



Council of the  
European Union

118337/EU XXV. GP  
Eingelangt am 11/10/16

Brussels, 11 October 2016  
(OR. en)

12296/16

RECH 272  
EDUC 287  
SOC 531  
COMPET 494

**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Delegations

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No. prev. doc.: 12028/16 RECH 262 EDUC 273 SOC 507 COMPET 468

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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

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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 Monday, 17 October 2016.

Explanation:

Strikeout = deletion in relation to doc. 12028/16

**Bold underlined** = new text

**DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON 'MEASURES TO SUPPORT YOUNG EARLY  
STAGE 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)<sup>1</sup>;
- its conclusions of 18 April 2005 on reinforcing human resources in science and technology in the European Research Area<sup>2</sup>;
- 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 staff<sup>3</sup>;
- 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 Strategy<sup>4</sup>;
- its conclusions of 1 and 2 December 2008 on the definition of a '2020 Vision for the European Research Area'<sup>5</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 282, 25.11.2003.

<sup>2</sup> 8194/05.

<sup>3</sup> 7652/1/08 REV 1.

<sup>4</sup> 10212/08.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/104434.pdf](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 careers<sup>6</sup> and its conclusions of 1 December 2015 on research integrity<sup>7</sup> and gender balance;<sup>8</sup>
  - **its conclusions of 29 May 2015 on the European Research Area Roadmap 2015-2020 highlighting the role of human capital in the advancement of the ERA and the necessity to strengthen comprehensive human resources strategies and the empowerment of young researchers by providing them with attractive career pathways;**<sup>9</sup>
  - its conclusions of 27 May 2016 on The transition towards an Open Science system<sup>10</sup>;
1. NOTES that new generations of researchers and scientists are key for Europe's future research and innovation, and ~~can~~ **will** play an important role in a modernised research environment.
  2. ACKNOWLEDGES that there are important barriers for young **early stage** researchers<sup>11</sup> in entering and fully contributing to the scientific community and in this regard TAKES NOTE **SUPPORTS** of the aspirations young researchers have identified in the Bratislava Declaration of 19 July 2016<sup>12</sup>. STRESSES the need to support young **early stage** researchers in their careers, to foster their talent and to offer them attractive career development opportunities, including for intersectoral and international mobility **and to and from the private sector**, as well as to improve the attractiveness of scientific careers for young people.

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<sup>6</sup> 6833/10.

<sup>7</sup> 14853/15.

<sup>8</sup> 14846/15.

<sup>9</sup> 9351/15.

<sup>10</sup> 9526/16.

<sup>11</sup> [Young researcher definition]

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.eu2016.sk/data/documents/bratislava-declaration-of-young-researchers-final.pdf>

3. With the aim of empowering ~~young researchers~~ and creating better conditions overall for ~~young~~ **early stage** researchers at both European and national level, CALLS UPON the Commission and the Member States **to work together to raise awareness about existing initiatives aimed at improving early stage researchers' opportunities and career prospects, and** to explore new ~~and innovative~~ ways of supporting ~~young~~ **early stage** researchers, ~~providing better career security and an independent stable career trajectory, based on quality and excellence,~~ **also taking into account the best national practices on how to encourage researchers to choose and pursue this career path**<sup>13</sup>.
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 initiatives<sup>14</sup> can play.~~
54. **ACKNOWLEDGES the important role the European Research Area (ERA) as well as mentoring, funding schemes and networking initiatives<sup>15</sup> can play for the benefit of early stage researchers.** 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~~ **supporting** of ~~young~~ **early stage** researchers within their national ERA roadmaps **action plans and involving them in the policy design and implementation of a fully functioning ERA.**

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<sup>13</sup> Examples of best practices: <http://declaration.mimuw.edu.pl/best-practices/>

<sup>14</sup> ~~Such as the COST targeted network Sci-Generation~~  
<http://www.cost.eu/about-cost/strategy/targeted-networks/sci-generation>

