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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Making Europe a magnet for research talent: better conditions and fewer barriers

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European Research and Innovation Area Committee (ERAC) delegations will find attached a Background Note on the discussion “Making Europe a magnet for research talent: better conditions and fewer barriers,” prepared by the Commission, with a view to the extraordinary informal ERAC meeting on 16 April 2025 (by videoconference).

**Making Europe a magnet for research talent:  
better conditions and fewer barriers  
Exchange of views**

**Context**

In today's global landscape marked by geopolitical uncertainty and growing competition for talent, Europe has the opportunity to both retain its two million researchers and improve its attractiveness as a destination for international research talent and returning members of the European scientific diaspora.

The European Commission is advancing several initiatives to support the European 'pull factor' with better conditions and fewer barriers. This includes but is not limited to the MSCA "Choose Europe" pilot, additional ERC support for researchers relocating to the EU, relocation and career development support by EURAXESS a Visa Strategy, and the future ERA Act, legislation on the freedom of academic research, or the implementation of the Council recommendation on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe. However, these endeavours must be complemented by a collaborative effort, requiring swift action at both national and EU levels.

At the Research Working Party on 7 April 2025, the Commission presented its ongoing and upcoming actions, underscoring the urgency and opportunity for Europe to strengthen its strategic position. A clear message emerged: ensuring better conditions and removing barriers must be a joint effort, remaining country-agnostic, in full compliance with research security principles, and consistent with existing sanctions regimes.

In this context, the Commission launched a survey on 9 April 2025 via the ERA Forum to collect information on national, regional, and institutional initiatives designed to attract global talent (deadline of 25 April). This survey supports evidence-based policymaking at both national and EU levels and the results are ready in May. The survey should be given appropriate visibility within each national administration to ensure that the relevant people and services are able to contribute.

### **ERAC strategic discussion**

This informal ERAC meeting offers an opportunity for ERAC delegations to exchange views and share experiences regarding their efforts to attract and retain research talent. It will provide a platform to gain a clearer understanding of recent and planned initiatives across Europe, explore the role of communication campaigns, and collect ideas for further EU support. Moreover, it will assess interest in a possible collective approach involving Member States, EU institutions, and stakeholders to act in a more coordinated, strategic and visible manner through a package of measures allowing for a greater impact and sending a strong signal to researchers worldwide.

Questions for Delegations:

- (1) Could you share your country's views and any recent or upcoming initiatives on attracting researchers from third countries?
- (2) Do you promote these initiatives, and if so, how?
- (3) What suggestions would you have for potential EU initiatives to further support the 'pull factor' of Europe for the attraction of researchers from third countries?
- (4) Would there be interest in developing a collective approach involving Member States, EU institutions and stakeholders, to better coordinate efforts and send a strong signal to researchers worldwide?