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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	ERAC Secretariat
To:	ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)
Subject:	ERAC Plenary in Helsinki on 2 October 2019 - Item 5.1 (Updates from the ERA-related Groups)

In view of item 5.1 of the agenda of the ERAC plenary on 2 October, delegations will find attached the "Updates from the ERA-related Groups."

UPDATES FROM THE ERA-RELATED GROUPS

ESFRI.....	2
GPC.....	3
SFIC.....	4
ERAC SWG on Gender in Research and Innovation (GRI).....	5
ERAC SWG on Human Resources and Mobility (HRM).....	6
ERAC SWG on Open Science and Innovation (OSI).....	8

ESFRI

The following is a short update on recent ESFRI activities:

ESFRI had no Forum meetings since the last update provided and only one Executive Board meeting.

The work of ESFRI focused in the meantime on the finalisation of the 2021 Roadmap update methodology and Guide for Applicants, which will be publically presented and discussed at a dedicated Info Day on 25 September in Brussels, where close to 200 participants are expected.

Over the summer, the ESFRI WG on Monitoring of RI performance continued its work on a draft report, whose main features will be presented by the ESFRI Chair at the ERAC plenary on 2 October.

GPC

Following the last GPC meeting on June 4 and in view of the next GPC meeting on September 20, here are the latest developments:

- In view of the GPC report on JPP and JPIs foreseen next year, the TF on the impact of JP at national level (led by the Chair) presented a draft questionnaire to all GPC delegations. The objective of this questionnaire is to document in a comprehensive manner the impact of JP at national level. Several comments were made during the meeting in June and written comments were sent afterwards. The questionnaire was published in July and it was supposed to be open until September 20 (next GPC meeting). However, the deadline to answer this questionnaire will be extended for one month, and the meeting in September will allow delegations to ask for any clarification related to this. ERA-LEARN is helping the GPC on this task. After the survey, the idea is to select some countries for more extensive analysis of impact of JP at national level, possibly through interviews and a dedicated workshop. This second part of the process should be carried out by December 2019.
- A discussion started during the GPC meeting regarding the future of ERA and GPC delegations were asked for written feedbacks on the questions submitted by the ERAC ad-hoc group (based on first preliminary answers provided by the Chair and Vice-Chair). This discussion will continue during the next GPC meeting. Moreover, JPIs representatives will also present their views on how they see the development of JPIs after 2020, in the context of the new approach for partnerships in Horizon Europe.
- The TF on openness and transparency of networks (led by the Vice-Chair) has started to work and presented during the meeting a first roadmap for this work. Two tasks were envisaged: to deliver data on how MS/ACs address transnational cooperation (country mapping) and to examine collaboration patterns according to topics (mapping based on Horizon Europe clusters). The first one is progressing and decision was to abandon second one and focus on different openness measures networks take (inspired by the ERALEARN survey for ERA-NETs and EJPS). TF is currently collecting data related to second task from Art.185s, JTIs and JPIs.
- GPC Chair joined the kick-off meeting for the Transitional Forum for R&I Partnerships. There is a lot of knowledge coming from GPC delegates and different report of Implementation /Working groups regarding monitoring and setting up governance structures that can be shared.

SFIC

Following the last SFIC meeting on June 12, here are the latest developments:

- SFIC validated a short statement (one pager) on the SFIC mandate to provide ERAC as food for thought (possibly for the WG on future of the ERA).
- SFIC work programme 2019-2020 has been validated and has been transmitted to ERAC.
- SFIC also validated a statement on SFIC impact as food for thought for the ERAC discussions.
- On the ERA monitoring process, (despite the preparation of a ready to fill doc), the feedback from SFIC delegates were quite low. Some of them express the administrative burden and the lack of time to reply in due time.
- A Commission-SFIC informal workshop on “National and EU Strategies for International R&I Cooperation : cluster energy, climate, transport" was organized the day before the June plenary. Only 7 SFIC delegations participated but the debates were interesting.
- Early June, FR welcomed the first country visit of the MLE on international cooperation. These 2 days meetings were very fruitful and appreciated by all participants. Mid-September, Romania welcomed the second country visit. The discussions were very good as well. From now, this MLE exercise is very valuable.
- On science diplomacy, a SFIC doc will be issued end of 2019, a dedicated workshop on the topic with EEAS will be organize the day before the next plenary (3rd October).
- Also in the pipes, projects of creation of 2 task forces : one on China and one on Africa. The ToR are under preparation and will be discussed during the plenary early October.

ERAC SWG on Gender in Research and Innovation (GRI)

The 5th meeting of the SWG GRI will take place on 25 October 2019 in Helsinki.

The following main actions are under way:

- **Support to address policy challenges related to gender in R&I: Analysis on sexual harassment and sexual assault in academia, with a focus on international mobility**

A questionnaire survey was sent to the delegations on 3 June and, by 6 September, 23 out of 27 delegations had responded. The rapporteur will present a preliminary report to the SWG GRI at the 5th meeting on 25 October.

- **Policy brief on gender and innovation**

Following adoption, the chair disseminated the policy brief to the ERA Stakeholder Platform organizations. In some countries the policy brief was further disseminated in the national language to policy makers and wider research community.

- **Cooperation with EU Presidencies**

SWG GRI is cooperating with the upcoming FI PRES on the preparation of the EU-funded FI PRES conference. Several delegations act as members of the conference steering committee and the chair is a member of the Scientific Committee. In this capacity she has participated in online meetings and commenting on preparatory documents.