<sup>15</sup> **Such as the COST programme** ~~targeted network Sci-Generation~~  
<http://www.cost.eu/about-cost/strategy/targeted-networks/sci-generation>

65. REAFFIRMS that open, **transparent and merit-based** recruitment in compliance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers<sup>16</sup> is essential and INVITES the Commission **and Member States** to continue raising awareness of the EURAXESS portal and the RESAVER scheme ~~for their implementation.~~ **CALLS ON the Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility to follow-up on these issues.**
76. INVITES the Commission and Member States to foster and equally **adequately** 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.~~
87. ENCOURAGES the ~~ERC Scientific Council to consider establishing Junior ERC Grants as a pilot~~ **Commission to examine the possibilities of reinforcing and if necessary adjusting the existing support to the needs of early stage researchers, such as those provided by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellowship Programme.**
8. **WELCOMES the set-up of visiting fellowship programmes by several Member States to give the opportunity to future applicants to the ERC calls to visit research teams of existing ERC grantees. CALLS UPON the Commission to publish a report by mid-2017 on the current state of play of European support for early stage researchers and investigate the demand for extending the ERC Starting Grants to such researchers.**

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<sup>16</sup> OJ L75, 22.3.2005.

9. TAKES NOTE of the Commission Communication on a 'New Skills Agenda for Europe'<sup>17</sup> and the accompanying proposals<sup>18</sup> issued in June 2016 and NOTES the importance that young researchers' skills **and competences** should be suited for an evolving research environment, including industry, and for fuelling the knowledge-based economy. **STRESSES the need to equip the new generations of researchers with innovative, cutting-edge skills giving emphasis to the use of digital and data technologies, entrepreneurship and product development.**
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 **higher education and** ERA and addressing the issues relevant to young **early stage** researchers.

In particular,

11. CALLS UPON the Member States to:
- a) further promote science, research careers and the importance of ~~scientists~~ **early stage researchers** 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 project<sup>19</sup>,~~
  - c) **consider** **establishing** 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,

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<sup>17</sup> 10038/16.

<sup>18</sup> 10205/16 and 10209/16.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.primas-project.eu/en/index.do>

- d) ~~establish as appropriate a database of~~ **promote mentorship activities of** senior researchers from universities, academies of sciences and industry ~~who are willing to work with young researchers~~ **before, during and** after 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~~ **early stage** 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,~~
- f) promote best practices and policies that seek to dismantle barriers to the advancement of women in research and enhance the diversity of the research community,**
- g) encourage the national funding agencies to consider ~~reorganising the~~ **analysing if and how** funding schemes **can be improved**, strengthening their output-based performance in order to ~~trust and empower best young~~ **early stage** researchers **and enabling** them to pursue their ideas,
- h) facilitate and promote participation of early stage researchers in bilateral and multilateral S&T cooperation schemes and projects, as increased mobility of early stage researchers contributes to the European added value in research excellence.**
- ~~hi)~~ **h)** consider ~~in the future a minimum wage~~ **proper funding** for PhD students, ~~but~~ establishing it on the basis of quality assessment and respecting the autonomy of the universities **and research institutions.**

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,~~

e) ~~explore the possibility of strengthening short-term and virtual mobility schemes, as mobility of researchers is a driver of excellence,~~

**b) support the return of early stage researchers, both from outside and within the EU, to pursue scientific careers in their countries of origin, thus facilitating inter-institutional networking and international scientific cooperation,**

**ed)** ~~consider establishing an inducement~~ **recognition** prize<sup>20</sup> for excellent young **early stage** researchers aimed at supporting their independent research, mobility and networking,

**ed)** ~~establish a database of~~ **promote European** 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.~~

143. CALLS UPON young **early stage** researchers **to share responsibility in managing their own career paths** 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.

154. AGREES to take stock of progress **by mid-2018**, together with the Commission **and** on a regular basis **thereafter**.

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<sup>20</sup> Such as the **possible creation of a** Matej Bel Prize.