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**EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE**

**– ERAC –**
**Secretariat**

**Brussels, 21 September 2018**
**(OR. en)**

**ERAC 1209/18**
**ADD 1**

**NOTE**

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| From: | ERAC Secretariat |
| To: | ERAC delegations |
| Subject: | ERAC Opinion on the 2018 review of the ERA advisory structure - Technical Annex |

Delegations will find annexed to this Note the Technical Annex of the ERAC Opinion on the 2018 review of the ERA advisory structure, as adopted at the ERAC plenary on 17-18 September 2018.



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# REVIEW OF THE ERA ADVISORY STRUCTURE 2018

## Technical Annex

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| Document: | Review of the ERA Advisory Structure: Technical Annex |
| Authors: | CH: Philipp LANGER, Lisa MÜLLER<br>NO: Kari B. ØISETH |
| Date / State: | 18.09.2018: Technical Annex (adopted) |

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# 1. TECHNICAL ANNEX: DETAILED FINDINGS

This Technical Annex summarises the findings from the documentary analysis in more detail, provides the self-assessment reports as prepared by the Chairs of the ERA-related groups and presents the aggregated numerical results of the online survey in graphical form. Because of the large volume of text (totalling 77 pages), the numerous comments submitted in the open-ended questions of the survey are not included in this Technical Annex. However, they were duly considered in the analysis and the preparation of the conclusions and recommendations.

The actual review in form of the recommendations and main conclusions is presented in a separate document.

## 1.1 Cross-cutting Issues and Future Developments of the ERA

### 1.1.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

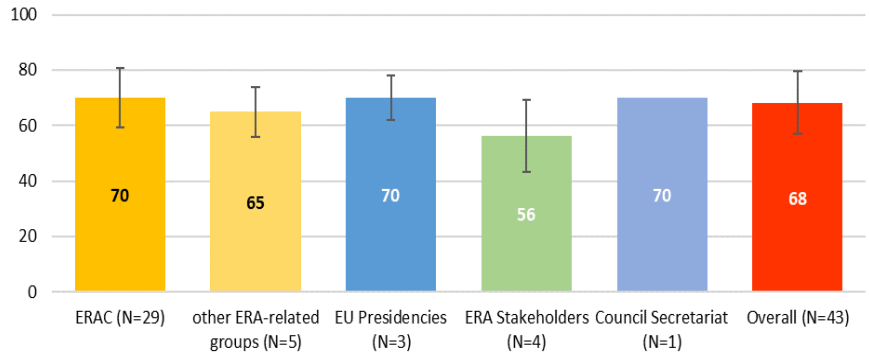
During the documentary analysis of the seven ERA-related groups, a few issues were observed which concern all or several of the groups. They are briefly discussed here as crosscutting findings but are also mentioned under the respective groups, if applicable:

- Coverage of the ERA priorities in the mandates of the ERA-related groups: The Top Action Priorities according to the ERA Roadmap are quite well reflected in most of the mandates. However, almost no mandate covers all elements of the corresponding ERA Priority as described in the Roadmap.
- Advisory role: The group mandates do not always state clearly who they are actually supposed to advise. Making this more explicit could help to better assess and monitor a group's impact.
- Monitoring: Although there are differences between groups in this respect, generally more could be done in terms of monitoring the implementation of the ERA priorities but also the impact of the groups themselves.
- Collaboration between ERA-related groups: Judging from the work programmes and outputs of the groups, there does not seem to be very much collaboration between different ERA-related groups (in terms of joint publication or sub-groups) despite obvious overlaps between mandates. More than one self-assessment report also confirmed that this could be improved.

### 1.1.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey entitled "Cross-cutting issues and future developments of the ERA". The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). All the questions in this part of the survey were mandatory. If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question.

Do you think that we are making good progress in achieving the objectives of the ERA priorities?
[0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree]





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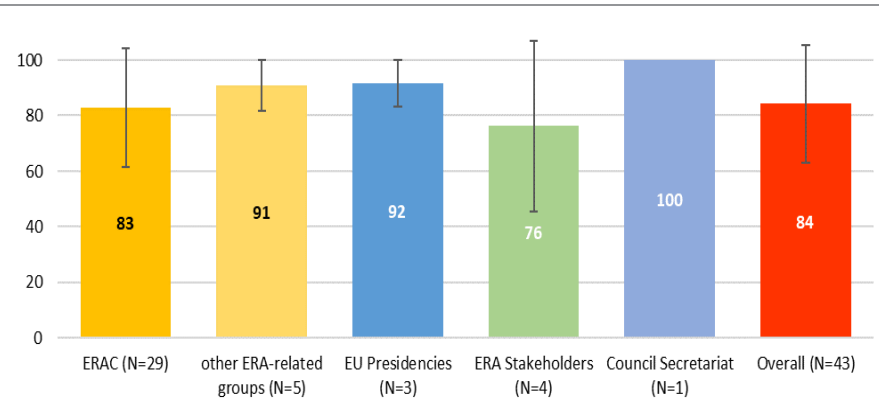
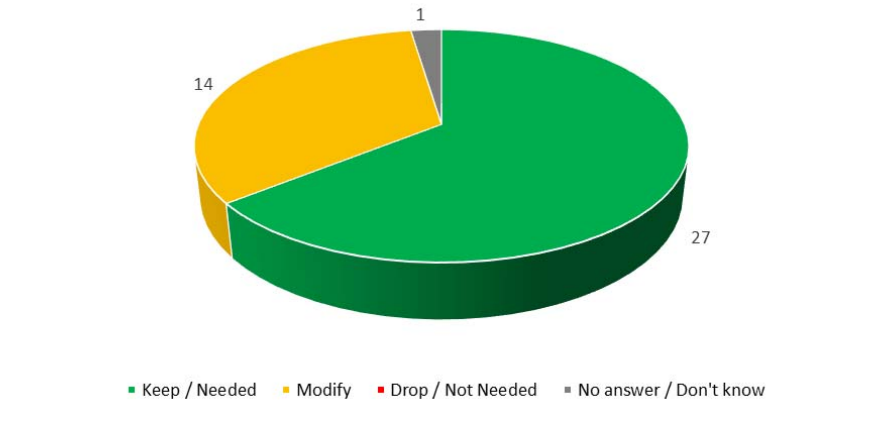
| Is the current number of ERA-related groups adequate to achieve the objectives of ERA? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] | |
| Do you think that the ERA monitoring and reporting system is adequate? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] | |
| Should the European Commission update its 2012 ERA Communication? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 1 (Effective national research systems) |  |

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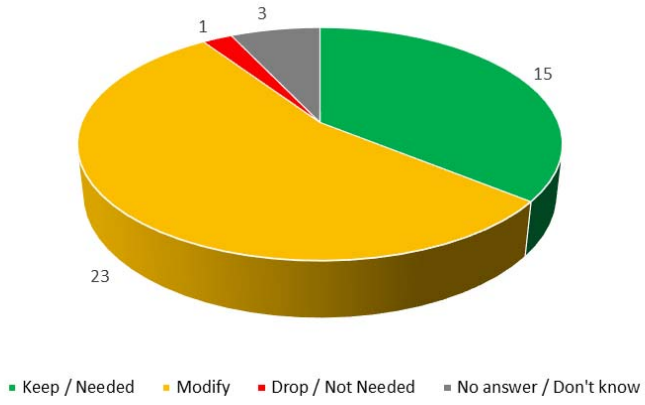
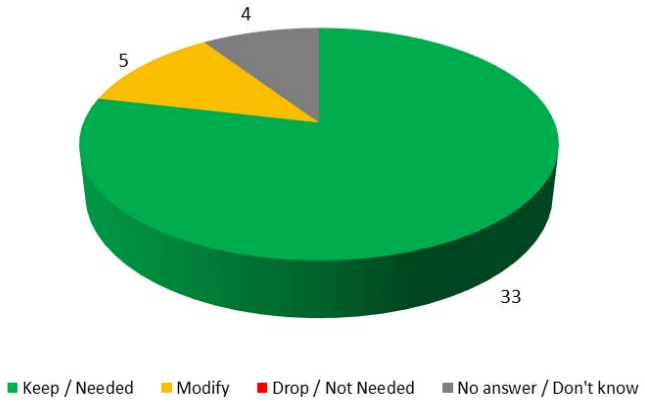
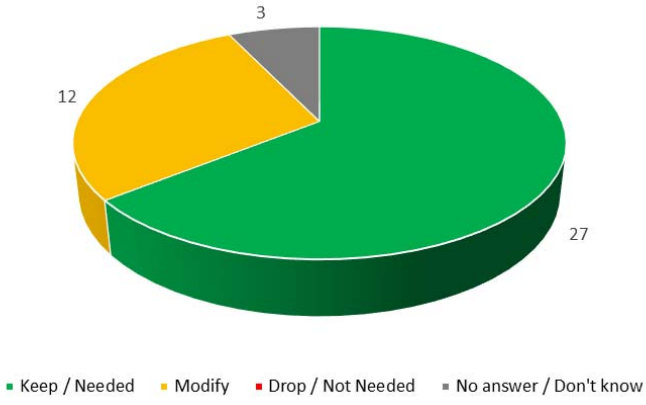
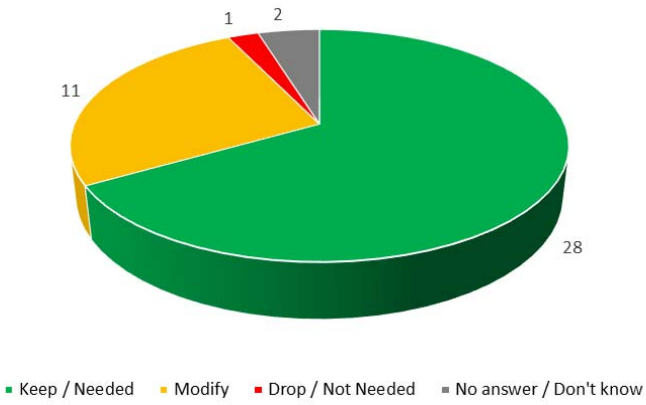
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 2a (Jointly addressing grand challenges) |  |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 2b (Make optimal use of public investments in research infrastructures) |  |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 3 (An open labour market for researchers) |  |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 4 (Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research) |  |

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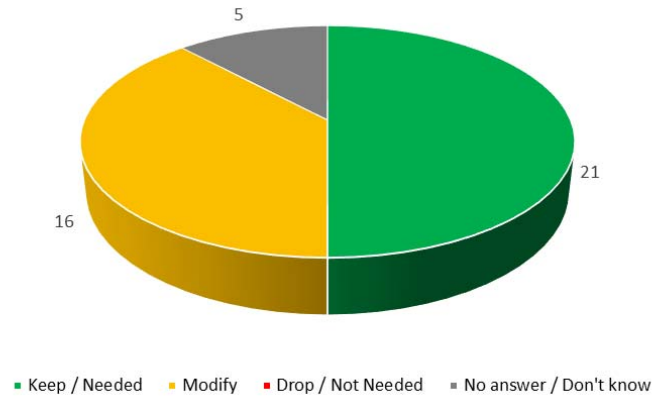
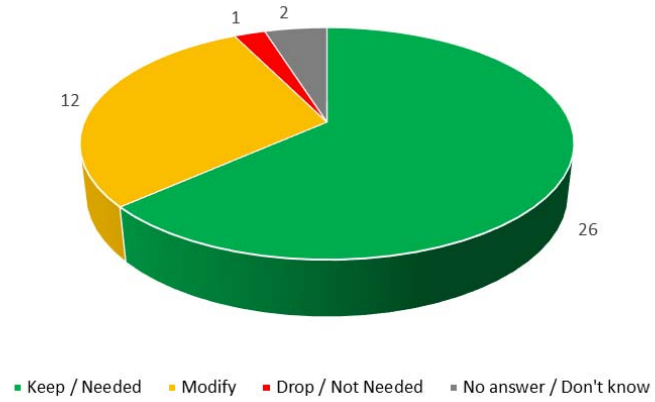
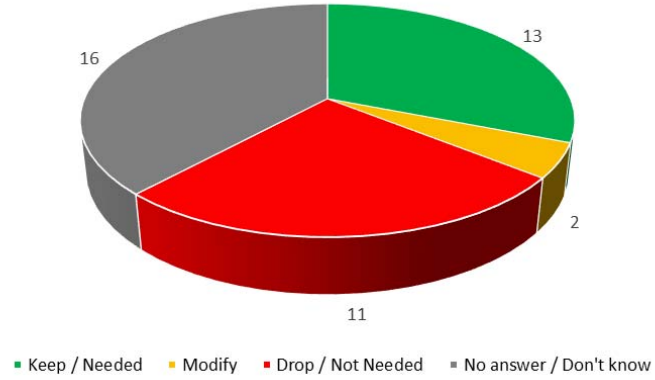
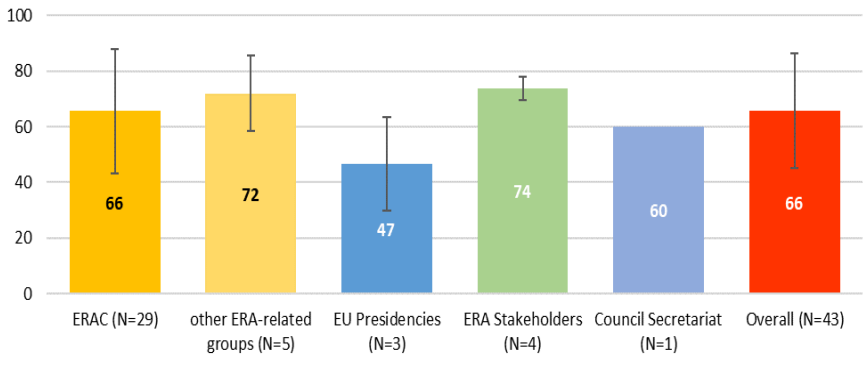
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 5 (Optimal circulation and transfer of scientific knowledge) |  |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – ERA Priority 6 (International cooperation) |  |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? – New ERA priorities |  |
| Do you think that the objectives of the ERA are well integrated into the Framework Programmes? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |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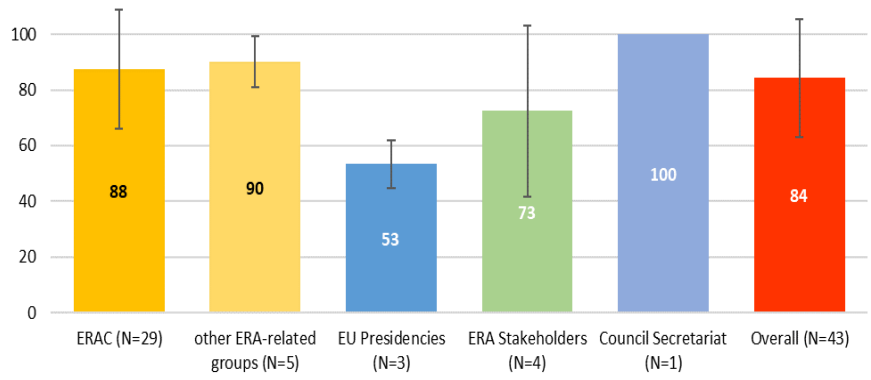
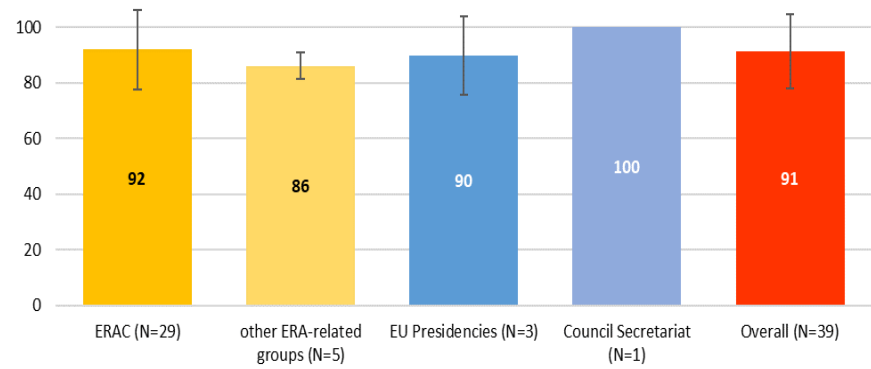
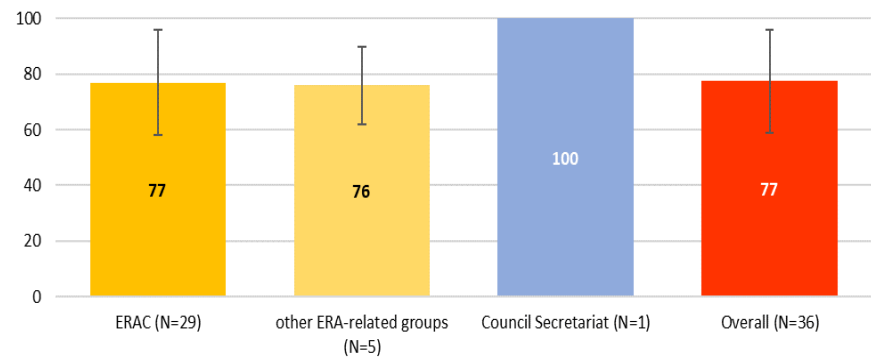
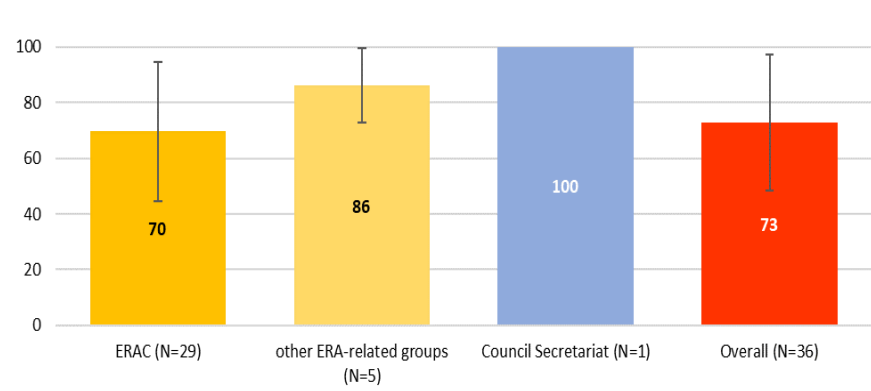
| Should the link between ERA and the European Higher Education Area be strengthened? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Should ERAC maintain its coordinating and superordinate role in the ERA advisory structure? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How useful is the coordination between the ERA-related groups through the ERAC Steering Board? [0 = Not useful at all; 100 = Very useful] |  |
| Do you think that the ERA-related groups should delimit the scope of their activities to their own ERA priority and avoid overlaps or, by contrast, seek out more synergies with each other? [0 = Delimit more clearly; 100 = Seek out more synergies] |  |

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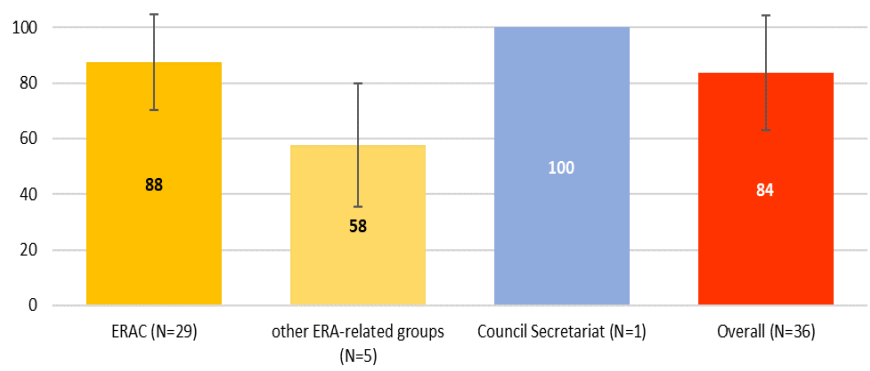
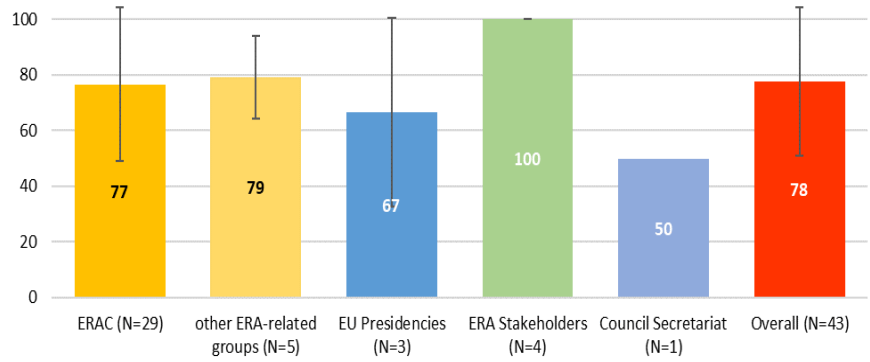
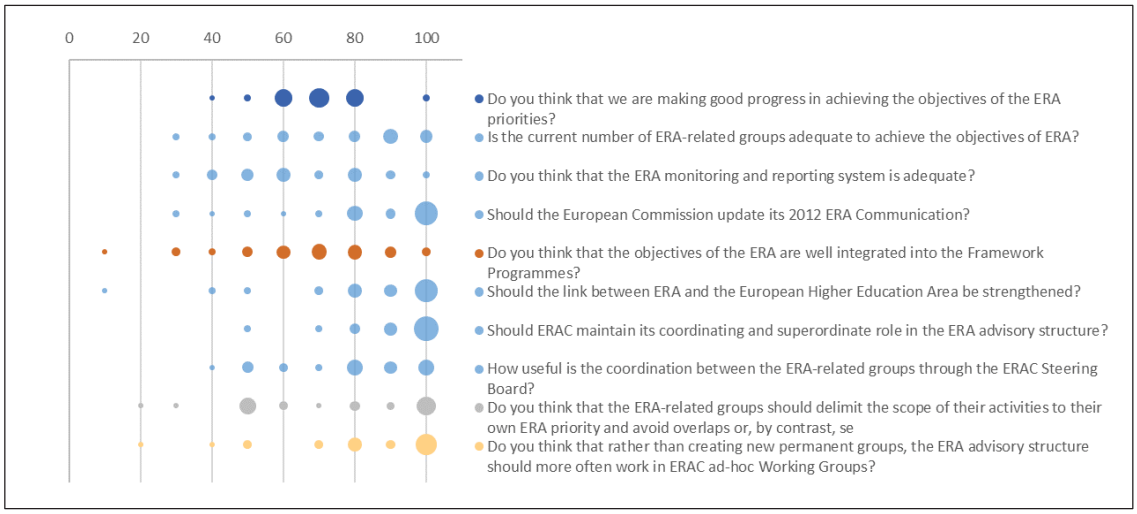
| Do you think that rather than creating new permanent groups, the ERA advisory structure should more often work in ERAC ad-hoc Working Groups? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Should the ERA-related groups interact more with relevant ERA Stakeholder organisations (such as EUA, LERU, EARTO, CESAER, Science Europe, and others)? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |

In addition to the graphs with the mean values and standard deviations, the following graph shows the distribution of categorised replies to the questions listed above (except the one about the ERA Priorities). Replies were categorised into ten groups, according to the value ranges 0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, 90-100. The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.




## 1.2 ERAC

### 1.2.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

The European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) was established in 2010, replacing the former "Comité de la recherche scientifique et technique" (CREST) which had been in place since the

1970s. ERAC's main role is to provide "timely strategic input to the Council, the Commission and Member States on the ongoing implementation of the ERA in Member States and Associated Countries and on other strategic research and innovation policy issues".

ERAC is charged with covering ERA Priority 1 as defined in the ERA Roadmap. The respective top action priority is "Strengthening the evaluation of research and innovation policies and seeking complementarities between, and rationalisation of, instruments at EU and national levels". The ERAC mandate largely reflects ERA Priority 1, even though it does not actually mention this, and even though not all of its elements as described in the ERA Roadmap are explicitly picked up (such as for example spreading excellence and closing the innovation gap, or securing commitment for national investment in R&I). Furthermore, ERAC's mission according to its mandate is much broader and more general than ERA Priority 1. ERAC is supposed to deal with the "full spectrum of R&I in the framework of the governance of ERA", thus also covering all the other ERA Priorities and overseeing the work of and ensuring the coordination with the other ERA-related groups.

ERAC's activities according to the work programmes from the period under review are in line with and largely fulfil the group's mandate. However, the different activities do not seem to be distributed evenly. Especially activities related to the ERA governance but also the treatment of the National Action Plans (NAPs) took/take up considerable space. By contrast, more substantial discussions on concrete topics around ERA Priority 1, reflections on outcomes from the PSF or the European Semester process appear to be somewhat underrepresented and were often dealt with as SIP (Standing Information Points) items only.

In sum, ERAC seems to struggle with balancing, on the one hand, its overarching and superordinate role for the whole ERA advisory structure and, on the other hand, its responsibility for ERA Priority 1. More strategic debates about policy topics around ERA Priority 1 do not receive as much attention in Plenary meetings. In that sense, ERAC does not fully live up to its main mission as stipulated in its mandate.

Organisation and working conditions

The work of ERAC is supported by the Council Secretariat and the EC services. The group is allowed to meet on Council premises and to reimburse the travel costs of MS delegates. The coverage of countries in ERAC is good, with all EU MS and all AC except Tunisia formally represented. The committee is currently co-chaired by Director-General Jean-Eric Paquet from the EC (DG RTD) and Christian Naczinsky from Austria.

ERAC meets regularly, four times a year in plenary form and in the form of the Steering Board. During the period under review, outputs have been produced at regular intervals, with the exception of September 2017 to May 2018. Two ad hoc working groups have been put in place between 2016 and 2018.

Interaction between ERAC and the other ERA-related groups takes place through the Steering Board – where the Chairs of all groups are represented – and through updates of the other groups in ERAC plenaries. All other ERA-related groups contribute to the ERAC Annual Report but apart from that, there are not joint sub-groups or publications by ERAC and any of the other six groups.

The Council operates a separate webpage for ERAC and its dedicated configurations (GPC and SFIC) but not much up to date information is on it. All ERAC outputs can be found in the online document register of the Council webpage, and this is very helpful if one wants to get access to a specific document with known identifiers (either the document number or precise keywords). In contrast, the Council register is less useful to obtain a general overview of ERAC's outputs.

Output

ERAC's output can be considered satisfactory. During the period under review, ERAC produced five opinions and two reports. All but one of these outputs include recommendations, and they are to a large degree practical and concrete. ERAC's recommendations mainly addressed the EC and national governments, to a lesser extent also research performing and funding organisations.

The majority of ERAC's outputs also discuss monitoring efforts and/or best practices, and two are even fully dedicated to this domain in one way or another. However, there is no written, established mechanism dedicated to analysing the impact of ERAC's work more generally or the implementation of the NAPs. In fact, only one of the seven reports and opinions refers to the NAPs. Within ERAC, they are mainly dealt with by means of dedicated workshop discussions and exchanges.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Impact

ERAC has had quite some impact between 2016 and 2018, measured by the number of references to its work. During the period under review, ERAC's work is cited in two EC documents, five Council Conclusions, most of the NAPs, three further official national reports or policy documents, two strategy papers by stakeholder organisations and six other publications (such as journal articles).

Conclusions

ERAC is an active committee with a comprehensive mandate, a clear advisory role, regular meetings and outputs as well as considerable impact (as measured by citations).

A challenge for ERAC is how to balance its overarching mission for ERA and its advisory structure with its responsibility for ERA priority 1. Judging from the work programmes and activities between 2016 and 2018, procedural debates about the ERA governance seem to outweigh substantial discussions on policy issues related to ERA Priority 1. In this context, it might be worthwhile to consider ways to enforce the link between ERAC and notably the PSF, by devoting more time to reflections of PSF outcomes in ERAC plenaries. Furthermore, ERA Priority 1 should be explicitly mentioned in the ERAC mandate.

### 1.2.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about ERAC. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so.

