



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: Draft Council conclusions on "Accelerating knowledge circulation in the EU"
- Presidency text

Delegations will find attached a Presidency text on the Draft Council conclusions on "Accelerating knowledge circulation in the EU" with a view to the Research Working Party meeting on Monday 26 March 2018.

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

ACCELERATING KNOWLEDGE CIRCULATION IN THE EU

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING:

- Its Conclusions of 29 May 2015 on open, data-intensive and networked research as a driver for faster and wider innovation¹, in which it considers that openness of research data could further increase the efficient use of public funding and highlights that making data discoverable, accessible, assessable, reusable and interoperable would considerably increase innovation potential and create new business opportunities;
- Its Conclusions of 27 May 2016 on "FP7 and the Future Outlook: Research and Innovation investments for growth, jobs and solutions to societal challenges"², in which it recognises that the Commission and the Member States should aim for better use of other EU funds to support R&I projects and cater for downstream exploitation of research results for marketable products, services and social innovations;
- Its Conclusions of 27 May 2016 on "The transition towards an Open Science system"³, in which the Council acknowledges that unnecessary legal, organisational and financial barriers to access results of publicly funded research should be removed as much as possible and appropriate, in order to attain optimal knowledge sharing, taking into account when necessary the need for exploitation of results;

1 9360/15
2 9527/16
3 9526/16

- Its Conclusions of 1 December 2017 "From the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 towards the ninth Framework Programme"⁴ in which the Council highlights the importance of disseminating and exploiting effectively research and innovation (R&I) results; recognises that the European competitiveness hinges on the effective circulation of new ideas and knowledge and underlines the importance of better synergies between different EU funding sources;
- The ERAC Opinion⁵ of 7 July 2017 on the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 and preparations for the next Framework Programme (FP), in which ERAC recognises FPs as generating a wide range of impacts, from science to society and from business to culture, but it also considers that the "productivity paradox"⁶ observed in Europe is partly due to the slow dissemination of innovation from the technology frontier actors to the rest of society;
- The Commission Communication of 11 January 2018 on "Horizon 2020 interim evaluation: maximising the impact of EU research and innovation"⁷ which stresses the need to build on progress made in terms of making the scientific publications and data generated by Horizon 2020 openly accessible to the wider scientific community and the public;
- CONSIDERING that increased openness and dissemination of research results and innovations and thereby an enhanced uptake by European innovators, research organisations and companies, in particular SMEs, together with improved research and innovation framework conditions, are prerequisites for boosting the European competitiveness and prosperity;
- RECALLING that R&I activities in certain Member States are low, and that EU financial programmes, in particular the European Structural Investment Funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investments, could play a role in the upgrading, operating or constructing of European research infrastructures and thus the uptake of research results and innovations in those Member States;

⁴ 15320/17

⁵ ERAC 1207/17

⁶ European Commission: *The economic rationale for public R&I funding and its impact*, 2017

⁷ 5271/18

Transfer of knowledge for maximising the impact of R&I

1. CONSIDERS that the EU needs to make full use of the produced knowledge and ensure a more effective transfer of results of R&I projects to industry and society to maximise the impact of R&I public investment and further amplify the EU added value of the Framework Programme.
2. ACKNOWLEDGES the call of the High Level Group, chaired by Pascal Lamy, on maximising the impact of EU R&I Programmes for better capturing, measuring and communicating the impacts of the EU Framework Programme for research and innovation⁸; and CALLS on the Commission to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for the next EU Framework Programme allowing to track and assess its impact on the short, medium and longer-term;

Fostering the uptake of results

3. INVITES the Commission to constantly monitor and support the innovation potential of the FP projects and apply novel approaches to cluster mature research results that can be transferred for potential uptake and reuse to companies (of all sizes, in particular SMEs and start-ups), investors, national, regional and European public administrations and policy-makers;
4. WELCOMES the recommendations of the High Level Group of Innovators (hereinafter the High Level Group) on establishing a European Innovation Council⁹ which stresses the importance of collecting and making available intelligence on emerging technologies with breakthrough, market-creating potential coming from national and EU research funding programmes to enable the quicker uptake of knowledge and open up new avenues for commercialising knowledge more quickly in different areas;

⁸ LAB – FAB – APP, Investing in the European future we want - Report of the independent High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU Research & Innovation Programmes, see http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/archive/other_reports_studies_and_documents/hlg_2017_report.pdf

⁹ *Europe is back: accelerating breakthrough innovation, 2018*

5. RECOGNISES that open access, FAIR¹⁰ data, modern education, training and incentive mechanisms, optimal dissemination of knowledge and the uptake of research results are important enablers for increasing the European competitiveness and growth. REQUESTS the Commission to strengthen the innovation-friendly framework conditions that allow unhindered and seamless knowledge circulation and create the necessary training modalities and incentives for FP beneficiaries, researchers and innovators to share their results for use and reuse, as well as help bring a continual stream of innovation;
6. CALLS on the Commission to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for increasing the availability of results of R&I projects and accelerating their potential uptake to boost the overall impact of the Research and Innovation Framework Programmes and demonstrate its added value to the European economy and society.

Openness and dissemination

7. STRESSES the importance of ensuring open access to research results and innovations to innovators, research organisations and companies in all Member States, especially those Member States with low R&I performance, and of fostering their use. UNDERLINES that national, regional and local administrations may affect positively the multiplier effect of innovation, in particular when it comes to conceiving, designing and implementing public framework conditions for research and innovation ;
8. ACKNOWLEDGES that international, inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary mobility of researchers and their continuous professional development are key for optimal dissemination of knowledge. RECOGNISES that open science and the exploitation of the global data ecosystem demands new sets of skills for researchers. CALLS on the Member States and the Commission to support the dissemination of knowledge by implementing and further progressing in mobility enhancing initiatives such as EURAXESS and RESAVER.

¹⁰ FAIR data: Findable, Available, Interoperable and Reusable data
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/oa_pilot/h2020-hi-oa-data-mgt_en.pdf

Synergies with other EU programmes

9. REITERATES the importance of synergies between Horizon 2020 and other relevant Commission initiatives such as the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and ERASMUS+. Such synergies can pave the way for prototyping in EU regions, allow the building of resilient regional economies and foster knowledge circulation and its take-up with the final aim of fully exploiting positive spill over effects among research organisations, universities, industries and societies all over Europe;
10. CONSIDERS therefore, as stated in previous Conclusions¹¹, that regulations for the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and the European Structural and Investment Funds, as well as any other relevant EU programmes, must be designed from the very beginning with synergies, coherence, compatibility and complementarity in mind. This can help improve diffusion of information on innovation support from all EU funding sources and deepen its impact including better market uptake of innovative solutions.

Long-term sustainability of Research Infrastructures

11. [This section will be revised after the BG Presidency conference "RI beyond 2020 – effective ecosystem for science and society" on 22-23/3 and the envisaged Call for Action on LTS].

¹¹ Conclusions of 1 December 2017 "From the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 towards the ninth Framework Programme" (15320/17)