

EUROPEAN UNION

**Brussels, 24 October 2014
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**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE
Strategic Forum for International
S&T Cooperation**

Secretariat

ERAC-SFIC 1362/14

NOTE

Subject: SFIC opinion on the second ERA Progress Report

Delegations will find attached the opinion of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) on the second ERA Progress Report, as adopted via written procedure on 23 October 2014.

SFIC opinion on the second ERA Progress Report

The first ERA Progress Report¹ referred to international cooperation and concluded that the realisation of ERA will ‘facilitate international cooperation in research and innovation and create a global level playing field’.

Through a SFIC opinion on the first ERA Progress Report², SFIC recommended that the external dimension should be much more elaborated in the second ERA Progress Report 2014 – both at EU level and Member State level, notably by moving towards the integration of the “international cooperation monitoring mechanism” into the ERA Monitoring Mechanism.

The Council Conclusions on European Research Area Progress from 21 February 2014³, dealing with the first ERA Progress report, took into account the input from SFIC. The Council, considering the external dimension as an integral part of the ERA, asked the Commission to adequately address this important aspect in the second ERA Progress Report and beyond, notably by moving towards the integration of an international cooperation dimension into the ERA Monitoring Mechanism.

The second ERA Progress Report⁴ issued by the Commission in September 2014, stresses the importance of the international dimension being mainstreamed across all the ERA priorities, with the rationale that international cooperation "should be enhanced as a cross-cutting priority of the ERA actions". SFIC is expecting this issue to be subject of a more comprehensive analysis within the next ERA Progress Report. In this regard, SFIC would like to state that:

¹ Doc. 13812/13 (COM(2013) 637 final)

² Doc. ERAC-SFIC 1356/13

³ Doc. 6945/14

⁴ Doc. 13197/14 (COM (2014) 575 final)

- *SFIC WELCOMES the mainstreaming of international cooperation across all ERA priorities and STRESSES that international cooperation is an essential part of ERA and should not only be considered in its horizontal dimension being reflected in policy measures at all relevant levels, but also as a separate ‘sixth priority’, as agreed by the Council and ERAC.*

- *SFIC STRESSES the importance of making real progress on the integration of the “international cooperation monitoring mechanism” as sixth ERA priority into the ERA Monitoring Mechanism; WELCOMES the first step of including indicators measuring the international dimension of ERA; and RECOMMENDS Member States and the Commission, with the contribution of SFIC, to further identify the appropriate input/output indicators for this purpose.*

- *SFIC INVITES the Commission and Member States, with a view to mainstreaming the international dimension in the different ERA priorities, to jointly identify as soon as possible a clear baseline and define the appropriate objectives to be achieved within each of the different priorities.*