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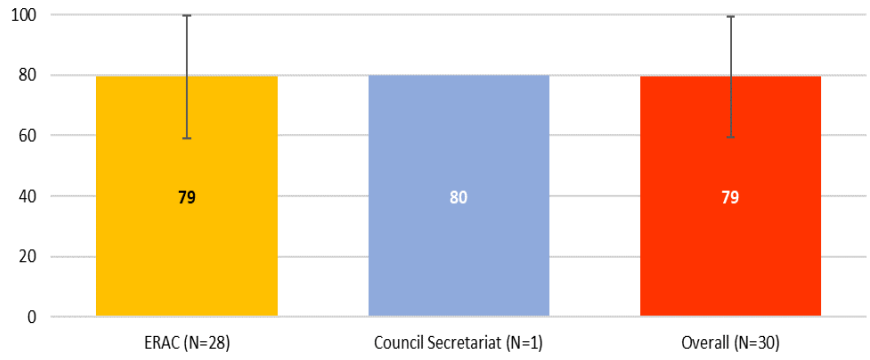
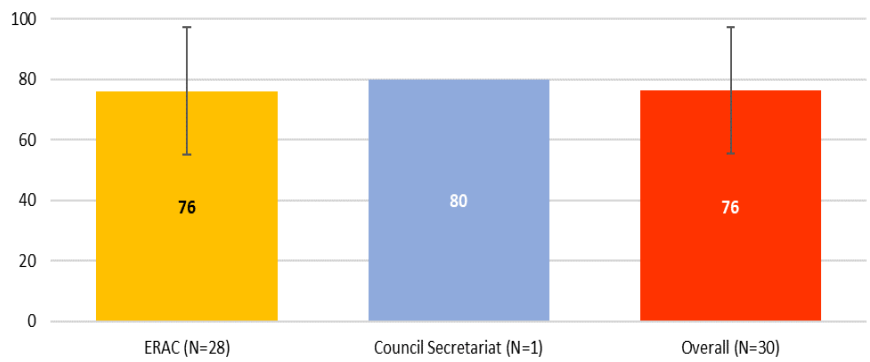
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |   |
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |   |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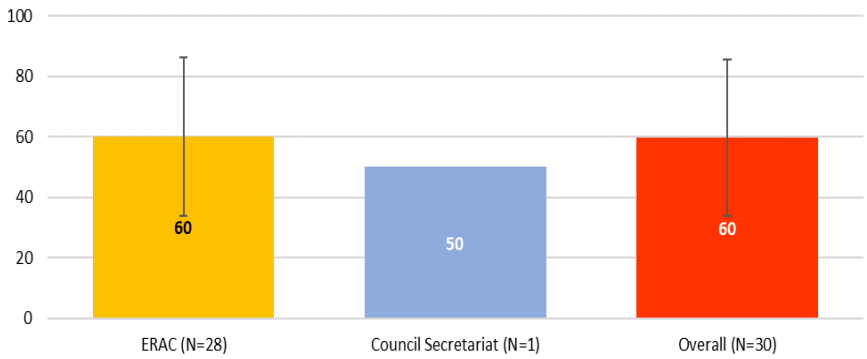
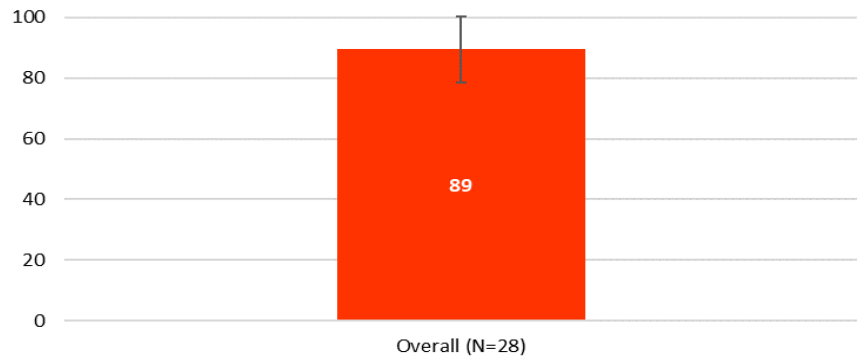
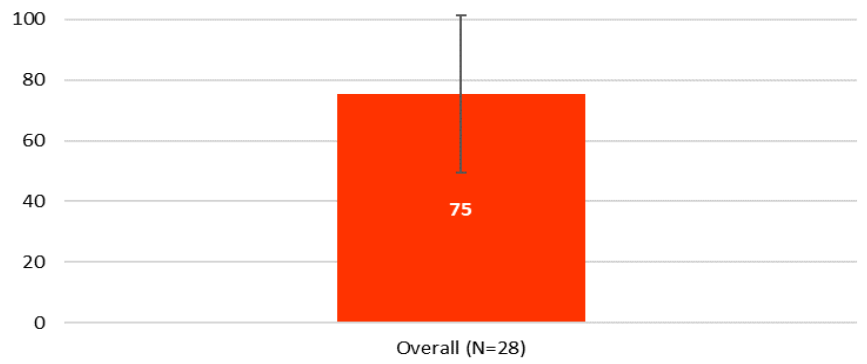
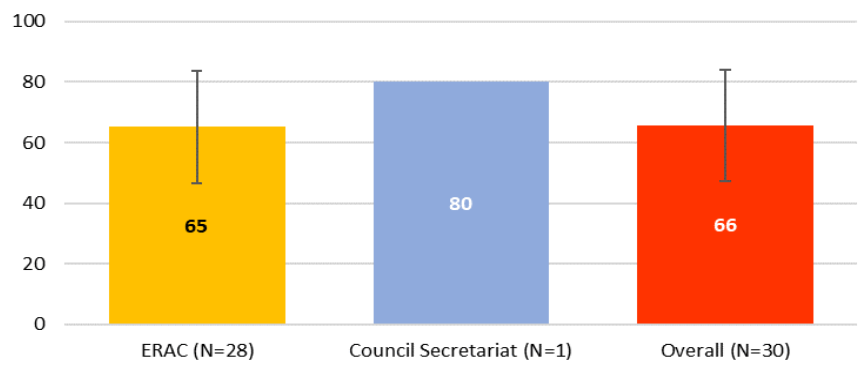
| Does ERAC have enough time for substantial discussions? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Co-Chairs? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Steering Board? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? [0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant] |  |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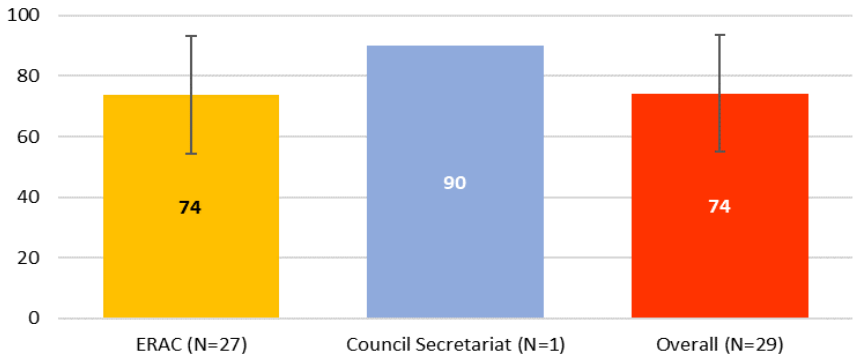
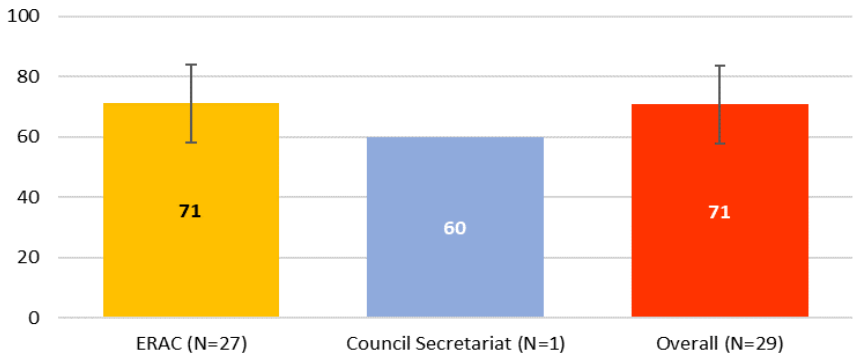
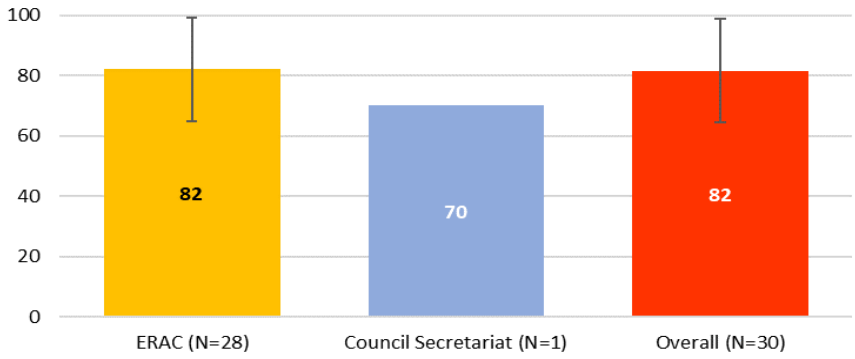
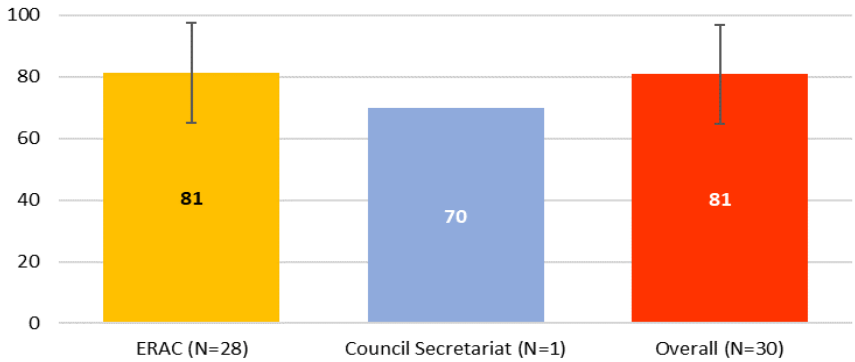
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] |  |
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group? [0 = Very unsatisfied; 100 = Fully satisfied] |  |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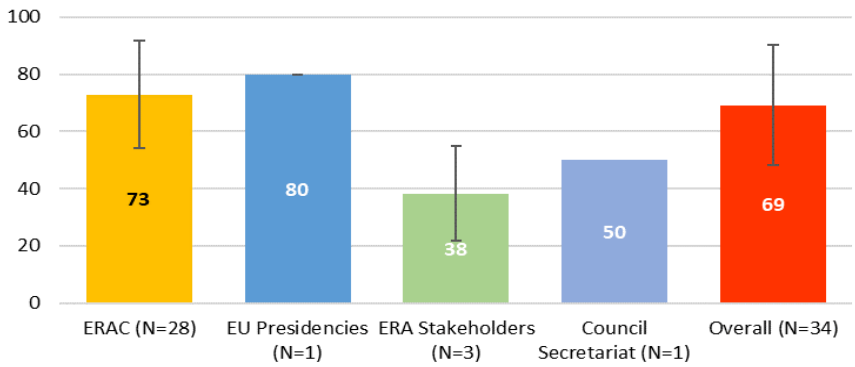
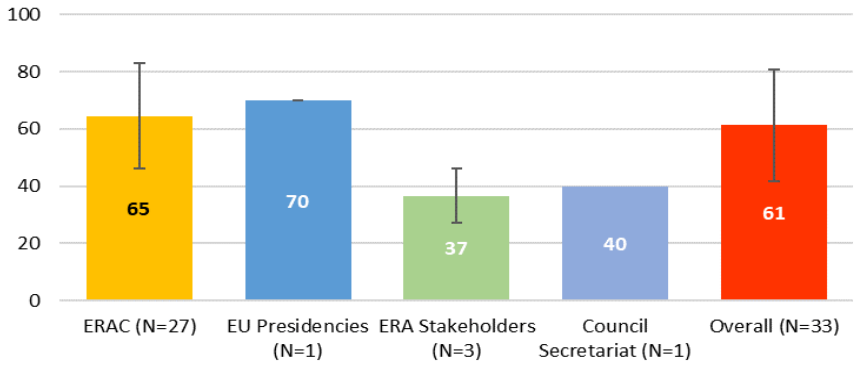
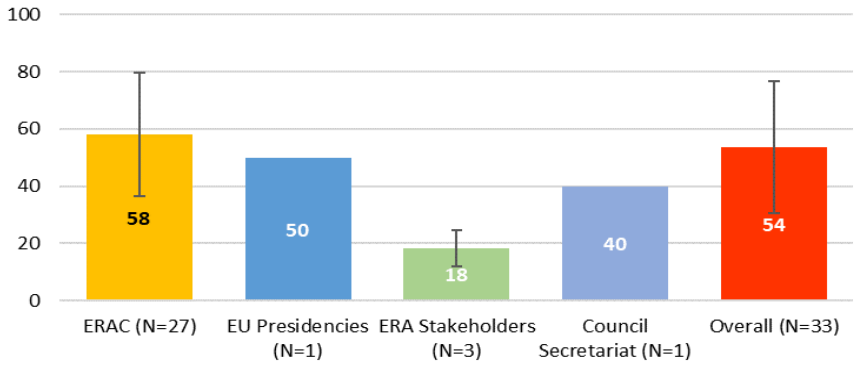
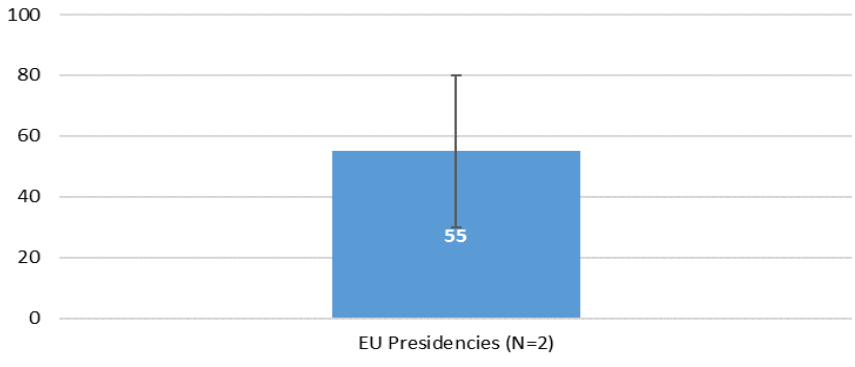
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall? [0 = Very irrelevant; 100 = Fully relevant] |  |
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |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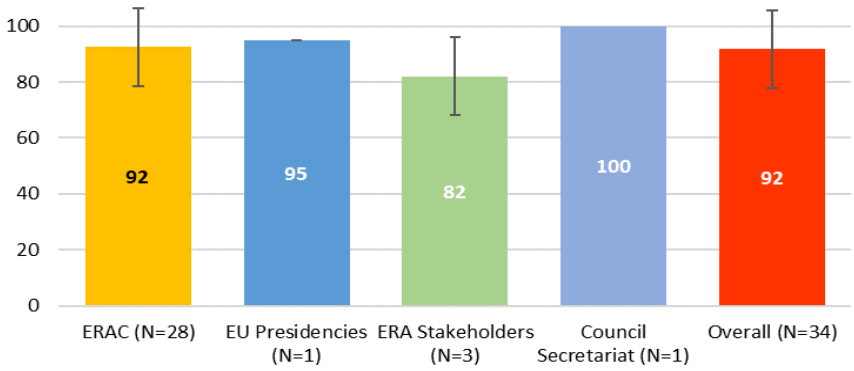
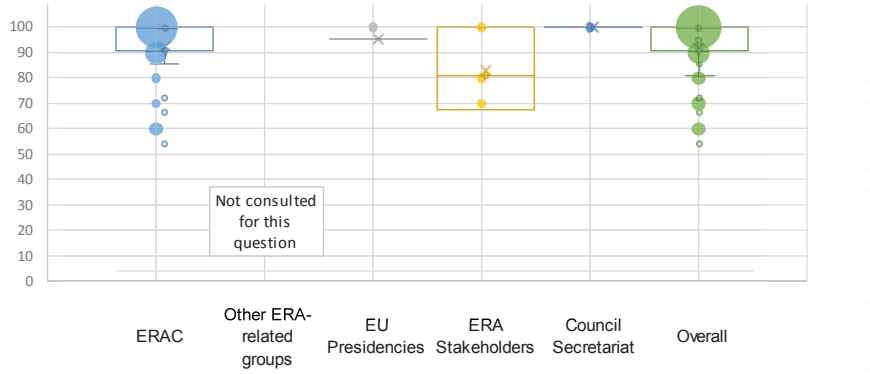
How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important]




In order to better show the distribution of replies, the following additional graph combines a scatterplot with a box-and-whisker plot of the scores categorised into ten groups (according to value ranges 0-9, 10-19,…). The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.




### 1.2.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

Scope of the group

*MS Co-Chair (Christian Naczinsky, AT)*: The mandate of ERAC is actually much broader than ERA Priority 1, whose top action priorities are (a) better evaluation of policies, and (b) complementarities between, and rationalisation of, instruments (Source: ERAC Opinion on ERA Roadmap 2015-2020, doc. ERAC 1208/15, p.5). ERAC addressed the first objective (evaluation) through the "*Final Report of the ERAC Ad-hoc Working Group on Measuring the Impact of EU Framework Programmes for R&I at National Level*" in July 2017. Relating to the second objective (instruments), ERAC established the "*ERAC Ad-hoc Working Group on Partnerships*", which will deliver its conclusions and recommendations in the course of 2018. Both activities involve and directly concern the implementation of ERA in the MS & AC.

The ERAC mandate calls for advice on all R&I policies, current or future, at the crossroads of national, intergovernmental, and EU initiatives. The mandate goes even one step further by encouraging ERAC to develop interactions and coherence with other policy areas beyond R&I but relevant to R&I (see point 5 of the ERAC mandate). A number of ERAC Opinions, notably on the "*Idea of a European Innovation Council*" (2016), on "*Open Research Data*" (2016), on "*Streamlining of the Expert Groups set up by the Com-mission*" (2016), on "*Streamlining the Research and Innovation Monitoring and Reporting Landscape*" (2017), and on the "*Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 and preparations for the next Framework Programme*" (2017), bear witness to ERAC's broad spectrum of activities.

ERA National Action Plans are discussed at dedicated ERAC Workshops back-to-back with the ERAC plenary. It is currently under discussion how ERAC can benefit better from the findings of these workshops in the future.

*EC Co-Chair (DG Jean-Eric Paquet):* There is potential to strengthen further ERAC's role in delivering on Priority 1 in the broadest sense (reforms to increase the quality and efficiency of national research and

innovation systems). It is an area where further progress needs to be made and where ERAC has a great leverage potential to achieve major impact.

The implementation of the National Action Plans has so far been followed up in dedicated workshops (back-to-back with ERAC Plenary meetings) where the focus has been on sharing best practices and challenges encountered in the implementation in the MS and AC. This follow-up of the National Action Plans should not to be confused with the ERA Monitoring Mechanism and the biannual ERA Progress Report (next report foreseen for end 2018). It would be logical to link the proposed follow-up of the ERA Roadmap and National Action Plans to the process under the European Semester.

Organisation and working conditions

*MS Co-Chair (Christian Naczinsky, AT):* In total, ERAC consists of 44 delegations (EC, 28 MS, 15 AC). Overall, the level of engagement is high in ERAC. For example, each of two ERAC Ad-hoc Working Groups have attracted around 30 delegations. Debates during ERAC Plenaries are lively and sometimes require time limits for interventions in order to allow everybody to take the floor. Still, it seems that there is limited involvement in ERAC from some of the newer Associated Countries. In addition, if you analyse the pattern of participation in activities under the PSF, there is potential for increased participation from some MS. It might be worth looking for any specific barriers that might hinder some countries to benefit fully from the learning activities in the ERA context.

The support by the ERAC Secretariat (Council) and the Commission Unit for Interinstitutional Relation and Internal Coordination is excellent. There is a constant exchange between the officials involved in preparing the agenda of ERAC Steering Board meetings and the ERAC plenary of work, but also about the follow-up of activities, and about any issue that needs attention by the Co-Chairs.

The flow of information is very well organised by the ERAC Secretariat provided by the Council. In general, time-lines are respected by delegations. From the point of view of the MS' Co-Chair, the collaboration between the Co-Chairs has sometimes been time-consuming and complex, due to several layers of coordination within the Commission services. A more direct line of communication between the Co-Chairs could enhance the efficiency of this collaboration in the future.

In addition, there is a need to provide for a possible replacement of the MS' Co-Chair (by one of the elected MS representatives on the Steering Board) at ERAC plenary meetings.

The interaction between ERAC and the other ERA-related groups takes place on different levels: (1) in the ERAC Steering Board, (2) during ERAC plenaries, and (3) on a bilateral basis. On all three levels, ERAC tries to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of collaboration, with the objective of mutual benefits for all parties.

*EC Co-Chair (DG Jean-Eric Paquet):* DG RTD regularly organises dedicated Workshops under the auspices of ERAC (e.g. on the European Innovation Scoreboard, the report "Science, Research and Innovation Performance of the EU 2018" or Horizon 2020 PSF activities), for which it receives very positive feedback from participating countries.

While there were substantial improvements after the review in 2015, there is still a lack of co-ordination between ERAC and the six ERA-related groups, which seem to act in a relative autonomy and not necessarily in synergy in relation to priority agenda items. The ERA-related groups, rather than supplying a mere description of the work carried out as it happens for the time being, should also communicate clearly the real-world impact of their work as well as the challenges they encounter. For some of the groups a thorough look at the mandate and objectives would be necessary in the light of recent developments (e.g. role of GPC and ad-hoc WG on Partnerships).

Output and impact

*MS Co-Chair (Christian Naczinsky, AT):* In quantitative terms, the output of ERAC (2016-2018) can be summarised as follows: 12 ERAC Plenary Meetings (until end of 2018), 11 ERAC Steering Board Meetings (until end of 2018), 5 ERAC Opinions (not counting the one on "Partnerships" to be expected later in 2018), 2 Ad-hoc Working Groups with 7 meetings so far, 2 Work Programmes, 1 Annual Report, numerous activities under the H2020 PSF. In qualitative terms, MS and AC are among the most important target groups of ERAC Opinions and recommendations (e.g. ERAC Opinion on "*Open Research Data*"). However, no systemic overview is available that would capture the concrete steps taken by individual countries based on ERAC Opinions.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Stakeholder organisations are sometimes consulted in preparation of ERAC Opinions (e.g. ERAC Opinion on the "*Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 and preparations for the next Framework Programme*"). Stakeholders have not been involved in a more continuous and structured way in recent years.

For ERAC, impact is measurable by the relevance of ERAC to Council. Between 2016 and 2018, five Council Conclusions have directly referred to, or have been based on, ERAC Opinions. Another important measure of the relevance of ERAC is the role of its work for the Commission.

*EC Co-Chair (DG Jean-Eric Paquet):* We agree with the input from the MS' Co-Chair. An important measure of the relevance of ERAC is the role of its work for the Commission, which directly fed into the European Open Science Cloud, the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020, and the new Partnerships approach, just to name a few examples.

Outlook: What should be changed?

*MS Co-Chair (Christian Naczinsky, AT):* Break-out sessions during ERAC Plenaries based on good experiences in CREST but also during informal meetings of the Competitiveness Council.

*EC Co-Chair (DG Jean-Eric Paquet):* The Commission takes good note of the wish of ERAC for a light review. However, for the longer term, there is scope to raise the level of ambition and consider new dynamics for ERAC by setting a stronger focus around the delivery of more effective and efficient national research and innovation systems, attaching thus a greater centre of gravity of its work around the issue of "reforms". This would require a preliminary reflection as to the priorities to focus on and how to do it in practice, notably by drawing valuable lessons from past experience under ERAC and the former CREST and on new approaches that are proving very useful to catalyse national reforms, such as the Horizon PSF. The ERA Communication of 2012 should be taken into account in this process, and in particular its Impact Assessment.

It is key to bear in mind that the ERA agenda has traditionally had its focus on building ERA, both through EU level initiatives and through coordinated national initiatives to implement objectives agreed at EU level, while national reforms have traditionally been the focus of the European Semester. To some extent, this is reflected in the current composition of ERAC.

Finally, there is a need to re-think the working modalities of ERAC to achieve a 'collective governance' arrangement, which would be more dynamic, transparent and inclusive. In such governance arrangements, there should be a possibility to involve the ERA Stakeholders.

## 1.3 GPC

### 1.3.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

GPC (Groupe de haut niveau pour la Programmation Conjointe) was founded in 2008 as a dedicated configuration of ERAC (then CREST). It was given the tasks to identify and substantiate a limited number of Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) themes, and to develop guidelines on framework conditions for Joint Programming.

The GPC has initiated and accompanied the setting up of ten Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) and has delivered "Voluntary Guidelines on Framework Conditions for Joint Programming". It has been decided that GPC will continue its work in order to follow up on ERA priority 2a of the ERA Roadmap, support the activities of the JPIs and to develop the Joint Programming Process (JPP) further. Among the main tasks of GPC are the promotion of the alignment of research and innovation funding at national and European level, the improvement of the framework conditions for Joint Programming, the monitoring of JPIs, and the possible selection of new themes for further JPIs.

ERA priority 2a reads "Jointly addressing grand challenges", and the top action priority in the ERA Roadmap is "Improving alignment within and across the Joint Programming Process and the resulting initiatives (e.g. Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs)) and speeding up their implementation".

The GPC mandate covers the Top action priority of the ERA Roadmap, and in principle, the other aspects of the ERA Priority as defined in the ERA Roadmap ("GPC will focus its activities on delivering strategic


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and timely advice on the ERA Priority area 2a and on the whole progress towards the implementation of ERA and its Roadmap.")

The mandate covers the whole JPP, not just JPIs. The division of labour with the EC is unclear, since paragraph (e) in the mandate reads: "without prejudice to the responsibilities of the European Commission, promoting access to funding instruments for the initiatives aimed at enhancing integration and EU added value, such as those currently known as 'Coordination and Support Actions' for the set-up phase of the initiatives, 'ERA-NET Cofund' for conducting the research and innovation projects foreseen in the strategic research agendas of the initiatives and, when an adequate level of integration is achieved at scientific, managerial and financial level, the 'European Joint Programmes' and the public-public or public-private partnerships, as per articles 185 or 187 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, respectively, monitoring the impact of the JPP on addressing the relevant societal challenges".

It is not quite clear what this means when it comes to actions connected to other partnerships than the JPIs. However, GPC is supposed to (c) "contributing to the preparations of debates and decisions of the Competitiveness Council on the JPP".

The advisory role on ERA Priority 2a is clear, but the mandate does not specify to whom advice is to be given.

The work programme (WP 2016 – 17) was concrete, practical and ambitious. It was well in line with the mandate, with the exception of the two aspects mentioned above (access to funding initiatives, and preparations of debates of the Competitiveness Council.

Organisation and working conditions

All 28 member states and 13 associated countries are represented in GPC. The group is currently chaired by Leonidas Antoniou (Cyprus). GPC has regular meetings, has established several sub-groups, and organised three workshops since 2016. Since 2017, the meetings of GPC have been reasonably well aligned with ERAC meetings. There was no joint output with any of the other ERA-related groups during the period under review, and interaction only took place through ERAC Steering Board.

As a configuration of ERAC, GPC delegates receive travel reimbursement, and the plenary meetings can take place on Council premises. Furthermore, GPC can also use interpretation under the rules for Council preparatory bodies. The Secretariat is provided by the Council.

Some information on GPC is provided on the ERAC website of the Council. Their output documents can most easily be found in the Austrian ERA portal. To find them on the Council website, you need to know what to search for (document number).

