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(OR. en)

ERAC 1201/16

NOTE

From: ERAC Secretariat
To: Delegations
Subject: ERAC Work Programme 2016-2017

Delegations will find attached the ERAC Work Programme 2016-2017 as adopted at the 29th ERAC plenary meeting on 14-15 January 2016.

ERAC Work Programme 2016-2017

Introduction

The work programme will cover the next period of policy development in the areas of research and innovation and closely related policies.

Following the adoption of the Council conclusions on the review of the European Research Area advisory structure in December 2015, ERAC can move into a new phase of activity, focussing on more strategic issues, with timely, open debates that are better aligned to the incoming Presidency's priorities, and with clear deliverables that can add value to the challenges facing EU and national research and innovation systems.

Working methods for ERAC

Article 2 of ERAC's mandate states that: "The Committee's principal mission is to provide timely strategic input to the Council, the Commission and Member States on the ongoing implementation of the ERA in Member States and Associated Countries and on other strategic research and innovation policy issues. The Committee shall do this on its own initiative or at the request of the Council or the Commission."

ERAC's work programme will need to take a more flexible, proactive approach to ensure ERAC can contribute in a speedy and timely manner, as appropriate, to emerging and evolving issues. ERAC will consider three or four 'big ticket' issues each year. Such topics will give ERAC an opportunity, for example:

- to give strategic advice at an early stage in developing R&I policy;
- to consider the impact of other policies on the R&I agenda and advise on the appropriate actions; and
- to advise on the implementation of R&I policies and propose specific actions to support these policies.

It is important that ERAC considers carefully what outcomes and impacts it hopes to achieve. ERAC is reminded that it doesn't have to reach consensus on topics and outside speakers may be invited to stimulate discussions. It is proposed that during the ERAC plenaries hosted by the Presidency country, the 2nd day could be devoted for DGs to discuss such strategic issues.

ERAC will improve the dialogue with the incoming Presidencies, undertaking the necessary preparatory work to contribute policy options for debates in Council. Presidencies will be invited to present their indicative priorities and planning to ERAC well in advance of their term (SK and MT Presidencies will start this process at the ERAC Plenary in January). ERAC will also liaise with the current/ outgoing Presidency to provide advice regarding the follow-up and implementation of Council conclusions.

ERAC will continue to work on its 'regular' strands, in particular ensuring the momentum is maintained on the initiatives to deliver tangible results. The significant milestone to be reached in 2016 will be Member States delivering their national ERA action plans and strategies.

The key factors in meeting the demands during this period will be prioritisation and willingness from both Member State representatives and the Commission to actively participate in the process - otherwise the activities of ERAC will not have any value added and there will be no partnership.

The quality in preparations of each strategic debate will be decisive. ERAC and the Steering Board will have to make use of seminars, *ad hoc* working groups and rapporteurs in order to deal with issues so that they can reach the Plenary sufficiently mature for debate and/or adoption, e.g. in the form of a written opinion.

In order to have adequate time for strategic debate in ERAC Plenary, summary information will continue to be given to members of ERAC in writing in advance of the meetings (under Standing Information Point), with new important developments being taken up orally by the co-Chairs or Presidency.

Strategic topics for 2016

The proposed strategic topics for consideration by ERAC in 2016 are:

- Research, science and innovation in the EU budget and the mid-term review of the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF);
- The innovation/ research divide (both within the EU and with the rest of the world);
- Better regulation for innovation - the Innovation Principle and Innovation Deals;
- Horizon 2020 mid-term review, orientations for the next Framework programme;
- Digitalisation in the context of the societal challenges;
- Foresight (e.g. The Knowledge Future: intelligent policy choices for Europe 2050);
- European Innovation Council.

Presidency's priorities

This particular part of the work programme will develop in line with the priorities for the Presidencies as they become more mature.

- Framework conditions for research and innovation (including Better regulation for innovation) (NL);
- Open Science (including open access to scientific publications) (NL);
- Measures to support young researchers - attractiveness of scientific career, support of mobility (SK);
- Implementation of key changes in the business sector in order to boost economic growth at national and European level (SK);
- Widening participation in Horizon 2020 (SK);
- Streamlining the R&I Monitoring and Reporting Landscape (MT).

Regular strands

These strands include:

- ERA - implementation and monitoring the ERA Roadmap, including Member States' national ERA action plans and strategies, ERA conference and the future orientation and development of ERA;
- European Semester – Annual Growth survey priorities for the Semester; dialogue on the R&I elements of the country reports and follow-up on R&I country-specific recommendations;
- Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility - demand-driven, responding to requests made by Member States and Associated Countries for its three main services: Peer Reviews of national R&I systems; specific support to the design, implementation and evaluation of policy reforms; and mutual learning exercises in relation to the policy issues raised;
- ERA governance - implementation of Council conclusions, including the coordination of ERAC and the ERA-related groups through the ERAC Steering Board with the objective of knowledge sharing and greater alignment of activities; streamlining ERA-related groups and other expert groups; preparing the annual report to the Council on the progress and impact against the ERA Roadmap.

WORK PROGRAMME 2016-2017

Update January 2016

<u>Regular strands</u>	14-15 January 29 th meeting Amsterdam	22 April 30 th meeting Brussels	15-16 September 31 st meeting Bratislava	6 December 32 nd meeting Brussels	16-17 March 2017 (TBC) 33 rd meeting Valetta	2 nd semester 2017
ERA - implementation and monitoring the ERA Roadmap, national action plans and strategies	<p>Follow-up of ERA Roadmap – progress of national action plans and strategies (break-out session)</p> <p>Discussion on state of the art and methodology of the proposed indicators for the EMM</p> <p>ERAC Opinion on Open Access and Innovation</p> <p>Presentation of R&I policy in the Netherlands</p>	<p>Follow-up of ERA Roadmap - national action plans and strategies – final issues and preparation of Ministerial Conference (round table)</p> <p>Presentation and agreement on the Work Programmes of ERA-related groups</p>	<p>Outcome and follow-up of Ministerial Conference (tbc)</p> <p>Initial discussion on streamlining the R&I Monitoring and Reporting Landscape</p> <p>Presentation of R&I policy in Slovakia</p>		<p>Presentation of R&I policy in Malta</p>	
European Semester	<p>Follow-up European Semester</p>	<p>Follow-up European Semester (tbc)</p>				

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Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility	Update on the ongoing PSF activities	Peer Review - update on review of Moldovan R&I system				
ERA governance	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2015) on ERA governance Set-up of ERAC WG on ERA P5 Discussion on the Commission's inventory of ERA-related groups and other expert groups with a view to streamlining the groups	Implementation of Council conclusions on ERA governance				

Major events and milestones

January 2016	February 2016	March 2016	April 2016	May 2016	June 2016
Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for research (27 January, Amsterdam, NL)				Competitiveness Council (27 May) Ministerial conference on ERA	
July 2016	August 2016	September 2016	October 2016	November 2016	December 2016
		Competitiveness Council (end September - TBC)		Competitiveness Council (end November- TBC)	ERAC plenary (6 December, Brussels)
January 2017	February 2017	March 2017	April 2017	May 2017	June 2017
July 2017	August 2016	September 2017	October 2017	November 2017	December 2017