



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 3 October 2011

14992/11

**RECH 322
TELECOM 139
SAN 194
SOC 835**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat
To: Delegations
No. Cion prop.: 12959/11 RECH 268 TELECOM 104 SAN 152 SOC 654
No. Prev. doc. 14205/11 RECH 302 TELECOM 123 SAN 180 SOC 768
Subject: Launching of joint programming initiative 'More Years Better Lives'
- Council conclusions

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on the launching of joint programming initiative 'More Years Better Lives', as adopted by the Council ("Competitiveness") at its meeting of 29-30 September 2011.

Council conclusions on the launching of joint programming initiative 'More Years Better Lives'

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

- The Commission Green paper of 4 April 2007, entitled "The European Research Area: New Perspectives"¹ in which one of the core objectives was to ensure the coherence of national and regional research programmes and priorities on issues of European major societal challenges or opportunities relevant to all or many countries which require a new approach as regards research efforts beyond individual national capacity;
- The Key Issues Paper (KIP) of 25 February 2008 by the Council ("Competitiveness")², in which the Member States and the Commission were encouraged to continue developing initiatives for joint programming of research in areas suited to such an approach, allowing a more strategic and better structured approach to the launch of new joint programmes and common calls for projects;
- The conclusions of the European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008³, which launched the new cycle of the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs (2008-2010) and which, with the aim of fully developing the potential for innovation and creativity of European citizens, confirmed that particular attention should be given to further initiatives for joint programming of research;

¹ 8322/07.

² 6933/08.

³ 7652/1/08 REV 1.

- The Commission Communication of 15 July 2008, entitled "Towards joint programming in research: Working together to tackle common challenges more effectively"⁴, which called for the implementation of a process led by the Member States to step up their cooperation in the R&D area in order to better confront major societal challenges of European or worldwide scale, where public research plays a key role;
- The Council conclusions of 2 December 2008 concerning joint programming of research in Europe in response to major societal challenges⁵, which established a dedicated configuration of CREST, the High Level Group for Joint Programming (GPC), to identify and substantiate the first list of a limited number of joint programming themes;
- The Council conclusions of 3 December 2009⁶ which launched the pilot Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) on combating Neurodegenerative diseases, in particular Alzheimer's, and welcomed the identification and substantiation of the "first wave" of themes for JPIs in the areas of 'Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change', 'Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a new challenge for Europe', and 'A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life';
- The Council conclusions of 26 May 2010⁷ welcoming the Commission recommendations on the "first wave" of JPIs, and inviting the Commission, within the remit of its competence, to contribute to the preparation of further JPIs corresponding to the themes identified and substantiated by the GPC in the areas of 'Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe (Clik'EU)', 'Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans', 'More Years, Better Lives - The Potential and Challenges of Demographic Change', 'The microbial challenge - An emerging threat to human health', 'Urban Europe - Global Challenges, Local Solutions' and 'Water Challenges for a Changing World'.
- The conclusions of the European Council of 17 June 2010 finalising the European Union's new strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020 Strategy)⁸;

⁴ 11935/08.

⁵ Official Journal C 24, 30.1.2009, p. 3–6.

⁶ 17226/09.

⁷ 10246/10.

⁸ EUCO 13/10.

- The Council conclusions of 12 October 2010 on the launching of joint programming initiatives on 'Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change', 'Cultural Heritage and Global Change – A new challenge for Europe', and 'A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life'⁹;
- The Council Conclusions of 26 November 2010 on the progress in the joint programming process¹⁰;
- The Council Conclusions of 26 November 2010 on Europe 2020 flagship initiative Innovation Union welcoming the objectives of and the ongoing work regarding European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) as an approach that is meant to foster synergies and mobilise expertise and resources across the EU, and acting across the entire research and innovation chain, by combining supply and demand policies, and by ensuring consistency between EU policies through a better coordination of initiatives and actions in a coherent framework;¹¹
- The Council Conclusions of 17 December 2010 on the impact of an ageing workforce and population on employment policies¹².
- The Conclusions of the European Council of 4 February 2011 stating that joint programming should be developed¹³;
- The Council conclusions of 9 March 2011 on preparatory work for the pilot European Innovation Partnership "Active and Healthy Ageing" attaching great importance to duly taking into consideration relevant existing initiatives and stressing the independent and voluntary nature and the essential role of Joint Programming;¹⁴

⁹ 14976/10.

¹⁰ 17166/10.

¹¹ 17165/10.

¹² 18132/10.

¹³ EUCO 2/1/11 REV 1.

¹⁴ 7586/11.

