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	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY D 4.1 / MS13
DELIVERABLE TITLE	Possible mandate, composition, structure of a new Nanotechnology Risk Governance Council (NRGC)
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This document outlines aspects to be considered for the design of a Nanotechnology Risk Governance Council (NRGC). While a complex network of regulatory institutions already exists, some stakeholders highlight gaps, which a nanotechnology Council could help remedy, by unifying and harmonizing the field.

Furthermore, even if dealing with the known risks of engineered nanomaterials is no longer a priority in European policies and strategies, there is an increasing focus and some concern about advanced materials and sustainability issues, where a new organisation might make a valuable contribution. Nanomaterials are incorporated into many consumer products as electronics, food and food packaging, building material, energy or medicine, and existing institutions are well-placed to deal with known and less-well-known risks. However, the fast development of advanced materials and the convergence with other technologies such as bio-, neuro-, or digital technologies increase the level of complexity and uncertainty and thus raises broader sustainability and responsibility challenges¹. Not all concerns with current technology have been addressed, and even more, ambiguity is probably coming with 'nano-based systems' where nanotechnology is combined with other technologies². Finally, the European Union has a long tradition for precaution, which is challenged when international competition from other countries may push for a rebalancing of priorities towards more innovation brought to the market.

There is already a large number of institutions in various sectors, including food (e.g. EFSA), consumer products, medicine (e.g. EMA), and chemicals (e.g. ECHA). It is in this context that we make a proposal for a Nanotechnology Risk Governance Council (NRGC), that will operate a Nanotechnology Risk Governance Framework (NRGF). As an additional 'body' in an already busy and complex network of institutions dealing with engineered nanomaterials, the NRGC should not add more complexity. Instead, it should aim to simplify things, fill gaps, such as gaps in data sharing, or gaps between risk assessment (produced by specific scientific authorities) and risk management (decided by regulatory authorities), or help unify and harmonize the field.

The answer to how to do this depends on the objective and role of the NRGC, which is not pre-defined. The NRGC could be:

- (1) a *group of experts* expressing their own view about ways to monitor, promote and maintain high standards in risk assessment, including through the provision of consulting services
- (2) a **neutral place to deliberate**, resolve conflicts and decide on complex technical issues, like a court of justice
- (3) a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder *neutral place for dialogue*, but without any advisory, regulatory or decision power

¹ This was emphasized by various speakers and in several sessions during the EuroNanoForum 2019, Budapest <https://www.euronanoforum2019.eu/>

² Roco, M. (2018). Overview: Affirmation of Nanotechnology between 2000 and 2030. Dans B. G. Thomas O. Mensah, *Nanotechnology Commercialization: Manufacturing Processes and Products, First Edition*. John Wiley & Sons.

(4) a **scientific advisory board** that is respected by all stakeholder groups and the general public in their considerations, and formally provides input to regulatory processes

(5) a **policy institution or 'pre-regulatory' body**, with the mission to help resolve tradeoffs between safety and precaution on the one side, and innovation on the other side, or more broadly look into longer-term issues (such as long term sustainability of advanced materials), which regulatory institutions may have to consider

(6) a **regulatory body** that would have authoritative power to decide about, among other aspects, technical requirements for risk assessment and management.

Section 1 of this working document presents the proposal, suggesting a vision and mission, followed by objectives, and participants/members. This section results from and will continue to be updated by insights and suggestions on needs, gaps and priorities, as expressed by various stakeholders.

Section 2 (Statutes and operating rules, 'code of conduct for members' and 'membership rules' will be developed later. Once a prototype of the NRGC is sufficiently elaborated, it will be tested, then refined, and finally launched. The final stage will include inviting and selecting members. Much remains to be done as we need to progress gradually to ensure adequacy with needs, relevance, financial sustainability, credibility and legitimacy, and avoid threatening any existing body or position. Trustworthiness will be key.

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