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ERAC

WORKING PAPER

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)
Subject:	Draft ERAC opinion on the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 and preparations for the next Framework Programme - Draft Executive Summary - ERAC plenary 16 June 2017 - agenda item 4.1

Delegations will find attached the draft Executive Summary of the draft ERAC opinion on the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 and preparations for the next Framework Programme.

Research and Innovation are the roots of our European democratic values. Today, the framework programmes for research and innovation (FPs) represent the main drivers for competitiveness, wellbeing, as environmental and social resilience, particularly in pointing out social challenges in addition with excellence. At EU level, FPs generate an outstanding EU added value, notably by teaming up and by driving collaborations of R&I ecosystems through all Europe.

With Horizon 2020, FPs have achieved a significant leap toward simplification and predictability both by framing a coherent architecture based on 3 main pillars, and by implementing 2-year work programmes. This breakthrough at programme level has been reinforced by relevant simplifications at project level, widely supported by the stakeholders.

These improvements have been successful at supporting excellence and collaborative research as corner stones on all the R&I chain.

Today, FPs rely on outstanding initiatives that optimize the European added value of the programme. For instance, ERC activities, the infrastructure programme, the Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions and the collaborative projects under Future Emerging Technologies, the Societal challenges and the Key Enabling Technologies, have already contributed to the impact H2020. The current balance between collaborative projects and mono-beneficiaries activities should be preserved to further boost transnational collaborations.

FPs are also enabling the realization of the European Research Area, consistently with all its priorities, which is a common goal as well as a shared competence of the Member States/Associated Countries and the European Union.

Beyond the FP7 and H2020 significant achievements and successes, ERAC nevertheless identified further improvements to be delivered:

- 1) ***The next FP should reaffirm the achievement of ERA as a top priority.*** In particular, FPs should continue supporting all activities related to the so called ERA priorities such as the common efforts by MS/AC and the EC in jointly at addressing grand challenges.
- 2) ***FPs must incentive involvement of new participants, whatever is their location, status, gender, as far as they met excellence.*** This calls for different actions. On the one hand, it is necessary to keep simplification high on the agenda, so as to squeeze transaction costs related to proposal preparation. On the other hand, it is crucial to disseminate excellence by ensuring the inclusion of all EU R&I excellent stakeholders interested in the common activities of FPs.
- 3) ***FPs must reinforce the international cooperation with Europe's global partners as soon as possible.*** The current global context calls for a longstanding cooperation between research and innovation actors from all over the world. FPs can boost EU attractiveness and EU stances in decisive multilateral endeavors such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.
- 4) ***Innovation has to deserve a good policy mix and the involvement of all R&I actors.*** The wellbeing of Europeans relies on the capacity to incentive R&I ecosystems to push forward

the knowledge frontiers, while disseminating knowledge and solutions to society at large. There is a need for technological innovation support as well as non-technological innovation, notably with the active involvement of Social Science and Humanities. All existing schemes should aim at maximizing complementarities among existing national and EU initiatives.

- 5) ***FPs should feed EU sectoral policies.*** R&I policies can provide significant impact to EU policies, notably by providing data for evidence based policies. The other way round, R&I policies should be liaising with pertinent public policies. In particular, strong linkages with Higher Education are necessary to harness the full potential of the knowledge triangle.
- 6) ***FPs should deliver better and continued dialogue with the European citizens.*** Exchanges between science and society have to be continued and renewed. In a context of political questioning in Europe, it is necessary to show that FPs are a great success in terms of scientific and socio-economic achievements, dissemination of the European values of freedom and inclusion.