun 2019).

Partners first assessed the political relevance of the three Presidencies keeping in mind their respective preliminary programmes and the ReSOMA activities and areas (Asylum-Migration-Integration, AMI). Based on their assessment, they would consider the possibility of either anticipating or postponing the Presidency Workshop @M12 to maximise dissemination of Y1. The Bulgarian Presidency was quickly ruled out, as it would not make AMI top priorities on its agenda. Initially, partners were in favour of framing the Presidency Workshop in the Austrian Presidency. Nonetheless, they grew increasingly more concerned over time as the Austrian leadership would not prioritise issues such as the reform of the Common European Asylum Service (CEAS). The Romania Presidency was eventually chosen despite the low political relevance. While AMI remained very low on the Presidency's agenda, partners felt that having the Presidency Workshop in early 2019 would allow for some influence in informing and influencing the political debate short before the election cycle, namely the European elections of May 2019.

Partners discussed the organisation more into detail in the second half of Y1. ISMU dedicated a time slot on this issue during the 7th SG Meeting (21/09/2018), when CEPS offered to have the Presidency Workshop as part of their annual IdeasLab in Brussels (21-22/02/2019). The [IdeasLab](#) is CEPS's 2-day flagship conference, which gathered more than 1000 high level policy makers, academics and civil society every year.

Based on the first outline of the event made by CEPS partners grew convinced that the event would be a key opportunity to disseminate the preliminary results of ReSOMA and reach out to new potential members of the expert database as well as the AB. As a matter of fact the event was structure upon interactive talks and open discussions that would enable partners to feed into the debate by providing data from WP1 and WP2 activities in a dedicated session. At the same time, by gathering a big number of high-profile speakers and participants the IdeasLab would facilitate liaison with key actors in view of Y2 activities and a possible enlargement of the AB.

Partners discussed on how to best tailor the Presidency Workshop to the ReSOMA project and the target audience of the event. CEPS asked partners as ReSOMA for names of potential national contacts that could be invited to the event and invited them. After gathering the list of names, CEPS invited all potential invitees to the event and followed-up a few days later.

3.2 THE CEPS IDEASLAB AND ITS PRIME TALKS

As of the 7th SG Meeting (21/09/2019) the Presidency Workshop started taking shape. As anticipated by CEPS, the workshop would take place as one of the so-called "prime talks" foreseen in their flagship event (the IdeasLab). The IdeasLab, indeed, included two different discussion formats: small reflection "labs" and high-level "prime talks". At the suggestion of CEPS, partners decided to frame the workshop as one

of prime talks in light of the format and prestige of these types of event, with interactive discussions that feature high-profile speakers from national, EU and international political and policy contexts discussing a salient European topic followed by a moderated discussion in a more standard panel format. In addition, the audience contributes lively comments and questions while a live Twitter feed gathers comments from participants and feed into the panel discussion.

3.3 THE AGENDA OF THE EVENT

The prime talk that was chosen for the workshop dealt with the issues stemming from the so-called “refugee crisis” that reached its peak in 2015. By focusing discussions on public opinion, priority setting and measures adopted the event was a perfect opportunity to disseminate the preliminary results of ReSOMA, namely in identifying policy topics (WP1), policy options (WP2) and policy trade-offs (WP3).

The list of participants had the advantage of mirroring the ReSOMA objectives to a great extent, with international, EU and national policy makers debating the topics along with academics and stakeholders from the local level. It is worth mentioning that one of the panelists, Lefteris Papagiannakis, is also member of the ReSOMA Advisory Board and was consulted on a number of WP1, 2 and 3 activities.

By being in charge of the event moderation, CEPS ensured proper mainstreaming of the ReSOMA results along the debate.

The picture below shows the final agenda of the EU Presidency Workshop.

Three years after the refugee crisis: Have Europe's priorities shifted?

Friday, 22 February 2019, 11:00 - 12:15

The European Refugee Humanitarian Crisis that emerged in 2015 has shaken the EU's foundations and brought into question its legitimacy in being able to ensure a common policy response towards the phenomenon of asylum seekers. This has taken place at a time when populism and extreme nationalism are rising in several EU countries and engaging in active anti-immigration discourses. It is to be expected that migration will be at heart of the upcoming European Parliament elections. This Prime Talk will take stock of EU responses to the crisis and discuss the roles that populism and public opinion may have played in terms of priority setting and the measures adopted. What specific ways are open to the EU in the area of migration and asylum to respond to populism, racism and xenophobia? And what is the state of public opinion in different member states about the EU and migration – does it vary at the implementation and local level? Do any policy actions suggest a longer-term vision for the EU to adopt?

This session is organised in the context of the ReSOMA Project. The project receives funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program.

