



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

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| From: | The Presidency |
| To: | Delegations |
| Subject: | Draft Council conclusions on Key Enabling Technologies, including the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials |

Delegations will find attached draft Council conclusions on Key Enabling Technologies, including the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials.

These conclusions will be presented at the meeting of the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth on 6 September 2012. The first exchange of views will also take place at this meeting.

Draft Council conclusions on Key Enabling Technologies, including the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

- the European Council conclusions of 28-29 June 2012 stating that it is of particular importance to strengthen key enabling technologies, which are of systemic importance for the innovativeness and competitiveness of industry and the whole economy, and calling for further efforts to ensure that research efforts are swiftly translated into innovations meeting market demands and thus strengthen Europe's competitiveness and help respond to societal challenges¹;
- the European Council conclusions of 4 February 2011² calling for synergies between the EU and Member States to ensure that innovations with a societal benefit get to the market quicker, and recognising the role of joint programming, as well as stating that the Council will take the necessary political decisions on future European Innovation Partnerships before they are launched;

¹ Doc. EUCO 76/12 of 29 June 2012, p. 10, under (e). The European Council of 1-2 March 2012 had already underlined the importance of key enabling technologies in almost identical wording (doc. EUCO 4/3/12 REV 3, p. 6-7).

² Doc. 2/1/11 REV 1 of 8 March 2011, p. 7.

- the Council conclusions of June 2012³, which encourage the implementation and further development of the European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) and support the launch of EIPs on Water and on Raw Materials in order to break down barriers to innovation and facilitate the development of innovative solutions in the fields of water management and of sustainable supply, use, recycling and substitution of raw materials, taking into account its conclusions of 30-31 May 2012 on European Innovation Partnerships⁴;
- (1) WELCOMES the Commission's Communication entitled "A European strategy for Key Enabling Technologies — A bridge to growth and jobs"⁵, which outlines a single strategy for key enabling technologies (KETs) to allow maximum exploitation of the EU's potential in competitive markets, aiming to keep pace with the EU's main international competitors, contributing to sustainable growth and job creation in the EU, whilst at the same time addressing today's major societal challenges;
- (2) WELCOMES the adaptation and streamlining of EU policy instruments for KETs, and AGREES with the need to ensure co-ordination of EU and national activities, appropriate governance structures at EU level, a level playing field in a globally competitive market, and the role of cluster policy to strengthen competitiveness and intra-EU partnerships;
- (3) EMPHASISES the importance of an integrated approach towards KETs, which strengthens synergies between EU policies and instruments, in particular research and innovation policy and Horizon 2020⁶, cohesion policy and particularly the European Regional Development Fund and the European Investment Bank, and which covers the entire value-chain, in order to translate research into marketable products;

³ Doc. 11186/12 of 11 June 2012, Paragraph 13.

⁴ Doc. 10701/12 of 1 June 2012.

⁵ Doc. 12093/12 of 2 July 2012.

⁶ Doc. 17933/11 of 5 December 2011.

- (4) CALLS on the Commission, in cooperation with Member States and regions, each in their respective area of competence, to exploit research and innovation strategies for Smart Specialisation⁷. ENCOURAGES industry to invest in KET-based product manufacturing within the EU;
- (5) CALLS ON the Commission to modernise State aid rules with the aim of creating a level playing field vis-à-vis external competitors, in particular to raise the threshold for State aid notification. Also CALLS ON the Commission to make the widest possible use of Article 107(3)(b) TFEU, which is foreseen in the Community Framework for State aid for Research and Development and Innovation⁸ and provides for aid to promote the execution of important projects of common European interest, and consider in particular projects for KETs in this respect;
- (6) INVITES the Commission to continue to work towards favourable trade conditions and level playing field in international trade for KETs at bilateral and multilateral level;
- (7) CALLS on the Commission to seriously consider, as part of its strategy for KETs, the recommendations included in the Final Report by the High Level Expert Group on Key Enabling Technologies, which was published in June 2011⁹;
- (8) WELCOMES the introduction of a monitoring mechanism for KETs in 2013, which will provide relevant market data on the supply of and demand for KETs in the EU and other regions;

⁷ Smart Specialisation is a strategic approach to economic development through targeted support to research and innovation. It will be the basis for Structural Fund investments in research and innovation as part of the future cohesion policy's contribution to the Europe 2020 jobs and growth strategy.

⁸ OJ C 323, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

⁹ See http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/files/kets/hlg_report_final_en.pdf, p. 30-39).

- (9) WELCOMES the Commission's Communication "Making raw materials available for Europe's future wellbeing — Proposal for a European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials"¹⁰ as a key contribution to the successful implementation of the Innovation Union and the Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era Flagship initiatives, and CALLS ON the Commission to launch the Raw Materials EIP and to develop its Strategic Implementation Plan¹¹ by the end of 2013, in cooperation with the High Level Steering Group;
- (10) INVITES the Commission to appoint representatives of Member States at ministerial level to the High-level Steering Group foreseen for the governance of the Raw Materials EIP¹², representing a good balance between industry, environment and research, coming from different Member States and covering the fields of expertise included in the raw materials value chain;
- (11) INVITES the Commission to report to the Council by the end of July 2013 on progress achieved with the Raw Materials EIP, in particular with regard to its Strategic Implementation Plan.

¹⁰ Doc. 7247/12 of 5 March 2012.

¹¹ See doc. 7247/12 ADD 1 of 7 March 2012 (Commission Staff Working Paper accompanying the Raw Materials Communication), p. 8-14.

¹² See doc. 7247/12 ADD 1, p. 8-9.