MERGE

MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

Policy pathways to sustainable and inclusive wellbeing

Measuring what matters: Sustainable and Inclusive Wellbeing metrics in EU Budget post-2027

Workshop, February 4th 2025 9-11:00

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Your moderators today

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MERGE

Agenda

9:10-9:25

set the scene presentation

9:25-9:50

world café exercise

09:50-10:10

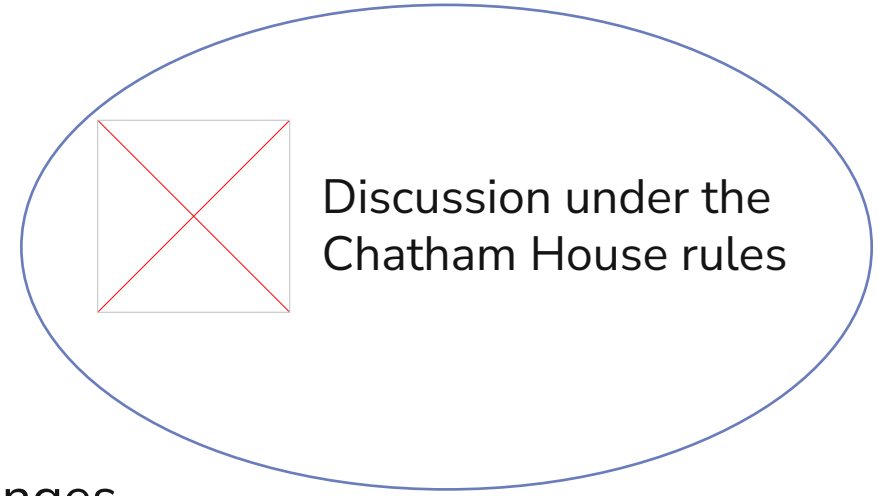
Summary of the results, voting on key challenges

10:10-10:50

"How might we" exercise

10:50-11:00

Closing remarks



MERGE

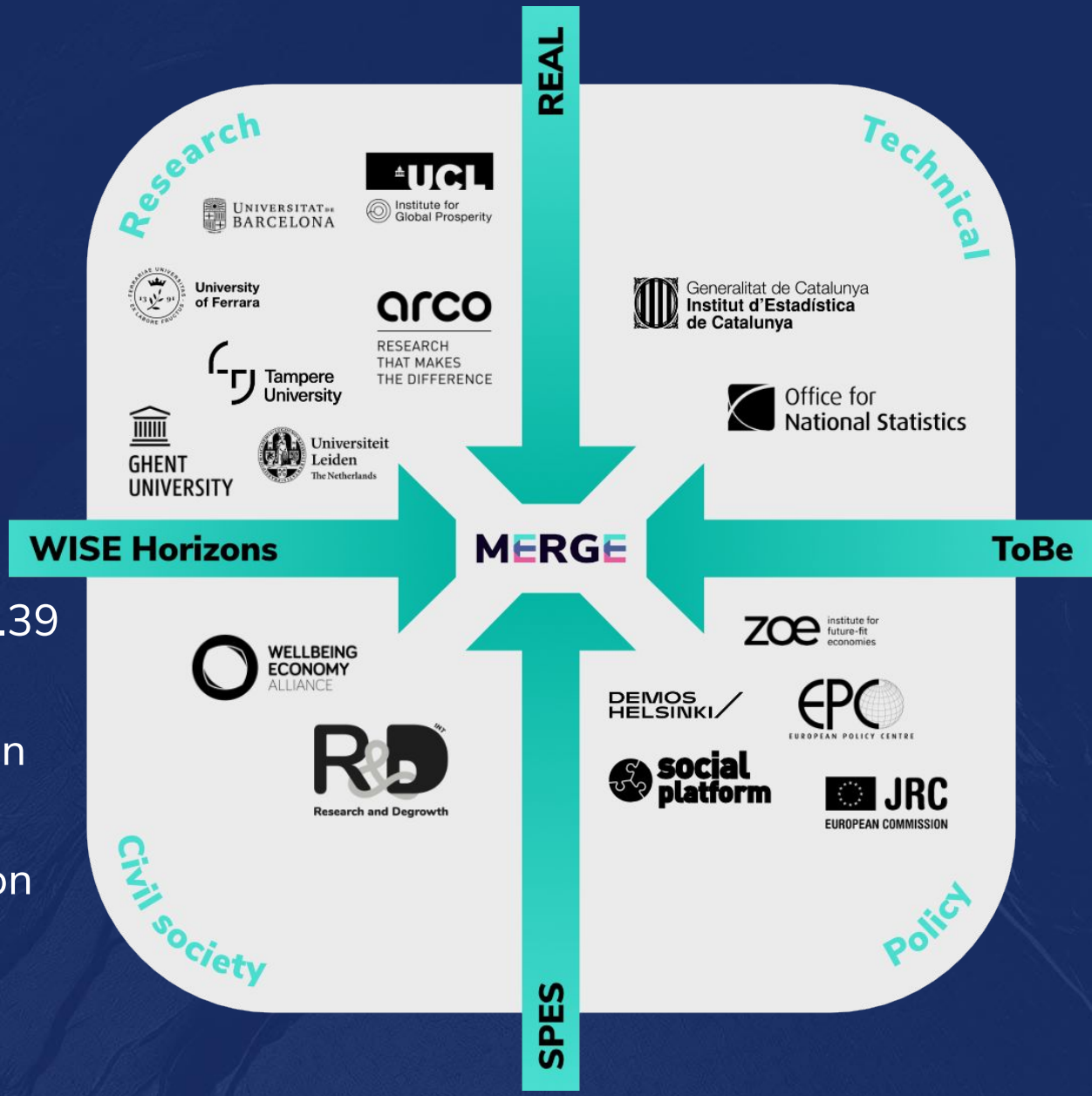
MERGE is Horizon Europe funded Coordination and Support Action (CSA) project with an aim to find pathways towards inclusive and sustainable wellbeing.MERGE consists of 16 partners.

