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From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on "Open, data - intensive and networked research as a driver for faster and wider innovation"

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Delegations will find attached draft Council conclusions on "Open, data - intensive and networked research as a driver for faster and wider innovation" with a view to the discussion by the Research Working Party at its meeting on 16 April 2015.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON 'OPEN, DATA-INTENSIVE AND NETWORKED  
RESEARCH AS A DRIVER FOR FASTER AND WIDER INNOVATION'**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING

- Its Conclusions of 31 May 2010 on "A Digital Agenda for Europe"<sup>1</sup>, acknowledging that Europe should put the necessary resources in the development of a Digital Single Market to raise productivity and generate economic growth and attract investments, create jobs and reinforce its influence at a global level;
- **Its Conclusions of 3 December 2010 on “Cross fertilization between Europe 2020 flagship initiatives Digital Agenda for Europe and Innovation Union”<sup>2</sup>, recognising the contribution of digital technologies as one of the main drivers to improve Europe's productivity, growth capacity and ability to innovate in all sectors;**
- Its Conclusions of 30 May 2013 on "High Performance Computing: Europe's place in a Global Race"<sup>3</sup>, underlining the overall objective to achieve European leadership in the development and use of High Performance Computing systems, software, applications and services by 2020;
- The Conclusions of the European Council of 24-25 October 2013<sup>4</sup> which emphasise the importance of the digital economy, innovation and services as drivers for growth and jobs and invites action at EU level to provide the right framework conditions for a single market for big data and cloud computing;

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 10130/10

<sup>2</sup> **Doc. 16834/10**

<sup>3</sup> Doc. 10322/13

<sup>4</sup> Doc. EUCO 169/13

1. REITERATES its Conclusions of 2 March 2015 on the "Single Market Policy"<sup>5</sup> highlighting "that full and efficient exploitation of tools and services such as Cloud Computing, Big Data, Automation, Internet of Things and Open Data can drive for better productivity and better services, and therefore should be facilitated, including through market driven solutions, R&D and the promotion of the necessary skills and capacity building, along with further ICT standardisation and interoperability"; In this context, STRESSES that open, data-driven and networked research can maximize Europe's digital potential through fostering faster and wider innovation;
  2. TAKES NOTE of the progress already made towards a truly digital Europe, and the initial discussions relating to the forthcoming Digital Single Market strategy in several Council configurations;
  3. WELCOMES the Communication from the European Commission of 2 July 2014 on "Towards a thriving data-driven economy"<sup>6</sup> which outlines the features of the data-driven economy and identifies the main areas where action is needed to support and accelerate the transition towards it, as an important contribution to the ongoing development of the Digital Single Market; and LOOKS FORWARD to the adoption by the European Commission by the end of 2015 of its detailed action plan to accelerate the transition towards a data-driven economy in Europe;
- 3a. EMPHASISES that multilingualism in the digital age provides new opportunities for economic growth and social cohesion. NOTES that language technologies already bring benefits to European citizens, businesses and public institutions enabling multilingual access to e-services, extracting knowledge out of multilingual data and boosting efficiency of machine translation systems and technologies;**

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<sup>5</sup> Doc. 6197/15

<sup>6</sup> Doc. 11603/14

4. RECOGNISES the high potential of the data-driven economy and the need to strengthen the whole data value chain in Europe. REAFFIRMS the broad political support from Member States for setting better framework conditions for faster and wider data-driven innovation taking into account the research perspective and **CONSIDERS that openness of research data can further increase the efficient use of public funding; ACKNOWLEDGES the importance of data as fuel for entrepreneurship and the development of new business ideas and innovative start-ups;**
- 4a.** ACKNOWLEDGES the potential of open science and NOTES growing support for **open** access to publicly funded research publications and underlying data, **as well as** **RECOGNISES the need for a reflection on current research evaluation mechanisms.** At the same time, RECOGNISES **STRESSES** the need for adequate sharing, use and interoperability of data, based on common standards ~~in an environment ensuring appropriate protection and trust~~ **as well as the importance of a good balance between scientific research and data-driven innovation in the interest of societal welfare and the protection of privacy;** ACKNOWLEDGES the need for development of data skills for academia, researchers and **the** wider community and EMPHASISES the importance of developing e-infrastructures and networks of centres of excellence;

#### **Community building and knowledge transfer for a thriving data-driven economy**

5. UNDERLINES the importance of developing ~~an~~ EU-wide data communities **iesy** of researchers, companies, SMEs, public sector and other relevant stakeholders and NOTES the need to foster their cooperation along the data value chain in order to form the basis of a strong and vibrant data-driven ecosystem. TAKES NOTE of the **contractual** European Public-Private Partnership on **Big** Data **Value** launched in October 2014 with such an objective;

