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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB for the meeting of the Council "Competitiveness" (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space) on 22 and 23 May 2025 The Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area beyond 2027 - Information from Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia

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The Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) partnership was proposed in October 2016, adopted in July 2017, and extended until April 2024.

PRIMA was set under the initiative of the Member States and based on Article 185 TFEU, establishing a public-public partnership and following the ordinary legislative procedure. It was the first partnership in the Mediterranean area on equal footing with the European Commission EU Member States and southern Mediterranean countries from Africa and the Middle East.

PRIMA has become a relevant tool for science diplomacy and the main instrument of cooperation in the region. PRIMA's main aim is to pool the knowledge and financial resources of the EU and the Participating States to develop research activities and innovative solutions for water provision and food systems in the Mediterranean area.

Between 2018 and 2024, the PRIMA Partnership funded 269 projects, involving over 2,500 beneficiaries and allocating more than €400 million to these initiatives.

PRIMA activities are expected to continue until 31 December 2031, with the final call for proposals scheduled for 2027 under the Horizon Europe framework—marking the end of its active term.

The Participating States have expressed a shared political and scientific interest in continuing PRIMA beyond 2027 and supporting the Commission in prioritising its future under the same institutional framework of Article 185 of the TFEU. In a recent letter to Commissioner Zaharieva, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain urged the Commission to conduct the evaluation foreseen in the Horizon Europe provisions and to take the necessary steps to assess PRIMA's continuation under the next EU's multiannual financial framework.

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