WISE Horizons: 4 years (2023-2026), 2.39 € million funding, 8 organisations

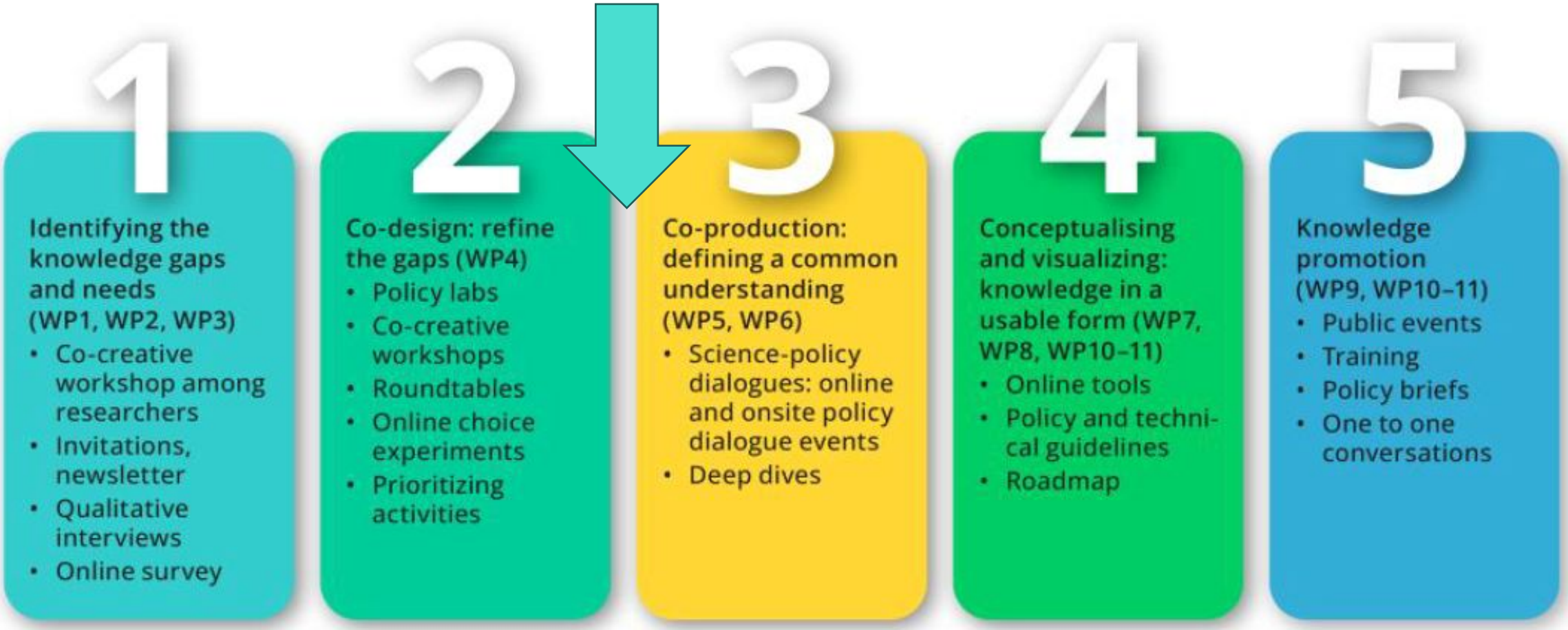
ToBe: 3 years (2023-2026), 2.69€ million funding, 15 organisations

