



Brussels, 14 September 2018
(OR. en)

12071/18

Interinstitutional File:
2018/0224(COD)

RECH 372
COMPET 596
IND 238
MI 627
EDUC 319
TELECOM 279
ENER 299
ENV 585
REGIO 72
AGRI 417
TRANS 369
SAN 266
CADREFIN 195
CODEC 1448

NOTE

From: Presidency

To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

No. Cion doc.: 9865/18 + ADD 1

Subject: *Preparation of the Competitiveness Council of 27-28 September 2018*
Strategic Planning process in relation to the Horizon Europe Framework
Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027
- *Policy debate*

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN HORIZON EUROPE

1. The main features of strategic planning have been set out by the Commission in its proposal on the Specific Programme for Horizon Europe. Though Member States generally welcome the European Commission's approach of introducing a more strategic and transparent governance for Horizon Europe, they do not find the elaborations on strategic planning in the

Specific Programme proposal sufficient in terms of clarity of its objectives, as well as regarding its implementation and in particular the role of the Member States. As a consequence, strategic planning has emerged as a core aspect from early on in the discussion on Horizon Europe within the Council.

2. At the informal meeting of research ministers in Vienna on 17 July 2018, delegations emphasised that Member States must be strongly involved in the implementation of the strategic planning process, in particular in approving the Strategic Plan. Furthermore, taking into account the entire duration of the programme, Member States called for the strategic planning process to be enshrined in the legal acts of Horizon Europe. The Presidency summarised the discussion on the way forward with regard to the strategic planning process at the meeting of 17 July 2018 in its Presidency Conclusions which were submitted to delegations on 19 July 2018.
3. Based on these orientations, the Presidency presented a discussion paper on 25 July 2018, with options for the strategic planning process, including the legal status of the future Strategic Plan. On 3 August 2018, the Commission presented an Issues Paper on strategic planning aiming at clarifying the overall objective¹ and including an outline of the elements of the Strategic Plan.
4. On 3 September 2018, and again on 13 September 2018, the Research Working Party discussed the options presented by the Presidency. A clear preference emerged to integrate certain key elements of the strategic plan into the Specific Programme. Delegations also emphasised the need for real co-creation of the Strategic Plan and the importance to ensure that the process towards the plan and the status of the plan be speedy and flexible enough to easily respond to emerging challenges.

1 According to the EC's Issues Paper, strategic planning should help to translate – in a strategic and systemic way – the content of the Specific Programme into work programmes. It should reflect priority-setting, consultation, political priorities, scientific and technological developments and the macro-economic setting in general. The Strategic Plan would help to ensure a coherent work programme aligned with EU and national priorities, and with the work of other EU programmes, in order to achieve the greatest impact possible.

5. The majority of interventions preferred an option in the Presidency paper, which foresees the integration of areas for missions and institutionalised partnerships in the annex of the Specific Programme, while the rest of the Strategic Plan² would be adopted by the Commission as an Implementing Act (option 4, combined with option 2). Further delegations indicated that this option could be acceptable by way of compromise. This approach would respect the competence of the Council in defining core elements of Horizon Europe, while respecting the right of the European Commission to implement the framework programme.
6. A number of interventions preferred all or most of the elements of the Strategic Plan to be included in the Specific Programme (option 5 of the Presidency paper). Whilst this option would provide Member States with a high degree of control over the final product, any adaptation of the Strategic Plan would be cumbersome.
7. The Commission expressed its preference for option 1, which means that the Strategic Plan would be adopted by the Commission and endorsed by the Council through Council Conclusions. None of the Member States' delegations supported option 1, and options 2 and 3 were not supported by more than 2 delegations each.

