



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Brussels, 23 September 2019

WK 10305/2019 INIT

LIMITE

RECH

WORKING PAPER

This is a paper intended for a specific community of recipients. Handling and further distribution are under the sole responsibility of community members.

MEETING DOCUMENT

| | |
|----------|--|
| From: | ERAC Secretariat |
| To: | ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee) |
| Subject: | ERAC Plenary in Helsinki on 2 October 2019 - Item 6 - "Standing Information Point - Note on the role of the European Commission in the ERA-related Groups" |

In view of item 6 of the agenda of the ERAC plenary on 2 October 2019, please find attached the "Standing Information Point - Note on the role of the European Commission in the ERA-related Groups".

Note on the role of the European Commission in the ERA-related Groups

The European Research Area (ERA) was initially launched by the publication of the Commission Communication ‘Towards a European Research Area in 2000’. More recently, the Lisbon Treaty mentions explicitly its achievement as an objective in the research chapter¹. It follows that the ERA is a key priority for the Commission.

Accordingly, the Commission has been and currently is actively involved in the achievement of the ERA. The Commission is a member of all the ERA-related Groups since their set-up, providing regularly, in different roles (see attached table), input on the content of the discussions.

There are seven ERA-related Groups, currently:

- the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) and its two dedicated configurations: the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC), and the Strategic Forum for International Science and Technology Co-operation (SFIC);
- the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructure (ESFRI);
- three Standing Working Groups respectively on: Gender in Research and Innovation (SWG GRI), on Human Resources and Mobility (SWG HRM), and on Open Science and Innovation (SWG OSI).

The Commission is committed to continuing to pursue pro-active collaboration in the future with all the ERA-related groups and to provide input to their work. However, it should be noted that with the next review in 2021, the ERA Advisory structure may evolve.

It should be noted that the achievement of the ERA is mentioned prominently in the mission letter of Commissioner-designate Gabriel, which guarantees that it will remain high on the policy agenda of the next Commission². Education, research and innovation will be key to our competitiveness and our ability to lead in the transition to a climate-neutral economy and new digital age. Our world-leading science, research and innovation capacity can help us find European solutions to the most pressing global issues.

The Commission will work with Member States to build a true European Research Area in which we pull together all national and European efforts, and ensure that research, policy and economic priorities go hand in hand.

¹ “The Union shall have the objective of strengthening its scientific and technological bases by achieving a European research area in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely, and encouraging it to become more competitive, including in its industry, while promoting all the research activities deemed necessary by virtue of other Chapters of the Treaties.”

² “I want you to work with Member States to build a true European Research Area in which we pull together all national and European efforts.”

Synoptical table of the ERA-related Groups:

| ERA Group | Firstly established by | Notes | Secretariat | Commission Role | DG RTD Unit in charge |
|------------------|--|---|--------------------|-------------------------|---|
| ERAC | Concil conclusions 28 May 2010 | | Council | co-Chair Member plus | Coordination and Interinstitutional Relations |
| ESFRI | Concil conclusions 26 June 2001 | | Commission | Member | Research & Industrial Infrastructures |
| GPC | Concil conclusions 3 December 2008 | ERAC configuration | Council | Member | Missions & Partnerships |
| SFIC | Concil conclusions 3 December 2008 | ERAC configuration | Council | Member | International Cooperation |
| SWG GRI | Concil conclusions November 1999 | Formerly EC Expert Groups, now under the remit of the Council as from July 2017 | Council | Member | Democracy & European Values |
| SWG HRM | Concil conclusions 10 December 2001 | | Council | Member | Academic R&I and Research organisations |
| SWG OSI | Concil conclusions 30 May 2008 | | Council | Member | Open Science |