

EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 18 November 2011

**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
COMMITTEE**

**High Level Group for
Joint Programming**

Secretariat

ERAC-GPC 1305/11

NOTE

Subject: Rules of Procedure of the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC)

Delegations will find in the annex Rules of Procedure of the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC), as adopted by GPC at its meeting on 11 November 2011.

**HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON JOINT PROGRAMMING (GPC)
DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Article 1
COMPOSITION**

1. The High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC) (hereinafter referred to as "the Group") shall consist of the Member States and the Commission (hereinafter referred to as "the Members").
2. Each Member shall nominate up to two representatives responsible for research and innovation policies.
3. Each Member may nominate up to two alternate representatives. However, each Member shall be represented in a meeting by a maximum of two representatives.
4. Notice of nominations or replacements of the representatives and their alternates of Members shall be sent to the Secretariat.
5. At the meetings, the Members' representatives may be assisted by advisers.

**Article 2
OBSERVERS**

1. The GPC shall also include the countries associated to the Framework Programme (hereinafter referred to as "the Observers").

2. Each Observer shall nominate up to two representatives responsible for research and innovation policies.
3. Each Observer may nominate up to two alternate representatives. However, each Observer shall be represented in a meeting by a maximum of two representatives.
4. Notice of nominations or replacements of the representatives and their alternates of Observers shall be sent to the Secretariat.
5. At the meetings, the Observers' representatives may be assisted by advisers.

Article 3

CHAIR

1. The Group shall be chaired by one of its Member States' representatives for a period of two years. The Chair shall be elected according to the procedure defined in Article 9. The Chair's term shall not be renewable more than once.
2. The Member State from which a representative has been elected as the Chair shall nominate another representative in his/her place for the period of the Chair's term.
3. The Chair shall have no voting rights.
4. The Chair shall be responsible for chairing the Group's meetings and the overall guidance of its work.

Article 4
VICE-CHAIR

1. The Group shall have a Vice-Chair elected for a period of two years from among its Member States' representatives, according to the procedure defined in Article 9. The Vice-Chair's term shall not be renewable more than once.
2. The Member State whose representative has been elected as the Vice-Chair shall nominate another representative in his/her place for the period of the Vice-Chair's term.
3. The Vice-Chair shall have no voting rights.
4. The Vice-Chair shall cooperate with the Chair in carrying out his/her tasks and shall replace him/her on mutually agreed occasions.

Article 5
SECRETARIAT

1. The Secretariat of the Group shall be provided by the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU.
2. The Secretariat shall ensure proper running of the Group's meetings. It shall prepare the summary of conclusions of each meeting of the Group and, in agreement with the Chair submit it to the Group for approval at the following meeting.
3. All correspondence for the Group shall be addressed to the Secretariat, using the following electronic address [erac.gpc@consilium.europa.eu].

4. All correspondence from the Group to the Members and Observers shall be addressed from the Secretariat to the electronic addresses of the Members' and Observers' representatives (including the alternates). All representatives (including the alternates) must provide their electronic addresses to the Secretariat.

Article 6 MEETINGS

1. The Group shall meet at least twice a year depending on the needs to fulfil its mandate.
2. The Group shall meet when convened by the Chair on his/her own initiative or at the request of at least six Members.

Article 7 WORK PROGRAMME

1. The Group shall have a 24 months rolling Work Programme.
2. The Work Programme shall be adopted by the Group.
3. The Work Programme shall describe activities of the Group which are in line with its mandate.

The Work Programme shall be updated every 12 months.

Article 8
AGENDA

1. Taking into account the Group's Work Programme, the Secretariat shall draw up the provisional agenda for each meeting. After the agreement of the Chair, it shall be submitted to the Group at least 10 working days before the beginning of the meeting.
2. The agenda may also include items in respect of which a request for inclusion, together with any documents relating thereto, has been received by the Secretariat from the Members or Observers at least 12 working days before the beginning of that meeting, unless under exceptional circumstances which have been accepted by the Chair.
3. The Group may invite other experts as observers, including members of the European Parliament, when relevant agenda items so require. The provisional agenda shall clearly indicate which items are subject to such an invitation.
4. Documentation to be submitted to the Group shall include, where appropriate, a brief summary highlighting the key issues on which its opinion is requested and shall normally be available at least 10 working days before the meeting, unless exceptional circumstances accepted by the Chair. In any case this time limit shall not be less than two working days.
5. The agenda shall be approved by the Group at the beginning of each meeting.
6. By consensus and in duly justified cases, the Group may derogate from the abovementioned provisions.

Article 9

VOTING ARRANGEMENTS AND QUORUM

1. Each Member shall have one vote. The presence of the representatives of at least 15 Members is required to enable the Group to adopt its decisions.
2. Decisions of the Group, including opinions and reports, shall be adopted by a 2/3 majority of its Members present at the meeting if a vote is requested¹. Any minority views of the Members shall be recorded.
3. The vote shall be cast by one of the representatives or alternate representatives nominated in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 3 of Article 1.
4. In urgent cases decisions of the Group, including opinions and reports, may be adopted by means of a written procedure. Such procedure shall be set in motion by the Secretariat upon the request of the Chair who shall also fix its time limit according to the urgency of each case. In any case this time limit shall not be less than two working days.

Article 10

AD-HOC WORKING GROUPS

1. The Group may, on a case by case basis, nominate rapporteurs and, if necessary, establish temporary ad hoc working groups with specific mandates to deal with questions relevant to its mandate. The proceedings of these working groups shall be under the responsibility of the chair of each working group.

¹ This provision emphasises that the main aim is to take decisions by consensus. Only when a vote will be requested, the majority rule will apply.

2. Specifically an ad-hoc working group could be established in order to prepare the first Work Programme as well as to propose and provide support for actions in view of its implementation.

Article 11

PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS AND TRANSPARENCY

1. The meetings of the Group and its working groups are confidential and not open to the public.
2. The official documents of the Group, notably the agendas, work programmes, summary conclusions, opinions and reports, shall be made public unless otherwise decided by the Group. These documents shall bear a GPC number and, when relevant, their author(s).
