EUROPEAN UNION

**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE**
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**– ERAC –
Secretariat**

Brussels, 19 September 2018
(OR. en)

ERAC 1208/18

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Updated ERAC Work Programme 2018-2019

Delegations will find annexed to this Note the Updated ERAC Work Programme 2018-2019, as adopted by ERAC at the plenary on 17-18 September 2018.

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UPDATED ERAC WORK PROGRAMME 2018-2019

INTRODUCTION

The work programme will cover the next period of policy development in the areas of research and innovation and closely related policies.

In 2018, the European Research Area advisory structure will be due for a review of its structures and processes. Following the latest review in 2015, it was decided that ERAC would move into a new phase of activity, focussing on more strategic issues, with timely, open debates that are better aligned to the incoming Presidency's priorities, and with clear deliverables that can add value to the challenges facing EU and national research and innovation systems. This proposal for the ERAC Work programme 2018-2019 has been prepared with this background in mind.

WORKING METHODS FOR ERAC

Article 2 of ERAC's mandate states that: "The Committee's principal mission is to provide timely strategic input to the Council, the Commission and Member States on the ongoing implementation of the ERA in Member States and Associated Countries and on other strategic research and innovation policy issues. The Committee shall do this on its own initiative or at the request of the Council or the Commission."

ERAC's work programme will continue to take a flexible, proactive approach to ensure ERAC can contribute in a speedy and timely manner, as appropriate, to emerging and evolving issues. ERAC will consider three or four 'big ticket' issues each year. Such topics will give ERAC an opportunity, for example:

–   to give strategic advice at an early stage in developing R&I policy;

–   to consider the impact of other policies on the R&I agenda, the impact of R&I policy on other policies, and advise on the appropriate actions; and

–   to advise on the implementation of R&I policies and propose specific actions to support these policies.

It is important that ERAC considers carefully what outcomes and impacts it hopes to achieve. ERAC is reminded that it does not have to reach consensus on topics and outside speakers may be invited to stimulate discussions. It is proposed that Directors-General are strongly encouraged to attend the strategic discussions.

ERAC will improve the dialogue with the incoming Presidencies, undertaking the necessary preparatory work to contribute policy options for debates in Council. Presidencies will be invited to present their indicative priorities and planning to ERAC well in advance of their term. ERAC will also liaise with the current/outgoing Presidency to provide advice regarding the follow-up and implementation of Council conclusions.

ERAC will continue to work on its 'regular' strands, in particular the follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the ERA National Action Plans, to achieve the objective of implementation by 2020, as set out in the ERA Roadmap and the National Action Plans. In addition, ERAC will work on ensuring the momentum is maintained on the initiatives to deliver tangible results.

Prioritisation and willingness to actively participate in the process, from both Commission and Member State representatives, will be the key factors in meeting the demands during this period.

The quality in preparations for each strategic debate is decisive. ERAC and the Steering Board will have to make use of the input from the other ERA-related groups, workshops, seminars, *ad hoc* working groups and rapporteurs so that the issues at stake can reach the Plenary sufficiently mature for debate and/or adoption, e.g. in the form of a written opinion.

To have adequate time for strategic debate in ERAC Plenary, summary information will continue to be given to members of ERAC in writing in advance of the meetings (under Standing Information Points), with new important developments being taken up orally by the co-Chairs or Presidency. Furthermore, input from the ERA-related groups on their recent activities will be given to ERAC members in writing prior to the meetings.

ERAC STRATEGIC TOPICS FOR 2018-19

The proposed strategic topics for consideration by ERAC in 2018-19 are:

– The Innovation/Research divide (both within the EU and with the rest of the world);

– Review of the ERA Advisory Structure

– National structural reforms (linked to EU semester and the contribution that PSF can make)

– Partnerships

– Improvement of National Research and Innovation systems of Member States and Associated Countries

INTERACTION WITH PRESIDENCIES AND THEIR PRIORITIES

This particular part of the work programme will develop in line with the priorities for the Presidencies as they become more mature.

−   Accelerating the transfer of knowledge, data and research results in support of a new generation of innovators and researchers (BG);

−   Council conclusions on ERA (AT);

−   Reducing disparities in R&I performance between Member States through appropriate measures and instruments (RO);

−   Establishing a regional partnership to launch a Black Sea cooperation initiative in the field of scientific research (RO)

REGULAR STRANDS

These strands include:

−   ERA - implementation and monitoring the ERA Roadmap, including Member States' ERA National Action Plans and strategies; interim review of the implementation of the ERA National Action Plans which will also feed into the ERA Progress Report 2018; discussion on the future orientation and development of ERA in line with the Council conclusions of May 2015 that states that the ERA Roadmap and thereby the National Action Plans are seen as living documents, implementation of the Council conclusions of December 2015 on advancing gender equality in the ERA;

