

EUROPEAN UNION

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**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
COMMITTEE**

**– ERAC –
Secretariat**

ERAC 1205/13

NOTE

To: ERAC delegations

Subject: Overview of developments in the ERA-related groups as relevant for ERAC

Delegations will find attached to this Note an overview of developments in the ERA-related groups relevant for ERAC.

This overview has an Annex comprising a provisional meeting schedule of all ERA-related groups.

This document has been drafted under the authority of the Steering Board of ERAC.

Overview of developments in the ERA-related groups as relevant for ERAC

According to its mandate, ERAC "shall keep overview of the other ERA related groups, which it should cooperate with and consult, as necessary to attain its objectives"¹. In the context of the review of ERAC, many delegations considered that ERAC has not been proactive in developing strategic interactions and coherence with the other ERA-related groups and relevant policy areas, and improved coordination and dialogue are needed among the ERA-related advisory groups to avoid duplication of efforts.

The Council resolution on the advisory work for the European Research Area, which was adopted by the Competitiveness Council on 30 May², invites the ERA-related groups to consider together, in the interest of the timeliness, effectiveness and efficiency, how best to improve their cooperation, consultation and coordination³.

The Vice-Chair has taken the initiative to invite the Chairs of the ERA-related groups to the ERAC Steering Board meetings, to discuss the (monitoring of) ERA progress based on the note sent earlier (doc. ERAC 1206/13) and some guiding questions. The Committee will be briefed by the Vice-Chair on the outcomes and follow-up of the Steering Board meeting on 14 May. The present note includes some of the contributions received at this meeting.

As additional information, under the item Standing Information Point of the provisional agenda for the 15th ERAC meeting⁴, a regular information note with an overview of developments in the ERA-related groups as relevant for ERAC (the present note is the first one) will be distributed to ERAC delegates. This will summarise in advance of future plenary ERAC meetings the state of play and planned future activities, which can assist delegates in coordinating ERA-related activities at the national level.

¹ Doc. 10255/10 of 28 May 2010, Annex to the Annex, Paragraph 15.

² Doc. 10331/13 of 31 May 2013.

³ Paragraph 4.

⁴ See doc. CM 3035/13, p. 2.

Strategic Forum on International Cooperation (SFIC)

The 2012 ERA Communication⁵ sets out five key-priorities. International R&I cooperation is not part of these priorities, but most of these priority areas have an underlying international dimension. The external dimension of the ERA is instead addressed in the Communication on international R&I cooperation from September 2012⁶. This Communication and the Council conclusions from May 2013⁷ have framed SFIC's work over the last year and its 2013-2014 work programme adopted in March 2013. The most relevant activities of SFIC as set out in the work programme are:

- To facilitate up-front coordination when STI issues are items of summits, bi-regional/bilateral dialogues and international fora.
- To advise on areas for joint European actions through the development of roadmaps and/or strategic research and innovation agendas for the SFIC initiatives on USA, China and Brazil and ensure the connection to Horizon 2020 and national programmes.
- To consider organising SFIC & other ERA-groups joint seminars.
- To increase its collaboration with stakeholders, especially when developing the SFIC initiatives vis-à-vis third countries.
- To contribute to the development of common principles and guidelines for the conduct of international R&I activities as defined in the Communication on international R&I cooperation⁶.
- To support activities related to the monitoring of the external dimension of the ERA, to the development of the EU Research and Innovation Observatory and the definition of indicators in the international R&I cooperation field.

The draft fourth annual report covering the period 1 March 2012 - 28 February 2013 will be discussed in the next SFIC plenary meeting on 18 June 2013. Based on the questionnaire submitted by ERAC, SFIC will also discuss an appropriate way to contribute to the monitoring the ERA progress in the next plenary.

⁵ Doc. 12848/12 of 23 July 2012.

⁶ Doc. 14000/12 of 20 September 2012.

⁷ Doc. 10318/13 of 31 May 2013.

High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC)

The GPC 2012 Biennial Report⁸ captures the contribution of the GPC to progress of the Joint Programming process. It has also been sent to the ERAC Steering Board as relevant material for the Committee to prepare orientations on ERA progress.

In the next meetings, the Group will discuss its follow-up to the outcome of the Presidency Conference on Joint Programming held in March and of the policy debate on Joint Programming held by the Competitiveness Council on 30 May⁹. Its Work Programme will be adapted as a consequence in order to act on the conclusions and recommendations as appropriate.

The Group will also complete its interaction with the other ERA-related groups by addressing interaction with the Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM).

It is also intended that the GPC will in due course consider the survey and the mapping of national policies monitoring ERA progress for the part on cross-border collaboration.

ERAC Working Group on Knowledge Transfer (KT WG)

The ERAC Working Group on Knowledge Transfer acts as a strategic advisory body to ERAC, develops relevant initiatives and ensures that these are delivered effectively.