Discussion Leaders:

Dima Yared, Human Rights Officer, UN Human Rights Office, Regional Office for Europe

Ilkka Salmi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Finland

Lefteris Papagiannakis, Deputy Mayor, City of Athens

Sophie Magennis, Head of the Policy and Legal Support Unit, UNHCR Regional Representation for EU Affairs, Brussels

Violeta Moreno-Lax, Senior Lecturer in Law, QMUL

Moderator:

Lina Vosyliute, Researcher, CEPS

Figure 1 – Final agenda of the EU Presidency Workshop (CEPS IdeasLab, 22/02/2019)

3.4 VISIBILITY OF ReSOMA AHEAD OF THE EVENT

Ahead of the CEPS IdeasLab, the CEPS and the ISMU teams coordinated on how properly ensure visibility to the ReSOMA project and its contribution to the general CEPS event. Moreover, as foreseen in the GA obligations, CEPS included the acknowledgement of the project in the relevant page of the agenda that was available on the event website, as well in its printed version.

After consulting CEPS and the rest of the Consortium, ISMU printed a roll-up featuring the ReSOMA logo, the project objectives, a catchy phrase to persuade people to join the ReSOMA community, partners' logo and the acknowledgement of EU funding. The texts and visuals were taken from the flyers designed by Social Platform in October 2018 to enhance visual consistency. ISMU took the roll-up to the event and handed it to MPG, who will use it and lend it to other partners when a pitch of ReSOMA is foreseen.

The day before the event, ISMU posted a tweet announcing that ReSOMA would be pitched and its results would be disseminated at the CEPS IdeasLab. The tweet was reposted by a number of partners and other followers.



Figure 2 – Tweet posted the day before the event

3.5 THE EVENT

On 22/02 the EU Presidency Workshop successfully took place at the EGG, in Brussels, near Gare de Midi, gathering more than 40 people in the room. CEPS and ISMU arranged the visuals (roll-up and flyers) while copies of the Discussion Briefs from WP1 were made available. EUROCITIES posted a tweet during the event that was retweeted from the ReSOMA account.

During the debate the speakers highlighted a number of issues where ReSOMA could feed in effectively. On the one hand, the public perception of the so-called “migration crisis” and the rise of populism across the EU were partly due to the lack of a truly evidence-based approach to policy making, as evidence was often sidelined in favour of more emotional responses. On the other hand the role of the cities and other stakeholders was often overlooked by national and EU policy-makers despite their privileged position in accessing data from the grass-root level that could feed into effective asylum, migration and integration policies. Thanks to CEPS pitching ReSOMA and its Y1 activities in the opening, project results could directly feed into the speakers' presentations and the following debate.



Figure 3 – Thematic tweet by EUROCITIES



Figure 4 – ReSOMA hand-outs and flyers arranged for the event



Figure 5 – The panel of the event and the ReSOMA roll-up in the background

All in all, dissemination of the ReSOMA results through the event was effective. The presence of high-level political personalities enabled the ReSOMA partners to reach out to key stakeholders strategically. For instance one of the panelists, Ilkka Salmi, represented Finland and the country's agenda in the upcoming tenure of the EU Presidency (Jul-Dec 2019). By accessing the project's preliminary results, Mr. Salmi will be a valuable gatekeepers in accessing the Finnish presidency in view of the workshop that will take place in Y2. Likewise, the involvement of Mr. Papagiannakis, who is already member of the AB, strengthen his commitment to the project and its fine-tuning to the policy context.

Among participants, many high-profile personalities took part in the event and joined the discussion, including EU policy-makers and national politicians.

It is worth mentioning that partners organised and implemented the EU Presidency Workshop in full compliance with the GDPR standards. This raised a number of issues related to the targeted outreach of key participants prior to the event, as CEPS could not and did not share data collected during the online registration¹. Despite this, the composition of both the panel and the audience as well as the

1 Please note that in light of the GDPR compliance and because the deliverable is public, the names and details of participants cannot be featured in this report

mainstreaming of ReSOMA outputs throughout the discussions made the prime talk a success in disseminating preliminary results.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The EU Presidency Workshop is a key outputs that aims at disseminating preliminary project results from Y1 among national and EU policy-makers. After preliminary talks on the agendas of the various upcoming EU presidency, partners decided that the Y1 EU Presidency Workshop would take place in the framework of the CEPS IdeasLab (21-22/02, Brussels), namely as a “prime talk”. Partners worked together to best frame the project in the IdeasLab session, while CEPS and ISMU ensured proper visibility of the ReSOMA outputs and EU funding prior and during the event. Thanks to its format, topics and invited panelists, the event enabled partners to capitalise on the results from Y1 by directly feeding into the presentation and the following debate. This will help liaising with key stakeholders in Y2, especially in view of the Finnish presidency and the Y2 EU Presidency Workshop that will be organised.

5 ANNEXES

Annex 1 – ReSOMA flyer distributed during the prime talk

