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From: ERAC Secretariat
To: ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)

Subject: ERAC Plenary 5 December - agenda item 6 (Standing Information Point)
- Outcome of the Expression of Interest for PSF activities.

In view of the discussions under item 6 of the agenda of the ERAC plenary on 5 December, delegations will find attached the "Outcome of the Expression of Interest for PSF activities".

ERAC - Standing Information Point
Update on the activities of the Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility

36th Plenary meeting
Agenda Item 6
Brussels, 5 December 2017

The [Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility](#) (PSF) provides support in the design, implementation and evaluation of research and innovation policy reforms, is demand-driven and responds to requests made by Member States and Associated Countries. Its support is either topic-specific (mutual learning exercises) or country-specific (peer reviews of national R&I systems, or specific support to policy reforms). The PSF draws on expressions of interest that the Commission services launch annually through ERAC (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. The PSF cycle



The fourth expression of interest in PSF services was sent to ERAC on 13 June 2017 (with deadline 15 September 2017) and served as basis for the planning of the 2018 PSF activities. As a result tailor-made policy support will be provided to Malta, Cyprus, Montenegro, Estonia and Latvia. Two new Mutual Learning Exercises (MLEs) will be launched: one on *Research Integrity* and the second one, jointly with the OECD, on the *Digitalisation of science and innovation policies*. The concept notes describing the scope of these MLEs will be circulated for ERAC's feedback and ERAC delegates will be asked to express their country's interest in joining these activities in due time. Since there is an increasing demand for PSF support, some of the requests (e.g. Armenia) are planned to start in 2019.

The [PSF Knowledge Centre \(https://ec.europa.eu/h2020-policy-support-facility\)](https://ec.europa.eu/h2020-policy-support-facility) presents the main findings of all PSF activities. In addition, the PSF monthly newsletter¹ (subscribe [here](#)) informs about highlights of PSF's activities by presenting factsheets on each new activity (e.g. [Georgia](#)) or articles summarising findings of concluded activities (see summaries on [Poland](#), [Lithuania](#) and [MLE on Alignement and Interoperability of Research Programmes](#)).

With almost **twenty-six activities carried out since its launch in 2015** (see Annex 1), feedback portrays the PSF as an influential tool to induce reforms of national research and innovation systems, drawing on tailor-made advice by leading experts and policy practitioners (e.g. recent PSF inputs to the Polish Law 2.0 constituting an overall revision of the Polish Science and Higher Education system or to the new Research Code in Moldova, including the creation of a dedicated Ministry). PSF mutual learning exercises (MLEs) are notably appreciated by participants for their ability to sustain communities of peers that furnish fresh policy insights on issues such as performance-based funding, open science or innovation procurement.

A Seminar on "***Policy support to reforms of national research and innovations systems in Europe***" will take place on **11 December 2017** in Brussels and gather high-level independent experts that actively contributed to PSF activities, policy practitioners from host and peer countries, and representatives of international organisations involved in support to R&I policy development such as the OECD and the World Bank. It will allow for a space for dialogue on the approaches and methods used, the results obtained and the difficulties encountered in the process of country-specific policy support.

The findings of this Seminar will influence future approaches to R&I policy support by the European Commission.

An invitation to the Seminar was sent to ERAC delegates on 27 October 2017. 10 countries confirmed their interest in participating in the discussions. Please note that a specific seminar on policy support approaches devoted to mutual learning exercises is also planned as a follow up to the 11 December 2017 Seminar (details to be announced in Q1-2018).

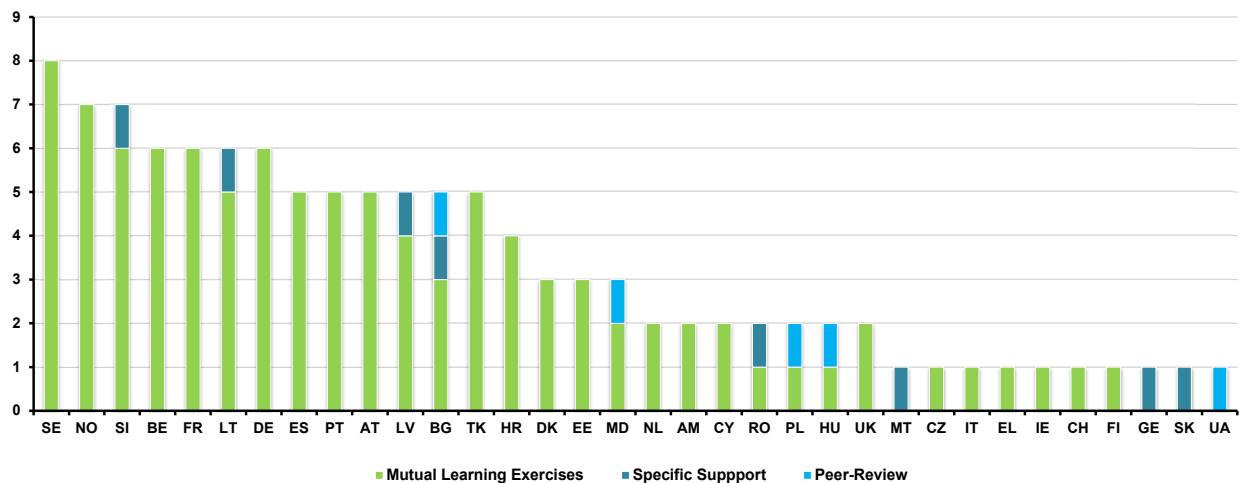
Contact RTD-PSF@ec.europa.eu.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/rtd/newsletter-specific-archive-issue.cfm?newsletter_service_id=545&lang=default

Annex 1: Summary list of the concluded, ongoing and planned PSF activities

Find below a summary of the concluded, on-going and planned activities of the PSF. Those foreseen for launch in 2018 follow up from the outcome of the fourth call for expression of interest in the services of the Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility (circulated to ERAC on 13 June 2017).

