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

Subject: ERAC Plenary 5 December - agenda item 7.1 (Updates from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups)

In view of item 7.1 of the agenda of the ERAC plenary on 5 December, delegations will find attached the "Updates from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups."

**UPDATES FROM THE ERAC STANDING WORKING GROUPS AND FROM THE
ERA-RELATED GROUPS**

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ESFRI

ESFRI carries out its mandates from Council concerning the update of the Roadmap 2018, the analysis of scenarios for optimal e-Infrastructures and the long term sustainability of RIs. Concerning Priority 2b, ESFRI has received at the deadline of August 31, 12 new proposals that are currently in the pipeline of evaluation. A new strategic working group on data and e-infrastructured (DIGIT) has been established. In fall 2017 the second volume of ESFRI Scripta II has been published with the results of the Long Term Sustainability of Research Infrastructures Working Group. ESFRI is now preparing the edition of ESFRI Scripta III about the results of the INNO WG describing the innovation aspects connected with RIs.

GPC

The work of the GPC, since the last ERAC meeting in September 2017, includes activities related to:

Measuring the Progress and Implementation of Priority 2a of the ERA Roadmap:

The Report of the Task Force “**ERA NAPs and Strategies Analysis for Priority 2a**” and a monitoring mechanism are foreseen to be adopted during the GPC meeting in Dec. 2017. The GPC is planning to monitor the progress of relevant actions/per country on the implementation of ERA Priority 2a on an annual basis.

Contributing to the Discussion on the Future of Joint Programming:

Following the work done since Apr. 2017 (input to the H2020 WP 2018-2020, Long Term Strategies of the 10 JPIs, GPC Opinion on the "Future of Joint Programming " etc.) and the recent discussions in the informal Council and ERAC meetings, the GPC:

- organised a first discussion during the Sept. 2017 plenary meeting with the participation of the EC, Ms Jana KOLAR, guest speaker in the Informal Meeting of Ministers and the Chair of the Research Working Party,
- decided to establish a new Working Group (AT, ES, FR, PT, SE) to conduct *an analysis of the Long Term Strategies of the 10 JPIs*,
- **organised its 3rd Workshop on the Future of Joint Programming (JP) entitled “Partnerships on Mission Oriented Programmes”**, with 135 participants. The Workshop aimed to take a next step towards a reflection of existing partnerships and their missions against requirements of future mission oriented programmes. Parallel sessions were organised to **bring together the JPIs, other initiatives tackling similar challenges and EC representatives** and allow thematic in-depth discussions on how to improve coherence of the partnership landscape and strengthen the delivery of partnerships on tackling specific societal **challenges and related missions**.

The main conclusions of the Workshop will be discussed during the next GPC meeting (Dec. 2017) in view of taking possible further actions.

- will actively *contribute to the ERAC ad-hoc WG on Partnerships* (Five GPC members including the GPC Chair and Vice-Chair will participate).

Improving Alignment and Interoperability

Following a presentation by Ms Jana KOLAR, Chair of the Mutual Learning Exercise, the GPC discussed during its last meeting (Sept 2017) the background, the modus operandi, the transferable lessons as well as the planned follow-up steps of the exercise. The follow-up and next steps will be discussed during the next GPC meetings.

Enhancing Widening Participation:

The Inclusiveness TF continue its work to examine the participation of low-performing countries in JPP (analysis of major bottlenecks) and assesses the best practices used for involving low-performing countries.

SFIC

The Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) met on 29 September 2017 in Plenary format.

In the context of the preparation of a SFIC opinion on gender aspects in international cooperation the rapporteur presented a draft report summarising the results of a survey carried out between April and June 2017 among government representatives and funding agencies with the aim to explore the current situation at national and organisational level regarding a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI. The report shall be finalised and adopted at the next SFIC Plenary meeting. Furthermore, the rapporteur is currently preparing on this basis a draft opinion to be discussed at the next SFIC Plenary meeting. The work on the SFIC report and opinion is being coordinated with the recently created ERAC Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation. It aims at providing an input for the preparation of the next multiannual framework programme for research. Delegations generally welcomed the results of the survey which, from their point of view, correctly reflected the current difficulties in including gender issues in international STI cooperation and showed the importance of developing joint guidelines on gender aspects.

Moreover, SFIC discussed the state of play on requests to the INCO Service Facility submitted so far. The Commission reported about the commitments made at this stage and promised to provide regular written information on the follow-up given to the service requests in order to enable Member States to promote the requested activities among stakeholders and to avoid duplication with similar actions at national level.

SFIC adopted guidelines for the submission and endorsement of service requests to the INCO Service Facility in order to establish a standard procedure, clear responsibilities and objective criteria for the introduction of requests, their endorsement by SFIC and their implementation by the Commission.