Output

The output of GPC in terms of reports and other documents seems satisfactory. Since 2016, GPC has published eight reports/papers/recommendations/opinions, focussing mainly on topics connected to the JPIs (including "Fostering and mentoring JPIs", "Alignment and improving interoperability" and "Monitoring and evaluating JPIs"). The exception is the GPC Opinion on the "*Future of Joint Programming to address societal challenges in the context of the mid-term review of Horizon 2020 and the preparation of the 9th Framework Programme for research and innovation*". This Opinion deals with the Joint Programming Process as such. GPC has specifically prepared a monitoring mechanism, and performed a first monitoring exercise of relevant national actions.

It is not apparent how the point in the mandate about contributing to the preparations of de-bates and decisions of the Competitiveness Council of the JPP has been followed up between 2016 and 2018, as no relevant Council Conclusions are listed.

The advice and recommendations given in GPC documents are mainly clear and practical.

Similarly to ESFRI, GPC differs from the other ERA-related groups, in the sense that their output does not only consist of policy documents, but also the establishment of actual collaborations (for GPC through ten JPIs in an earlier period, and their follow-up in this period). The indirect output through the JPIs cannot be described, as it was not covered in the documents collected and evaluated for this exercise.

Impact

The work of GPC is referred to in a large number of documents from the Commission, in all the National Action Plans and in documents from Technopolis and Science Europe. An expert group appointed by the


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EC did an evaluation of Joint Programming (The Hernani report) which of course also refers extensively to GPC.

GPC contributed to the Mutual Learning Exercise on Alignment and Interoperability of National Research Programmes, and is referred to in the final report.

The impact from the common strategic research and innovation agendas of the ten JPIs cannot be assessed through this documentary analysis, but has led to alignment of research in MS and AC.

Conclusions

GPC seems to be an active group with regular meetings and outputs, and productive sub-groups. It has worked actively on the framework conditions for JPIs, but not so much on the JPP as such. This reflects the dilemma of GPC under the new mandate. Working on the JPP also requires active collaboration with the Commission, and the role and division of labour here seems unclear.

However, continuing GPC without taking into consideration the development regarding the strategic process for partnerships does not make sense. The ERAC ad-hoc working group on partnerships recommended (and ERAC adopted the recommendation on 17 May 2018):

*"ERAC calls on the Member States and Associated Countries to take into account the implications of the strategic co-ordinating process in the review of the ERA advisory structure foreseen in 2018".*

### 1.3.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about GPC. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so.

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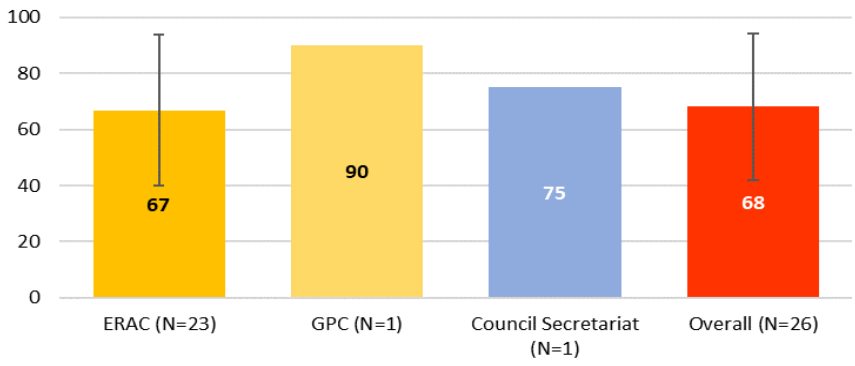
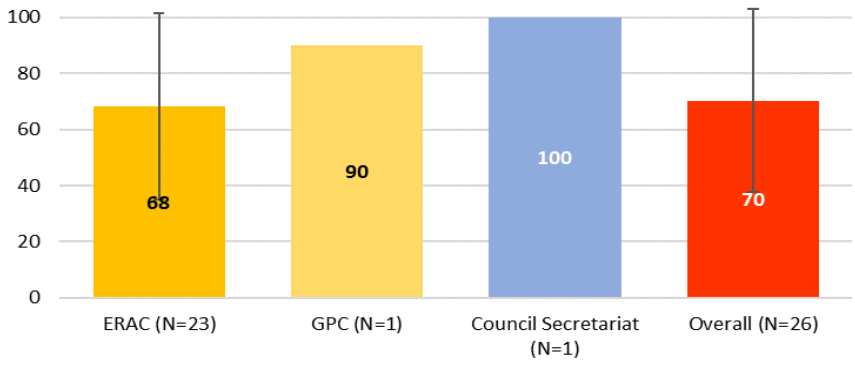
|---|---|
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its respective ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Should GPC be responsible to oversee all partnership initiatives and instruments? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |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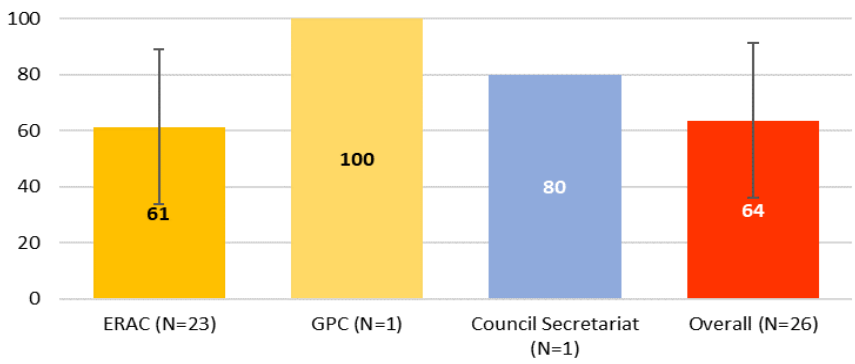
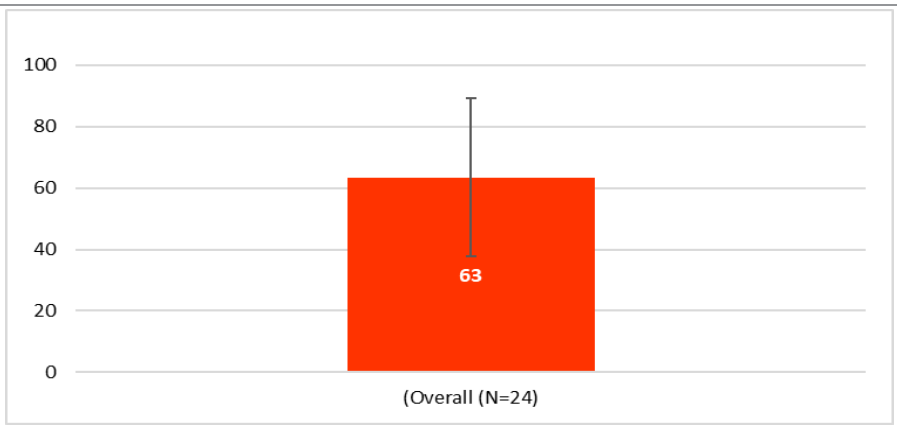
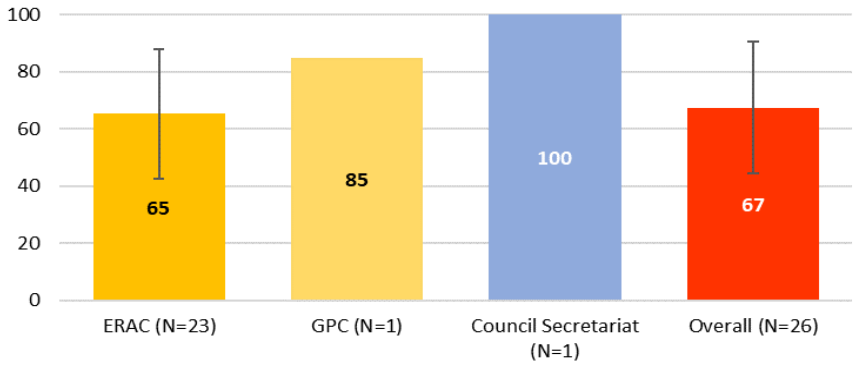
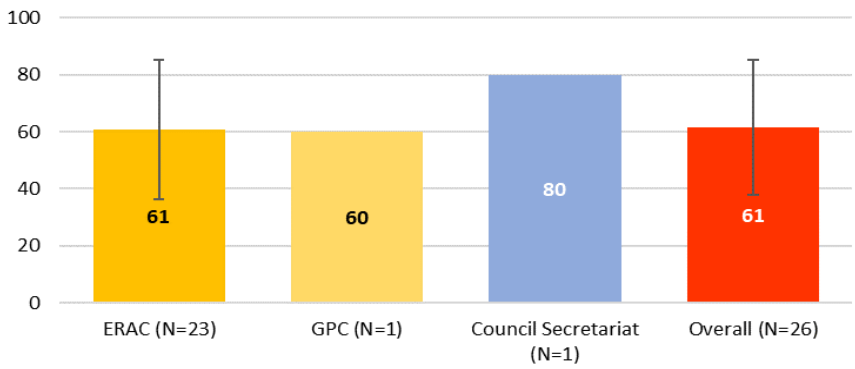
|---|---|
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? [0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant] |  |
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |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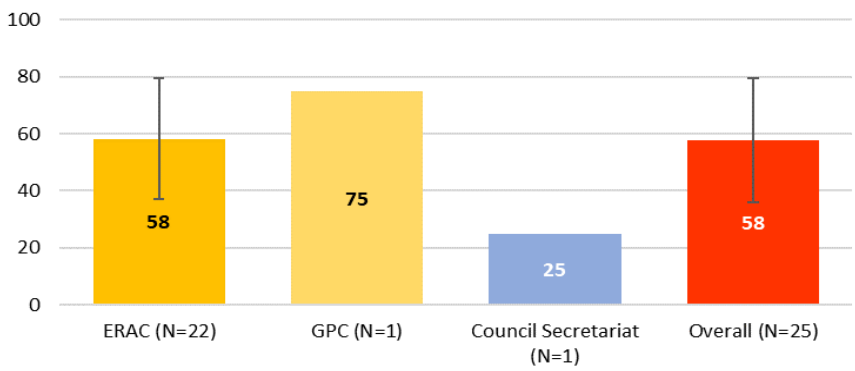
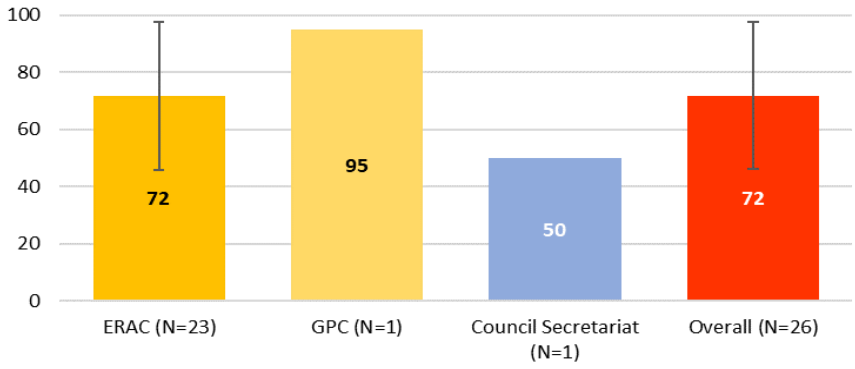
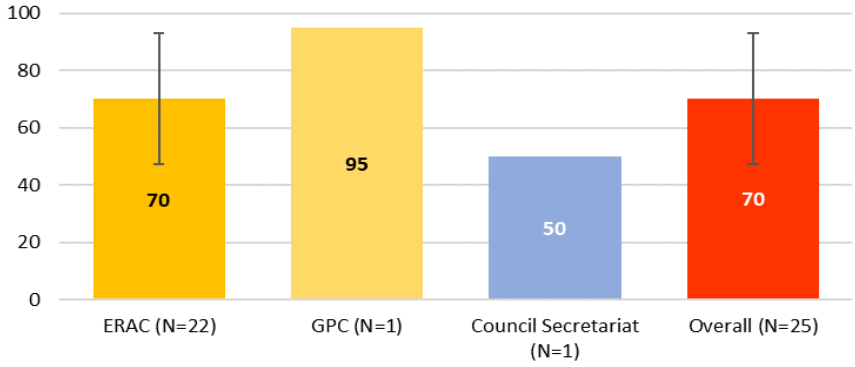
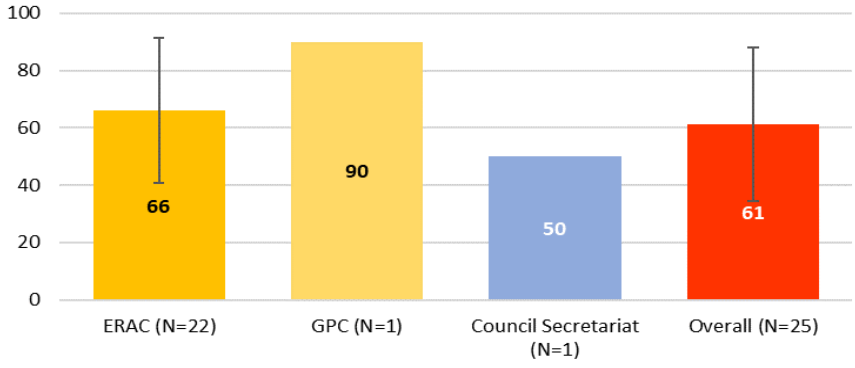
| | |
|---|---|
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] |  |
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group? [0 = Very unsatisfied; 100 = Fully satisfied] |  |
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |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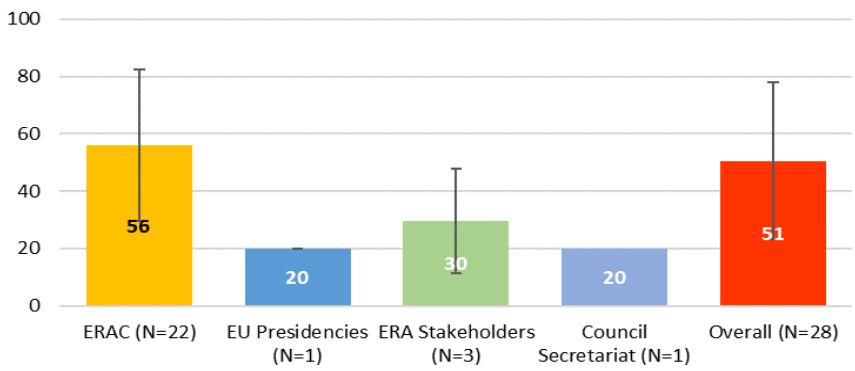
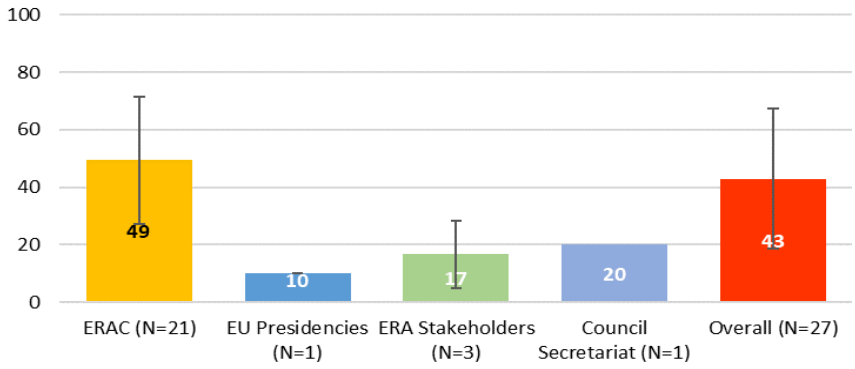
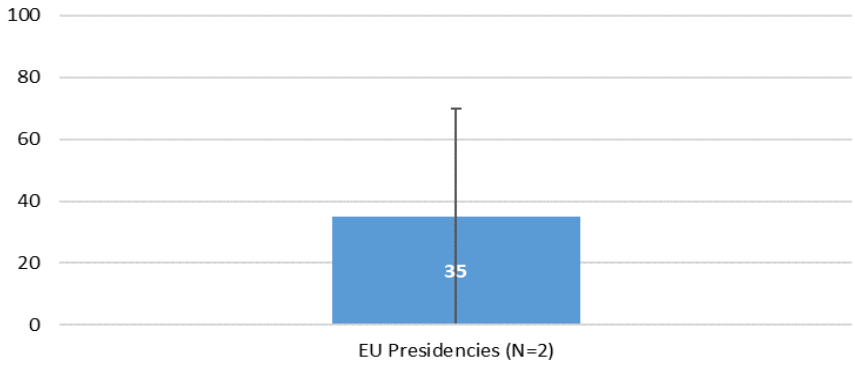
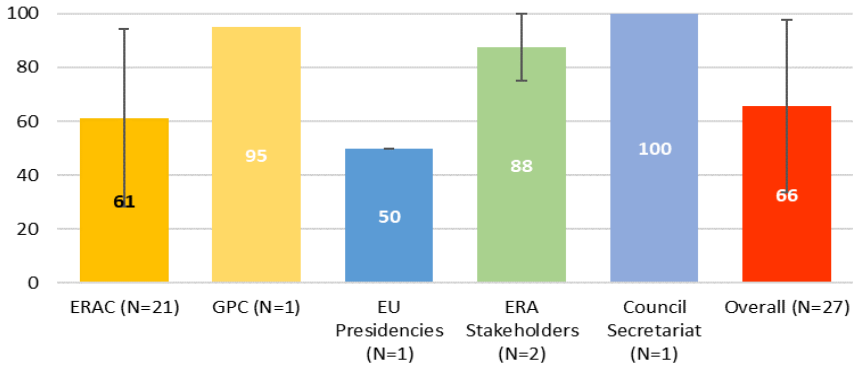
|---|---|
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall? [0 = Very irrelevant; 100 = Fully relevant] |  |
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important] |  |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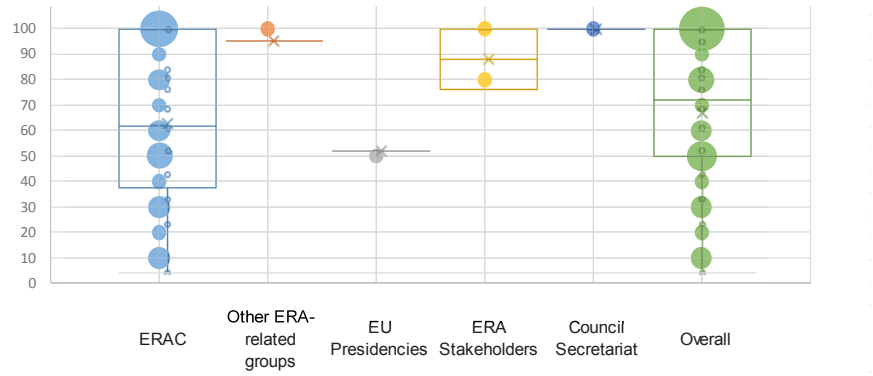


### 1.3.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

Scope of the group

There is an ambiguity as regards the scope of the activities of the GPC: Joint Programming Process (JPP) or Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs)? Historically, when it was set up, the main task of the GPC was to identify and select the to-be-established JPIs. But the priority 2a is explicitly referring to the JPP and the JPIs. This is why the Council adopted the new GPC mandate (2016) in order to go beyond the selection and follow-up of JPIs and focus to the JPP. However, this remains a complex issue as other P2Ps are in the remit of the European Commission (ERA-NETs, EJPs, art.185). The role, as well as the level and ways in which the GPC could be involved in the JPP as a whole (beyond the JPIs) should be clarified, to allow the GPC to cover the entire spectrum of Priority 2a.

The activities of the GPC do not go beyond the priority 2a.

The GPC is putting strong emphasis on the implementation of Priority 2a both at European and national level. Presentations, discussions and exchange of best practices are organised during the GPC meetings and workshops, starting from the period of preparation of the NAPs up to the last GPC meeting. In addition, each delegation provides feedback on the national progress.

The GPC Task Force (TF) prepared (2017) a report on the "ERA NAPs and Strategies Analysis for Priority 2a", as well as a monitoring mechanism. The report provides a thorough analysis of objectives and actions set-up at national level for P2a and allows GPC delegates to have more insights on national activities. The monitoring mechanism provides a follow-up of relevant national actions at an annual basis. The output of this first monitoring exercise, were discussed during the last GPC meeting.

Organisation and working conditions

Most MS/AC are present during plenary meetings. Nevertheless, only a smaller group of delegations (10-12) are actively participating in the discussions and contributing to the implementation of GPC Work Programme (mainly coming from the more active countries in JPIs). The EC is a member of the GPC and has an active role. The level of collaboration is very good and EU colleagues contribute significantly to the GPC work, both in terms of supporting MS/AC and JPIs, and providing general information on relevant issues. However, there is still room for improvement regarding the collaboration on issues related to the rest of P2Ps.

The support from the Council secretariat is excellent, with a high level of professionalism and knowledge. The rooms allocated for the GPC Plenary meetings have all the necessary equipment and amenities (including translation service). Nevertheless, it is not possible to use the Council premises, for the operation of working groups, which leads to the need for searching volunteers to host such meetings.


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In terms of volunteers from delegations there has been an important decline: there were many delegations involved during the previous years (2015-17), but more recently, there have been few volunteers for the most recent activities.

The work is organised as efficiently as possible, given the conditions stated above. The level of transparency is considered to be high. The work done by TFs and WGs is always presented to the plenary meetings, and the Chairs are providing information on all relevant issues.

The link with ERAC is done through the usual channels: participation in ERAC SB and ERAC Plenary meetings, periodic updates to ERAC etc. Moreover, the MS Co-Chair of the ERAC and ERAC rapporteurs are attending GPC meetings when there are topics of common interest (e.g. governance, partnerships). Up to now, there is no specific interaction with other thematic ERA-related groups, although some common activities could be developed in the future.

Output and impact

It is difficult to assess the group's productivity as it depends much on what could be expected. Nevertheless, the GPC is clearly delivering a large volume of quality work regarding both policy advices on issues that are in its remit and practical recommendations for the development of the JPP.

The GPC is an advisory body to MS, COM and Council and as such has an important role of providing timely and strategic advice on P2a. According to its new mandate, the GPC has evolved toward a role of promoting the JPP. In that perspective, the GPC opinion on future of JP was an important milestone, even though the EC focused on the ERAC opinion which is addressing JP more briefly. The opinion was useful for several MS to echo in their national positions what is stated in the GPC opinion. In addition, the GPC organised a public dialogue with the aim to provide opinion and recommendations on the issue of partnerships and their relation with mission oriented programmes. In that spirit, the GPC invites representatives of JPIs, P2P, national, European and international stakeholders to participate in its meetings, WGs and events. This creates an impact on the cooperation between JPIs, and between stakeholders in general. Furthermore, the GPC has (i) organised a systematic process in collaboration with the 10 JPIs, for the preparation of their Long Term Strategies (LTS) and contribution to the WP 2018-20 of H2020, (ii) established a monitoring mechanism for the national progress on P2a, (iii) implemented a MLE on Alignment and Interoperability and (iv) adopted a New Framework for Evaluating new and existing JPIs.

Historically, the main achievement of the GPC was the selection and establishment of the 10 JPIs. More recently, the GPC opinion on the future of JP is addressing the issue of JP and P2Ps in the future in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, the work done on the inputs to the H2020 and the JPI LTSs, as well the preparation of recommendations on several JP issues (e.g. alignment, evaluation, monitoring, international cooperation etc.) and the work done for the monitoring of P2a progress are also very important. Finally, we consider the approach of opening the GPC's operation to the broader JP community as appositive step towards strengthening the public debate on the future of JP.

Outlook: What should be changed?

Policy Level: Turn the GPC into the high level MS/AC group to address issues regarding all P2Ps in close collaboration with the EC.

Operational Level: Upgrading the level of representation and commitment of the MS/AC; Better articulation between the GPC and the ERA-LEARN consortium in order to upgrade the professional support to the joint programming community.

## 1.4 ESFRI

### 1.4.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

The European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) was established in 2002, and its mission is "to support a coherent and strategy-led approach to policy-making on research infrastructures (RI) in Europe, and to facilitate multilateral initiatives leading to the better use and development of research infrastructures, at EU and international level".


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ESFRI is the ERA-related group that covers ERA Priority 2b according to the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020. The respective top action priority is "making optimal use of public investments in RIs by setting national priorities compatible with the ESFRI priorities and criteria taking full account of long term sustainability". The mandate of ESFRI is fully compatible with ERA Priority 2b and actually refers to it among its objectives. The only aspect that is found in the ERA Roadmap for Priority 2b but not directly mentioned in the ESFRI mandate is the encouragement of the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds for the purpose of research infrastructures.

ESFRI does not have any work programmes as such but its activities according to the tasks and responsibilities indicated in ESFRI's procedural guidelines can be considered fully in line with its mandate. In addition, the tasks and responsibilities include links to other ERA Priorities, notably human resources (ERA Priority 3), knowledge transfer (ERA Priority 5) and international cooperation (ERA Priority 6).

Monitoring and evaluation of the RI proposals, the RI landscape and its impact represent the core of ESFRI's activities. Similarly, the group conducts exchanges "of information and reporting on national and EU policies, on institutional arrangements and resources, on existing or planned national or European research infrastructures open to international use". However, the tasks and responsibilities do not specifically refer to the National Action Plans (NAPs) and an assessment thereof.

Organisation and working conditions

ESFRI benefits from its secretariat's professional work, which is provided by the EC. In that sense, ESFRI has a special status within the ERA advisory structure, being the only ERA-related group not solely under the remit of the Council. EC representatives can and do participate in ESFRI, but cannot chair it. The Chair of ESFRI is elected among the ESFRI delegates for a period of two years. Giorgio Rossi from Italy currently holds the position.

The coverage of countries in ESFRI is good, with all EU Member States and all Associated Countries except Tunisia formally represented.

ESFRI meets regularly. Between 2016 and 2018, four plenary (ESFRI Forum) and six Executive Board meetings per year have taken or will take place. In addition, there are coordination meetings of the Working Group Chairs. The ESFRI meeting calendar is, as far as possible, tuned to the one of ERAC, but also has to take into account the schedule of the International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI) and the biannual ESFRI roadmap cycle.

During the period under review, ESFRI produced outputs at regular intervals. Eleven working groups have been operational at some point between 2016 and 2018, of which seven are permanent and are composed of experts who evaluate RI proposals in different thematic domains.

Apart from the participation of the ESFRI Chair in the ERAC Steering Board and updates in ERAC plenaries, there were no exchanges or joint activities between ESFRI and any of the other ERA-related groups. Given the thematic links with further ERA Priorities than 2b (see 'Scope of the group' above), there might be potential for interactions in the future. Considering that both ESFRI and SWG OSI have been dealing with the EOSC, this could have been a possible area of collaboration as well.

With their last update in March 2017, ESFRI procedural guidelines seem to have increased the room for interpretation for the Chair and Executive Board members with regard to evaluation decisions in the roadmap update procedure. This might compromise transparency of the evaluations as well as the compliance with standards of independent, excellence-based scientific review on which ESFRI was built. As the impact of the ESFRI output crucially depends on ESFRI procedures being accepted and trusted by the scientific community, this issue may need some attention in the future.

Output

ESFRI has issued nine outputs in the period under review and organised three conferences, three workshops and an Info Day on RI proposal submission. Thus, ESFRI's output can be considered very satisfactory. Its main product is the biannually updated ESFRI Roadmap, which presents and summarises the results of an enormous amount of policy development, coordination, evaluation, analysis and monitoring work performed by the ESFRI working groups.

All of the outputs include clear and practical recommendations and are well structured, concise, targeted, timely and in line with the ESFRI mandate. They most often address research funding and performing organisations, but also national governments, the Council and the EC.


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None of the ESFRI outputs is explicitly dedicated to the NAPs or refers to them, but the ESFRI roadmap can be interpreted as the result of coordinating the implementation of NAPs with regard to the group's ERA Priority.

Impact

ESFRI has had considerable impact between 2016 and 2018, measured by the number of references to its work. Its output has been taken up at high policy level, both by European and by national bodies. During the period under review, ESFRI's work was cited in at least one Council Conclusion, four publications by the EC and numerous national policy documents (the vast majority of NAPs, all existing national RI roadmaps as well as some National Reform Programmes draw on the ESFRI Roadmap). Furthermore, ESFRI also appears in two reports developed in the context of other international organisations, namely the OECD and the G7.

