

EUROPEAN UNION

**Brussels, 6 September 2013
(OR. en)**

**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
COMMITTEE
High Level Group for
Joint Programming**

Secretariat

ERAC-GPC 1304/13

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: GPC functioning and working methods

Delegations will find in Annex a document on GPC functioning and working methods as adopted by the GPC at its meeting of 4 September 2013.

GPC FUNCTIONING AND WORKING METHODS

Starting Point

The starting point of this paper is the assumed consensus on the following points:

- Joint Programming has become an integral part of the European Research Area and is an important driving force in its further integration.
- The 10 JPIs have the potential to make a considerable contribution to driving forward research and innovation in tackling grand societal challenges.
- In order to make Joint Programming a success and fully exploit its potential continued support and commitment (political and financial) of Member States, Associated States and Commission is essential.

1. Role and Ambition of the GPC

- Within the remit of its mandate, the GPC should act as a platform of MS and AS with the aim of facilitating the JP Process, thus reducing fragmentation and eliminating duplication of research initiatives, as well as the establishment and implementation of JPIs, acting as an intermediate between politics, policies and practice.
- This must be done in fruitful cooperation with the JPI's, the Commission, national (research performing & research funding) organisations and other actors at national, multilateral and European level.
- The GPC will only be able to fulfil this ambition if it is able to develop practical and workable working methods which are in proportion to the ambitions of the GPC as reflected in its Work Programme.

- Therefore a creative, critical and active attitude of all GPC members/observers¹ and their alternates is needed.

2. Working Methods

3.1. Working methods principles

1. GPC ambitions and GPC efforts should be proportional, and the other way around. High ambitions should be accompanied by high efforts, and low efforts should be accompanied by modest ambitions;
2. Main GPC activities should be pulled by GPC members/observers responsible for the preparation of GPC discussions, reports, proposals and opinions;
3. A well functioning GPC needs a well equipped supporting unit, assisting the Chair in the preparation and organisation of GPC meetings and other activities;
4. GPC should organise its relations with its relevant environment in a simple and effective way, making the best use of ongoing activities and experiences elsewhere.

3.2 Working methods operation

3.2.1 Rapporteurs² and Working Groups

The GPC could appoint RAPPORTEURS. Working Groups (WG) could be formed to support their work. Rapporteurs would be responsible for the preparation of GPC positions on the major issues from its work programme. They would lead the collection and analysis of information, experiences and views and support the development of GPC proposals and positions. The Rapporteurs should prepare reports/opinions to the GPC on the issue they have been appointed for. The reports/opinions would be the basis for GPC reflections, discussion and decisions.

¹ GPC members are EU member states and the Commission, Associated member states are observers

² As foreseen in the GPC Rules of Procedure, Article 10

On proposal of the Chair, rapporteurs will be appointed by the GPC. For each major issue in the work programme a Rapporteur should be appointed.

3.2.2 Strengthening the GPC support

An increased output and efficiency of the GPC will need additional support beyond the secretariat function provided by the General Secretariat of the Council. The GPC should explore how these resources could be increased.

These additional resources would be dedicated to tasks and working groups foreseen in the Work Programme, going beyond the administration of GPC meetings such as support to the Chair in the preparation and organisation of GPC meetings, overview and keep a watch over activities and appointments or support to the Chair in contacting and briefing speakers, guests and other people.

3.2.3 Relations with its relevant environment

Outside the GPC there are a lot of ongoing activities relevant for the GPC's work on Joint Programming. GPC should develop good connections in order to be aware of new developments and activities, to make the most of the experience of (persons acting in) other bodies and to avoid reinventing the wheel or doing double work.

The GPC could invite **experts**³ to report to the GPC major developments and observations in their field. These experts are persons acting in projects or programmes which are of high importance for the Joint Programming process and development (e.g. the project JPIs to Co-Work or ERA-Learn). They would be invited to report to the GPC on an ad hoc, temporary or on a more structural basis.

The GPC could identify **correspondents**: GPC members/observers (or alternates) also active in JPIs or in Joint Programming relevant projects, programmes, committees (e.g. ERAC groups) or institutes. These correspondents could be asked to report to the GPC major relevant developments in these bodies (e.g. once a year and/or in special cases).

³ As mentioned in the ROP Article 8/3

3.2.4 Annotated agenda

GPC meetings should be prepared with an annotated agenda (describing each agenda item, its context, questions to be dealt with and aim of the discussion). The Chair could ask GPC members/observers to prepare drafts on specific points of the annotated agenda.

3.2.5 Online platform

Austria has already established an online platform for the GPC on the “ERA Portal Austria” which could be used to support the preparation of meetings and the collaboration of members and observers of the GPC and its working groups.