The German delegation presented three new proposals for service requests:

- A request for a foresight study on the Global Research Area, which was endorsed by SFIC;
- A request relating to indicators for international cooperation, which was not accepted by the Commission as different sets of indicators had already been developed in other fora and there was not sufficient evidence on the added value of the requested work;
- A request to support the Danube Region Policy Dialogue, which the Commission suggested to include as a sub-item in the already existing Western Balkans Platform meetings.

The SFIC Plenary also discussed the future of SFIC working groups on the basis of a working paper developing four different options for a future approach. Many delegations expressed their preference for not renewing the mandates of the current groups, and creating thematic or geographical groups on an *ad hoc* basis in specific cases and for dedicated short time spans while, in general, topics should be dealt with during the Plenary meetings or in dedicated workshops.

Delegations underlined that working groups, if really needed, should have a clear mandate, achievable objectives and a realistic workload, and that a permanent existence of working groups should be avoided. SFIC will discuss at the next Plenary meeting which kind of working groups could be established in the coming years.

The rapporteur for the Toolbox Working Group gave an update on the Group's activities and informed about a workshop that will be organised on 7 December 2017. Some delegations raised questions about the compatibility of the Working Group's ideas with the Research and Innovation Observatory initiated by the Commission's Joint Research Centre. The Commission suggested to strengthen the links between existing Commission websites of international research and innovation

cooperation and the Member States' national repositories of research and innovation developments at country and EU levels. SFIC will have an exchange of views on the results of the workshop and the way forward at its next Plenary meeting.

Representatives of the COST Association presented an overview of the COST framework that supports trans-national cooperation among researchers, engineers and scholars across Europe. They explained the principles for the participation in COST and the functioning of COST actions as well as their financing. Several delegations welcomed the efforts by COST and asked for more information, notably about the financial rules to be respected, but also about the conditions for COST membership and for the participation of partner countries. Delegations expressed their wish to be regularly informed about the activities of COST.

Finally, the Commission presented its activities in the context of the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on science, technology and innovation that had been launched in 2011. The Commission emphasized that the Dialogue so far had concentrated on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture as well as on climate change and sustainable energy, and that it currently prepared a proposal for an EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on climate change and sustainable energy to be endorsed by the EU-Africa Summit scheduled in November 2017 in Abidjan. A number of delegations supported the Commission's efforts and called for creating a strategic partnership that could have a real impact.

The next SFIC Plenary meeting is scheduled on 8 December 2017.

ERAC SWG on Gender in Research and Innovation (GRI)

The SWG GRI was established as of 1/7/ 2017 and builds on the work of the Commission expert group “Helsinki Group on Gender in Research and Innovation” (the HG). The first meeting was held on 18/10/2017. The SWG GRI elected its chair and vice-chair and discussed the Rules of Procedure.

1. Work Programme

SWG GRI Work Programme was discussed at length at the first meeting. Two main analytical topics were identified for the draft Work Programme:

- a) In 2018: Analysis of the implementation of the CC of 1 Dec 2015 on advancing gender equality in the ERA; a sub-group to be established to deal specifically with it. A subgroup will be formed to perform this analysis.
- b) In 2019: Sexual harassment and sexual assault in international mobility – analysis of actions and measures taken at national and institutional level.

The SWG GRI also agreed to allocate a slot at each meeting to best/good practice exchange among Members on programmes and actions at national/regional level to foster gender equality in R&I.

Other priority issues to be addressed by the group include the gender dimension in research and innovation content (gendered innovations) and gender bias in evaluation. Deadline for input for the Work Programme is on 30/11/2017.

2. Guidelines on a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI

As a follow-up to the work launched under the HG, in line with the Council Conclusions on advancing gender equality in the ERA, the SWG GRI discussed draft guidelines on a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI, prepared jointly by rapporteurs from SWG GRI and SFIC. Rapporteurs reported to the SWG GRI on results of a survey carried out in 2017 among national stakeholders (national authorities and RFOs) and presented the draft report; adoption of the guidelines is planned in December 2017 by both SFIC and SWG GRI. Dissemination will take place at the beginning of 2018.

3. Guidance on gender balance in decision-making

In line with Council Conclusions on advancing gender equality in the ERA, the HG in cooperation with the Commission drafted a guidance on gender balance in decision-making. A survey was performed among MS and AC on targets and quotas in decision-making and professorial appointments, a preliminary analysis of NAPs was carried out, and best practices were collected. The guidance was adopted by the HG at its last meeting in April 2017.

At the first meeting of the SWG GRI the Commission and the SWG GRI chair presented the state of play, including a discussion of the guidance with the Gender Doers of the ERA Stakeholder Platform on 18/9/2017 and modifications to the guidance in response to the consultation. Members of the SWG GRI were asked by the Commission to double-check country examples provided for the guidance.