6. WELCOMES actions supporting researchers and **industry, including** SMEs, within the Horizon 2020 framework, **TAKES NOTES of initiatives** such as the 'lighthouse projects' (large-scale demonstrators in targeted sectors) and 'i-Spaces' (incubator & accelerator environments where research outcomes on novel technologies can be quickly tested and piloted), as well as the open data incubator for SMEs. **Such actions** ~~which~~ **will** aims to set up supply chains based on data, promote open access including to cloud computing, and promote networks of data incubators across Europe;
  
- 6a. RECOGNISES the importance of availability of secure, reliable and high-quality cloud services, and in this context WELCOMES the further development of a European Science Cloud;**
  
7. REITERATES the need to increase the **multidisciplinary** digital skills base. In particular, STRESSES the need for new types of data professionals and researchers who combine the knowledge in their fields with data skills. NOTES the importance of new skills required to develop new technologies, systems, platforms, and services for deep ~~big~~ data analysis. In this respect, WELCOMES supplementary actions contributing to capacity-building, **and TAKES NOTE of initiatives** such as the European Data Science Academy based on a network of European skills centres for big data analytics;

### **Developing the framework conditions**

8. UNDERLINES the exponential increase of ~~research~~-data, **including research data**, and UNDERSCORES that making data ~~findable~~ **discoverable**, accessible, **assessable, reusable** **and** interoperable ~~and reusable~~ would considerably increase innovation potential **and create new business opportunities**. In this context, NOTES the need to promote innovation driven by text and data mining taking into account research needs **and UNDERLINES that the removal of legal uncertainty and fragmentation of the data protection regulatory framework would facilitate a science and innovation-friendly environment for better use of data;**

**8a RECOGNISES the global importance of research data exchange and interoperability of data across disciplines and national boundaries as a means to broadening the scientific reach of individual data sets. In this context, NOTES community-led open and voluntary efforts for international coordination and cooperation on data infrastructures such as the Research Data Alliance;**

9. ENCOURAGES the development of a data-friendly policy environment in Europe and Member States which promotes interoperability, use and re-use of government data for research and innovation purposes while ensuring necessary ~~depersonalisation~~ and protection, **e.g. by depersonalisation or other techniques;**

**9a. STRESSES the need for further development of key enabling digital language services based on excellent European research and innovation, thus facilitating companies to create solutions to cover a variety of market needs and providing equal digital opportunities for all EU language communities;**

10. CALLS for urgent action to remove obstacles to wide access to publicly funded research publications and underlying data. CALLS for actions addressing better data management and, in this context, WELCOMES the Pilot on Open Research Data under Horizon 2020;

11. UNDERLINES that e-infrastructure is one of the key elements for research and innovation focused on data or benefiting from it, as they offer services for data preservation and re-use, as well as possibilities for data analysis (~~modelling, simulation, pattern recognition and optimisation using big data and best European computing resources~~). **NOTES the need to better exploit the existing Authentication and Authorization Infrastructure (AAI) to foster open access to e-infrastructures.** WELCOMES that Horizon 2020 will address ~~cloud computing solutions~~ **e-infrastructures** for data analytics and services;

12. UNDERSCORES the importance of PRACE<sup>7</sup>, a world-class European High Performance Computing (HPC) infrastructure for research that provides access to computing ~~and data management~~ resources and services for large-scale scientific and engineering applications;  
~~and CALLS for the Commission, Member States and industry to step up~~  
**ACKNOWLEDGES the need to develop** ~~the development of the new generation of HPC technologies as well as~~ **and CALLS for** the reinforcement of the interconnected network of data processing facilities GEANT<sup>8</sup>. **In this respect, INVITES ESFRI to establish a dedicated group for the coordination of Member States' investment strategies in HPC and the elaboration of a unified roadmap for e-infrastructures, covering HPC, grid, data and networks;**
13. Against this background, UNDERLINES the importance of research and innovation in the forthcoming "Digital Single Market Strategy", and URGES the Member States, Commission and industry to acknowledge the need to increase investment in research and innovation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), ~~in particular~~ **and** stimulating the **short and long term** leveraging effect of investment;
14. CALLS for better identification of sectorial priorities for research and innovation with the greatest potential for social and economic benefits in the data economy. At the same time, EMPHASISES the need for tailored support schemes on national and regional level in order to ensure the greatest impact of investments in ICT through smart specialization strategies;
15. CALLS for synergetic **synergies between** national and European data strategies to ensure a European technological leadership role in the data-driven economy addressing all dimensions of the data value chain.
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<sup>7</sup> Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe.

<sup>8</sup> Pan-European data network for the research and education community.