Conclusion

ESFRI is a very active committee with a comprehensive output and considerable impact between 2016 and 2018, responding well to its mandate, which itself is very much in line with ERA Priority 2b.

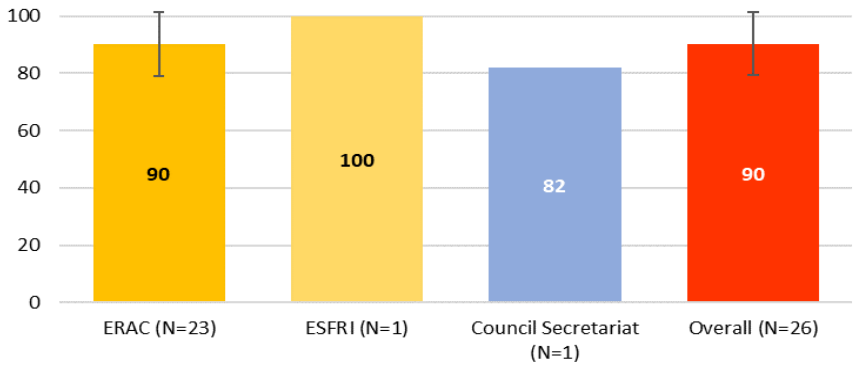
ESFRI's work is greatly supported by the EC, which provides the secretarial resources. This puts ESFRI in a special position compared to all the other ERA-related groups, which are assisted by the Council Secretariat.

With regard to activities and organisation of work, ESFRI could do more in terms of collaborations with other ERA-related groups. Virtually inexistent so far, there would be potential for links and exchanges with SWG HRM, SWG OSI and SFIC.

A possible area of concern for ESFRI is the last update of its procedural guidelines, which may risk to compromise the transparency and objectivity of decision-making in the ESFRI Executive Board.

### 1.4.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about ESFRI. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so.

| | |
|---|---|
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its respective ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |   |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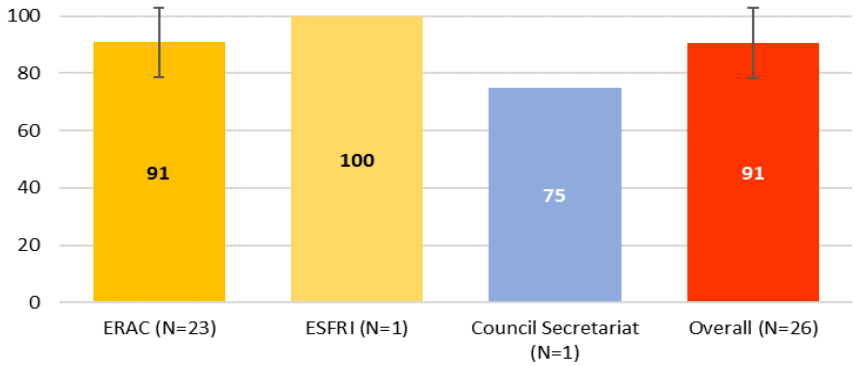
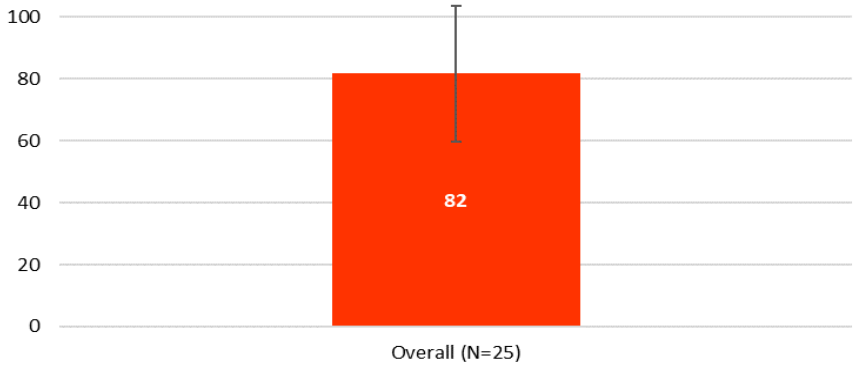
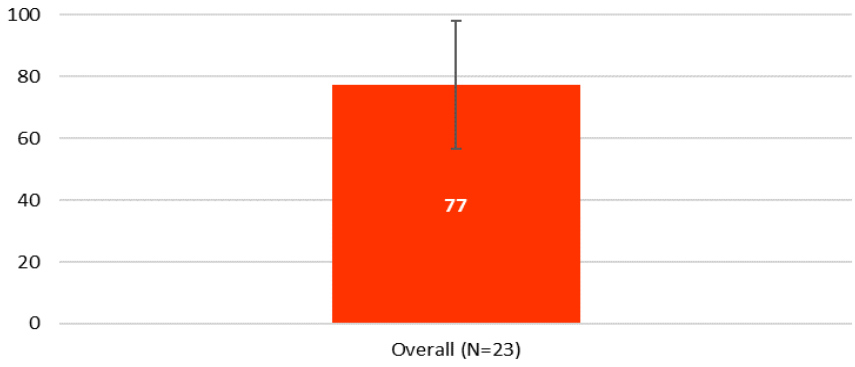
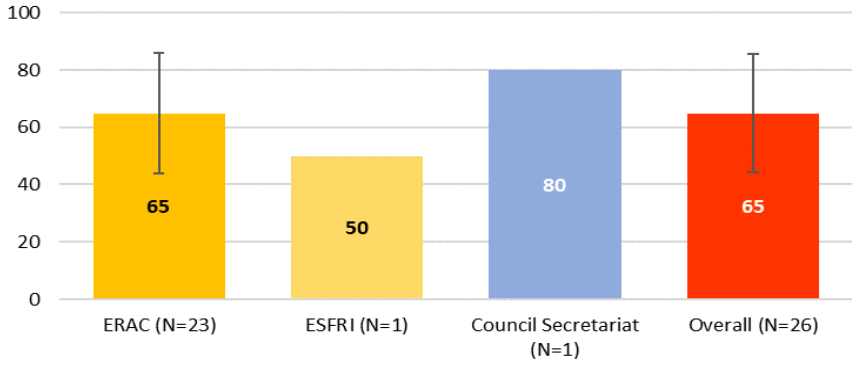
|---|---|
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Executive Board? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? [0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant] |  |

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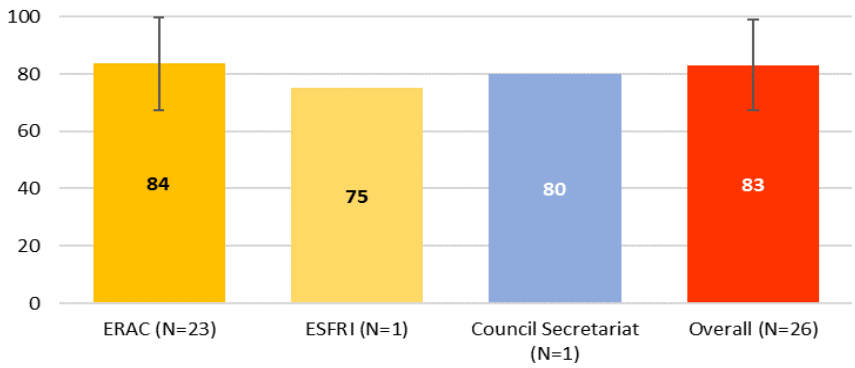
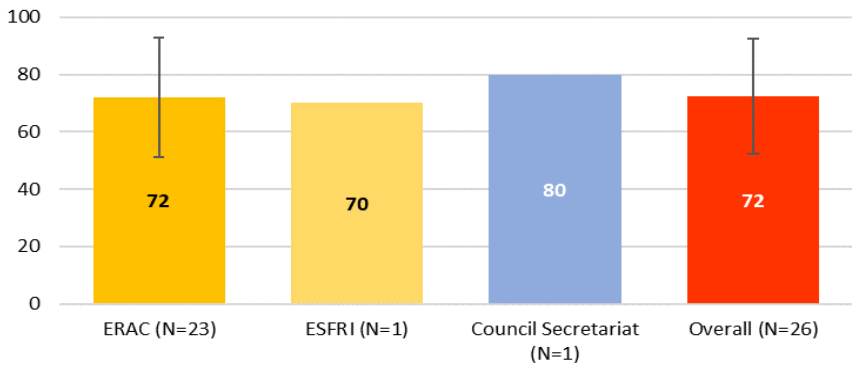
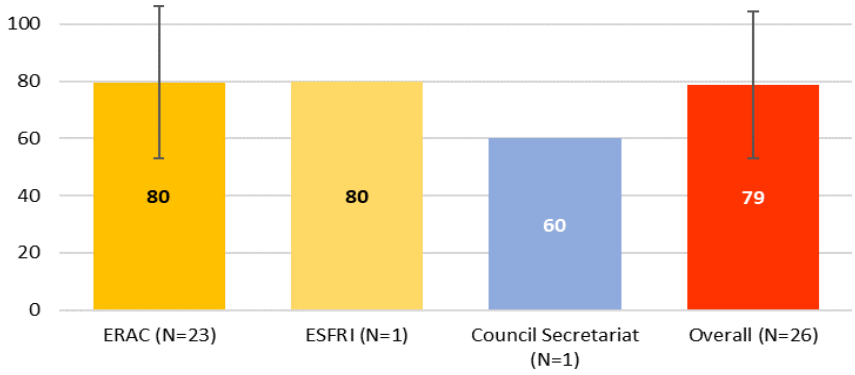
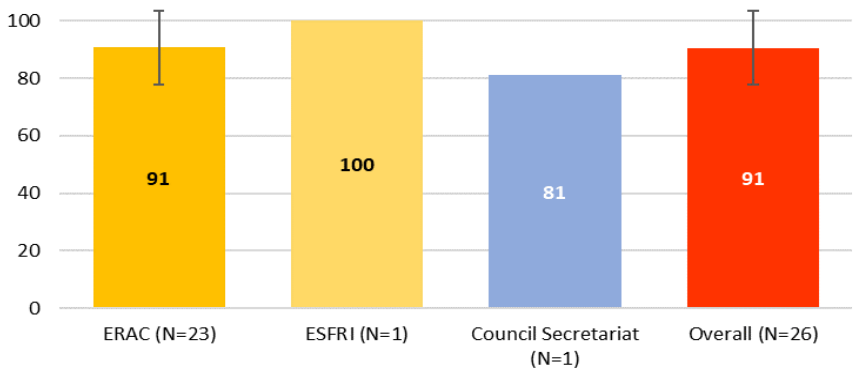
|---|---|
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] |  |
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group? [0 = Very unsatisfied; 100 = Fully satisfied] |  |

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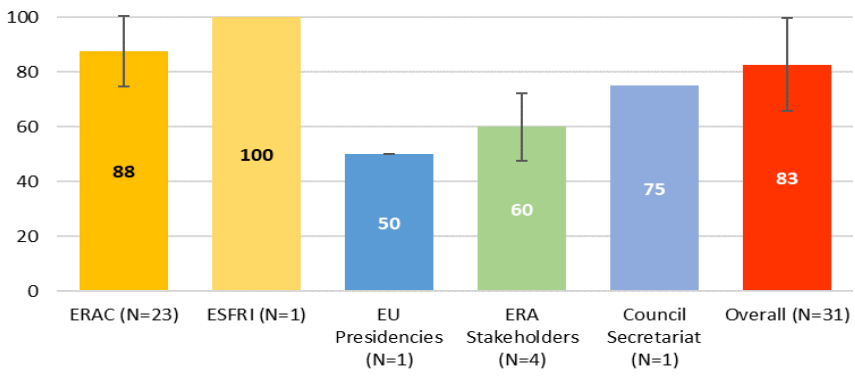
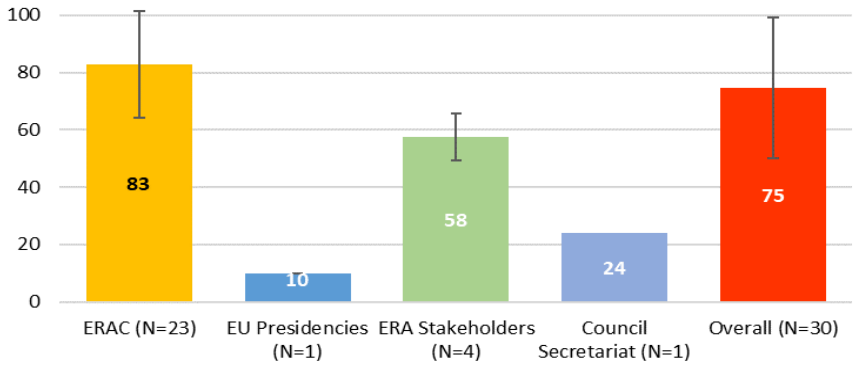
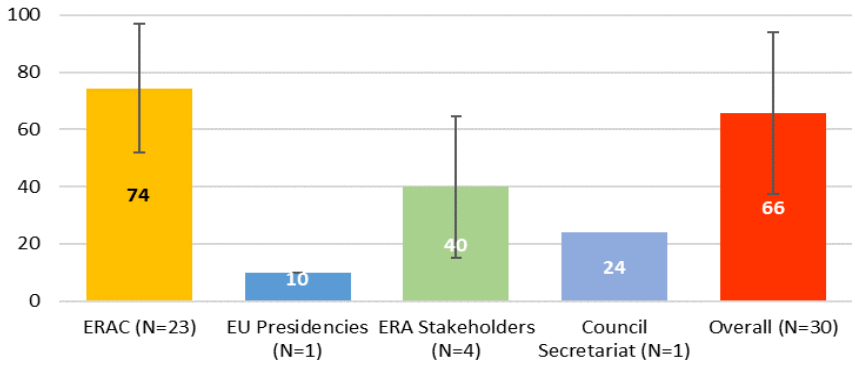
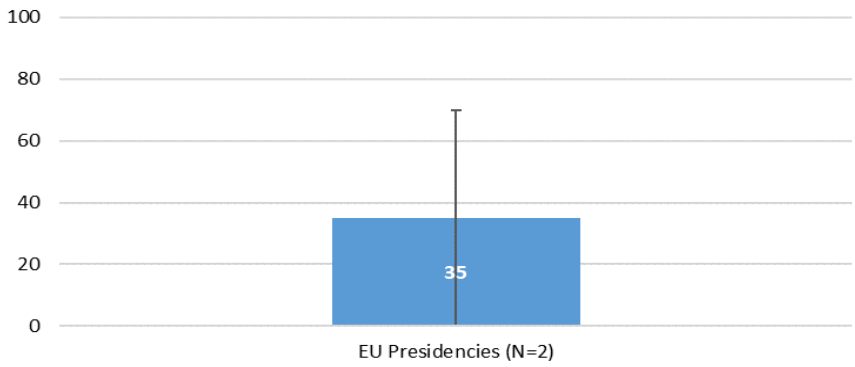
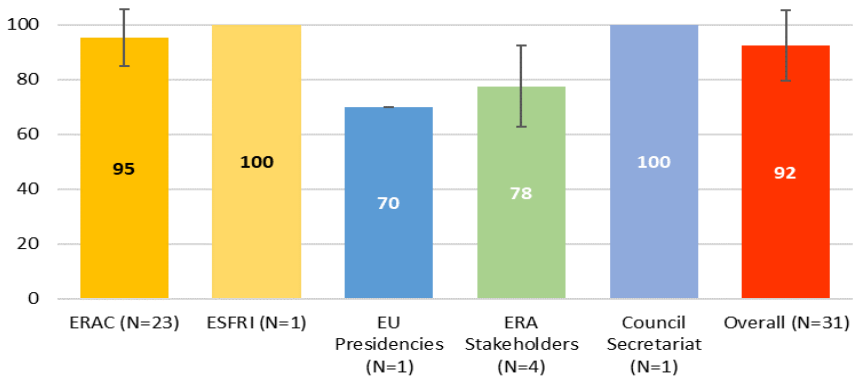
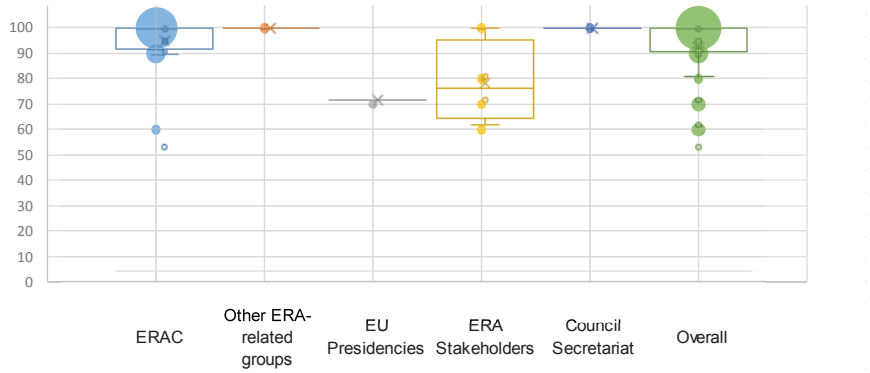
|---|---|
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall? [0 = Very irrelevant; 100 = Fully relevant] |  |
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |

How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important]




In order to better show the distribution of replies, the following additional graph combines a scatterplot with a box-and-whisker plot of the scores categorised into ten groups (according to value ranges 0-9, 10-19,…). The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.




### 1.4.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

Scope of the group

ESFRI is a strategy forum composed of governmental representatives from EU Member States and Associated Countries, as well as the European Commission.

The mandate and the activities of ESFRI cover very comprehensively the ERA Priority 2b – Make optimal use of public investments in research infrastructures, going even beyond its scope. In particular, one of the key tasks of ESFRI is to serve as an incubator for new multilateral and global initiatives, facilitating commitments and leveraging investments across the ERA, through its European Research Infrastructure Roadmap. Within the scope of the Roadmap, ESFRI develops a landscape analysis of the European research infrastructure ecosystem, identifying gaps and opportunities for the future. Importantly, ESFRI also received the mandate from the Council in February 2017 to act as strategic hub of funders also for e-Infrastructures.

ESFRI regularly puts emphasis on the implementation of the ERA Priority 2b by exchange of information and experience on the national roadmaps for research infrastructures and the applied methodologies. ESFRI also ensures the follow-up of the research infrastructures on the European Roadmap, fostering their effective implementation, facilitates exchange of experiences, and reinforcing their impact.

ESFRI road-mapping inspired similar processes in most Member States. The Delegations regularly report on the developments and progress made in this area.

ESFRI also carries out specific studies for the strategic development of the research infrastructures and publishes the results in ESFRI Scripta books.

ESFRI activities do not make explicit reference to the ERA National Action Plans, even if in general they are highly relevant and provide support to the implementation of the Plans. Reinforcing this link is one area that could be further explored in the future.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Organisation and working conditions

Overall, ESFRI has sufficient resources to carry out its work, thanks to a very strong engagement and dedication of many National Delegates and the resources put at their disposal by their governments, as well as thanks to the active role of the Secretariat and the support project funded under Horizon 2020.

There is a very good and productive dynamic in ESFRI, with many Delegations dedicating a lot of time, effort and resources to all ESFRI activities, ranging from expert analytical work to preparation and implementation of the ESFRI Roadmap. For these purposes ESFRI has established an Implementation Working Group and six Strategy Working Groups consisting of experts nominated and supported by the national governments. These groups meet on operational basis, each several times a year. Ad-hoc expert working groups are also set up on a specific mandate to carry out analysis of relevant strategic aspect concerning the whole research infrastructure system, such as sustainability, cooperation with industry, strategic coordination of investments in a given domain. The Commission is also actively engaged in the work, participating in all ESFRI activities and ensuring the Secretariat.

ESFRI has developed robust procedures, both for its analytical work in the permanent and ad-hoc Working Groups, as well as in the implementation of the Roadmap methodology. ESFRI also encourages active involvement of all Delegations in the discussions by ensuring ample space during ESFRI meetings for sharing of information and exchange of views on topics of the general interest to the Forum.

ESFRI collaborates effectively with ERAC through the Steering Board and regular updates on its activities to the ERAC plenary. There is however still scope for more extensive interactions with the ERAC and other ERA-related groups on topics of mutual interest in strategic areas, such as for example the Open Science, ERA National Roadmaps, Human Resources and Long-term Sustainability of Research Infrastructures.

Output and impact

In the period 2016-2018, ESFRI has effectively provided advice to the Council on the priorities for investments in European Research Infrastructures by adopting the ESFRI Roadmap 2016 and preparing the 2018 Roadmap update.

As in the previous years, the Forum has also been very productive both in its analytical work, published in three volumes of ESFRI Scripta, and on concrete topics, such as e-Infrastructures. ESFRI also adopted positions on the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 and the next Framework Programme, and on the European Open Science Cloud, contributing to discussions on these topics at the EU level.

Since its creation in 2002, ESFRI has succeeded to mobilise and develop considerable expertise across National Delegations and in the scientific community. The most important impact of ESFRI so far, which is also its greatest achievement, is the successful incubation of over 30 European Research Infrastructures that mobilised over €20 billion worth of investments, which made an impact not only on the European Research Area, but world-wide. This was made possible thanks to the development of a comprehensive road-mapping methodology for research infrastructures, that extends to monitoring and periodically assessing the state of play of the infrastructures, which has become a reference across the European Union for national priority-setting and decision-making, as well as inspired our international partners. The identification of ESFRI Landmarks represents a set of well-performing infrastructures that are of reference in their field as providing the most advanced research opportunities.

Outlook: What should be changed?

ESFRI works in a very effective and efficient way, therefore no concrete changes in its organisation or procedures are needed. The increasing maturity of the research infrastructure ecosystem in Europe requires incremental adaptation of the activities of the Group and its ways of working. These adaptations are happening on regular basis, especially when new ESFRI Roadmaps are completed, to ensure constant improvement of ESFRI methods and foster the effectiveness and impact of the European Research Infrastructures.


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## 1.5 SWG HRM

### 1.5.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

The EC established the Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM) in 2002 as an advisory group. In 2017, it was transformed into the Standing Working Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SWG HRM) of ERAC and came under the remit of the Council. SWG HRM's main objective is to "support the implementation and the monitoring of progress of the EU2020 Flag-ship Initiative Innovation Union (IU) and the development of its European Research Area Framework in the areas related to researchers' career and mobility […] at EU and national levels".

SWG HRM is responsible for ERA Priority 3 of the ERA Roadmap even though this is not made explicit in those sections of the mandate which define the objectives and activities of the group. The top action priority of ERA Priority 3 according to the ERA Roadmap is: "Using open, transparent and merit based recruitment practices with regard to research positions". This as well as all of the other element listed in the ERA Roadmap under Priority 3 are not directly – or explicitly – addressed in the mandate of SWG HRM which remains broader and more general with regard to the substantial issues to be covered and focuses more on the definition of ways of working and partners. Nevertheless, ERA Priority 3 can be subsumed under the objectives of SWG HRM as specified in its mandate.

The mandate also states that SWG HRM is supposed to advise ERAC and the Council. The link with the EC, by contrast, seems unclear.

The work programmes of SWG HRM contained well-defined tasks that are largely in line with the mandate, and the proposed activities are well-balanced. Time was dedicated to evaluating the National Action Plans and the development of a monitoring tool is foreseen in the coming years.

Organisation and working conditions

The coverage of Member States in SWG HRM is satisfactory (24 countries), but the participation of Associated Countries could be better (only 5 countries). The Chair of the group is elected among the representatives of Member States for a period of three years. Currently, Cecilia Cabello from Spain holds the position.

SWG HRM has held two to three meetings per year since 2016, which were to a large extent aligned with ERAC's meeting calendar. The group also regularly produced outputs, but only up to its transfer to the Council in mid-2017. Four sub-groups have been active between 2016 and 2018.

The Secretariat is provided by the Council, but SWG HRM has no separate budget. As a standing working group, SWG HRM is not entitled to travel reimbursement or meeting rooms provided by the Council or internet visibility. It is difficult to find public information about the SWG HRM, its members, activities and outputs, unlike for the former SGHRM. At present, Austria provides meeting rooms for the group in the premises of its Permanent Representation.

Some interactions have taken place between SWG HRM and SWG GRI according to the work programmes but no joint sub-groups or outputs were established. Further collaborations with SWG OSI are foreseen.

Output

In the period under review, SWG HRM / SGHRM has produced six reports and two position papers and also co-organised a conference and a seminar in 2017. Most of them include concrete and practical recommendations, addressing the EC as well as national governments, research funding and performing organisations. One of the reports consists of an analysis of the implementation of National Action Plans with regard to ERA Priority 3. Moreover, all of the group's outputs make an effort to discuss best practice examples or monitoring ideas for the respective subject covered, but no dedicated monitoring tool for the group and its domain has been established in a written document.

Impact

The impact of SWG HRM / SHGRM, as measured by citations, can be considered satisfactory. Between 2016 and 2018, the group's work was so far referenced in one Council Conclusion, five publications by the EC, the Bratislava Declaration of Young Researchers and seven stakeholder publications or websites


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(European as well as national). However, these references can mostly be attributed to the former SGHRM. It remains to be seen what wider impact SWG HRM can have, especially given its limited public visibility.

Conclusions

The SWG HRM / SGHRM used to be a very active group with productive sub-groups and regular outputs until its transfer to the Council in mid-2017. Their publications are widely recognised, and the group had a significant impact on the development of quality HR strategies throughout European academic institutions and funders through the HRS4R process.

The transfer from the EC to the Council seems to have considerably impeded the group's working dynamic, which is most evident with regard to the marked differences in activity and output be-fore and after the transfer.

As is the case for SWG GRI and, to a lesser degree, SWG OSI, the framework conditions for SWG HRM have changed significantly since mid-2017 and could be improved (e.g. meeting rooms and public visibility).

As for the scope of SWG HRM, its mandate could be tailored better to ERA Priority 3. In its current form, the mandate of SWG HRM does not directly refer to the top action priority or other elements of Priority 3 and only mentions it explicitly in the reporting section. In addition, the role of and link with the Commission could be clarified in the mandate.

