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MEETING DOCUMENT

From: To:	ERAC Secretariat ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)
Subject:	ERAC videoconference on 16 December 2020 - Item 5.2 - SIP note - Final Report on the Transnational Forum for EU R&I Partnerships

Dear ERAC delegates,

Please find enclosed the Final Report on the Transnational Forum for EU R&I Partnerships, with a view to the ERAC videoconference on Wednesday 16 December (agenda item 5.2).

Best regards,

ERAC Secretariat

Transnational Forum for EU R&I Partnerships

FINAL REPORT

25 November 2020

Since the introduction of the European Research Area (ERA) and FP6, R&I **Partnerships have evolved into strategic elements** of national, European and industrial R&I policy and funding programmes. A new generation of European Partnerships has been prepared following an impact-driven and coherent approach to use their full potential in achieving ambitious EU policy objectives and SDGs by improving their openness, transparency and coherence with EU-level, national and regional R&I policies and programmes. These are complemented by other R&I partnerships of European relevance coordinating national and regional R&I programmes and policies for priorities of their choice (such as Joint Programming Initiatives, or Coordination and Support Actions under strengthening ERA).

In line with the political agreements¹, a **more strategic and comprehensive approach to R&I partnerships** is needed with equal participation of Member States, Associated Countries and the Commission to ensure strategic guidance on the overall policy approach, implementation and the future portfolio. The new governance framework set out in the Horizon Europe legal base – Strategic Coordinating Process – will contribute to a transparent and evidence based selection, implementation, monitoring and phasing out of partnerships. It allows strengthening the commitment to and visibility of partnerships through clear and regular communication on the overall landscape, as well as the progress and achievements of individual partnerships. It will encompass European Partnerships and other R&I partnerships of European relevance in order to carry on the work done on joint programming, and contribute to the European Research Area by promoting pan-European community building and collaboration on common challenges.

The Transitional Forum for R&I Partnerships was established with the specific task to prepare the timely launch of the strategic coordinating process under Horizon Europe in 2021, including to help prepare Member States and Associated Countries to participate in it. It is fully in line with the Council conclusions on [the future of the European Research Area]².

The preparation phase of new generation ambitious R&I partnerships under Horizon Europe is coming to an end in view of their launch next year. The Transitional Forum has underlined the need to ensure a **swift setting up of the different elements of the strategic coordinating process** in order to prepare the **first biennial monitoring report** planned for the end of 2021 with the objective to give a comprehensive overview of the new partnership landscape, including expected contribution to EU priorities. The Commission will ensure a timely follow-up to set up the strategic coordinating process, including nominations of national and partnership representatives to the task team starting from early 2021.

¹ Council conclusions 15320/17, ERAC conclusions ERAC 1215/18, Horizon Europe Specific Programme 8550/19

² Expected to be adopted on 27 November

An independent Commission Expert Group on support for the strategic coordinating process for partnerships is currently being set up and will start work in January 2021. It will support the development of the framework for monitoring of the EU research and innovation partnerships, including the biennial monitoring report. The task team of the Knowledge hub will be closely involved in this work. In this context, particular efforts will be needed from all sides (the Commission, partnerships and countries) to improve the availability of data and to optimise the monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Deliverables of the Transitional Forum

Taking forward the ERAC recommendations and the proposal made by the Commission at the ERAC plenary on 6 December 2018, the Transitional Forum for R&I Partnerships was set up in 2019 to provide advice on the future design and implementation of the strategic coordinating process. Its mandate included the following interlinked tasks:

- 1. Recommendation for the scope and structure of the **biennial monitoring report** and the necessary processes and data requests;
- 2. Recommendation for the scope, approach and necessary resources of **foresight** activities;
- 3. **Common guidelines** (enabling conditions) for the design and implementation of national governance structures, national monitoring mechanisms, etc.;
- 4. Report on the status of preparation of Member States / Associated Countries;
- 5. **Opinion on the proposal for the Forum** and its scope, implementation and governance during Horizon Europe;
- 6. Final report of the Transitional Forum to the attention of ERAC.

