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ERAC

WORKING PAPER

WORKING DOCUMENT

From:	ERAC Secretariat
To:	ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)
Subject:	ERAC Plenary 21-22 September 2017 - agenda item 7.3 Review of the ERA governance foreseen in 2018

ERAC Members will find attached a paper from the ERAC Steering Board relating to item 7.3 of the agenda of the ERAC plenary on 21-22 September 2017 in Tartu.

35th ERAC Plenary meeting on 21-22 September 2017 in Tartu

Agenda item 7.3: Review of ERA governance foreseen in 2018

Paper from the ERAC Steering Board

Prepared for the Steering Board by Christian Naczinsky (Austria) with the support of Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Italy and Sweden

Background

In its Conclusions of December 2015, the Council (Competitiveness) agreed that the mandates of the ERA-related groups should be reviewed at least every three years, starting no later than 2018.¹ The review should be organised in line with the procedures outlined in the ERAC Opinion on the review of the European Research Area advisory structure.²

In practical terms, the guidelines translate into the following milestones:

When	Who	What
4 December 2017	ERAC at DG level	Discussing the strategic landscape for R&I in Europe to identify key strategic priorities that will require attention by the research and innovation community
January 2018	ERAC Steering Board (including Chairs of other ERA-related groups)	Identifying the scope of the review ³ (in the light of DG's guidance), i.e. draft terms of reference, methodology and timetable
15-16 March 2018	ERAC	Launching the review (appointing a rapporteur)
17 May 2018	ERAC	Interim report on the review
17-18 September 2018	ERAC at DG level	Adopting the final report on the review
24 September – 29 October 2018	Council (Research Working Party)	Preparing ERA Council Conclusions
November 2018	Council (Coreper)	Preparing ERA Council Conclusions
30 November 2018	Council (Competitiveness)	Adopting ERA Council Conclusions

Preparatory work

Following the initial exchange of views at the Malta ERAC meeting in March 2017, a group of seven delegations from Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and Austria volunteered to help the ERAC Steering Board prepare the discussion at DG level. Given its role as future EU Presidency in 2018, Austria accepted the responsibility to facilitate the preparatory process.

¹ Council Conclusions of 1 December 2015 on the Review of the ERA advisory structure (doc. 14875/15).

² ERAC 1212/15, Annex D

³ In case ERAC's mandate is reviewed in-depth, the Bulgarian and Austrian EU Presidencies of 2018 will launch an independent ERA review.

The “Group of Seven” expressed its view that the ERA review in 2018 should seek a light, evolutionary approach. The review should acknowledge the on-going implementation of the 2015 European ERA roadmap and the 2016 national ERA roadmaps that will take a couple of years to deliver results. Therefore, the focus of the debate of Directors General in ERAC should be on two aspects: (a) short-term consolidation of the ERA process, and (b) mid-term review of key strategic priorities of ERA. In December 2017, DGs should take decisions that shape the scope of the review.

At its meeting in June 2017, the ERAC Steering Board decided to provide a guidance paper to be submitted to the DGs, in time for the ERAC debate at DG level in December 2017. This paper will cover the short- and medium-term issues the DGs would be invited to discuss, together with any necessary background on the broader strategic landscape for R&I in Europe. It will be based on the potential questions below, taking account of comments from ERAC delegations.

As a preliminary step, and with the kind agreement of the Norwegian delegation, the upcoming informal meeting of the Research Policy Group on 26/27 October 2017 in Oslo will invite participants to have an exchange of views on the broader strategic landscape. An informal note of the RPG discussion will be made by the AT delegation for the ERAC Steering Board to draw on as appropriate in preparing the guidance note for the DG discussion in December.

Possible set of questions for ERAC at DG level

(1) Fundamental question

- Do you consider the mandates of ERAC or any of the other ERA-related groups to be at the core of next year’s review?

(2) Short-term consolidation of the ERA process

- What works well, what does not work well today?
- What are the changes you would like to propose in order to optimise the governance of ERA? Is the system of ERA-related groups flexible enough to adapt to new challenges?
- Are there any urgent needs for adjustment of the governance?
- How well does the governance of the ERAC work? Including:
 - The interaction between the ERAC plenary and the ERA-related groups work?
 - The interaction within the ERAC Steering Board between the Co-Chairs, the ERAC Secretariat of the Council, the services of the European Commission, the EU Presidencies, the elected Member States’ representatives, and the chairs of the ERA-related groups work?
 - The interaction of the ERAC Steering Board with the ERAC plenary and individual ERAC delegations work?
- Is the current ERA monitoring and reporting system fit for purpose? If not, are there any ideas for improvement?
- How do you think the logistics of ERA-related activities should be adapted to the new situation?

(3) Mid-term review of key ERA priorities

- How do you assess the progress of the ERA-priorities?
- Are the current ERA priorities still relevant or are they “outdated”?
- How useful have the national ERA roadmaps been in promoting the ERA at national level and bringing forward the ERA as a whole?
- To what extent is ERAC committed to continuing/updating the national ERA Roadmaps after 2020, in the light of the new prospective key strategic issues?

Objective of the exchange of view at the Tartu ERAC meeting

Delegations are invited to consider the proposed set of questions in view of the discussion of ERAC at DG level on 4 December 2017. Feedback would be welcome concerning

- a. the appropriateness of the overall approach of the ERA governance review
- b. the proposed set of questions.