### 1.5.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about SWG HRM. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so.

| | |
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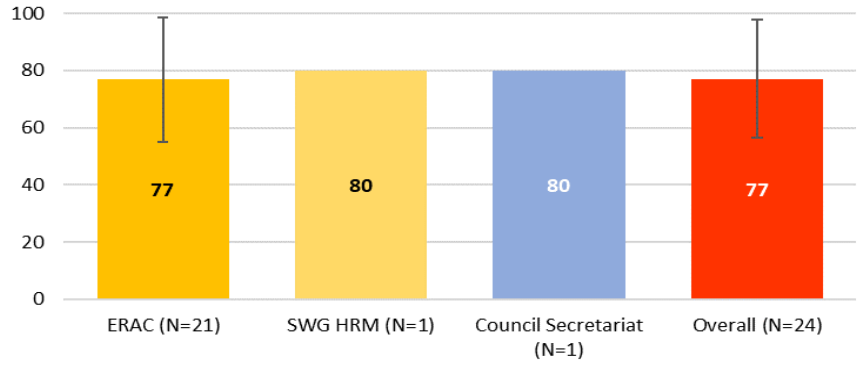
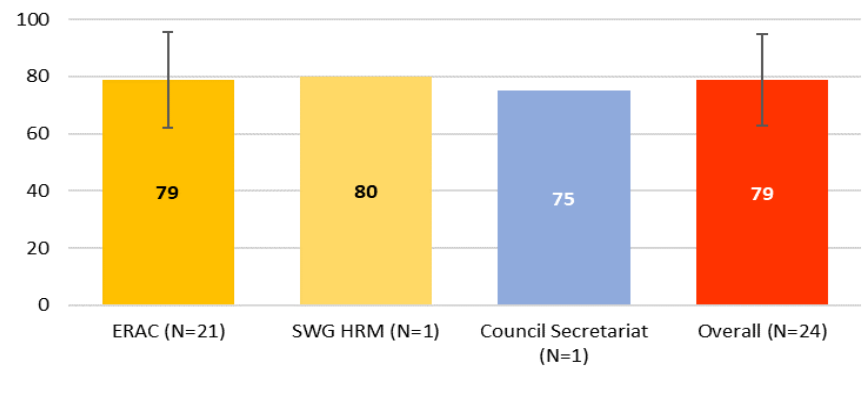
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its respective ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |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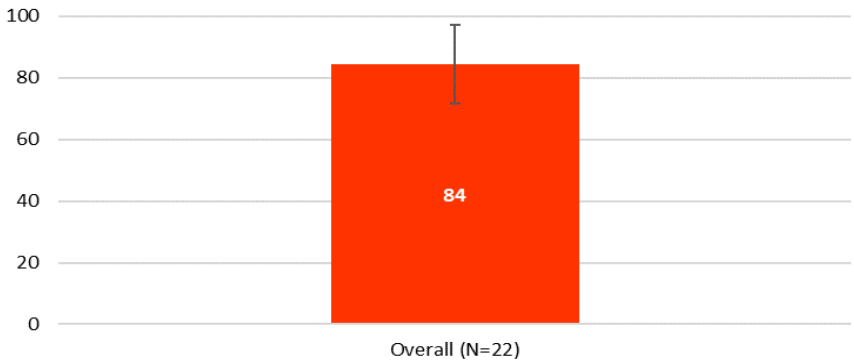
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? [0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant] | |
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] | |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] | |

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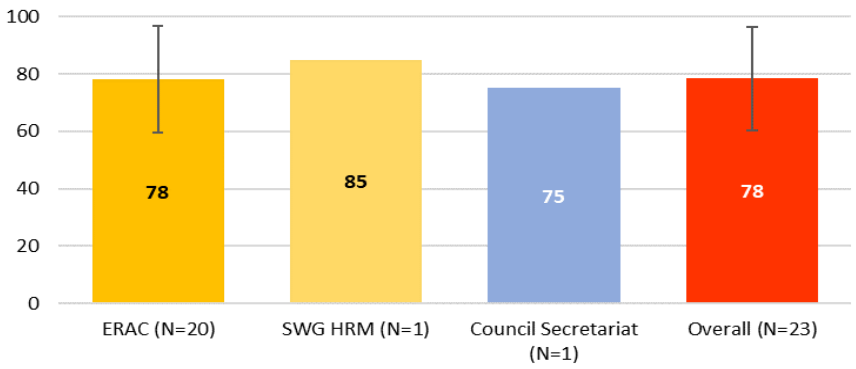
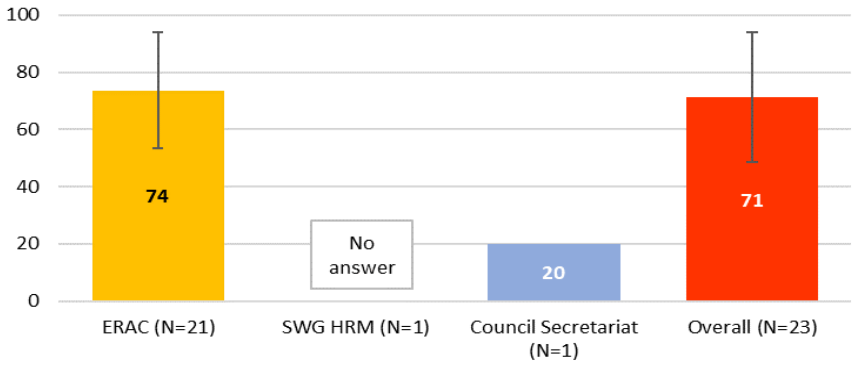
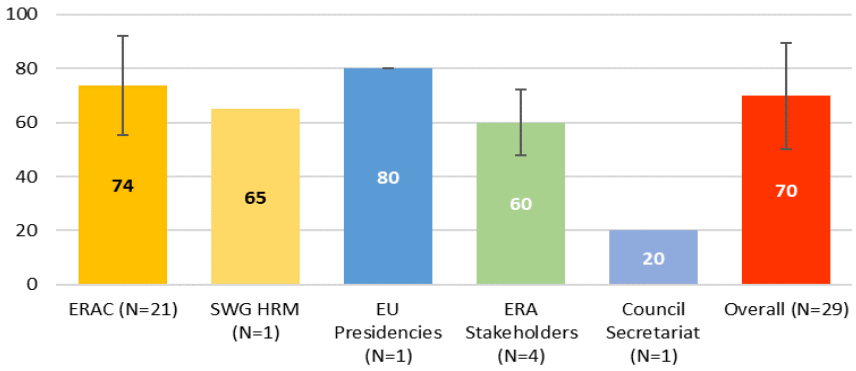
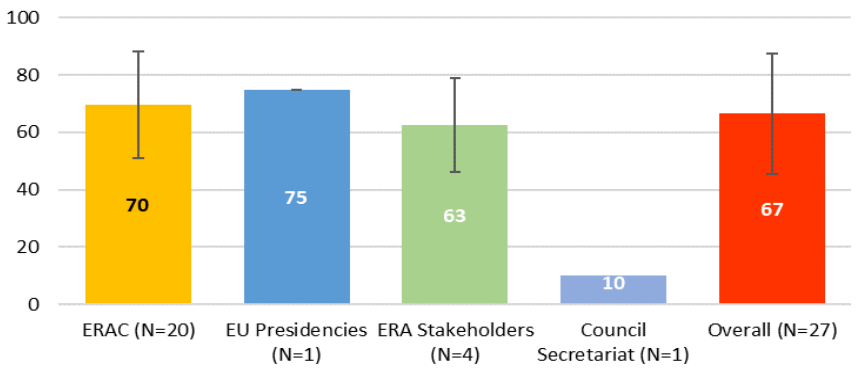
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent?<br>[0 = Fully disagree;<br>100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group?<br>[0 = Very unsatisfied;<br>100 = Fully satisfied] |  |
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general?<br>[0 = Poor;<br>100 = Excellent] |  |
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall?<br>[0 = Very irrelevant;<br>100 = Fully relevant] |  |

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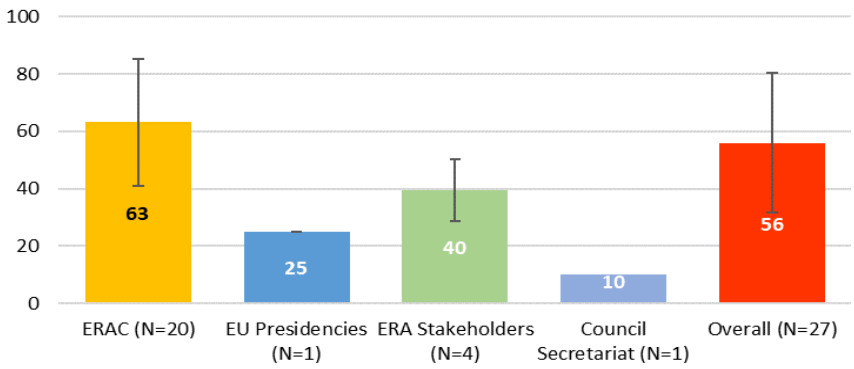
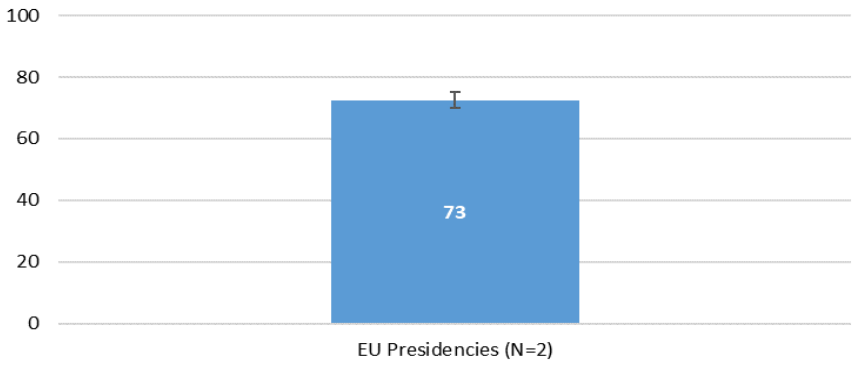
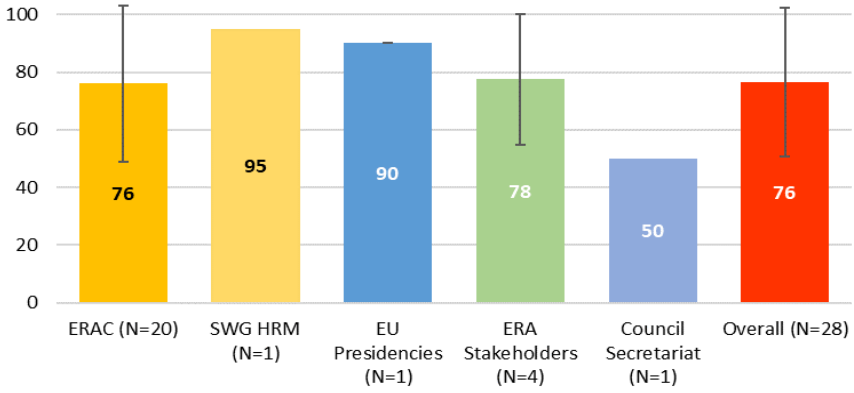
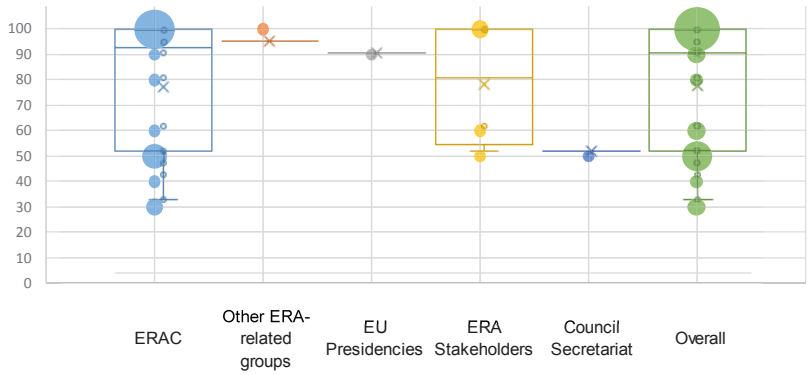
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important] |  <br>In order to better show the distribution of replies, the following additional graph combines a scatterplot with a box-and-whisker plot of the scores categorised into ten groups (according to value ranges 0-9, 10-19,…). The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.<br>  |

### 1.5.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

Scope of the group

The mandate and activities of the HRM group represent ERA priority 3, and all our areas of work are fully aligned with contributing towards an open labour market for researchers in Europe. In many aspects, the issue of human resources and mobility is transversal and crosscutting, therefore is closely related to other ERA priorities such as priority 1 (efficiency and effectiveness of the national systems of R&I) as well as priority 4 (gender), and also priority 5 (open science; and open circulation of knowledge). All these issues have a human resources dimension to them and therefore some of the group's activities have gone beyond the specific issue of priority 3.

In the past recent years, and in the context of the current organisational structure, the group has put emphasis on the implementation of its ERA priority since the group is a configuration dependent the ERAC and each of the members are very aware of the ERA Roadmap and their NAPs in relation to ERA priority 3; although, this implementation process has been followed in an informal manner. However, this year the intention is to prepare use a monitoring tool to better capture this implementation process, by reviewing the National Action Plans.

Organisation and working conditions

During the European Commission secretariat of the SGHRM configuration of the group, there was a very active support provided for the aspects of organisation, the logistics and content support for the activities, and therefore the work was very productive and there was a high dynamics in the group. The Commission secretariat offered direct support in content as wells as organisational issues also to the sub-groups also which generate high impact reports that have had direct policy implications (HRS4R, OSPP, etc.).

Within the new configuration, as SWG HRM this entails much higher implication for the members of the group in terms of participation and logistics. The new configuration also has new members and a new chair, and the organisational issues have posed some difficulties. The European Commission is present and always attends, but they no longer have a direct role in content. These aspects have contributed to a slow start since most of all responsibilities for the smooth functioning of the group rests on members of the group and chair. Nonetheless, the work is organised efficiently, and there is a transparent flow of information. The Council Secretariat ensures that the members receive all documentation and have access to the portal.

Finally, in terms of interaction with others, the HRM group plans to exchange and collaborate with other ERA-related groups, as included in the current work program and the regular close contact and exchange with other ERA-related groups at the Steering Board and ERAC meetings works very well and is highly welcomed.

Output and impact

The group's productivity and output, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, has been very successful. The group's impact on the EU level and on the national level in MS/AC, including stakeholders has been positive, especially through the recent published reports. Its contribution to specific policies which have been fully implemented such as: C&C, OTM-R, Innovative doctoral training, etc.

A recent report commissioned by the European Commission to an external expert highlights the most important achievements of the group since its creation in terms of policy impact, results and outcomes

Outlook: What should be changed?

Budget provided which could be used for reimbursement of flights for participation of those members that need support; this is notable since the number of members actually participating/attending in meeting is less than in the Commission configuration.

More participation of the European Commission would be welcomed; there is an active representative from the Commission that attends meetings, however, we think this participation could be extended to other units of the EC and would be beneficial and provide insight/input to our activities.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## 1.6 SWG GRI

### 1.6.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

The EC established the Helsinki Group on Gender in Research and Innovation (HG) in 1999 as an advisory group to help to overcome this disadvantage of women in research and science. In 2017, the Helsinki Group was transformed into the Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation (SWG GRI) of ERAC.

ERA Priority 4 of the ERA Roadmap covers gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research. The top action priority identified though Member State consultations is "Translating national equality legislation into effective action to address gender imbalances in research institutions and decision making bodies and integrating the gender dimension better into R&D policies, programmes and projects".

SWG GRI has a mandate covering ERA Priority 4, but it is also much broader. The overall objective of the Group is to advise the Council and the EC on policies and initiatives on gender equality in Research and Innovation (R&I), for the benefit of scientists, research institutions, universities, businesses and society at large. The mandate lists main activities, on top of the list is:

"The Standing Working Group shall advise and support the European Commission and the Council in implementing and monitoring the ERA Priority 4, the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020, gender equality in Horizon 2020 and the Council Conclusions on “Advancing gender equality in the ERA” of 1st December 2015. The Standing Working Group shall closely cooperate with the Commission services and other ERA-related groups with the aim of developing recommendations to ERAC."

Thus, the link with the EC seems clear in the mandate. The objectives and activities of the group are identical to the mandate of the former Helsinki group.

The link to Member States and Associated Countries is indirectly covered, through the activity "Promote mutual learning regarding gender equality policies / strategies and recommend good practices to effectively implement and assess the ERA national action plans or strategies".

The work programmes are concrete and practical, and in line with the mandate.

Organisation and working conditions

The coverage of countries in SWG GRI is good, only Croatia is missing among Member States. Six Associated Countries participate. The Chair is elected among the representatives of Member States for a period of three years. Currently, Marcela Linková from the Czech Republic holds the position.

SWG GRI has regular meetings and outputs (but only two meetings a year, which is less than for most groups). Five sub-groups have been active between 2016 and 2018. In 2016-2017 the meetings of the group were not well aligned with ERAC meetings.

The Secretariat is provided by the Council, but SWG GRI has no separate budget. As a standing working group, SWG GRI is not entitled to travel reimbursement, meeting rooms provided by council or internet visibility. Unlike for the former Helsinki group, it is very difficult to find any kind of information about SWG GRI, its members, activities and outputs, although the Austrian EU portal gives information about its existence and its mandate. At present, Austria also provides meeting rooms.

Output

In the period under review, SWG GRI has produced four reports and three opinions. All of them give concrete and usable advice on gender equality at European and national level. One of the opinions is a joint product with SFIC (SFIC and SWG GRI opinion on developing guidelines on a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI). The monitoring of national implementation of priority 4 has mainly been carried out through systematic mutual learning and best practice exchange, the only written documentation provided is a workshop presentation.

Much of the output is not directly linked to the ERA Priority 4, but covers other aspects of the mandate (and indirectly also Priority 4).


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Impact

The impact of the group's work is measurable: the group is referred to in three Council Conclusions, in a resolution of the European Parliament, and has contributed greatly to – and is referred to – in the She Figures 2015.

Conclusions

SWG GRI seems to be an active group with regular meetings and outputs, and productive sub-groups, especially given that they have only met twice a year. According to the mandate, the group has a clear advisory role towards the Council and the EC.

The framework conditions for the group could be improved. It is unfortunate that stakeholders and others interested in gender and the work on gender in ERA, are not able to find any kind of information about the work of the group, and how to contact them.

### 1.6.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about SWG GRI. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so.

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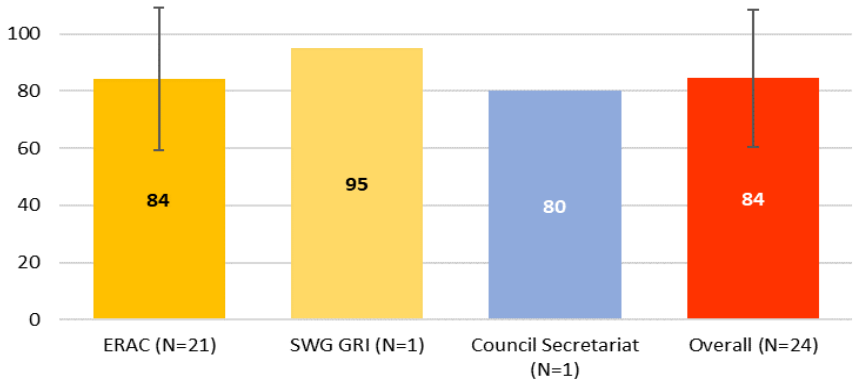
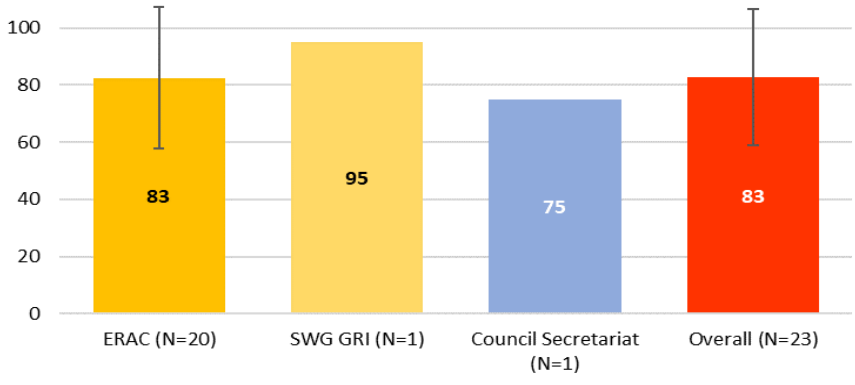
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its respective ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |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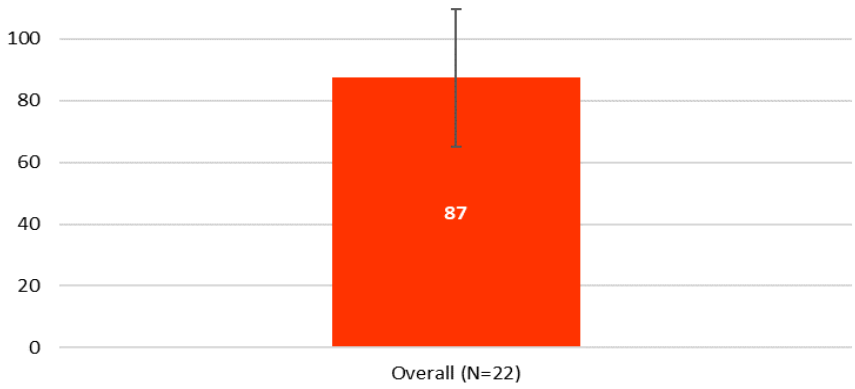
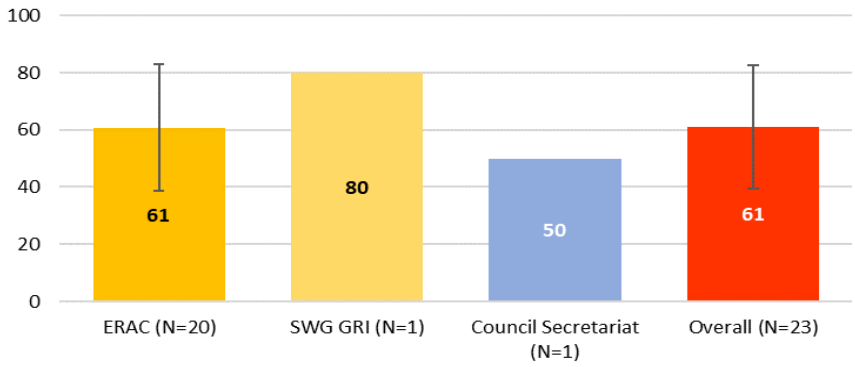
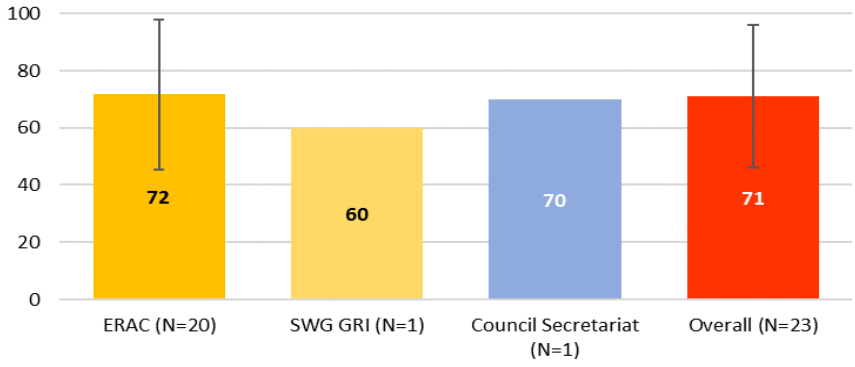
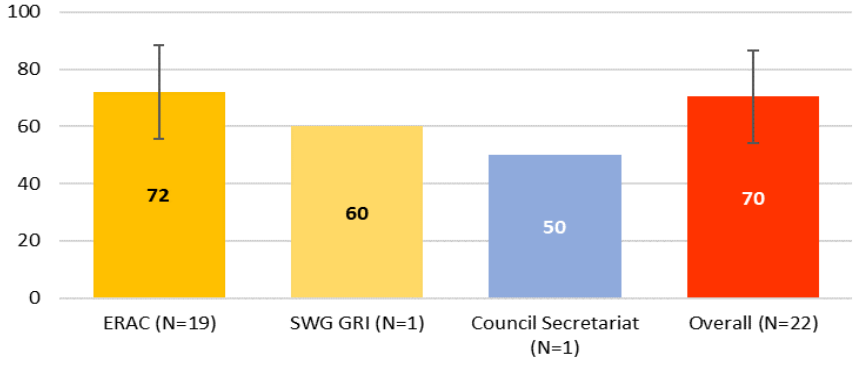
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? [0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant] |  |
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] |  |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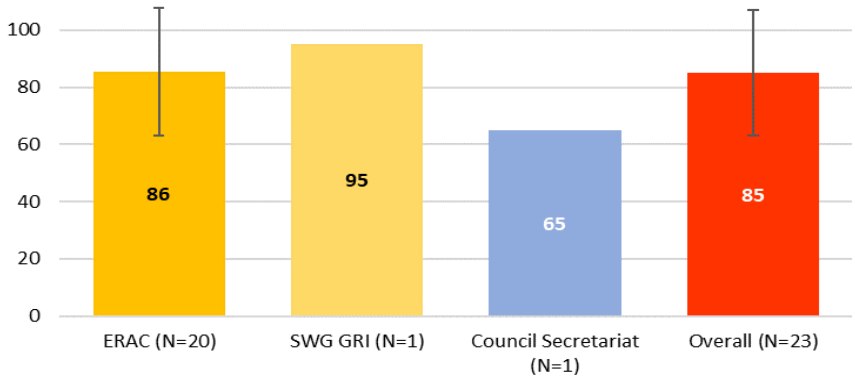
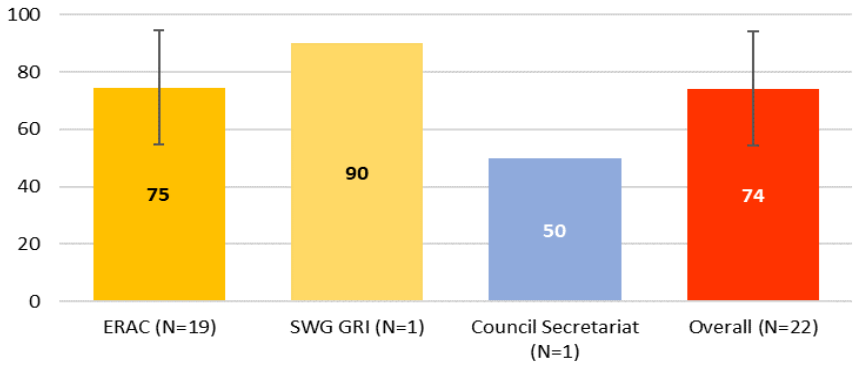
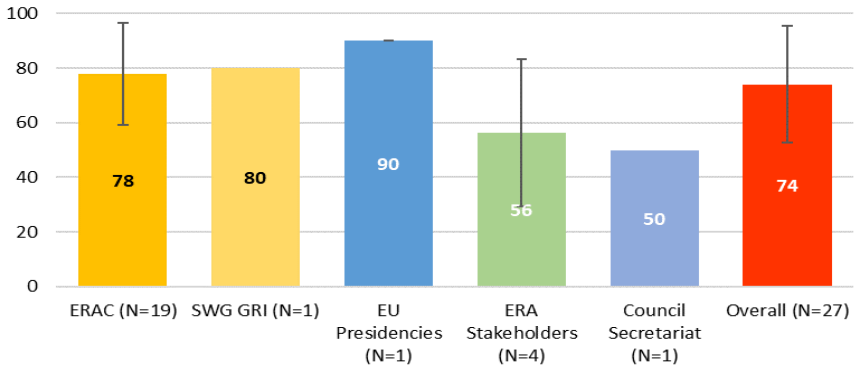
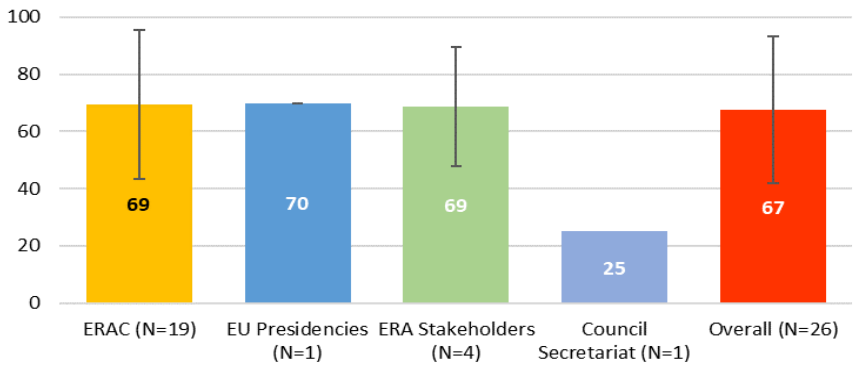
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent?<br>[0 = Fully disagree;<br>100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group?<br>[0 = Very unsatisfied;<br>100 = Fully satisfied] |  |
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general?<br>[0 = Poor;<br>100 = Excellent] |  |
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall?<br>[0 = Very irrelevant;<br>100 = Fully relevant] |  |

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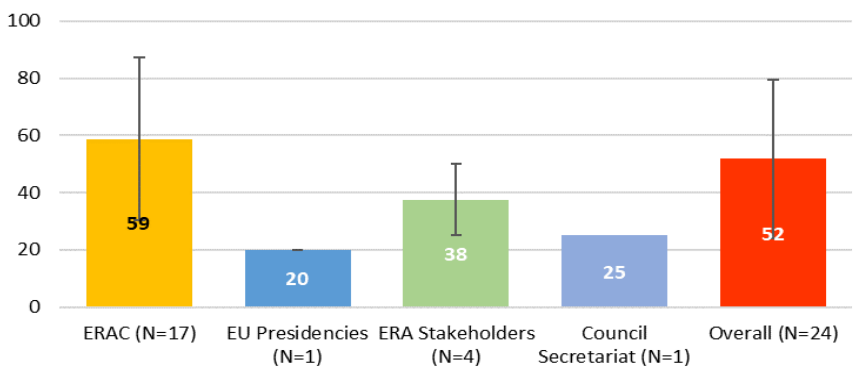
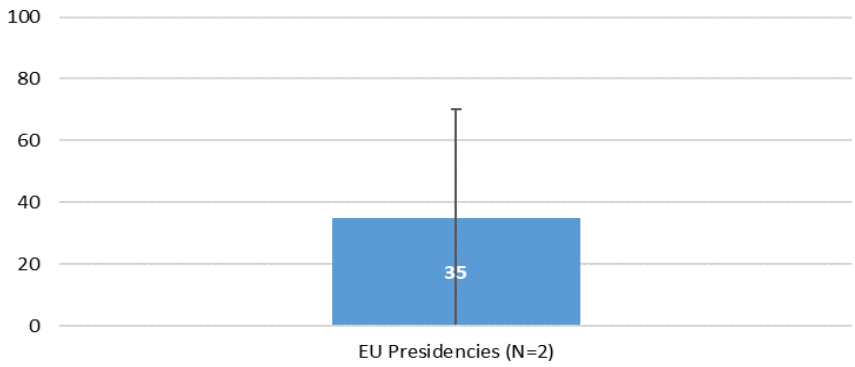
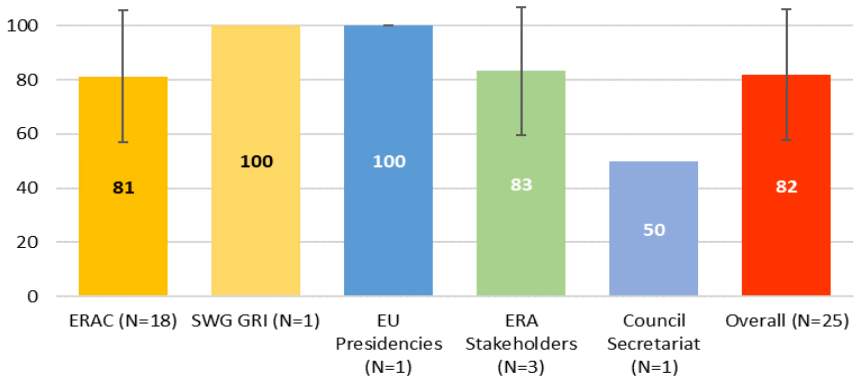
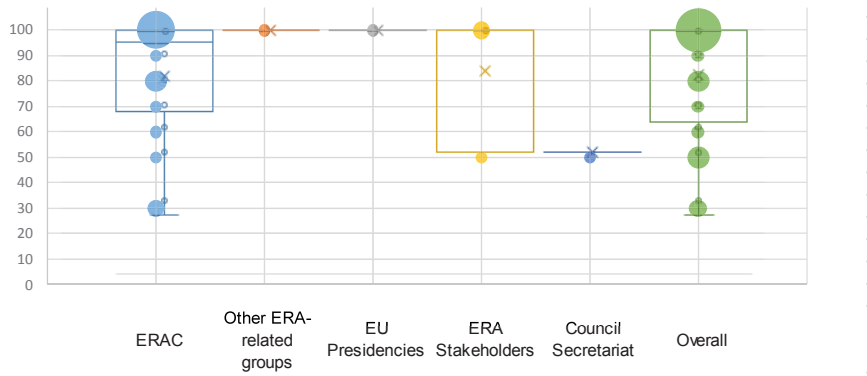
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important] |  <br>In order to better show the distribution of replies, the following additional graph combines a scatterplot with a box-and-whisker plot of the scores categorised into ten groups (according to value ranges 0-9, 10-19,…). The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.<br>  |

### 1.6.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

Scope of the group

The mandate and the Work Programme represent the ERA Priority well in that the entire mandate is framed by the approach of the institutional change with the three priority areas (gender balance in research teams, gender balance in decision-making and gender dimension in research). Identification of good practices as well as gaps and differences at national and European level has been an integral part of the group's work.

