

EUROPEAN UNION

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**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE
Strategic Forum for International
S&T Cooperation**

Secretariat

ERAC-SFIC 1356/13

NOTE

Subject: Opinion of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) on
the First ERA Progress Report

Delegations will find attached Opinion of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) on the First ERA Progress Report, as adopted during the SFIC plenary meeting on 12 November 2013.

SFIC Opinion on the First ERA Progress Report

The ERA Progress Report¹ has a short paragraph on international cooperation which concludes that the realisation of ERA will ‘facilitate international cooperation in research and innovation and create a global level playing field’.

As underlined in the Council Conclusions on international cooperation from May 2013², the international dimension remains an important part of the ERA. This should be reflected in the on-going process. SFIC considers that the international dimension is not dealt with in a satisfactory way in the ERA Progress Report.

It is not clear from the Report/supporting documents how international co-operation is being monitored and assessed at a country or EU level. It therefore makes it difficult to use the ERA Progress Report as a baseline for assessing the external component of the ERA.

In this context it is also important to distinguish between the integration of international cooperation in the five priorities on one hand and the external dimension of ERA on the other hand.

Finally, SFIC recalls the importance of Horizon 2020 as the most important instrument at EU-level to support and leverage R&I cooperation with third countries and the external dimension of ERA. It should be used in a pro-active manner to support these areas.

SFIC is prepared to further elaborate on the external dimension of ERA as an input to the next ERA Progress Report.

Conclusion: *SFIC recommends that the external dimension should be much more elaborated in the ERA Progress Report 2014 – both at EU-level and MS-level, notably by moving towards the integration of the “international cooperation monitoring mechanism” into the ERA Monitoring Mechanism.*

¹ Doc. 13812/13 (COM(2013) 637 final)

² Doc. 10318/13