



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 1 February 2013

5857/13

**RECH 23
TELECOM 13
COMPET 57**

NOTE

From: Presidency

To : Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

No. Cion prop.: 12847/12 RECH 320 TELECOM 146 COMPET 518
12846/12 RECH 319 TELECOM 145 COMPET 517

Subject: *Preparation of the Council ("Competitiveness") of 18-19 February 2013*

Scientific information

(a) Communication from the Commission on "Towards better access to scientific information: Boosting the benefits of public investments in research"

(b) Recommendation from the Commission on access to and preservation of scientific information

- Policy debate

I. INTRODUCTION

The European Commission is committed to **making open access to scientific publications a general principle of Horizon 2020** and has **recommended that Member States take a similar approach** regarding the results of research funded under their national programmes.

On 17 July 2012, the European Commission adopted the **Scientific Information package**, consisting of the Commission Communication *Towards better access to scientific information: Boosting the benefits of public investments in research*¹, and the Commission Recommendation on *access to and preservation of scientific information*². These documents were adopted together with the Commission Communication "*A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth*"³ which includes a priority on optimal circulation, access to and transfer of scientific knowledge.

The Scientific Information package pursues the overall goal of improving the return on public R&D investment through improved circulation of scientific information (i.e. publications and data) in Europe and beyond. The Recommendation on scientific information calls on Member States to **define clear policies on open access to scientific publications and research data, on preservation and re-use of scientific information, and on related e-infrastructures**. The Communication sets out what is planned for open access in Horizon 2020.

Proposed policy measures by the Commission to boost the benefits of public investments in research, to be applied **both at the European and national levels**, include the following:

- making open access mandatory for **scientific publications** resulting from publicly-funded research;
- developing experimental policy actions on open access to **research data**. On its side, the Commission is planning to run a pilot on open access to research data in Horizon 2020;
- stepping up European-level work among Member States and the European Commission to draw up, together, common principles and standards in the area of scientific information; stepping up the support to pan-European and seamless e-infrastructures for open access, preservation and re-use, such as OpenAIRE.⁴

¹ Doc 12847/12

² Doc 12846/12

³ Doc 12848/12

⁴ <http://www.openaire.eu>

II QUESTIONS FOR THE POLICY DEBATE:

In the light of the overall context described above, the Presidency invites the Council ("Competitiveness - Research part") on 18 February 2013 to address the following questions:

- A. Open access to publications is now a widely accepted principle, but questions remain on how Member States and the Commission should make it become a reality. Towards what common implementation standards should Member States and the Commission work to achieve open access?*
- B. How can Member States and the Commission best develop open access to research data in their research and innovation programmes? What should key principles be for the Horizon 2020 pilot on open access to research data?*
- C. How can the Commission and Member States together ensure that e-infrastructures for open access, preservation and re-use are built in a modular and sustainable way in a digital European Research Area?*
-