

# D4.1.

## **Possible mandate, composition, structure of a new Nanotechnology Risk Governance Council (NRGC)**

# Introduction

- D4.1. outlines aspects to be considered for the design of a Nanotechnology Risk Governance Council (NRGC).
- There is an increasing focus and some concern about advanced materials and sustainability issues, where a new organisation might make a valuable contribution.
- 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.
- In D4.1, a proposal is made for a Nanotechnology Risk Governance Council (NRGC), that will operate a Nanotechnology Risk Governance Framework (NRGF).

# The NRGCC

- Aims 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)
  - help unify and harmonize the field
- Could be:
  - 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
  - a neutral place to deliberate, resolve conflicts and decide on complex technical issues, like a court of justice
  - a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder neutral place for dialogue, but without any advisory, regulatory or decision power
  - 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
  - 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
  - a regulatory body that would have authoritative power to decide about, among other aspects, technical requirements for risk assessment and management.

# Aspects to consider for the design of an NRGCC

- Vision: balancing innovation and precaution towards the future
- Mission: the NRGCC at the interface between material innovation, risk science and regulation
- Objective:
  - publish authoritative position papers
  - move into standardisation and certification of responsible and sustainable nano-based products
- Operating rules differ according if the NRGCC is a governmental institution or whether the NRGCC is a private initiative
- Participants/members → represent the following stakeholders groups:
  - Scientific and research organisations, Innovation agencies, Production and manufacturing (industry), Finance and insurance, Environmental and societal non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

# Aspects to consider for the design of an NRGCC

- The Council will have:
  - Statutes (or a "Charter"), including operating rules
  - A "code of conduct" for members
  - Membership rules
- Stakeholders with legitimacy to represent a wide range of views about nanotechnology will be invited to contribute to the provision of evidence-based knowledge for improving research, technology development, practices, policies and regulation.
- In a multi-stakeholder membership organization, the baseline is that each legitimate stakeholder is invited to participate, but conditional on provision of financial resources that will ensure financial sustainability

# Each stakeholder comes with its own objectives, constraints, capacities

