



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 12 September 2016
(OR. en)

12028/16

RECH 262
EDUC 273
SOC 507
COMPET 468

NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: Draft Council conclusions on 'Measures to support young researchers, raise the attractiveness of scientific careers and foster investment in human potential in research and development'
- Presidency text

Delegations will find attached a Presidency text for the draft Council conclusions on 'Measures to support young researchers, raise the attractiveness of scientific careers and foster investment in human potential in research and development' with a view to the Research Working Party on Thursday, 15 September 2016.

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON 'MEASURES TO SUPPORT YOUNG RESEARCHERS, RAISE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF SCIENTIFIC CAREERS AND FOSTER INVESTMENT IN HUMAN POTENTIAL IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT'

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING:

- its Resolution of 10 November 2003 on the profession and the career of researchers within the European Research Area (ERA)¹;
- its conclusions of 18 April 2005 on reinforcing human resources in science and technology in the European Research Area²;
- the conclusions of the European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008, which called upon the Member States to remove barriers to the free movement of knowledge by creating a 'fifth freedom' based on, inter alia, enhancing the cross-border mobility of researchers, as well as students, scientists and university teaching staff³;
- its conclusions of 30 May 2008 on family-friendly scientific careers: towards an Integrated Model, which recalled the crucial role of research and technological development policy for Europe in the context of the Lisbon Strategy⁴;
- its conclusions of 1 and 2 December 2008 on the definition of a '2020 Vision for the European Research Area'⁵;

¹ OJ C 282, 25.11.2003.

² 8194/05.

³ 7652/1/08 REV 1.

⁴ 10212/08.

⁵ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/104434.pdf

- its conclusions of 2 March 2010 on European researchers' mobility and careers⁶ and its conclusions of 1 December 2015 on research integrity⁷ and gender balance;⁸
 - its conclusions of 27 May 2016 on The transition towards an Open Science system⁹;
1. NOTES that new generations of researchers and scientists are key for Europe's future research and innovation, and can play an important role in a modernised research environment.
 2. ACKNOWLEDGES that there are important barriers for young researchers¹⁰ in entering and fully contributing to the scientific community and in this regard TAKES NOTE of the aspirations young researchers have identified in the Bratislava Declaration of 19 July 2016¹¹. STRESSES the need to support young researchers in their careers, to foster their talent and to offer them attractive career development opportunities, including for intersectoral and international mobility, as well as to improve the attractiveness of scientific careers for young people.
 3. With the aim of empowering young researchers and creating better conditions overall for young researchers at both European and national level, CALLS UPON the Commission and the Member States to explore new and innovative ways of supporting young researchers, providing better career security and an independent stable career trajectory, based on quality and excellence¹².

⁶ 6833/10.

⁷ 14853/15.

⁸ 14846/15.

⁹ 9526/16.

¹⁰ [Young researcher definition]

¹¹ <http://www.eu2016.sk/data/documents/bratislava-declaration-of-young-researchers-final.pdf>

¹² Examples of best practices: <http://declaration.mimuw.edu.pl/best-practices/>

4. NOTES the need to act at all levels - institutional, regional, national and European - to implement the necessary reforms. ACKNOWLEDGES the important role European Research Area (ERA) national action plans as well as mentoring and networking initiatives¹³ can play.
5. INVITES the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts in making the European Research Area fully operational, notably in removing the remaining barriers to an open labour market for researchers and in further developing attractive working conditions for researchers, including mainstreaming support of young researchers within their national ERA roadmaps.
6. REAFFIRMS that open recruitment in compliance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers¹⁴ is essential and INVITES the Commission to continue raising awareness of the EURAXESS portal and the RESAVER scheme for their implementation.
7. INVITES the Commission and Member States to foster and equally reward all types of mobility, including outside the EU as well as from and to the private sector or on a short term basis, while taking into account the need to close the research and innovation divide across the Member States and regions and STRESSES the importance of entrepreneurial competences.
8. ENCOURAGES the ERC Scientific Council to consider establishing Junior ERC Grants as a pilot.
9. TAKES NOTE of the Commission Communication on a 'New Skills Agenda for Europe'¹⁵ and the accompanying proposals¹⁶ issued in June 2016 and NOTES the importance that young researchers' skills should be suited for an evolving research environment, including industry, and for fuelling the knowledge-based economy.

¹³ Such as the COST targeted network Sci-Generation
http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/strategy/targeted_networks/sci-generation

¹⁴ OJ L75, 22.3.2005.

¹⁵ 10038/16.

¹⁶ 10205/16 and 10209/16,

10. TAKES NOTE of the Commission's intention to review the Higher Education Modernisation Agenda and the potential this review can have in improving the synergies between ERA and addressing the issues relevant to young researchers.

In particular,

11. CALLS UPON the Member States to:

- a) further promote science, research careers and the importance of scientists in society,
- b) consider strengthening science education in all types and levels of curricula, based on best practices and research results, such as the Primas project¹⁷,
- c) establish more permanent positions and clear and structured career paths, to foster transparent recruitment procedures via instruments such as the 'Open, Transparent and Merit based Recruitment toolkit', to ensure that the new generation of researchers in Europe be trained to become creative, critical and autonomous risk takers, pushing the boundaries of frontier research, notably through the uptake of the Innovative Doctoral Training Principles from an early stage of education,
- d) establish as appropriate a database of senior researchers from universities, academies of sciences and industry who are willing to work with young researchers during their university studies (or before or after) on a short or long-term basis, as well as to consider rewarding the mentors of internationally best performing students,
- e) encourage universities to give more freedom to top young researchers with the aim of finding a better balance between research and teaching work,
- f) consider more permanent positions and leading roles for young researchers,
- g) encourage the national funding agencies to consider reorganising the funding schemes, strengthening their output-based performance in order to trust and empower best young researchers enabling them to pursue their ideas,

¹⁷ <http://www.primas-project.eu/en/index.do>

- h) consider in the future a minimum wage for PhD students, but establishing it on the basis of quality assessment and respecting the autonomy of the universities.

12. CALLS UPON the Commission to:

- a) explore, in cooperation with the Member States, integrated ways of networking the best young European researchers and to further facilitate institutional networking at the European level, helping young researchers to advance their careers, as well as to introduce them to the tools and grants that exist at national and European level,
- b) better use the data from EUROSTAT and OECD to support young researchers and to define their biggest challenges,
- c) explore the possibility of strengthening short-term and virtual mobility schemes, as mobility of researchers is a driver of excellence,
- d) consider establishing an inducement prize¹⁸ for excellent young researchers aimed at supporting their independent research, mobility and networking,
- e) establish a database of medal winners of the International Science Olympiads (in 13 disciplines) in order to raise awareness in academia, industry and society of young researchers and their potential.

13. CALLS UPON the Commission, Member States and stakeholder organisations to involve young researchers in the policy design and implementation of a fully functioning European Research Area.

14. CALLS UPON young researchers to be the ambassadors of the transformations that scientific development bring to society and to actively contribute to the buy in of European citizens to those changes.

15. AGREES to take stock of progress, together with the Commission on a regular basis.

¹⁸ Such as the Matej Bel Prize.