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WORKING PAPER

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WORKING DOCUMENT

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	ERAC Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation
Subject:	Rules of Procedure of the Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC)

Delegations will find attached the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC), as approved by written procedure.

**STANDING WORKING GROUP ON GENDER IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION OF
THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE (ERAC)**

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Article 1

Nomination of Members

1. The ERAC Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation (hereafter referred to as the Standing Working Group) shall consist of Member States of the European Union and of the European Commission (hereafter referred to as Members).

Member States shall nominate up to two representatives at an appropriate level and competence.

The Commission shall also nominate up to two representatives.

2. Members may be assisted by advisers at meetings of the Standing Working Group and its sub-groups.
3. Notice of nominations of representatives or their replacements shall be sent to the Standing Working Group Secretariat.
4. The Standing Working Group may invite representatives of countries associated to the EU Framework Programme (hereafter referred to as Associated Countries) to participate in its meetings as observers.
5. Delegates of Member States and Associated Countries are present in the Standing Working Group as formal representatives of their country, not as individual experts, and should ensure appropriate co-ordination with national representatives in other ERA-related groups.

Article 2

Chair

1. The Standing Working Group shall be chaired by a representative from the Member States elected by a majority of its component Members for a period of three years, which shall be renewable once.
2. The Chair shall be elected in accordance with the procedure defined in Article 8. Members shall have due regard to gender balance and other aspects of diversity when electing the Chair.
3. The Member State from which a representative has been elected as Chair shall be entitled to nominate a representative in his/her place for the duration of the Chair's term.
4. The Chair shall be responsible for chairing meetings of the Standing Working Group and for the overall guidance of its work.
5. The Chair shall have no voting rights, except in situations where there is no for/against majority, in which case he/she shall have one vote which will be taken into account.
6. The Chair shall be a Member of the ERAC Steering Board, along with the Chairs of the other ERA-related groups. The Chair shall ensure the substance of discussions with the ERAC Steering Board is systematically reported back to the Standing Working Group.

Article 3

Vice-Chair

1. The Standing Working Group shall have a Vice-Chair who shall be a representative from the Member States elected by a majority of its component Members for a period of three years, which shall be renewable once.
2. The Member State from which a representative has been elected as Vice-Chair shall be entitled to nominate a representative in his/her place for the duration of the Vice-Chair's term.

3. The Vice-Chair shall have no voting rights, except in situations where he/she is the only delegate of his/her own country, in which case he/she shall have the right to vote as any other national Standing Working Group Member.
4. In carrying out their duties, the Vice-Chair and the Chair shall cooperate in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect for their respective roles and responsibilities, as set out in these Rules of Procedure.

Article 4

Secretariat

1. The Secretariat of the Standing Working Group shall be provided by the General Secretariat of the Council.
2. The primary role of the Secretariat is to assist the Standing Working Group in its operation. In particular, it assists the Chair in the preparation, conduct and follow-up of meetings, including the circulation of provisional agendas and of related documents, and the drafting of summary conclusions of meetings.
3. The Commission shall support the work of this Standing Working Group within the remit of its competence.
4. All correspondence to the Standing Working Group shall be addressed to the Secretariat using the following electronic address: eracswg.gri@consilium.europa.eu.
5. All correspondence from the Standing Working Group to its Members and observers shall be sent by the Secretariat to the electronic mail addresses of the Members' and Observers' representatives. All representatives shall provide complete contact details to the Secretariat, which shall keep a list of representatives.

Article 5

Meetings of the Standing Working Group

1. The Committee shall meet twice a year and if necessary, up to four times. The number and approximate dates of the meetings shall be decided by the Chair and Vice-Chair.
2. In addition to Associated Countries, the Standing Working Group may invite other persons as observers if particular agenda items so require. Certain parts of meetings may only be open to Member States.

Representatives of Associated Countries shall have the same speaking rights as Members.

Article 6

Work Programme and Reporting Activities

1. The Standing Working Group shall have a Work Programme. It shall cover a period of 18 months and shall include the activities the Standing Working Group plans to undertake in line with its mandate¹ and the ERA Roadmap.
2. The Work Programme shall be adopted by the Standing Working Group after discussion within the ERAC Steering Board and presentation to ERAC, in order to ensure coherence among the ERA-related Groups.
3. The Standing Working Group shall submit a concise Annual Report to ERAC, providing a timely strategic and operational overview of research and innovation policy issues that are relevant to the progress of ERA Priority 4 - Gender equality and mainstreaming in research for which it is responsible in line with its mandate.

¹ Doc. ERAC 1205/16.

Article 7

Provisional agenda and other documents for meetings

1. Taking into account the Work Programme, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall draw up the provisional agenda for the meetings of the Standing Working Group. It shall be sent to the Standing Working Group at least 10 working days before the meeting.
2. In general, the provisional agenda may include items in respect of which a request for inclusion from any Member State or Associated Country, together with any relevant documents, has been received by the Secretariat at least 12 working days before the meeting and approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair.
3. Any relevant documents on the agenda shall normally be made available to the Standing Working Group at least 10 working days before the meeting.

Article 8

Voting rules and quorum

1. Only Members can vote. Each Member shall have one vote.
2. If a vote concerns a document that has any bearing on the Associated Countries, the views of their representatives shall be heard before the vote is taken.
3. Votes shall be cast by a representative who has been appointed in accordance with Article 1(1) and (2). Representatives who are unable to attend a meeting at which a vote may be expected may vote in writing before the meeting (their vote must be sent to the Secretariat). Alternatively, they may delegate their right to vote to a representative of another Member who may vote on their behalf, provided the Secretariat is informed in writing before the meeting of their intention to vote by proxy, as well as of the representative who shall vote on their behalf.
4. Summary conclusions, opinions and reports of the Standing Working Group shall be adopted by a simple majority if a vote is requested² and shall make mention of minority views.

² The aim is to take decisions by consensus. Only when a vote will be requested, the majority rule will apply.

5. Draft opinions and reports that are not adopted at a meeting of the Standing Working Group shall normally be adopted by means of written procedure. The time limit for the written procedure shall be set by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.
6. The presence of a simple majority of Members shall be required for the Standing Working Group to take a vote.

Article 9

Sub-groups

1. The Standing Working Group may set up sub-groups.
2. Sub-groups shall be responsible for the implementation of tasks relevant to the Standing Working Group's mandate and shall be of limited duration.
3. Sub-groups shall appoint a rapporteur from the members of the group who, on the basis of the sub-group mandate agreed by the Standing Working Group, shall be responsible for the overall functioning of the sub-group. The timetable and deliverables of the work of the sub-groups shall be agreed by the rapporteur and the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Standing Working Group.
4. The membership of sub-groups shall be open to representatives of Member States and Associated Countries and Commission.

Article 10

The nature of meetings and public access to documents

1. The meetings of the Standing Working Group are confidential and not accessible to the public.
 2. Documents of the Standing Working Group submitted to ERAC for information, such as opinions and reports, shall be made public and given an ERAC number, via the web site of the Council of the European Union, unless ERAC decides otherwise.
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