ERAC SWG on Human Resources and Mobility (HRM)

Current situation:

- On the basis of the mandate given by ERAC in June 2017, the Standing Working Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SWG HRM) was established on 1/7/2017. It is to build on, and expand on, the work done by previous Steering Group on Human Resources & Mobility (SGHRM).
- The first meeting was held on 10/10/2017 where a first discussion on the 2018-2019 Work Programme took place. At this stage, the working group considered that the programme should focus on concrete implementation of policy areas. Such areas would include researchers' inter-sectoral mobility, better connection of education, research and training policies, indicators to monitor and measure impact of researchers' work enhancing the recognition and visibility of researchers' work, and initiatives that contribute to achieving the ERA Priorities related human resources. In doing that, the working group intends to improve its communication with the research and innovation society as well as with other stakeholders, in particular with the ERAC gender working group.

Recent achievements:

- SGHRM coordinated and participated with experts in two working groups that started working in 2016 but concluded its work in July 2017. The outcomes were two reports:
 1. **Providing researchers with the skills and competencies for practicing Open Science** (Education & Skills);
 2. **Evaluation of Researchers practicing Open Science** (Rewards & Recognition).

Those reports have been very well received, and were presented in various fora/events/seminars in different countries since their publication in August 2017.

Furthermore, the recommendations of the reports were presented to the Open Science Policy Platform (OSPP) in October and further discussed with a High level group of experts in November. The recommendations of these reports will serve as relevant inputs for the European Open Science Agenda (through OSPP) as well as for the discussions on next Framework Program (FP9).

A preliminary analysis of national roadmaps within the SGHRM remit revealed a great number of similarities across groups of countries with regard to their thematic priorities under the ERA Roadmap for Priority 3. The analysis identified important policy issues regarding priority actions, which contribute to the implementation of ERA.

ERAC SWG on Open Science and Innovation (OSI)

Since the Tartu meeting of the ERAC (22 September 2017), the SWG OSI has focused its work on the issue of the EOSC (European Open Science Cloud) governance, the assessment of the feasibility of the Amsterdam Call for Action, and has put forward some ideas relating to its future work on Open Innovation.

▪ **EOSC Governance**

At the occasion of the 6th meeting of the SWG OSI on 25 October 2017, the Commission presented its views on the governance of the EOSC, more particularly emphasising:

- a staged approach to governance:
 - Phase 1 (< 2020): governance of the process for developing EOSC, mainly Member States/EC decision-making with stakeholders consulted;
 - Phase 2 (>2020): governance of the EOSC itself, mainly stakeholder-driven implementation with MS/EC oversight role;
- a threefold conception of governance:
 - A Governing Board that would comprise around 30 stakeholders (half designated by Member States, half by the Commission) to represent all stakeholders and that would have an Executive Board;
 - A Steering Committee of Member States and EC representatives to monitor the overall achievements of the EOSC implementation plan;
 - A Stakeholders Forum.

Discussions focused on: the best way to choose the members of the Governance Board (top-down designation of representatives of national data infrastructures vs. bottom-up consultation to form an expert group) and the Steering Committee (ministerial representatives of all Member States); the role of the Governance Board in phase 2 (after the strategic impulse of phase 1); the endorsement of the EOSC roadmap by the Council (since SWG OSI can only provide strategic advice, and not all Member States have a delegate in the SWG); the need to have a consensus on the roadmap before letting the EOSC H2020 call go ahead; the relation between HPC (High Performance Computing) and EOSC; the cost of developing interoperable FAIR standards (which is high, according to the Commission, but lower than the cost of developing new infrastructures).

- ⇒ **The SWG OSI is currently finalising its opinion on the governance of the EOSC, on the basis of the national positions that have been collected since the meeting by the Chair and Vice-Chair.**

- **Assessment of feasibility of Amsterdam Call for Action**

The Chair and Vice-Chair collected and analysed the answers provided to two complementary questionnaires (November 2016 and June 2017) by 18 delegations (AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, IE, LV, MD, MT, PL, PT, SI and UK; NL provided qualitative inputs). The questionnaires covered matters relating to Open Research Data and e-infrastructures, Open Access, Open Science implementation and monitoring, Citizen Science, Rewards, Text and Data Mining, IPR and transparency.

- ⇒ **The SWG OSI is currently finalising its report on the assessment of feasibility of the Amsterdam Call for Action. It is expected that the report will provide guidance to the Commission, Member States and stakeholders as regards the twelve actions identified in the Amsterdam Call in order to guide future policies in this field. The report should be presented on 1st December 2017 at the occasion of the Competitiveness Council.**

- **Open Innovation**

It has been decided that, at the 1st SWG OSI meeting in 2018, the issue of Open Innovation will be put on the agenda, including a presentation from the Commission on these issues. Further attention will be given to existing national initiatives and strategies in this field.