- **Cooperation with other ERA related groups**

SWG GRI chair met with ESFRI chair on 20 August to discuss the potential areas of cooperation and to plan concrete steps. The chairs agreed that SWG GRI chair would be consulted on the planned ESFRI Guidelines on the update of the ESFRI Roadmap 2021. The chairs have also agreed that SWG GRI chair will participate in the ESFRI meeting in December in Brussels, with a presentation on relevant gender topics, as a preparatory ground for potential further exchanges. The ES delegate in the SWG GRI will participate in a meeting of GPC on 20 September to present the activities of SWG GRI and discuss potential areas of cooperation. SWG GRI and SFIC are in contact to follow-up on the joint report produced in 2018; a follow-up survey is being conducted by the GENDERACTION project to assess changes in policy implementation regarding gender in international cooperation in STI since 2019, and the two groups have been invited to contribute to the survey.

ERAC SWG on Human Resources and Mobility (HRM)

The last meeting of the group took place on **May 8, 2019** as scheduled. The main issues currently being addressed by the group include the following:

- **Synergies between ERA (priority 3) and EHEA (task force).** The group has finalized the document on how the European Research Area (ERA) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) could strengthen their collaboration and common goals. The document included contributions from the European Commission as well as the delegations of the group and is aimed to support the discussions to happen among the European Research Area Committee (ERAC) and the Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DGEAC) following the tasks included in the ERA Action Plan. The Chair submitted to the ERAC Steering Board and the Finish Presidency representatives at the July 2 meeting. The HRM Chair will participate in the joint conference for ERAC and Directors General for Higher Education as a part of the Finnish Presidency held on October 1.

- The SWG HRM Chair participated in the **MSCA Conference of the Romania Presidency** concerning the Open Science & Human Resources session that took place in Bucarest on June 4th. Following recommendation to increase the dialogue with ERA related stakeholders as indicated in the **ERAC Action Plan**, the session was used interchange with these stakeholders on the issues concerning the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) and how to strengthen human capital and skills development throughout ERA, in the context of the MSCA program. The conclusions of the session were that the MSCA program has proven favourable to provoke culture changes in the institutional settings to improve overall career development, however more efforts are still needed to ensure that Europe achieves on open labour market. Research institutions and Universities can only reach high levels of excellence in the long term if they offer promising career paths for researchers and competitive working conditions.

- **Contribution to the Horizon Europe (task force).** The group has prepared a document to provide a consensus position on issues concerning human resources in Horizon Europe. The document outlines the need to further develop issues concerning:
 - (i) mobility of researchers,
 - (ii) promotion of international cooperation of researchers,
 - (iii) improvement of open science-related skills, and
 - (iv) Charter and Code for researchers and the HRS4R.

Following active discussion, the task force will take into consideration the reflections, comments and input received to elaborate a revised version to be approved by the next meeting of the group in the fall (November 13).

- **Review of ERA Roadmap NAs for Priority 3.** The Chair has finalized the progress report for Priority 3 - *"An open labour market for researchers"* based on the input received from the countries and submitted to the overall report that was prepared for the ERAC Plenary in June.
- **Discussion with other ERA related groups.** Initial discussions with SWG OSI and the European Commission were held to advance on a studying the issues of open science skills and reviewing the innovative doctoral training principals with an open science perspective possibly by setting up a joint/common task force.

ERAC SWG on Open Science and Innovation (OSI)

- The Work Programme 2019-2020 has been approved by SWG OSI delegates via written procedure.
- Marc VANHOLSBEECK has been elected Chair and Marie-Pascale LIZEE Vice-Chair (via written procedure).
- The priority list elaborated by the OSI taskforce on Communication has been communicated to the ERAC SB. The Council Secretariat is currently examining the extent to which those actions can be implemented.
- SWG OSI agreed to launch three taskforces during the Work Programme 2019-2020, on the following topics: Open Science and Open Innovation in the future ERA priorities – deemed as a development on the basis of the abovementioned questionnaire -, monitoring of Open Science (including OS indicators) and researchers’ training, incentives and rewards (this last being foreseen as a joint HRM-OSI taskforce, in particular for the aspects that concern the innovative PhD training).
- SWG OSI exchanged views and good practices on the development and implementation of national Open Science plans, taking into account the work on ERA Roadmap (priority 5). A Case study has been presented by the Dutch delegation.
- Following the work done on a draft working paper on the Plan S, SWG OSI pursued the exchange of thoughts on this topic through exchanges with Dr. Jon Flaeten, Member of the Coalition S Task Force.
- A non-formal meeting was held between some OSI and ESFRI delegates together with one member state representative of the EOSC Governance Board on 19 June in Brussels, for exchanging views on the EOSC, and more generally for fostering the collaboration between our 2 groups in regard to Open Science related infrastructures. The non-formal meeting has been fruitful and at least four issues have been identified as being cross-cutting between both ERA groups: monitoring of Open Science, researchers’ training, changes in scholarly communication ecosystems (including incentives and rewards), and communication and awareness raising on Open Science (in particular about the EOSC, towards research communities). OSI and ESFRI will pursue further interactions whenever those can have a cross-fertilization effect on their respective work.

- Monitoring of the ERA NAPs (Priority 5) has been duly conducted.
 - Answers to the ERAC task force on the future ERA Priorities have been drafted by the Chair and Vice-Chair and amended and finally approved by the delegates (via written procedure). Answered questionnaire has been provided to the Chair of the ERAC taskforce on Future ERA Priorities in late June.
 - SWG OSI is currently working on a (light) revision of its mandate.
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