2 As set out by the Commission in its Issues Paper of 3 August 2018, these other elements include (non-exhaustive list):

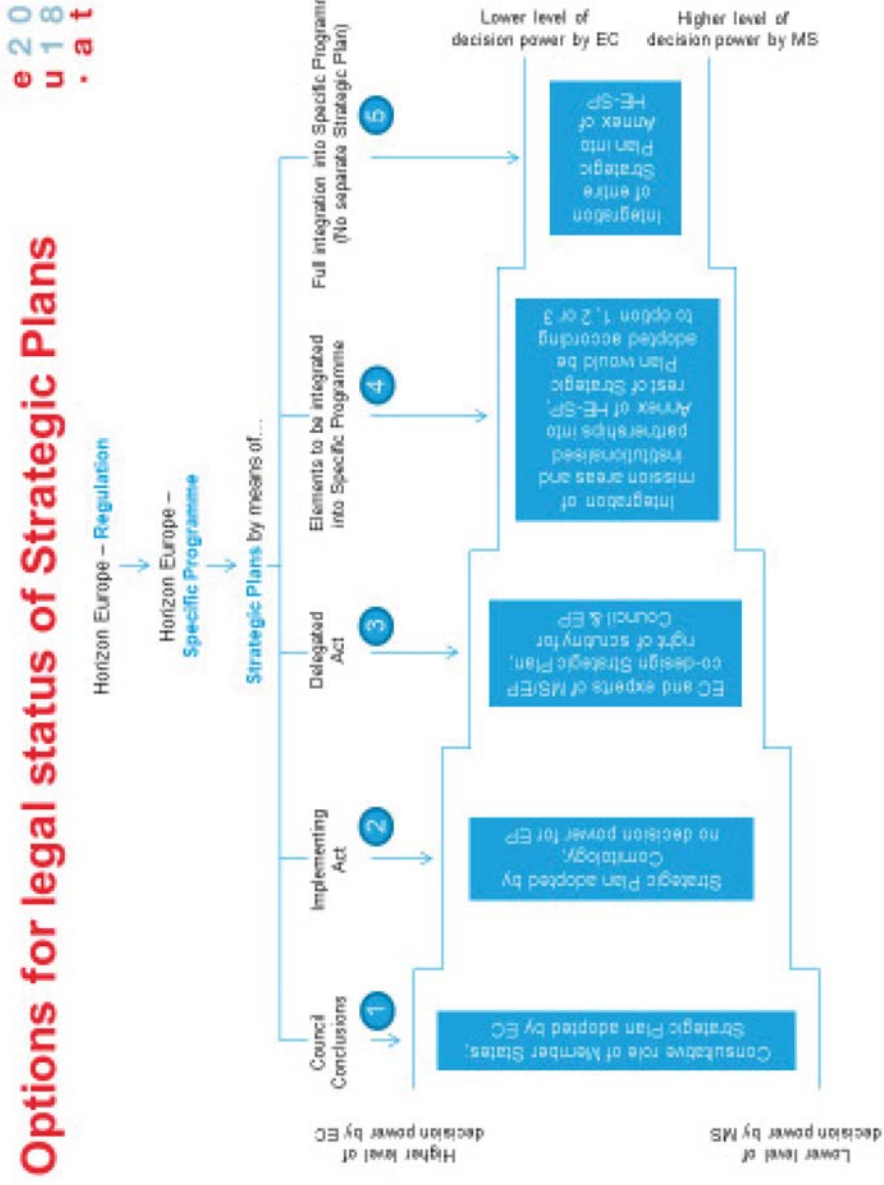
- key strategic R&I issues, including issues that cut across clusters, describing impacts and areas covered;
- areas to be implemented in synergy with other EU programmes;
- areas for international flagships, actions to be aligned with other nations and regions of the world at major scale, or actions to be carried out in cooperation with organisations in third countries;
- specific implementation issues to be taken into account (such as a balanced approach to research and innovation, integration of Social Sciences and Humanities, Key Enabling Technologies, strategic value chains, integration of gender dimension in R&I, opportunities for dissemination and exploitation etc.).

8. In the course of the discussion at technical level, several delegations asked for explanations regarding the implications of a possible change of the legal basis on the options for the strategic planning process. The Presidency therefore issued a Note on this specific subject to delegations on 14 September 2018. In the light of this Presidency Note, and given the clear opinions expressed in the discussions at technical level, the Presidency considers that the choice of the legal basis does not affect the five options in such a way as to reverse the preference articulated by the Member States.
9. The procedural implications of all options, and of option 4 in particular, are set out graphically in the annex to this note.
10. The Presidency is at this stage seeking the ministers' endorsement for the preferred option identified at technical level (option 4+2), defining the main features of the process of elaborating the Strategic Plan and its legal status. The detailed specifications will be elaborated at technical level, on the basis of the decision taken on the options and the political guidance given by ministers.

Ministers are therefore invited to express whether they consider option 4+2 as presented in the annex as their preferred option for the strategic planning process, or as an acceptable option by way of compromise, taking into account:

- **the elements of strategic planning that should be included in the Specific Programme adopted by the Council,**
- **the possible revision of these elements during the life-time of Horizon Europe,**
- **the implementing process for the Strategic Plan.**

Annex I Options for the legal status of the strategic plan (p.5 of the Presidency Paper of 25 July 2018)



Annex II - Procedural implications of the preferred option described in paragraphs 6