The group engages with the National Action Plans in its ERA Priority in several ways: Firstly, in 2016 there was an exchange on the national mechanisms for the implementation of ERA at national level, with a view to foster mutual learning among MS. Secondly, MS have ex-changed on the contents of the National Action Plans in 2016 already during the drafting stage; a first analysis of the NAPs in Priority 4 was conducted for the workshop in Malta held back to back with ERAC Plenary in March 2017. In 2017 members of SWG GRI took active participation in a survey carried out by the Horizon 2020 GENDERACTION project and took active part in a mutual learning workshop organised in Vienna on 7-8 February 2018. At this workshop members discussed the findings of the survey and criteria for identifying good practice implementation in Priority 4.

Organisation and working conditions

The group has a long tradition of a good dynamic and mix of countries involved in sub-groups. There is a core of more active countries.

As of 1 July 2017 the group changed from the HG under the Commission to SWG GRI under the Council. Under the EC the HG enjoyed the support of the Secretariat and the EC covered travel and per diem of one representative per country. As of 2018 Austria is generous to ensure meeting premises for SWG GRI. No financial resources are available to support the work.

The Chair (CZ) has the support of CZ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), which funds the National Contact Centre for Gender and Research with a four-year grant. Thanks to this, the Chair can allocate a portion of her working time to SWG GRI activities; furthermore, the MEYS funds Chair's travel to relevant meetings (ERAC, ERAC SB, SWG GRI).

The chair provides briefing notes after each ERAC SB and ERAC and reports to the group at its biannual meetings. In the past MS members were frequently of the opinion that information was not forthcoming timely from the Commission; information was provided ex post about developments, and thus MS felt they couldn't provide their advice timely. MS attempted to communicate to the Commission this fact on several occasions.

Particularly fruitful cooperation was with SFIC on the joint report and opinion on gender in international cooperation in STI. SWG GRI intends to liaise with SWG OSI in 2018 on gender in open science and innovation and with SWG HRM in 2019 on sexual harassment and assault in HE and research, with particular focus on international mobility. Participation in ERAC and ERAC SB meetings is useful in that an overall picture of developments in the ERA and mainstreaming opportunities are obtained.

Output and impact

Given the two meetings per year, the productivity and output of the group can be regarded as very good considering the resources. In the recent period, the group (HG and SWG GRI) performed three questionnaire surveys among its members (cooperation with NCPs and gender in NCP activities, gender targets and quotas, and gender issues in international cooperation in STI). The results of these questionnaire surveys formed the basis for three reports delivered by the groups, two of which were in response to Council Conclusions on advancing gender equality in the ERA (Guidance to facilitate the implementation of targets to promote gender equality in research and innovation, SFIC/SWG GRI opinion on developing joint guidelines on a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI). The report on gender in NCP activities was presented by the Commission to the Science with and for Society (SwafS) Working Group of the Strategic configuration of the Horizon 2020 Programme Committee on 23 November 2016 and informed the HG's position on the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 and the next Framework Programme.

Among other major successes of the group are the following: 1) Cooperation with the Commission on the She Figures, including the work of the sub-group of statistical correspondents; 2) Transfer of experience and sharing of best practices among members: Since its inception the group placed emphasis on

sharing information about new programmes and initiatives at MS level, and this has long been regarded by members as extremely useful since the best practice examples and experience from other countries can well be used at national level when designing new programmes and initiatives. The mutual learning also extends to processes and procedures for ERA implementation at national level. Both thematic and institutional learning is thus achieved, which contributes to building capacity in priority 4.

Outlook: What should be changed?

Two meetings per year are not sufficient; four meetings per year are advisable.

Increased transparency about how opinions of ERA groups are taken onboard when submitted for ERAC opinions; no feedback is given and input by the group is not reflected in resulting documents (e.g. ERAC Opinion on the interim evaluation of H2020 and the next FP, in a very limited manner ERAC Opinion on the EIC).

Better exchange among ERA groups via ERAC SB to ensure proper gender mainstreaming of ERAC and ERA group work. For this reason, gender equality should continue as an independent priority.

Qualification criteria for nominated delegates could be introduced. It would be helpful if delegates work in the field addressed and are in a more influential policy-maker position.

## 1.7 SWG OSI

### 1.7.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

The Standing Working Group on Open Science and Innovation (SWG OSI) of ERAC was established in early 2016 as a successor of the ERAC Working Group on Knowledge Transfer and the ERAC Task Force on Open Access. The main role of SWG OSI according to its mandate is to advise ERAC "in the context of open science and open innovation, on the development and implementation of policies and initiatives to enhance access to scientific information, and the circulation and use of knowledge" for all stakeholders and society at large.

SWG OSI is responsible for ERA Priority 5. In the ERA Roadmap, Priority 5 is subdivided into two parts, thus having two top action priorities: "fully implementing knowledge transfer policies at national level, in order to maximise the dissemination, uptake and exploitation of scientific results" (ERA Priority 5a), and "promoting Open Access" (ERA Priority 5b). While 5a seems rather broad or even somewhat unspecific and overambitious, 5b is rather narrow. This spectrum is challenging to cover in a single mandate. Nevertheless, both parts of ERA Priority 5 are reflected quite well in the mandate of SWG OSI. It is noteworthy, however, that the concept of "Open Innovation", although actually part of the group's name, is only cited at the very end of the description of Priority 5a in the ERA Roadmap. Moreover, the group's mandate does not specifically address some of the aspects included in the ERA Roadmap for Priority 5. This is for example the case with regard to developing "indicators to quantify the economic and social impact of knowledge transfer policies", management of intellectual property rights (IPR) or contract negotiations with publishers.

The work programmes of SWG OSI from the period under review suggest that the activities of the group were mostly in line with its mandate. However, following the Council Conclusions on the transition towards Open Science adopted on 27 May 2016, SWG OSI was tasked with assessing "the proposed actions on the Amsterdam Call for Action [on Open Science] on feasibility, effectiveness and prioritisation, and to report on this". The group thus concentrated its work mainly on this new assignment, which was not explicitly specified in the mandate. In addition, SWG OSI devoted considerable time to discussing the governance of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), which is not foreseen in the mandate as such. However, the mandate also stipulates that SWG OSI shall provide advice on "any other topic related to digital and open science and innovation that ERAC may consider of interest".

In consequence of the strong focus on the Amsterdam Call and the EOSC, other topic such as in particular open innovation did not receive much attention from SWG OSI so far. To be fair, this is supposed to change in the second half of 2018.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Organisation and working conditions

The coverage of Member States in SWG OSI is good (25 countries) but the Associated Countries could be represented better (only 5 countries). The group is currently chaired by Clara Eugenia García from Spain.

SWG OSI held many meetings between 2016 and 2018, especially in 2017 but they were not well aligned with the ERAC meeting calendar. No sub-groups have been active in the period under review.

The Secretariat is provided by the Council, but the SWG OSI has no separate budget. As a standing working group, SWG OSI is not entitled to travel reimbursement, meeting rooms provided by council or internet visibility. It is difficult to find public information about the group, its members, activities and outputs.

Few interactions have taken place between SWG OSI and other ERA Priorities, i.e. other ERA-related groups. However, the current work programme foresees exchanges with SWG HRM and SWG GRI in the future. Considering that both SWG OSI and ESFRI have been dealing with the EOSC, this could have been a potential area of collaboration as well.

Output

Since 2016, SWG OSI has produced two outputs – an assessment of the Amsterdam Call for Action and an opinion on the governance of the EOSC. This seems rather limited compared to other ERA-related groups. However, given that the group came into existence only at the beginning of the period under review, the number is reasonable. The two publications mainly addressed the EC and the Council but only the report about the Amsterdam Call includes specific recommendations and lessons learnt from different countries. Apart from the latter, the evaluation and follow-up of the National Actions Plans as well as monitoring more generally does not yet seem to be priority in the work and outputs of the group.

Impact

Between 2016 and 2018, the work of SWG OSI was referenced in one Council Conclusion and one EC staff working document. Again, this appears somewhat limited but is reasonable, considering the group's age. Furthermore, since SWG OSI is mainly supposed to advise ERAC and it is not very visible publicly, its wider impact is difficult to assess.

Conclusions

SWG OSI is an active group in terms of meetings but somewhat limited output and impact so far. This can be explained by its short period of existence as well as its clear advisory role with regard to ERAC.

The challenge of SWG OSI seems to be accommodating the wide and heterogeneous spectrum of ERA Priority 5 in its mandate and activities, while at the same time responding to newly emerging topics. It should be considered whether it would make sense to divide SWG OSI into two groups in the mid- to long term future, in order to do justice to the increasingly complex domains of Open Science and Open Innovation and the fast developments therein. In the short run, working more often in focused sub-groups could be a way to better cope with the complexity and diversity of these fields.

### 1.7.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about SWG OSI. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so. SWG OSI did not participate in the survey at all.


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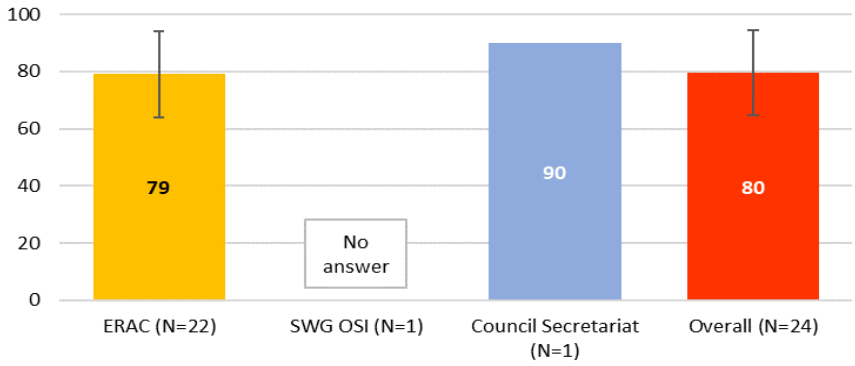
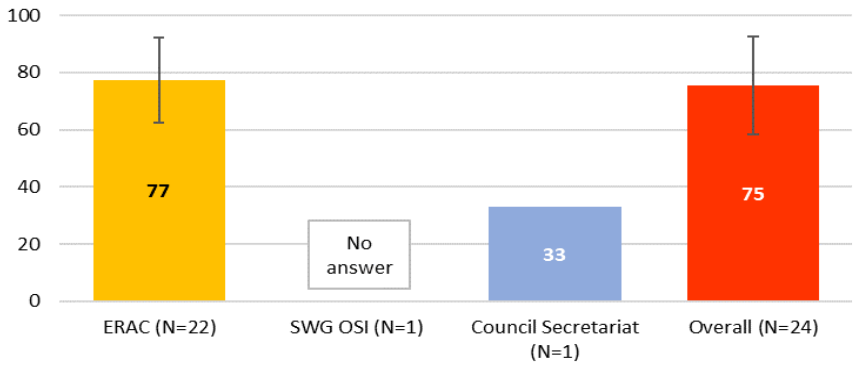
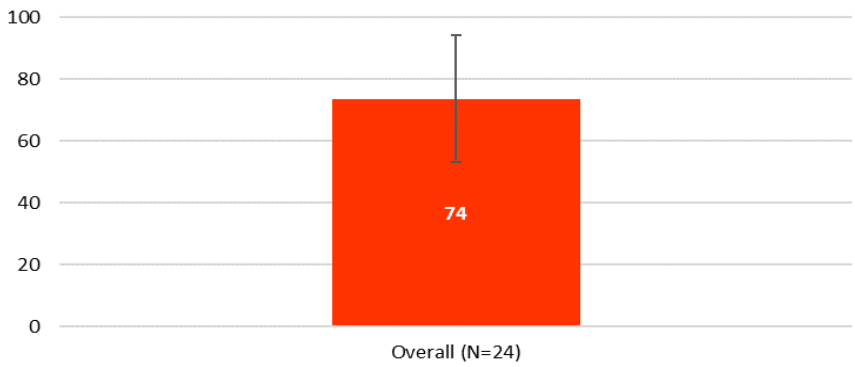
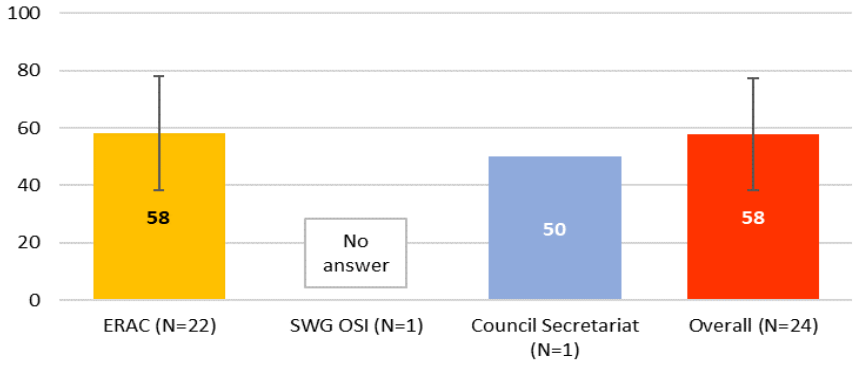
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its respective ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly?<br>[0 = Fully disagree;<br>100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate?<br>[0 = Fully disagree;<br>100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair?<br>[0 = Poor;<br>100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)?<br>[0 = Too passive;<br>100 = Too dominant] |  |

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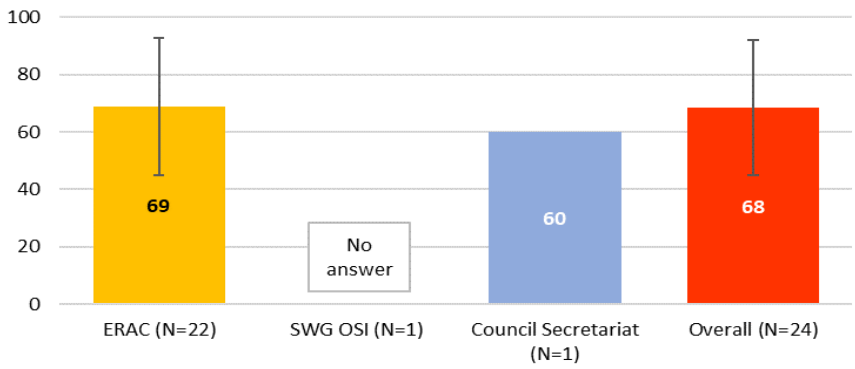
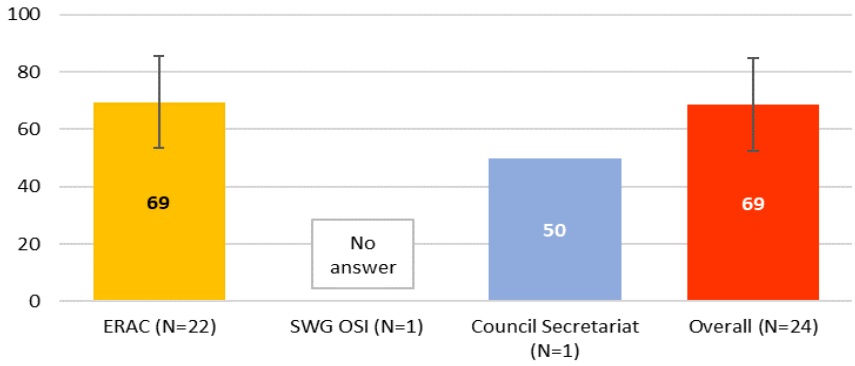
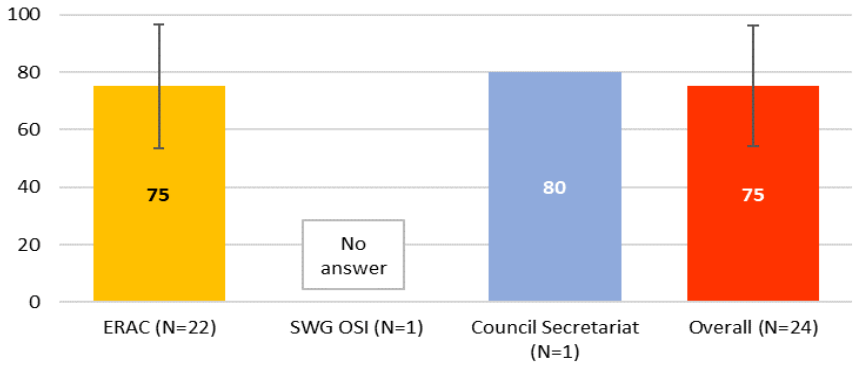
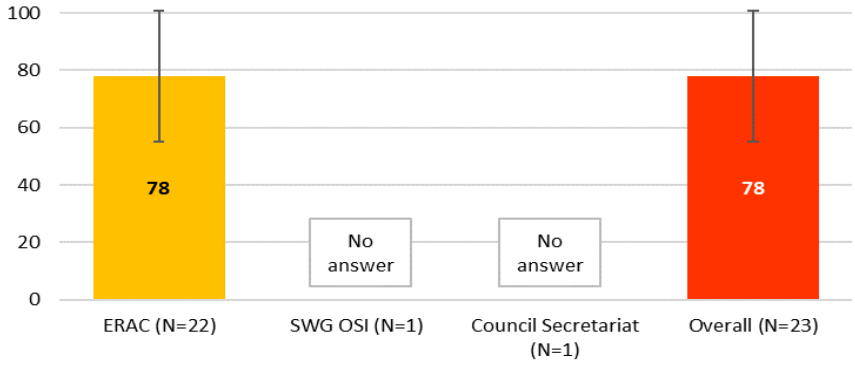
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] |  |
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group? [0 = Very unsatisfied; 100 = Fully satisfied] |  |

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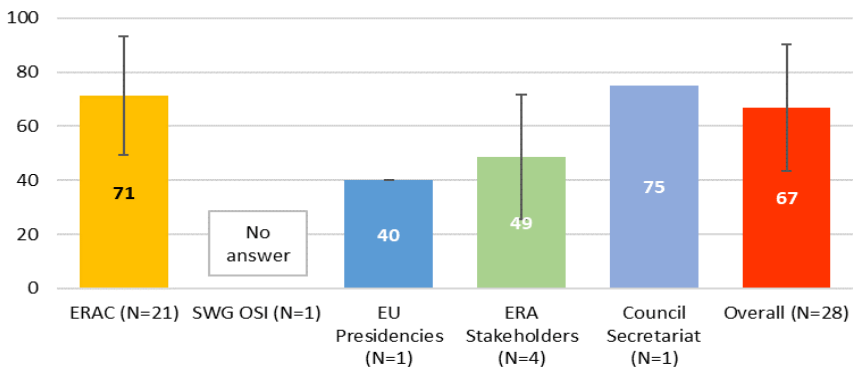
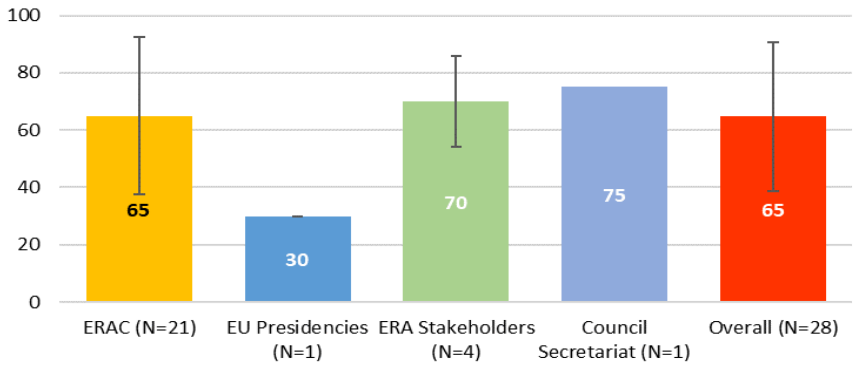
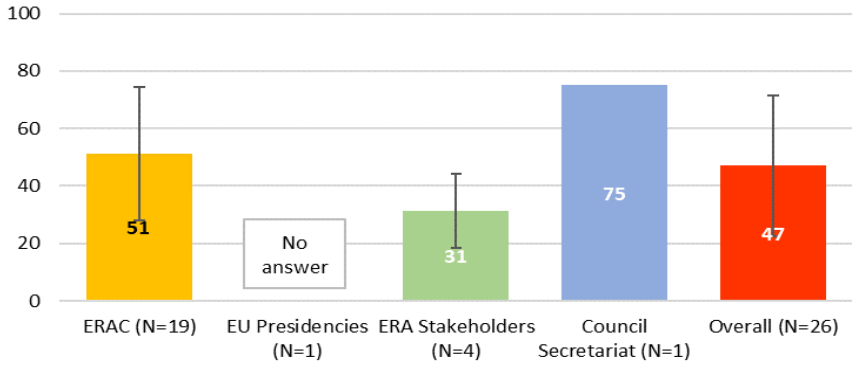
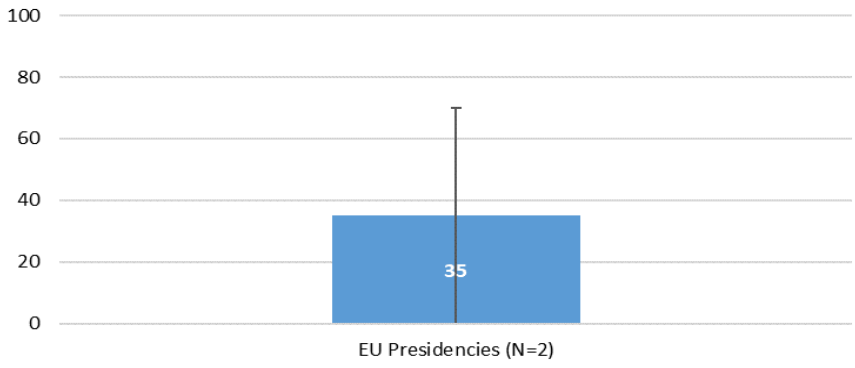
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general? [0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent] |  |
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall? [0 = Very irrelevant; 100 = Fully relevant] |  |
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |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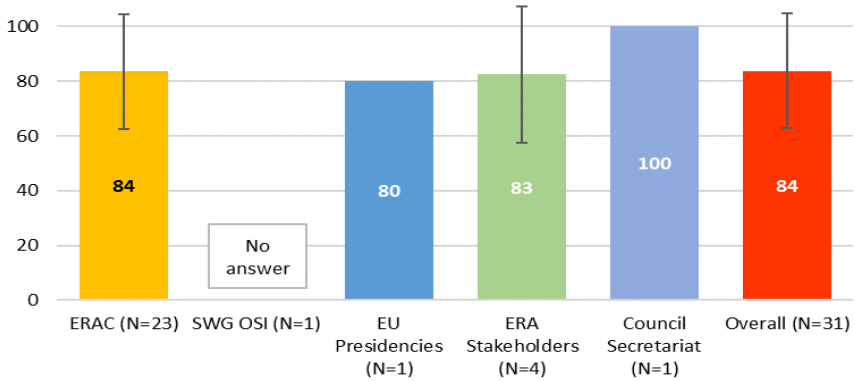
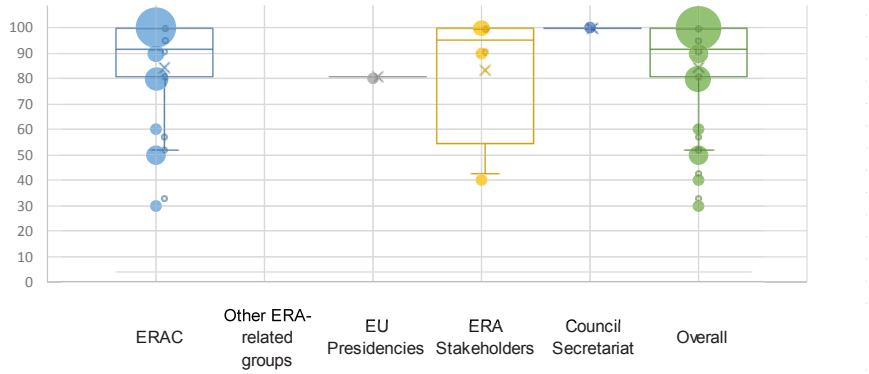
| How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important] |  <br>In order to better show the distribution of replies, the following additional graph combines a scatterplot with a box-and-whisker plot of the scores categorised into ten groups (according to value ranges 0-9, 10-19,…). The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.<br>  |

### 1.7.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

No self-assessment report was submitted by SWG OSI.