- that the year 2012 has been designated as the European Year for active ageing and solidarity between generations;¹⁵

The Council

1. NOTES that the Europe 2020 Strategy has identified demographic change as a challenge offering an opportunity for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth.
2. EMPHASISES that Joint Programming in research in the area of demographic change and population ageing as in the proposed initiative "More Years, Better Lives" will contribute to the reduction of fragmentation of research efforts of Member States and will step up the mobilisation of skills, knowledge and resources, with a view to advancing and strengthening Europe's leadership and competitiveness of research and innovation in this field.
3. RECOGNISES that the number of Europeans aged over 65 is expected to rise significantly by 42% from 87 million in 2010 to 124 million in 2030. Where the continued increase in life expectancy is a major achievement, it also risks putting an additional strain on the economy, society and sustainability of public finances. Moreover, as a consequence of ageing populations, the need for public provision of age-related transfers and services will increase, and a scenario with a reduction of the working age population could cause a decline in GDP.
4. UNDERLINES that there are large benefits to both individuals and society by extending the active and healthy life of older people. These entail staying independent for longer e.g. with the use of innovative care solutions including the use of modern technology and eHealth, increasing quality of life for older citizens and, where appropriate, their carers, as well as contributing to the sustainability of health and long-term care systems. Striving for active and healthy ageing can increase the working population and may also offer new market opportunities for innovative solutions for ageing well.

¹⁵ PE-CONS 20/11.

5. INVITES the Member States, participating in the framework of the initiative to:
- i. Develop a common vision, based on a multidisciplinary approach, on how cooperation and coordination in the field of research at the European level can improve addressing the challenges of the demographic change and capitalise on the opportunities it presents, in order to ensure the efficiency of the joint efforts of Member States.
 - ii. Develop a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) establishing medium to long term research needs and objectives in the area of demographic change. The Strategic Research Agenda should be further developed towards an implementation plan establishing priorities and timelines and specifying the actions, instruments and resources required for its implementation. The contents, work programmes and implementation plans should take into account the scientific, technological and innovation impacts of the supported research.
 - iii. Jointly implement the Strategic Research Agenda, including via their national research programmes taking into account the Voluntary Guidelines on Framework Conditions for Joint Programming in Research developed by the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC) or other national research activities.
 - iv. Set up and maintain an efficient common management structure in the field of research on demographic change and population ageing, with a mandate to establish appropriate conditions, rules and procedures for cooperation and coordination and to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Research Agenda. Such management structure should be lean, efficient and flexible and should take account of the Voluntary Guidelines on Framework Conditions for Joint Programming in Research developed by the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC).

- v. Build on the existing expertise within the Commission and take into account the voluntary guidelines on framework conditions when developing and implementing the Strategic Research Agenda with a view to coordinating the joint programming initiative and ensuring overall coherence with other programmes and initiatives in this field, such as the Active and Healthy Ageing pilot European Innovation Partnership, related work programmes and projects of the Framework Programme for Research, the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme as well as other research initiatives such as the other Joint Programming Initiatives, the Article 185 initiative Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme, and joint infrastructures like SHARE ERIC and ERA-nets like ERA-AGE II¹⁶.
 - vi. Report regularly to the Council, through the GPC (or ERAC), on the progress and results of this JPI, including lessons learned on achieving optimal efficiency.
6. INVITES the Commission, while fully preserving the character of JPIs as a Member States driven process, to:
- i. Act as a facilitator by suggesting complementary measures to support the Joint Programming initiatives. Those measures could include support to common coordination, the management structure and the establishment of the Strategic Research Agenda, the provision of data, information and analysis on the state of the art in this field at European and international level.
 - ii. Explore how to contribute with complementary measures to the Strategic Research Agenda as well as if and how to facilitate its implementation plan via EU funding instruments.
 - iii. Look, in cooperation with the JPI, into possible forms of consultation and cooperation on this subject with relevant stakeholders and other programmes at international level.

¹⁶ http://www.share-project.org/t3/share/fileadmin/press_information/SHARE_ERIC-EN_upload.pdf
<http://futurage.group.shef.ac.uk/>

- iv. Offer support in the implementation of this initiative while facilitating complementarity with other programmes and initiatives in this field, such as mentioned in point 5.v.
- v. Regularly report to the Council and inform the European Parliament on the overall progress and results of the JPI.

7. RECOMMENDS that the following actions could be considered, subject to the needs identified by participating Member States in the Strategic Research Agenda, as part of an implementation plan:

- a) analysing the state of the art in this field and identifying and exchanging information on relevant national programmes and research activities and similar international activities;
- b) reinforcing joint foresight exercises and technology assessment capacities;
- c) exchanging information, resources, best practices, methodologies and guidelines;
- d) identifying areas or research activities that would benefit from coordination or joint calls for proposals or mobilisation of resources;
- e) defining the modalities for research to be undertaken jointly in the areas referred to in point (d), and identifying the most appropriate instruments for implementation;
- f) where appropriate, sharing and ensuring access to existing research infrastructures or developing new facilities;
- g) encouraging better collaboration between the public and private sectors, together with open innovation between different research activities and business sectors;
- h) considering the changing needs of elderly people as well as the needs of their wider social networks, when defining the objectives for ageing related research programmes;
- i) exporting and disseminating knowledge, innovation and interdisciplinary methodological approaches;
- j) creating networks between centres dedicated to demographic change and population ageing research.