−   Follow-up of the work of the ERAC Ad-hoc Working Group on partnerships in the context of ERAC's role in the Interim Evaluation of H2020 and contribution to preparations for the next FP;

−   Responsible group for overseeing Priority 1 "Effective national research systems", through workshops, ad hoc working groups as well as debate with invited speakers;

−   European Semester – Annual Growth survey priorities for the Semester; dialogue on the R&I elements of the country reports and follow-up on R&I country-specific recommendations;

−   Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility - demand-driven, Horizon 2020 instrument that responds to requests made by Member States and Associated Countries for its three main services: Peer Reviews of national R&I systems; specific support to the design, implementation and evaluation of policy reforms; and mutual learning exercises;

ERA governance - implementation of Council conclusions, including the coordination of ERAC and the ERA-related groups through the ERAC Steering Board with the objective of knowledge sharing and greater alignment of activities; streamlining ERA-related groups and other expert groups; preparing the annual report to the Council on the progress and impact against the ERA Roadmap to ensure that the Council is regularly and comprehensively sighted on progress.

WORK PROGRAMME 2018-2019

Regular strands	15-16 March 37th meeting Plovdiv	17 May 38th meeting Brussels	17-18 September 39th meeting Salzburg	6 December 40th meeting Brussels	[Day Month] 2019 41st meeting Romania	[Day Month] 2019 42nd meeting Brussels
ERA - implementation and monitoring the ERA Roadmap, National Action Plans and strategies	Presentation of R&I policy in Bulgaria ERA National Action Plans Presentation of the Science, Research and Innovation Performance of the EU – 2018 Report	ERA National Action Plans	Presentation of R&I policy in Austria Strategic debate: how to improve national Research and Innovation systems of Member States and Associated Countries	ERA National Action Plans (?)	Presentation of R&I policy in Romania ERA National Action Plans ERA Progress Report	ERA National Action Plans
H2020 Interim Evaluation and preparations for Horizon Europe	ERAC's role in the Interim Evaluation of H2020 and contribution to preparations for the next FP State of play of the work of the Ad-hoc WG on Partnerships	ERAC's role in the Interim Evaluation of H2020 and contribution to preparations for the next FP Adoption of the reports on "Criteria" and "Process" from the Ad-hoc WG on Partnerships	Adoption of the reports on "Rationalising" and "Implementation" from the Ad-hoc WG on Partnerships	Ad-hoc WG on Partnerships and follow-up	Ad-hoc WG on Partnerships and follow-up	Ad-hoc WG on Partnerships and follow-up

Regular strands	15-16 March 37th meeting Plovdiv	17 May 38th meeting Brussels	17-18 September 39th meeting Salzburg	6 December 40th meeting Brussels	[Day Month] 2019 41st meeting Romania	[Day Month] 2019 42nd meeting Brussels
European Semester			Presentation of the outcome of the 2018 European Semester cycle (country reports and CSR package 2018)	Launch of 2019 European Semester		
Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility		Update on the H2020 Policy Support Facility		Update on the H2020 Policy Support Facility		Update on the H2020 Policy Support Facility
ERA governance	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2015) on the review of ERA advisory structure: launching the review and appointing a Rapporteur Updates from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2015) on the review of ERA advisory structure: interim report on the review Update of ERAC Work Programme Updates from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2015) on the review of ERA advisory structure: adopting the final report on the review Highlights from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2015) on the review of ERA advisory structure Update of ERAC Work Programme Highlights from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups Implementation of the Council Conclusions (Dec. 2015) on advancing gender equality in the ERA.	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2018) on the review of ERA advisory structure Highlights from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups	Implementation of Council conclusions (Dec. 2018) on the review of ERA advisory structure Highlights from the ERAC Standing Working Groups and from the ERA-related Groups

Major events and milestones

January 2018	February 2018	March 2018	April 2018	May 2018	June 2018
	Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for research (2 February, Sofia, BG)	ERAC Plenary (15-16 March, Plovdiv, BG)		ERAC Plenary (17 May, Brussels) Competitiveness Council (29 May, Brussels)	
July 2018	**August 2018**	**September 2018**	**October 2018**	**November 2018**	**December 2018**
Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for research (16-17 July, Vienna, AT)		ERAC Plenary (17-18 September, Salzburg, AT) Competitiveness Council (27-28 September, Brussels)		Competitiveness Council (29-30 November, Brussels) (Adoption of Council conclusions on the review of the ERA advisory structure)	ERAC Plenary (6 December, Brussels), preceded by ERAC Workshop on 5 December, Brussels
January 2019	**February 2019**	**March 2019**	**April 2019**	**May 2019**	**June 2019**
	Competitiveness Council (18-19 February, Brussels)	ERAC Plenary (21-22 March, Romania)		ERAC Plenary (Day Month, Brussels) Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for research (3 April, Bukarest) Competitiveness Council (27-28 May, Brussels)	