The main activities of the Working Group include: monitoring the implementation of the 2008 Commission Recommendation on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer and Code of Practice for universities and other public research organisations ('IP-Recommendation'¹⁰), thus contributing to the European Research Area and the Innovation Union commitments (notably the development of model consortium agreements and the creation of so-called European Knowledge Markets).

⁸ Doc. ERAC-GPC 1301/13 of 7 February 2013.

⁹ See http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/137340.pdf (p. 22).

¹⁰ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:146:0019:0024:EN:PDF>

In 2010, the Group released the first monitoring report on the implementation of the IP-Recommendation and ERA Guidelines on IP Management in international research collaboration agreements between European and Non-European Partners, as well as a position paper on Knowledge Markets. Several expert groups have been set up (including on international cooperation and on KT indicators) and studies were commissioned studies to support the work of the Group.

On-going and future activities include: delivering the second IP recommendation monitoring report, contributing to the Member State commitments on knowledge transfer in ERA, exchange of best practices of Member State activities and strengthening exchange with stakeholders.

In line with its mandate, the Group will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for a period of two years. The next election is expected to be held in October 2013.

Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM)

During the last plenary meeting on 16 April 2013, a new Chair, Conor O'Carrol from Ireland, was elected for a two-year period (2013-2015).

At the same meeting, the Commission gave a targeted presentation on the state of play of ERA implementation in the context of the reinforced ERA partnership in close cooperation with Member States and stakeholder organisations. The new Chair emphasised the pertinent role of this group as it focuses on ERA priorities and the importance of its contribution towards ERA implementation.

Two new working groups, WG 1 (Innovative Doctoral Training) and WG2 (Professional Development of Researchers), are in place. The kick-off meeting for both groups will take place in June.

The next plenary meeting of the Steering Group in late September will have as the main agenda point to review (and possibly revise) the SGHRM mandate to align with its role and tasks in ERA implementation by the end of 2014.

Helsinki Group for Gender in Research and Innovation (HG)

The Helsinki Group has actively contributed to the publication of She Figures (in 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012) through its sub-group of national statistical correspondents, which helped the Commission to gather and compile sex-disaggregated statistics and build gender-sensitive indicators in research.

Given the new context of the gender equality policy at European level with Horizon 2020 and the ERA Communication, the mandate of the HG was revised and approved in April 2013 in order to reflect new opportunities and additional needs. It stresses the essential role of the Helsinki Group in advising and supporting the Commission on relevant initiatives, statistics and indicators, exchanging best practices, creating awareness at national level and mobilising stakeholders. The next meeting of the Group is scheduled on 8 and 9 July 2013.

European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and e-IRG

In its conclusions of 12 December 2012¹¹, the Competitiveness Council endorsed the need for strengthened partnership in the field of research infrastructures and "emphasise[d] the need for renewing and adapting the mandate of ESFRI to adequately address the existing challenges and also to ensure the follow-up of implementation of already on-going ESFRI projects after a comprehensive assessment, as well as the prioritisation of the infrastructure projects listed in the ESFRI roadmap"¹².

ESFRI has set up an Implementation Working Group. Its report will be published soon.

An Expert Group on Assessment was set up in order to advise the projects as regards management, governance and financial issues. In 2012, ESFRI also set up an ad hoc-working group on indicators dealing with the pan-European relevance of research infrastructures. The report of this group should be finalised in 2013.

¹¹ Doc. 17649/12 of 12 December 2012.

¹² Paragraph 15.

ERA-related Groups
Provisional Meeting Schedule 2013

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
ERAC, including Steering Board (SB)	25 January			19 April	14 May SB	12 June (Ad hoc WG) 13-14 June (Plenary, Dublin) 27 June (Ad hoc WG)			12 September SB	10-11 October (Vilnius)	14 November SB	12 December
ERA-related groups												
GPC						25 June			4 September			5 December
ESFRI		13 February EB ¹³	11 March morning EB with Chairs of WGs, afternoon 44 th meeting, 12th March 44 th meeting		15 May EB	4 June EB (morning) 4-5 June 45 th meeting (Cork)			11 September EB with Chairs of WGs	7 October EB 8 October – 46 th meeting of ESFRI	6 November EB with Chairs of WGS	5 December EB 6 December 47 th meeting

¹³ Executive Board.

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
SFIC			19 March Plenary	24 April SFIC TF		17 June Brazil workshop; 18 June Plenary			17 September SFIC TF		12 November Plenary	
KT										21-22 October (tbc)		
HG							8 July- afternoon 9 July morning					
SGHRM				16 April Plenary		End June Kick off WGs			Late September Plenary		Late November Plenary	
Digital ERA - meetings (tbc)												