SPES: 3 years (2023-2026), 2.68€ million budget, 12 organisations

REAL: 6 years (2023-2029), 10€ million budget, two universities



Process of co-production



Sustainable and Inclusive Wellbeing Indicators

- SIWB is increasingly relevant and has the potential to inform the ongoing policy debate on more inclusive and sustainable economic policies.
- Transforming the current system requires a new integrated system of metrics, models, and policies all aimed at achieving the new goal of SIWB rather than merely seeing economic growth as an end.
- MERGE focuses on ensuring that the new paradigm SIWB can be fully embedded into policymaking processes. It integrates the emerging frameworks, metrics, models, and policies being developed and discussed as part of a range of ongoing Horizon Europe funded projects.

Deep dives

- As part of the MERGE policy stream, ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies and the European Policy Centre (EPC) will conduct a series of "deep dives" to analyse the need for a holistic set of metrics to enhance key policies in the European Union (EU).
- **Objective:** "*develop an EU engagement strategy that identifies the most important levers for increasing the uptake of beyond GDP policy frameworks and well-being metrics."* The strategy will define how the topics can be **connected to the Commission's work programme and how to inform the future agenda**.
- **Focus on six (non-legislative and legislative) files**, tools or processes and debates: MFF post-2027, the Clean Industrial Deal, Social Europe, Competitiveness, European Semester, and Governance.

The MFF

Importance:

•**Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF)** emerges a suitable starting point: The beginning of the interinstitutional negotiations of the upcoming MFF offers a great opportunity to bring together experts and policy practitioners to discuss how sustainable and inclusive wellbeing indicators can contribute and support the monitoring framework of the MFF 2028-2034.

Entry points:

•**The conditionality principle** serves as a governance mechanism that links the disbursement of EU funds to specific policy and institutional conditions. The EU budget already incorporates a variety of conditionalities (rule of law conditionality) and mainstreaming elements (climate, gender, biodiversity, SDG) that influence how member states utilize allocated funds. These conditionalities have evolved in light of recent economic challenges and political developments within the EU.

•**The DNSH principle**, introduced in 2020, offers mechanisms to ensure that EU-funded activities do not undermine environmental objectives or exacerbate regional disparities. Supporting the conditionality principle and DNSH principle implementation with a wider set of indicators can potentially enable better informed decisions and provide a tool for navigating trade-offs.

World Café- Challenges

- **Purpose:** reach a state of common understanding and alignment.
- **Process:** join in small groups at the tables to discuss a question
- **Table 1:** What are the possible challenges for integrating sustainable and inclusive wellbeing metrics into MFF: case of conditionality principle. If conditionality principle is applied to all funds and spread more widely, what kind of indicators would be used? And what are the challenges?
- **Table 2:** What are the possible challenges for integrating sustainable and inclusive wellbeing metrics into MFF and in particular the implementation of DNSH principle.

Discussion- Challenges

- **Group Sharing**: Each table shares their key challenges and other insights with everyone.
- **Finding Patterns**: Are there common themes and connections identified across the tables?
- **Voting:** What are the key challenges to take forward?

Table 1: Conditionality principle

Table 2: DNSH principle.

How might we? exercise- Opportunities

Problem/ Challenge	Policy practitioners aren't aware of the benefits of sustainable and inclusive wellbeing indicators.
HMW	How might we increase awareness of the SIW indicator's offerings?

1. Pick one of the challenges we voted as the most important.
2. Reframe it as a positive question: How might we [achieve the outcomes that would solve this issue]?
   - Turn this challenge into an opportunity
   - Be broad but still specific enough to not lose sight of the issue.
3. Reflect on the answer with your group.

Discussion- Opportunities

Group Sharing: Each table shares their key insights with everyone.

Closing

Next steps

- Follow up interviews
- Follow up event: science policy dialogue (online)
- Will feed into further development of MERGE policy …

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THANK YOU!

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