## 1.8 SFIC

### 1.8.1 Results from Documentary Analysis

Scope of the group

The Strategic Forum for International Scientific and Technological Cooperation (SFIC) is a dedicated configuration of ERAC. Its objective is to facilitate the further development, implementation and monitoring of the international dimension of ERA. In practice, this means sharing information and consultation between the partners (Member States, Associated Countries and the EC) with a view to identifying common priorities which could lead to coordinated or joint initiatives. The group also aims at coordinating activities and positions vis-à-vis third countries and within international fora.

ERA Priority 6 of the ERA Roadmap is international cooperation. The Top Action Priority identified through Member State consultations is “Develop and implement appropriate joint strategic approaches and actions for international STI cooperation on the basis of Member States’ national priorities”.

SFIC's mandate specifically covers responsibility for ERA Priority 6. The mandate mentions the Top Action Priority, but not all other aspects of the priority. The mandate also covers many other aspects of international collaboration. The mandate is broad, and the relationship/division of labour with the EC is not very clear. The mandate gives SFIC a specific advisory role on international S&T cooperation, but does not specify to whom the advice is to be given. A minor observation is that SFIC, as the only ERA-related group established as configuration or standing working group of ERAC, is to report directly to Council and EC every two years, in addition to the reporting via ERAC.

The work programmes are very ambitious, and cover the mandate. They are not very specific, and list a large number of activities, but do not commit to any milestones and hardly to any products.

Organisation and working conditions

The coverage of countries in SFIC is good, with all Member States participating, in addition to 14 Associated Countries. The chair of SFIC is designated from among the representatives of the Member States for a period of two years. Currently, Rozenn Saunier from France is holding this position.

SFIC has established a Steering Board, and three sub-groups have been active between 2016 and 2018. The SFIC plenary holds regular meetings. The meetings of SFIC are only to some extent aligned with ERAC meetings.

SFIC is a dedicated configuration of ERAC, which allows the group to meet on Council premises and to reimburse the travel costs of delegates. Furthermore, SFIC also uses interpretation under the rules for Council preparatory bodies. The Secretariat is provided by the Council.

A minimum of information about SFIC is found on the ERAC webpage of the Council. Their output documents can most easily be found in the Austrian ERA portal. To find them on the Council website, you need to know what to search for (document number)

Output

The output of SFIC seems rather modest in relation to the ambitious work programme. SFIC has produced three opinions on important EC documents, SFIC and SWG GRI have a common opinion/report on developing guidelines on a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI, and SFIC has produced a report on a Strategic Research Agenda towards Russia. In addition, SFIC produced a biannual activity report 2015-16.

The advice from SFIC is largely practical. Workshops are organised relatively regularly, and SFIC has had three sub-groups with clear mandates during the period under review. There is no specific document dealing with monitoring of Priority 6. Monitoring is only mentioned in the work programme through the activity (among the 24 listed) "Reflect on and contribute to the monitoring of the international dimension of Horizon 2020".

Given the relatively frequent meetings of SFIC and its sub-groups, compared to the relatively modest output, process might be more important than the product in this area. This is also partly reflected in the SFIC biennial report of activities 2015-2016, which says: "SFIC has taken measures to implement all aspects of the work programme in the appropriate form. In some instances this took the form of more concrete deliverables, such as opinions or events, in others it was implemented through more intangible means, such as regular exchanges within and beyond SFIC or sharing of information by email."

Impact

The impact of SFIC is difficult to measure, considering that a major part of its work consists of exchanges and discussions (see section “Output”). To what degree these influence EC work or national policies is hard to assess. In addition, the headline indicator for ERA Priority 6 (joint publications with non-ERA partners) is also far removed from the remit of SFIC.

Conclusions

SFIC seems to be an active group, even though the written output is rather modest compared to the work programme, and impact is hard to measure. The top action priority of the ERA Roadmap seems to be followed up through the SFIC sub-groups.

It might be an idea for SFIC to develop a more concrete and targeted work programme.

A possible revision of SFIC’s mandate should include some clarification on the division of labour and responsibility with the EC as well as clarification as to whom advice is to be given.

### 1.8.2 Results from Survey

The following graphs present the results for the numerical questions in the section of the survey about SFIC. The bars illustrate the mean value per respondent category (the EC does not appear as separate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category, but the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC). When a category consists of more than one respondent, the black line indicates the standard deviation (number of replies given in brackets). If a respondent category is not included in a graph this means that it was not presented with this question. By contrast, a "no answer sign" highlights when a respondent could provide an answer to a question but chose not to do so.

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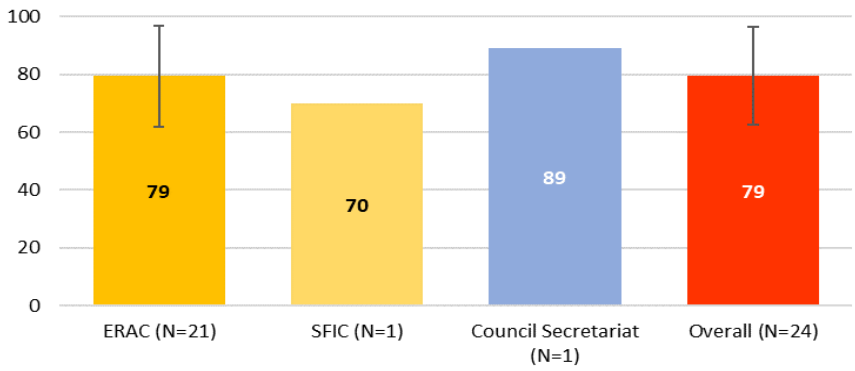
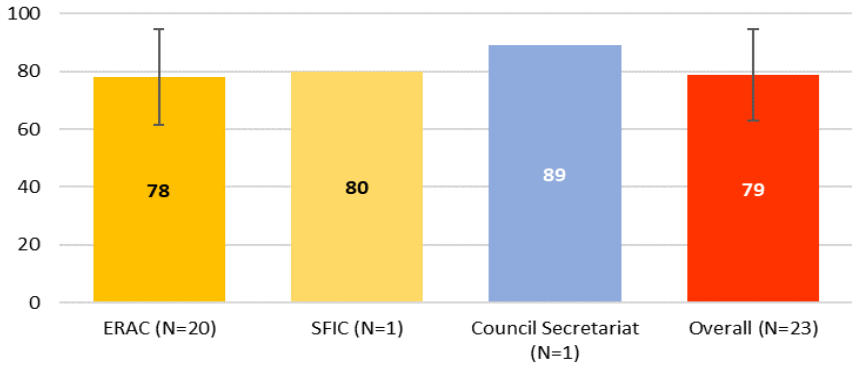
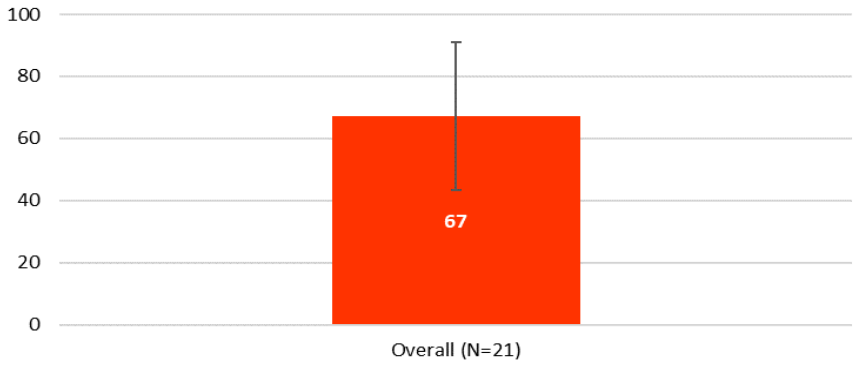
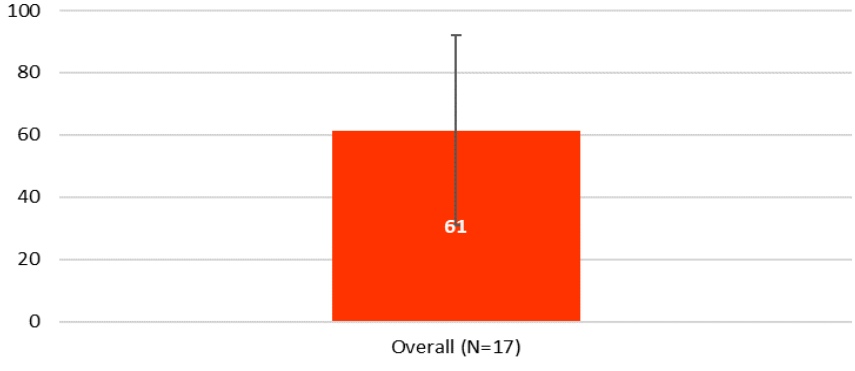
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its respective ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly?<br>[0 = Fully disagree;<br>100 = Fully agree] |  |
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate?<br>[0 = Fully disagree;<br>100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair?<br>[0 = Poor;<br>100 = Excellent] |  |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Steering Board?<br>[0 = Poor;<br>100 = Excellent] |  |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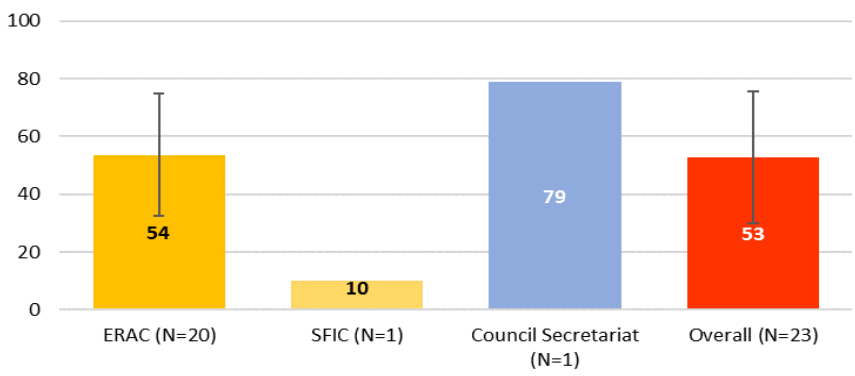
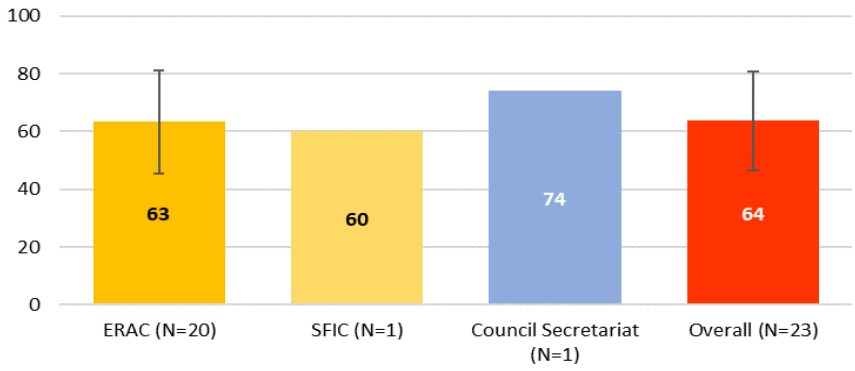
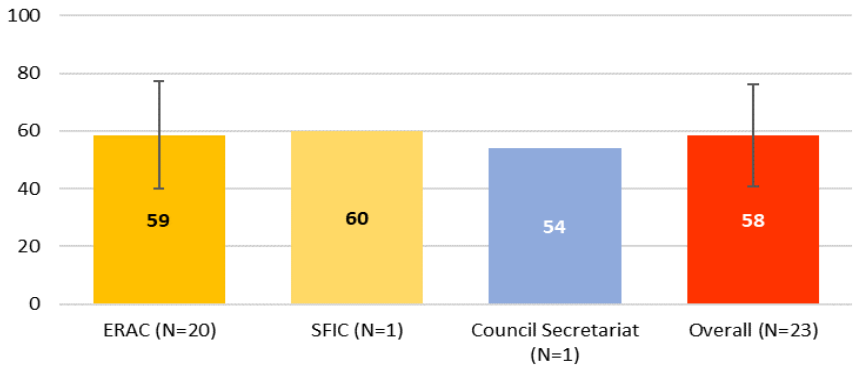
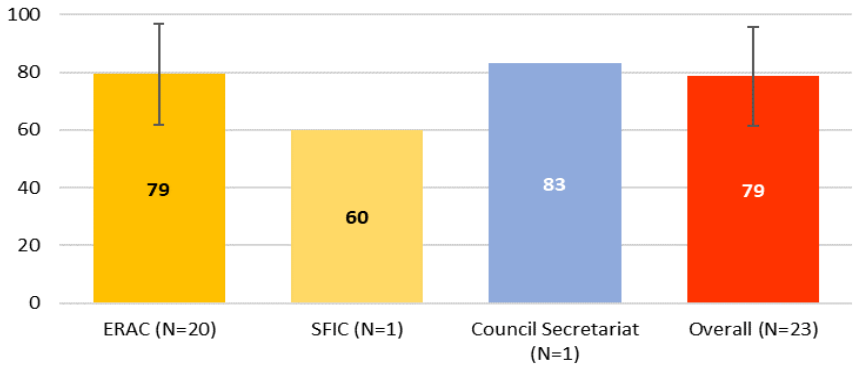
| How would you rate the European Commision's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? [0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant] |  |
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? [0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively] |  |
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent? [0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree] |  |

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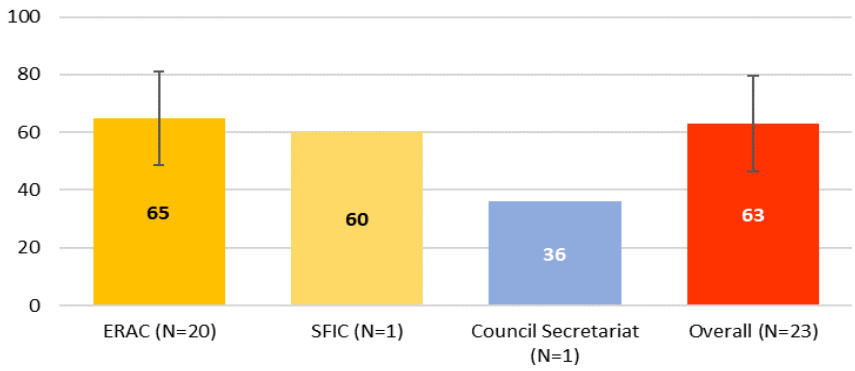
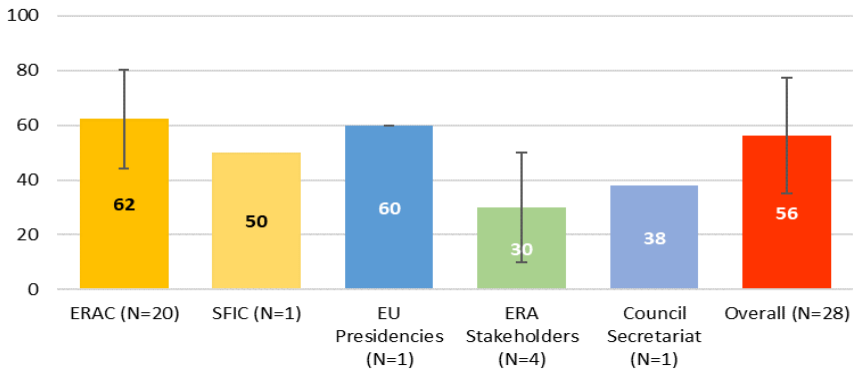
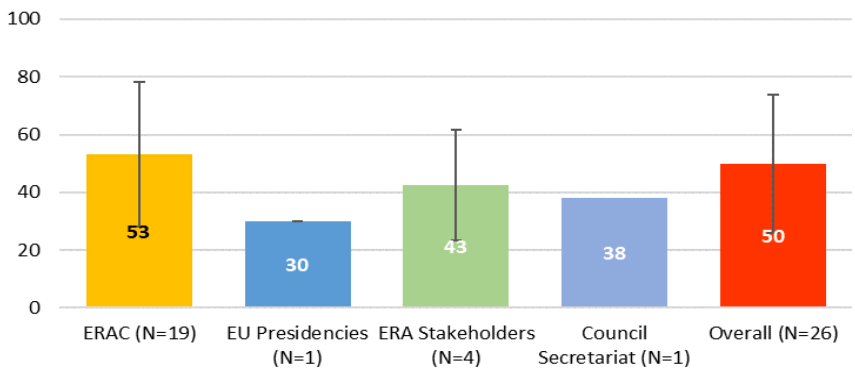
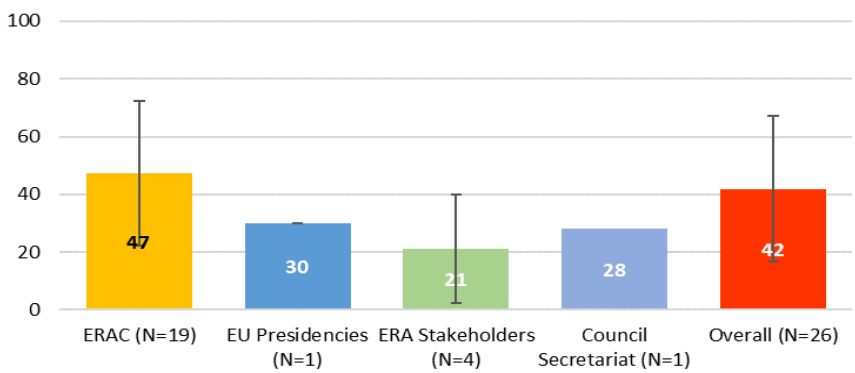
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group?<br>[0 = Very unsatisfied;<br>100 = Fully satisfied] |  |
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general?<br>[0 = Poor;<br>100 = Excellent] |  |
| How relevant are the group's publications for your country/organisation overall?<br>[0 = Very irrelevant;<br>100 = Fully relevant] |  |
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group?<br>[0 = Very low extent;<br>100 = Very large extent] |  |

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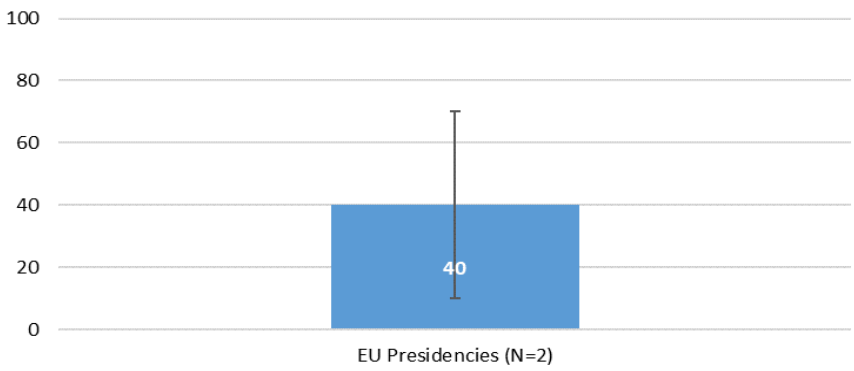
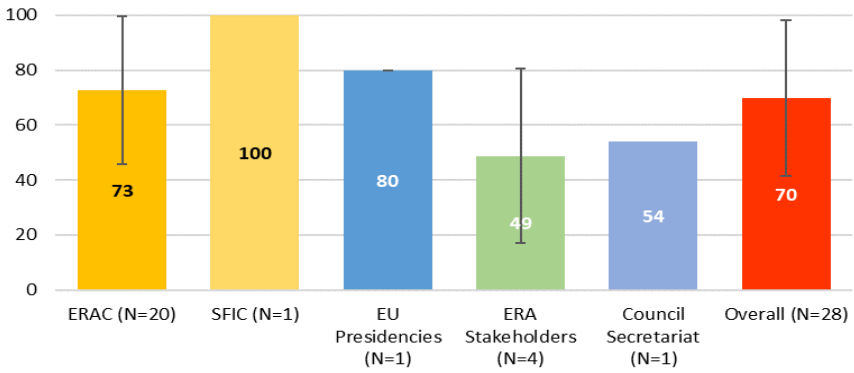
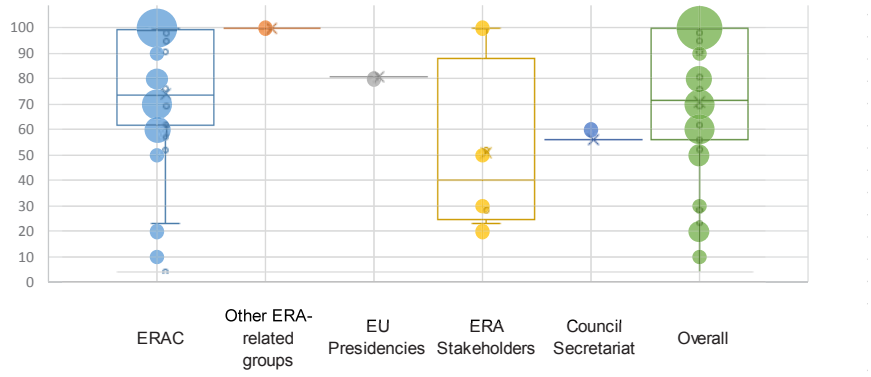
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? [0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent] |  |
| How important do you consider the continuation of this group? [0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important] |  <br>In order to better show the distribution of replies, the following additional graph combines a scatterplot with a box-and-whisker plot of the scores categorised into ten groups (according to value ranges 0-9, 10-19,…). The size of the bubbles indicates the number of replies within a category.<br>  |

### 1.8.3 Self-Assessment by the Group

Scope of the group

The ERA priority to develop and implement appropriate joint strategic approaches and actions for international STI cooperation on the basis of MS' national priorities is considered as a priority in the work of SFIC:

1) At National level, some MS and AC have defined national strategies for internationalisation. These are shared between SFIC members.

2) At National and European levels, we work to have a better coordination of the objectives and activities of the EU, MS/AC towards third countries and international organisations.

MS/AC actively participate in the further development of the Multi-Annual Roadmaps through SFIC.

Major improvements have been done such as information by the Commission on its international meetings or negotiations and its request of feedback from the MS/AC. But it still could be improved by more participation for SFIC.

Organisation and working conditions

The SFIC is a very dynamic group with an important participation of the MS/AC. Each plenary starts with 20 to 30 minutes dedicated to feedbacks from the MS/AC on their recent international activities. We can only regret the regular absence of few countries.

The secretariat provided by the Council is of a very high level. The plenaries can take place in the Council premises.

The improvement points could be to also have the possibility to organise other meetings (WGs, strategic seminars…) of the SFIC within the Council (up to now we have to find other solution like MS/AC Rep-Perm). Another point would be to have the financial possibility to invite experts to plenaries (travel and hotel when necessary).

To keep the work dynamic and efficient, some of the topics are entrusted to working groups. The creation of each group depends on the number of volunteers to participate and to chair.

The work is organised quite efficiently. Twice a month, the secretariat sends sort of newsletter called "SFIC biweekly" with all new information (documents, reports, events, invitations… or deadlines). MS/AC have the possibility to propose a topic for the bi weekly at their convenience.

The interactions with ERAC and other ERA groups are regular (notably through common requests, at the occasion of ERAC plenaries or SB) but should certainly be developed in the future. Notably, it could be useful to develop direct interactions and joint works.

Output and impact

SFIC's productivity and output are good. We issue opinions each time it is needed by the EC or relevant regarding the current discussions.

We could imagine that SFIC could be used more often by the EC for its international get togethers or negotiations as EU scientific ambassadors for instance.

SFIC has created a joint toolbox for information of MS, AC and the COM of international collaboration, which brings added value for all participants. It is constantly developed. SFIC has also had country specific working grou

Outlook: What should be changed?

The ideal situation would be to have all MS/AC participating to meetings and also to have the possibility to reserve rooms to meet and invite external experts from time to time.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# 2. TECHNICAL ANNEX: METHODOLOGY

This chapter in the Technical Annex gives detailed information on the approach taken and the methodology used in conducting the 2018 review of the ERA advisory structure, and it documents the tools that were used.

## 2.1 Methodology

Building on the Terms of Reference (WK 992/2018 INIT, see chapter 2.3), the review consisted of two main parts:

1. An evaluation of all ERA-related groups (ERAC, GPC, ESFRI, SWG HRM, SWG GRI, SWG OSI, SFIC), their work and impact during the period covered by the review (2016-2018);
2. An online survey covering cross-cutting and forward-looking questions regarding ERA and the ERA advisory structure overall as well as all ERA-related groups individually.

### 2.1.1 Part 1: Evaluation of ERA-Related Groups and their Work

Part 1 of the review was conducted between March and June 2018. On the one hand, Part 1 was based on a *documentary analysis* of the following information and documents:

- Mandate(s) of each group (ERA-related group only, i.e. no mandates of sub-groups etc.)
- Work Programme(s)
- Output / publications
- Other documents (if applicable)

The Chair(s) of each ERA-related group were contacted on 19th March 2018 with the request to provide the above documents to the rapporteur, as specified in a form that we sent along and asked them to fill out. For a systematic and consistent analysis of these documents and to ensure comparability of the findings across the groups, the rapporteur team developed an analytical framework for the documentary analysis ("codebook"). The full codebook is available in chapter 2.4 below. It includes specific questions along four main dimensions of analysis:

1. *Scope of the group:* Assessment of whether the mandate and activities of a group are in line with the ERA Priority they are responsible for and to what degree they cover the respective Priority.
2. *Organisation and working conditions of the group:* Assessment of organisational aspects, such as a group's composition and whether it is active and well integrated into the ERA advisory structure.
3. *Output:* Assessment of a group's output (reports, publications, events organised etc.), both in quantitative and qualitative terms.
4. *Impact:* Assessment of what impact a group's work has had, i.e. if and how it has been taken up on the EU and the national level.

The review team from Switzerland and Norway have divided the groups among themselves for the documentary analysis as follows:

- Switzerland: ERAC, ESFRI, SWG OSI, SWG HRM.
- Norway: GPC, SFIC, SWG GRI.

On the other hand and in addition to the documentary analysis, the Chairs of the ERA-related groups were invited on 3rd April to provide a short *self-assessment* with the help of a template (see chapter 2.5). The template includes specific questions along the same four dimensions as in the codebook, with clear indications of the maximum number of words required per answer. With the exception of SWG OSI, the Chairs from all groups submitted a self-assessment report.

*Final Deliverable:* The main result of part 1 was an overview of the state of play of the ERA advisory structure, an identification of gaps and shortcomings as well as potential areas for recommendations. The aim was to validate these findings through the survey, which is why Part 2 of the review did not start in parallel but in sequence to Part 1.


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### 2.1.2 Part 2: Survey

Part 2 of the review consisted of an online survey. Preparations for the survey started in April 2018. They included evaluating technical solutions for the survey implementation (final choice: Lime Survey) and drafting of the questionnaire. Input for the questionnaire was collected through direct exchanges with ERAC (at the May plenary), the E, the Council Secretariat, the organisations represented in the ERA Stakeholder Platform as well as those ERA-related group Chairs which took up the opportunity provided by the review team to have a bilateral conversation (GPC, SWG HRM, SWG GRI, SFIC).

The final questionnaire mainly included closed, numerical questions but also provided opportunities for open-ended comments and feedback. In total, the questionnaire consisted of 143 questions but not all questions were put to all respondents (adaptive survey as a function of the category of respondent). In addition, the large majority of questions were not mandatory. The questionnaire covered the same four dimensions used during the documentary analysis for each ERA-related group but also more general questions about ERA and its advisory structure, also allowing for reflections about the future development and direction of the ERA. An overview of the questionnaire is available in chapter 2.6 below.

