

Paris, the 29th of November 2017

NOTE FROM THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES

Subject: France's preliminary position on the 9th Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP9) - Summary

In the context of the ongoing reflections on the future of the post-2020 Framework Programme for research and innovation (FP), the French authorities wish to inform the Commission of their initial position, in particular:

- The European research and innovation policy must continue its escalation, to define solutions to global challenges, stimulate sustainable growth and economic competitiveness, and ensure the well-being of our societies. **The FP is at the core of this European Union priority ambition**, contributing to the enhancement of the European project as supported by the President of the French Republic. **Hence, the French authorities request the Commission to propose a firm commitment to this programme after 2020, by consolidating the principles of excellence and cooperation that represent its European added value.**
- The principle of allocating **FP funding on the basis of excellence and impact must be maintained.**
- There must be improved **synergy and complementarity with other EU sectoral policies**, which also support research and innovation activities:
 - Synergy with the cohesion **policy** should be reinforced. This will require simplified, easier access to structural funds, for example for “seal of excellence” projects.
 - Concerning the linkages with **higher education**, the French authorities propose creating networks of excellence of European higher education institutions, integrating their activities in the fields of education, research and innovation, and able to compete at international level. These “European universities”, eligible as such for European funding, will be genuine hubs of **excellence** contributing to the structuring of local ecosystems.
 - **Financial instruments developed at European level**, in particular those from Horizon 2020 managed by the EIB, seem to be extremely relevant tools with a strong leverage effect that should be consolidated to enable an appropriate public response to the substantial need for capital of innovative companies with high growth potential.
 - Finally, France is very keen on the expansion of **European R&I activities to Defence**, whilst emphasising that this must not be done to the detriment of civil actions, and will therefore require an independent budget.
- The next framework programme should also be **as inclusive and open as necessary**:
 - It should **encourage wider participation** from the best researchers and innovators. A “Widening Participation” programme could therefore be introduced within the Excellence pillar, and rolled out regionally. Financially, this programme could draw on structural funds;
 - **Open innovation and science** approaches must respect the “as open as possible, as closed as necessary” principle, taking into account intellectual property concerns. In particular, the opt out for open research data must be maintained, without penalising the evaluation of the projects concerned, as this is an essential condition of the programme's attractiveness to

- enterprises. France is seeking **transparent dialogue** with all stakeholders, including industry, to work on the joint design of the open data policy for FP9;
- Horizon 2020's successor must allow European teams to **access the best international partners**. However, the possible association of -third countries to the FP, especially with a view to contributing to missions, must be assessed in light of the guarantee of **European added value**, taking due account of European regulations. It will also be important to ensure **reciprocal access** by European entities to similar programmes in third countries (including programming information).
- The French authorities would like the **architecture of the framework programme adopted for Horizon 2020 to be broadly maintained under the FP9**, in particular the ERC. The idea of **refocusing certain EU R&I actions in the form of "missions"** should be explored in more depth, provided that these are **jointly elaborated** by the Member States and the Commission, as regards both the choice of missions supported and the means of attaining the targets set, particularly via partnership instruments. Support in completing these missions should **involve the whole RDI chain**, potentially going as far as public procurement (for market release of the solutions developed) in order to promote **exploitation of the results within the EU**. Finally, although France lauds the notable efforts in administrative and financial simplification in recent years, the **portfolio of instruments needs to be further simplified**.
 - The French authorities are keen for the future FP to encourage the **research-innovation continuum**. In this respect, the **current respective levels of support for research and innovation are satisfactory**. Cross-sectoral and subsidiary management of innovation should be maintained. Support for industrial and technological innovation on a European scale should be renewed, to **promote European technological autonomy** and position Europe as a global innovation leader. Within this field, **European action could also be reinforced by developing three complementary aspects**:
 - **Disruptive innovation**, by funding, through the **establishment of a dedicated agency**, , high-risk projects enabling technological breakthroughs, involving fundamental cutting-edge research and technological development;
 - collaborative RDI in line with the Horizon 2020 approach, by maintaining **support for key enabling technologies**;
 - **stimulation of innovation** through a bottom-up, decentralised approach, working closely with national and local ecosystems. The future European Innovation Council planned by the European Commission should ensure that innovators are offered all the existing European Union support tools available, enabling support for the different phases of innovation up to market release, specifically by providing guarantees to local financial intermediaries.
 - Finally, the French authorities invite the Commission to make best use of comitology to put in place a renewed dialogue that respects each party's rights, aiming for genuine **joint elaboration of European programming strategy**. This will involve jointly identifying the topics and relevant levels of technological maturity which represent the best potential for European added value, working in more synergy with national policies and validating the interest of involving any third countries.