The underlying rationale was to develop further the key elements (biennial monitoring, foresight and national preparedness) that will form the basis for the establishment of an efficient and strategic R&I partnership landscape, supported by the strategic coordinating process. The Commission developed in close collaboration with the Transitional Forum a proposal for the strategic coordinating process, on which the representatives of Transitional Forum adopted an opinion broadly supporting the proposal and outlining key issues.

Methodology:

The Transitional Forum had six meetings between September 2019 and December 2020. It adopted one opinion and four reports, including the final report that acts as a chapeau for all deliverables.

In total, 27 Member States, Norway and Iceland nominated representatives for the Transitional Forum. It was supported by DG RTD that provided a Secretariat for the Forum, a support group (the two co-chairs and Szonja Csuzdi, Timo Haapalehto, Mafalda Dourado, Alexander Grablowitz, Joerg Niehoff, Maria Reinfeldt), the chair of ERAC-GPC (Emmanuel Pasco-Viel and Petra Žagar) and ERA-LEARN (survey on national preparedness).

Based on the active contributions from delegations and additional desk research from the support group, each report includes a detailed analysis on the four topics, conclusions and

recommendations. All reports have been presented to and discussed in ERAC and its Steering Board.

Main achievements

The results and recommendations of the Transitional Forum were instrumental for the design and development of the strategic coordinating process. The discussions and various inputs are reflected in the Commission proposal. Notably, the discussions in the Transitional Forum allowed developing an innovative governance approach for the strategic coordinating process with common objectives but different elements that allow achieving this (i.e. modular instead of a static approach). Importantly, the Transitional Forum carried out significant work to **improve national preparedness** for the strategic coordinating process, by carrying out a survey on the status of preparations, identifying common problems and best practice and developing common guidance. Furthermore, it provided important inputs to the future Expert Group (notably deliverable 1) that will support the development of the monitoring system for partnerships, and the biennial monitoring report. The group appreciates the good collaboration between Member States, Associated Countries and the Commission established in the context of the Transitional Forum, and considers the joint development of the framework for collaboration as of 2021 as an important achievement of the group.

Final Remarks

The high quality of work was enabled by the members of the Transitional Forum and the support from the Commission. It was co-chaired by Erik HANSALEK and Kurt VANDENBERGHE (succeeded by Julien GUERRIER), and the members of the Transitional Forum were Ingeborg Schachner-Nedherer, Brigitte Weiss, Peter Spyns, Beata Bibrowska, Yumer Kodjayumer, Zorana Barišić, Mirela Čokešić, Slaven Mihaljević, Nada Sirotić, Leonidas Antoniou, Evgenios Epaminondou, Lucie Núñez Tayupanta, Jan Vašíček, Lisbet Elming, Inger Schow, Heidi Paju, Maarja Adojaan, Timo Haapalehto, Saara Vihko, Nicolas Chaillet, Laura Fabre, Alexander Grablowitz, Agnes Spilioti, Maria Christoula, Vassiliki Karavaggeli, Szonja Csuzdi, Eszter Lakos, Elísabet Andrésdóttir, Audur R. Thorgeirsdottir, Ian Hughes, Dearbhla Dunne, Luciano Catani, Basile Francesco Luca, Zita Duchovskienė, Aistė Vilkanauskytė, Robert Kerger, Lynn Wenandy, Glorianne Camilleri, Corinne Muscat Terribile, Jana Weidemann, Rune Vistad, Mateusz Gaczyński, Jacek Sadura, Mafalda Dourado, Anabela Carvalho, Viorel VULTURESCU, Letitia Clara PAVELESCU, Patrik Helmich, Andrej Kurucz, Petra Žagar, Sergej Možina, David Gonzalez, Joaquín Serrano, Guillermo Álvarez, Karin Schmekel, Dolf Grasveld, Doenja Koppejan.