Figure 2. Statistics on PSF participation by country



I. PSF Peer Reviews of national R&I systems:

PSF Peer Reviews of national R&I systems are in-depth assessments of a country's R&I system carried out by a panel of experts and leading to concrete recommendations to the national authorities on reforms necessary to strengthen their R&I system.

- [Bulgaria](#) (final report published in October 2015)
- [Moldova](#) (final report published in July 2016)
- [Hungary](#) ([pre-Peer Review](#) published in October 2015; [Peer Review](#) in September 2016)
- [Ukraine](#) (final report published in December 2016)
- [Poland](#) (final report published in September 2017);
- [Malta](#) (*planned for 2018*)

II. PSF Specific support to countries

PSF specific support to countries aims at providing a set of concrete recommendations on how to tackle a specific R&I policy challenge and how to implement the accompanying reforms.

- [Malta](#) on tools to monitor the national R&I Strategy (final report published in July 2016)
- [Slovakia](#) on framework conditions for start-ups/ high growth innovative enterprises (final report published in February 2017)

- [Romania](#) on innovative entrepreneurship (under finalisation)
- [Slovenia](#) on the internationalisation of science and higher education policies, and on the cooperation between the science base and businesses (under finalisation).
- [Bulgaria](#) on performance-based funding of public research and on evaluation of research institutions (under finalisation)
- [Lithuania](#) on attraction of innovation-oriented FDI and on science-business cooperation (final report published in October 2017)
- [Latvia](#) on the funding system for public research, notably its governance and organisational aspects (under finalisation)
- [Georgia](#) on identification of promising research fields, science-business links and performance-based evaluation of research entities (launched in October 2017).
- [Tunisia](#) on private sector participation in R&I and methodology for defining research priorities (starting soon).
- [Cyprus](#) on the use of publicly funded infrastructures by the business sector (planned for 2018, tbc)
- [Montenegro](#) on the development of the start-up ecosystem (planned for 2018)
- [Estonia](#) –topic to be confirmed (planned for 2018, possible joint project with OECD)
- [Malta](#) on open access (planned for 2019)
- [Latvia](#) on human resources for R&D (planned for 2019)

III. PSF Mutual learning exercises

PSF mutual learning exercises (MLEs) focus on specific/ operational R&I challenges of interest to several volunteering countries, and draw on a hands-on project-based exchange of good practice.

- **Pilot [Mutual Learning Exercise on measures to stimulate business R&I](#)**, during which the new MLE methodology was proposed (concluded in June 2015);
- **[Evaluation of business R&D grant schemes \(phase 2\)](#)** - launched in June 2017; with participation of AT, BE, DE, HR, ES, FR, LT, SE, SI, NO, TR, UK,;
- **[Administration and monitoring of R&D tax incentives](#)** with participation of LV, PT, BE, FR, NO, NL, UK (concluded in October 2016);
- **Evaluation of business R&D grant schemes** with participation of NO, DK, ES, SE, DE, TR, RO (concluded in November 2016);
- **[Evaluation of complex public private partnerships](#)** with participation of BE, NO, BG, SE (concluded in October 2016);
- **[Alignment and Interoperability of research programmes](#)** (national coordination) – with participation of FR, LT, DK, TK, NO, AT, PT, EE, SI, SE and RO (DE as observer), dissemination workshop on 28 June 2017 in Brussels ;
- **[Performance-based funding of public research organisations](#)** – ongoing, with participation of AT, CZ, CY, EE, ES, NO, SI, SE, PT, AM, IT, TK, HR, MD;
- **[Innovation procurement](#)** - ongoing, with participation of AT, EL, EE, LV, ES, PT, DE, SI, FR, IE, NO, TR, BE, LT, SE, NL
- **[Open science](#)** - ongoing; with participation of LT, SI, FR, BE, LV, CH, PT, HR, MD, AT, AM, SE, BG;

- **National practice in widening Participation to the EU Framework Programmes and strengthening synergies between H2020 and European Structural Investment Funds** - launched in May 2017, with participation of FR, DK, CY, FI, TK, SE, BE, HR, DE (as observer), ES, SI, PL, LV, BG and HU;
- **Alignment and Interoperability of research programmes** (Second sequence tbc); participation tbc;
- ***Research Integrity*** (planned for 2018)
- ***Digitalisation of science and innovation policies (jointly with OECD)*** (planned for 2018)

IV PSF Knowledge Centre

The **PSF Knowledge Centre** (<https://ec.europa.eu/h2020-policy-support-facility>) makes available all information stemming from the PSF work as well as R&I policy monitoring and analysis performed in the European Semester. It also includes communication material and the latest news about the PSF.