The survey was open for respondents from 4th June 2018 until 29th of June (official deadline, with extensions guaranteed in some cases until the 10th of July). Invitations to participate in the survey went out to a closed list of entities. In order to guarantee only one reply per entity, entities were provided with individual access tokens (in the case of ERAC delegations, the tokens were sent to the primary contact person per delegation, as indicated to the rapporteur team by the ERAC Secretariat). The following 70 entities were invited to participate in the survey:

- ERAC members (all ERAC delegations and both Co-Chairs)
- The European Commission (in addition to the ERAC EC Co-Chair)
- All other ERA-related groups (GPC, ESFRI, SWG HRM, SWG GRI, SWG OSI, SFIC; one reply per group)
- EU Council Presidencies in office during the period covered by the review (the Netherlands, Slovakia, Malta, Estonia, Bulgaria, Austria)
- Organisations of the ERA Stakeholder Platform (LERU, EUA, Science Europe, EARTO, CESAER, ERF, EIRMA, TAFTIE, ERRIN, EU-LIFE)
- The Council Secretariat

In total, 43 replies were submitted in the survey. The following table identifies those 43 entities:

| Respondent category | Entities that submitted a reply |
|---|---|
| ERAC | MS Co-Chair, EC Co-Chair, Delegations: AT, BE, BG, BIH, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HR, IE, IL, IS, IT, LT, LUX, MD, NL, NO, PT, SE, SI, SK |
| European Commission | European Commission (identical reply as ERAC EC Co-Chair) |
| Other ERA-related groups | GPC, ESFRI, SWG HRM, SWG GRI, SFIC |
| EU Council Presidencies | Austria, Malta, the Netherlands |
| ERA Stakeholder Platform | LERU, EUA, Science Europe, ERRIN |
| Council Secretariat | Council Secretariat |

The *analysis* of the survey data consisted in a combination of quantitative and qualitative procedures:

- *Quantitative analysis* of the numerical questions (see graphs in chapter 1 of this Technical Annex): Comparing means and standard deviations across respondent categories, all while being aware of the statistical limitations when dealing with such small numbers of cases and of the necessary caution in interpreting differences between answers on a 0-100 scale. For a selection of questions (namely the batch on cross-cutting issues and the ones about the continuation of groups) scatterplots combined with box-and-whisker plots are added, with the aim to better show the distributions of answers. The European Commission requested not to be presented as a separate category in any of the graphs; however, the replies of the EC Co-Chair are considered within ERAC.
- *Qualitative analysis* of the open comments: The survey respondents submitted a wealth of comments totalling 77 pages of text with very rich feedback, assessments and suggestions. These were analysed manually and incorporated into the conclusions, where they present the very basis for both


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the conclusions and recommendations (see the main review). The original statements are not documented in this Technical Annex, mainly because of the sheer volume of text.


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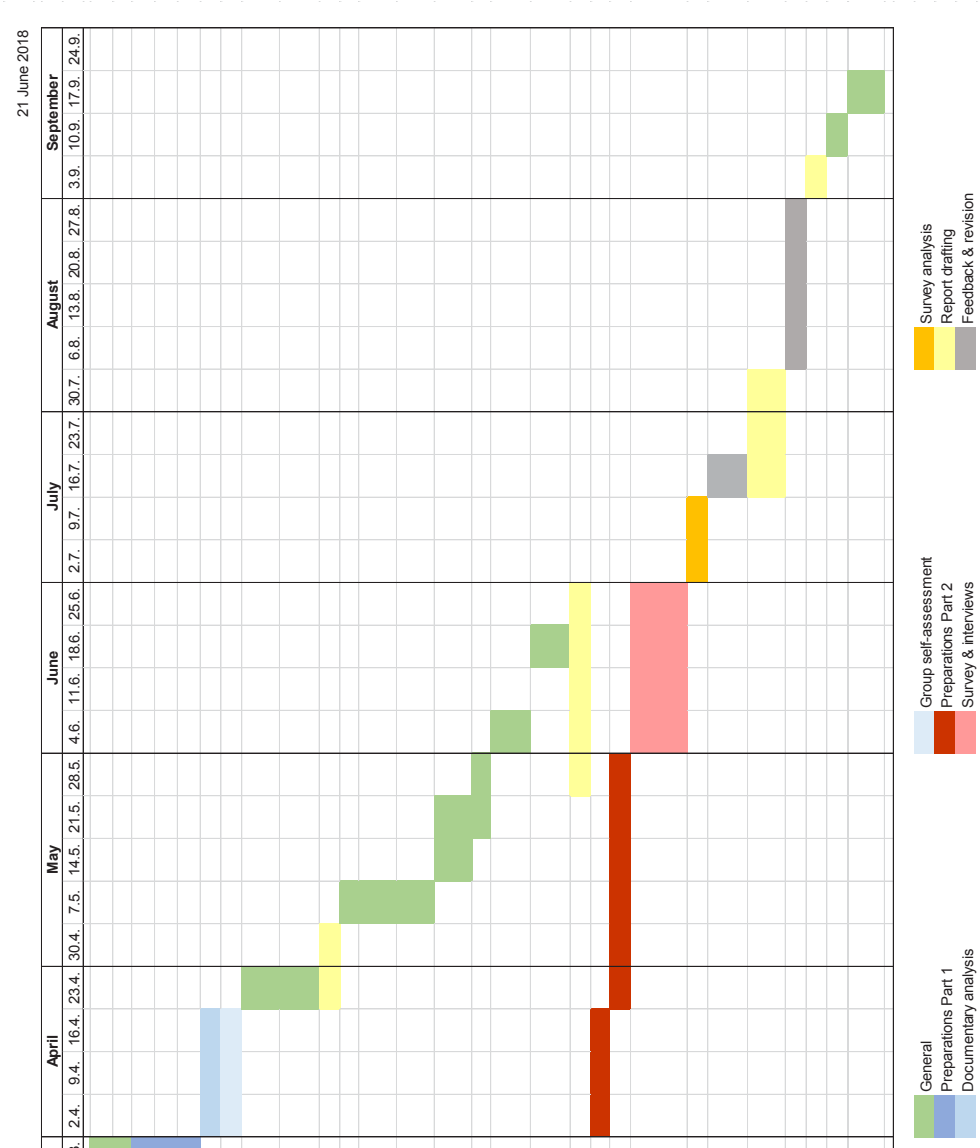
## 2.2 Schedule of Work





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## 2.3 Terms of Reference

The 2018 review of the ERA advisory structure built on the guiding principles and scope formulated in the ERA review's Terms of Reference (WK 992/2018 INIT).


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**Brussels, 30 January 2018**

**WK 992/2018 INIT**

**LIMITE**

**ERAC**

WORKING PAPER

*This is a paper intended for a specific community of recipients. Handling and further distribution are under the sole responsibility of community members.*

**WORKING DOCUMENT**

| | |
|---|---|
| From: | ERAC Secretariat |
| To: | ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee) |
| Subject: | 2018 Review of the ERA advisory structure - Terms of Reference |

In view of the discussion at the ERAC plenary in Plovdiv on 15-16 March 2018, delegations will find attached the Terms of Reference for the 2018 Review of the ERA advisory structure as agreed by the ERAC Steering Board at its meeting on 17-18 January 2018.

# 2018 Review of the ERA advisory structure

## Terms of Reference

**Objectives**

In its Conclusions of December 2015, the Council agreed that the mandates of the ERA-related groups should be reviewed at least every three years, starting no later than 2018.[1] The review should be organised in line with the procedures outlined in the ERAC Opinion on the review of the European Research Area advisory structure.[2]

The outcome of the review will be put to the Council for approval in the form of Council Conclusions by November 2018.

Taking into account discussions at ERAC, notably at the level of Directors General, the guiding principles of the review have been outlined as follows:

- the 2018 review should be light and evolutionary rather than revolutionary: adjustments might however be necessary for the groups to work more efficiently and to deliver better results with impact;
- the mandate of ERAC does not need substantial revision; it might however be necessary to adjust some of the mandates of the other ERA-related groups;
- co-ordination and co-operation between ERAC and the other ERA-related groups should be improved, while overlaps should be avoided;
- ERAC should fully play its strategic role and have discussions on strategic, cross-cutting, and new emerging topics;
- linkages between ERAC and the other ERA-related groups as well as ERAC and the Council work/Presidency should be strengthened;
- Member States and Associated Countries should try to reflect the work of ERAC better at national level;
- the ERA priorities are still relevant and thus do not need major overhaul. They should be broad enough to also include linkages between the ERA and the European High Education Area as well as the ERA and the innovation divide. These areas are generally considered to be partly covered by the work of the ERA-related groups, but this coverage might be expanded;
- there were some calls for better links between FP9 and ERA;
- implementation of the ERA Priorities and of the National Action Plans and the monitoring of this is very important (including the issue of indicators);

[1] Council Conclusions of 1 December 2015 on the Review of the ERA advisory structure (doc. 14875/15).
[2] ERAC 1212/15, Annex D


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**Methodology**

The current mandates of and reports from the ERA-related groups will provide the main background of the review. The Rapporteur will conduct an assessment of the output and the performance of the ERA-related groups measured against the mandates and the work programmes of the groups and the objectives of the ERA priorities.

In parallel, a questionnaire will ask for Delegations' opinions, comprising the full scope of the review. The questionnaire will be sent to ERAC Delegations and to the other ERA-related groups.

Based on the replies to the questionnaire, and in the light of input from the other ERA-related groups, the Rapporteur will provide an interim report by May 2018. A draft final report will be circulated before the 2018 summer break, inviting comments from the Delegations, in view of the ERAC meeting at DG level in September 2018.

*Principle of transparency*

All completed questionnaires will be available to ERAC Delegations. By the same token, the interim report and the draft final report on the review will be circulated to ERAC Delegations for comments in due time for the ERAC meetings of May and September 2018.

At the ERAC meeting of May 2018, the Rapporteur will engage in an open dialogue with all ERAC Delegates on the state of play of the review.

*Communication with different target-groups*

- Invitation to all ERA-related groups to provide their input on the review along the relevant topics listed under the scope of the review;
- Invitation to the ERA partnership organisations (e.g. Science Europe, Business Europe, EARTO) to comment on the review;
- Exchange of views with the EU Council Presidencies covering the period of the review, as well as with the European Commission, about the relevance and impact of the work of the ERA-related groups;

**Scope of the review**

(1) Assessment of the outputs and results of the different ERA-related groups in the light of the objectives of the ERA priorities;
(2) Review of the mandates of all ERA-related groups within the remit expressed by Director Generals at ERAC[3];
(3) Assessment of in how far the suite of formal ERA-related groups as a whole covers the required research and innovation ground in an appropriate manner; in this context, it is crucial to identify what still needs to be done in order to achieve the objectives of the ERA priorities;
(4) Appraisal of the current number and structure of the ERA-related groups;

[3] Summary conclusions of the ERAC meeting of 5 December 2017 (doc. 1201/18)


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(5) Recommendations on how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the ERA priorities by adjusted governance tools, including at the interface to the implementation of the national ERA roadmaps;
(6) Suggestions for further improving the ERA monitoring and reporting system;
(7) Proposals on optimising the management of ERA governance in terms of the interaction within, between and beyond the ERAC Steering Board, the ERAC plenary, the other ERA-related groups, other advisory bodies outside ERA but inside the knowledge triangle, the informal "Research Policy Group", the Commission services, the ERA partnership organisations, the Council, the Council Presidencies, and the national level;
(8) Recommendations on how to increase the impact of the work of the ERA-related groups beyond 2020.

**Duration and organisation of the work**

The review will start in March 2018 and should be completed in September 2018. The review will be carried out by a Rapporteur appointed by ERAC. The main deliverables of the review will be an interim report by May 2018 and a final report by September 2018, in time for discussion and adoption at the ERAC meeting at DG level.

**Rapporteur**

The Rapporteur will be appointed by ERAC, work on the basis of terms of reference adopted by ERAC, and report to ERAC in writing.

The Rapporteur will work closely with the co-Chairs, but the drafted report must be submitted for discussion to, and adaptation by, all the ERAC Delegates.

**Secretariat and support**

The General Secretariat of the Council (ERAC Secretariat) shall support the work of the review, notably by providing the mandates and other documents relating to the work of the ERA-related groups. Furthermore, it shall support the Rapporteur in conducting the review in a transparent manner, inter alia by circulating the completed questionnaires among ERAC Delegations. The Rapporteur shall be actively supported by the Commission services within the remit of their competence.


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## 2.4 Documentary Analysis: Codebook



**ERA-RELATED GROUP**:

**Corresponding ERA Priority:**

Description of Priority according to the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020[1]:

[1] ERAC 1208/15, available at: http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-1208-2015-INIT/en/pdf

## 1. Scope of the group

The purpose of this section is to assess whether the mandate and activities of the group are in line with the ERA Priority they are responsible for and to what degree they cover the respective Priority. The table below indicates the questions to be answered from which source.

| | Source | Question | Assessment | Further comments, explanations, examples etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mandate | Is the ERA Top Action Priority covered (see description of Priority on p.1 of the codebook)? | ☐ Fully covered<br>☐ To a large extent<br>☐ To a small extent<br>☐ Not at all covered | |
| 2 | Mandate | Are the other aspects of the ERA Priority as defined in the ERA Roadmap covered (see description of Priority on p.1 of the codebook)? | ☐ Fully covered<br>☐ To a large extent<br>☐ To a small extent<br>☐ Not at all covered | |
| 3 | Mandate | Are there any elements in the mandate which are out of scope of the ERA Priority? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here. |
| 4 | Mandate | Are there elements of the ERA Priority missing in the mandate? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here. |
| 5 | Mandate | Does the mandate cover or refer to any of the other six ERA Priorities? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here. |
| 6 | Work Programmes | Is the mandate adequately reflected, i.e. are all aspects of the mandate covered? | ☐ Mandate fully covered<br>☐ To a large extent (majority of aspects)<br>☐ To a small extent (less than half)<br>☐ Not at all covered | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Work Programmes | Are all aspects of the mandate covered in a well-balanced way? | ☐ Yes<br>☐ No (please specify) | If no, please specify here and, if possible, provide explanations (e.g. some aspects already dealt with prior to 2016). |
| 8 | Work Programmes | Are there any elements in the Work Programme which are out of scope of the mandate? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here. |
| 9 | Work Programmes | Are there elements of the mandate missing in the Work Programme? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here and, if possible, provide explanations (e.g. some aspects already dealt with prior to 2016). |
| 10 | Work Programmes | Do the Work Programmes cover any of the other six ERA Priorities? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here. |
| 11 | Work Programmes | Do the Work Programmes refer to any activities in relation to the ERA National Action Plans and their implementation with regard to the group's ERA Priority? | ☐ Yes<br>☐ No | |
| 12 | Work Programmes | Do the Work Programmes envisage a monitoring instrument (toolbox or similar) of the group's work and the implementation of its ERA Priority? | ☐ Yes<br>☐ No | |
| 13 | Outputs | How many of the group's outputs (reports etc.) are in line with the mandate? | ☐ In line: ...<br>☐ Out of scope: ... (please specify)<br>☐ Unclear: ... | Please list the outputs which are out of scope: |

## 2. Organisation & working conditions of the group

The purpose of this section is to assess organisational aspects, such as the group's composition and whether it is active and well integrated into the ERA advisory structure. The table below indicates the questions to be answered from which source.

| | Source | Question | Assessment | Further comments, explanations, examples etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mandate | What is the role of the European Commission in the group? | ☐ Co-Chair<br>☐ Participant<br>☐ Other (please specify) | If other, please specify here. |
| 2 | List of countries in the Word form | How many countries participate in the group? | ☐ Member States: ...<br>☐ Associated Countries: ... | |
| 3 | Mandate | How often is the group supposed to meet? | ... times per year. | |
| 4 | List of meetings in the Word form | How often did the group meet (plenary meetings)? | ☐ 2016: ...<br>☐ 2017: ...<br>☐ 2018: ... | *Keep in mind: SWG HRM and GRI had little or no meetings because of their transfers from COM to Council (COM said that they will no longer organise meetings).* |
| 5 | List of meetings in the Word form | Where did the group meet? How many times in Brussels, how many in other locations? | ☐ Brussels: ...<br>☐ Other location: ... (please specify) | If other, please list the locations. |
| 6 | List of meetings in the Word form | Is the group's meeting calendar well-aligned with ERAC's meeting calendar[2]? Did/do the group's meetings usually take place within a month before ERAC meetings? | ☐ To a large extent<br>☐ To some extent<br>☐ Not at all | |

[2] 2016: 14-15 January; 22 April; 15-16 September; 2 December
2017: 15-17 March; 16 June; 21-22 September; 5 December
2018: 15-16 March; 17 May; 17-18 September; 6 December

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | List of sub-groups in the Word form | How many sub-groups, working groups, task forces etc. of the group were active between 2016-2018? | ... | |
| 8 | Mandate | Who provides the secretariat? | ☐ Council<br>☐ Commission<br>☐ Other (please specify) | If other, please specify here. |
| 9 | Mandate, Work Programmes | How many different lines of action (mandate) / activities (WPs) are foreseen? | ☐ Mandate: ...<br>☐ Work Programmes: ... | |
| 10 | Mandate, Work Programmes | Do the mandate or Work Programmes envisage any collaboration or interaction with other ERA-related groups? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here which ones. |
| 11 | List of sub-groups in the Word form | Were/are there any joint sub-groups with another ERA-related group? | ☐ Yes (please specify)<br>☐ No | If yes, please specify here which ones. |
| 12 | Outputs | How many of the group's outputs resulted from a collaboration with another ERA-related group (only count if explicitly mentioned) | ... out of ... | If applicable, please specify how many with which other group. |
| 13 | Outputs, List of meetings in the Word form | Judging from the publication and event dates, was the group's level of activity constant between 2016-2018? | ☐ More or less constant<br>☐ Marked differences between high- and low-activity phases (please specify)<br>☐ Other (please specify) | Please specify which different phases can be identified or if other patterns can be observed. |

## 3. Output

The purpose of this section is to assess the group's output, both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

| | Source | Question | Assessment | Further comments, explanations, examples etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Outputs | How many and what kind of outputs / publications has the group produced? | ☐ Reports: ...<br>☐ Position papers: ...<br>☐ Guidelines: ...<br>☐ Recommendations: ...<br>☐ Annual reports: ...<br>☐ Other (please specify): ... | If other, please specify here. |
| 2 | List of meetings in the Word form | How many and what kind of events has the group organised? | ☐ Workshops: ...<br>☐ Conferences: ...<br>☐ Other (please specify): ... | If other, please specify here. |
| 3 | Work Programme, Outputs | Did every planned activity in the Work Programme result in a concrete output? | ☐ Yes<br>☐ No (please specify) | If no, please specify here and, if possible, provide explanations (e.g. some aspects already dealt with prior to 2016 or not yet dealt with; activity not supposed to lead to concrete output).<br>If there is a large discrepancy between WP and outputs, ask perhaps for the minutes to see whether certain activities have only been addressed as a discussion point in their meetings, or ask the Chair of that group. |
| 4 | Outputs | How many of the group's outputs / publications include clear policy recommendations or even commitments/decisions? | ... out of ... | |
| 5 | Outputs | How practical are they (e.g. directly applicable, measurable? | ☐ Fully practical<br>☐ Largely practical<br>☐ Mostly vague | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | ☐ Not practical at all | |
| 6 | Outputs | Who are the target groups of the outputs' recommendations and how often? | ☐ Council: ...<br>☐ Commission: ...<br>☐ National governments: ...<br>☐ RFOs: ...<br>☐ RPOs: ...<br>☐ Learned societies: ...<br>☐ Libraries: ...<br>☐ Other stakeholders (please specify): ... | If other stakeholders, please specify here. |
| 7 | Outputs | Is there a publication dealing with the ERA National Action Plans and their implementation with regard to the group's ERA Priority | ☐ Yes<br>☐ No (please specify) | If no, please specify here and, if possible, provide explanations (e.g. some already dealt with prior to 2016 or not yet dealt with; no stipulation in the mandate / Work Programme). |
| 8 | Outputs | How many of the group's outputs / publications make references to the ERA National Action Plans? | ... out of ... | |
| 9 | Outputs | Is there a publication dedicated to a specific monitoring mechanism or framework for the group? | ☐ Yes<br>☐ No (please specify) | If no, please specify here and, if possible, provide explanations (e.g. some already dealt with prior to 2016 or not yet dealt with; no stipulation in the mandate / Work Programme). |
| 10 | Outputs | How many of the group's outputs / publications include monitoring efforts (such as reflections about possible monitoring instruments, national statistics or national best practice examples)? | ... out of ... | |

## 4. Impact

The purpose of this section is to assess what impact the group's work has had, i.e. if and how it has been taken up on the EU and the national level.

| | Source | Question | Assessment | Further comments, explanations, examples etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | List of impact from Word form | How often has the work of the group been taken up in publications by other actors, organisations or institutions? | ☐ Council conclusions: ...<br>☐ Commission communications or other EC publications: ...<br>☐ National policy documents (please specify): ...<br>☐ Stakeholder publications (please specify): ...<br>☐ Other (please specify): ... | Please specify here which countries, stakeholders or other organisations. If possible, also specify the legal status of national-level documents. |
| 2 | Google search | Please perform a Google search to find out – as far as possible – how often the work of the group has been taken up in publications by other actors, organisations or institutions between 2016 and 2018<br>(not counting references already recorded with the question before). | ☐ Council conclusions: ...<br>☐ Commission communications or other EC publications: ...<br>☐ National policy documents (please specify): ...<br>☐ Stakeholder publications (please specify): ...<br>☐ Other (please specify): ... | Please specify here which countries, stakeholders or other organisations. If possible, also specify the legal status of national-level documents. |



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## 2.5 Template for Self-Assessment Report

ERA governance review 2018 Self-assessment report

**ERA-RELATED GROUP:** .....

Report written by: .....
E-mail: .....

Please give us your opinion on each of the questions below, which are grouped into four sections:

A) Scope of the group;
B) Organisation and working conditions;
C) Output and impact;
D) Outlook.

Please do not exceed the indicated word count per section or 1000 words in total. The text you provide hereafter will be directly pasted into the final report and should therefore not be too long.

Remember that the relevant period for the self-assessment is 2016 to 2018, except for the last question in section C.

### Scope of the group

1. To what degree would you say that the mandate and activities of the group represent its ERA Priority[1]? If the Priority is not fully covered, why?
2. To what degree and in what sense do the activities of the group go beyond your ERA Priority?
3. Does your group regularly put emphasis on the implementation of its ERA Priority in the Member States (MS) and Associated Countries (AC)? If yes, how?
4. Does your group take into account the ERA National Action Plans and their implementation with regard to your ERA Priority? If yes, how?

Reply for questions 1-4 (max. 300 words):

| |
|---|
| |

### Organisation and working conditions

5. Is there a good and productive working dynamic in the group, i.e. active and balanced participation by different MS/AC delegations and the Commission?
6. Does the group have enough resources to carry out its work, in terms of secretarial support, meeting rooms, personal capacity of the Chair(s), volunteers etc.? If no, please elaborate.

[1] As defined in the ERA Roadmap 2015-2020 (ERAC 1208/15), available at: http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-1208-2015-INIT/en/pdf

1


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7. To what extent is the group and its work organized efficiently? For example, is there a regular and transparent flow of information?

8. To what extent does the group exchange and collaborate with other ERA-related groups, in particular with ERAC, and how useful are such interactions?

Reply for questions 5-8 (max. 300 words):

## Output and impact

9. How would you assess the group's productivity and output, both in quantitative and qualitative terms?

10. How would you assess the group's impact on the EU level and on the national level in MS/AC, including stakeholders[2]? Please provide examples, if applicable.

11. What do you consider as the group's most important achievement since its creation? (Including the period before the transfer to the Council in the case of the ERAC SWG HRM and the ERAC SWG GRI.)

Reply for questions 9-11 (max. 300 words):

## Outlook

12. If there were one or two things that you could change for your group, what would it be?

Reply for question 12 (max. 100 words):

[2] European or national stakeholder organisations, such as RFOs, RPOs or learned societies.





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## 2.6 Online Survey: Questionnaire

The survey was divided into two parts: the first one included cross-cutting and forward-looking questions, covering the overall functioning of the whole ERA advisory structure as well as respondents' opinions regarding improvements and future developments of the ERA and the ERA priorities.

The second part of the survey dealt with every ERA-related group individually, by means of a number of questions covering the four dimensions of evaluation already used in the documentary analysis and the self-assessment reports by the groups as well as a general assessment.

A. **Who are you?**

Please specify who you are. Depending on your selection, the questionnaire will adapt (not all sections are available for all entities).

Please fill in one survey per entity (e.g. one reply for each ERAC Delegation, other ERA-related group, ERA Stakeholder, EU Council Presidency). You can use the token provided for your entity to facilitate internal coordination and to allow several persons to fill out the questionnaire.

| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| Which respondent category do you belong to? Please choose only one of the following. | Drop down list with the following options: ERAC, European Commission, GPC, ESFRI, SWG HRM, SWG GRI, SWG OSI, SFIC, EU Presidency, ERA Stakeholder, Council Secretariat | All |
| Who do you represent in ERAC? Please choose only one of the following. | Drop down list all ERAC delegations, EC Co-Chair and MS Co-Chair | ERAC (incl. EC) |
| Which EU Council Presidency do you represent? Please choose only one of the following. | Drop down list with the following options: Netherlands, Slovakia, Malta, Estonia, Bulgaria, Austria | Council Presidencies |
| Which ERA Stakeholder do you represent? Please choose only one of the following. | Drop down list with the following options: LERU, EUA, Science Europe, EARTO, CESAER, ERF, EIRMA, TAFTIE, ERRIN, EU-LIFE | ERA stakeholders |

B. **Cross-cutting issues and future developments of the ERA**

The questions in this part of the survey are foreseen for all entities that fill out the questionnaire. Replies to the questions are mandatory (with the exception of comment fields).

| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| Do you think that we are making good progress in achieving the objectives of the ERA priorities?<br>Link to ERA Roadmap 2015-2020: http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-1208-2015-INIT/en/pdf | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | All |
| Is the current number of ERA-related groups adequate to achieve the objectives of ERA? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), other ERA-related groups, Council Secretariat |
| Do you think that the ERA monitoring and reporting system is adequate? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), other ERA-related groups, Council Secretariat |


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| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| Do you have suggestions for further improving the ERA monitoring and reporting system? (optional) | Open comment field | ERAC (incl. EC), other ERA-related groups, Council Secretariat |
| Should the European Commission update its 2012 ERA Communication?<br>Link: http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era-communication/era-communication_en.pdf | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | All |
| Do we need to modify, drop or add ERA Priorities in the near future, and if yes, which ones? | Multiple choice:<br>option to click either "Keep / needed", "Drop / Not needed", "Modify" or "No answer / don't know" for each of the following:<br>• ERA Priority 1 (Effective national research systems)<br>• ERA Priority 2a (Jointly addressing grand challenges)<br>• ERA Priority 2b (Make optimal use of public investments in research infrastructures)<br>• ERA Priority 3 (An open labour market for researchers)<br>• ERA Priority 4 (Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research)<br>• ERA Priority 5 (Optimal circulation and transfer of scientific knowledge)<br>• ERA Priority 6 (International cooperation)<br>• New ERA priorities | All |
| Please comment on your answers to the previous question (optional). | Open comment field | All |
| Do you think that the objectives of the ERA are well integrated into the Framework Programmes? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | All |
| Please comment (optional). | Open comment field | All |
| Should the link between the ERA and the European Higher Education Area be strengthened? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | All |
| Please specify how. | Open comment field | All |
| Should ERAC maintain its coordinating and superordinate role in the ERA advisory structure? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | All except ERA stakeholders |
| How useful is the coordination between the ERA-related groups through the ERAC Steering Board? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Not useful at all; 100 = | ERAC (incl. EC), other ERA-related groups, Council |


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| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| | Very useful) | Secretariat |
| Do you think that the ERA-related groups should delimit the scope of their activities to their own ERA priority and avoid overlaps or, by contrast, seek out more synergies with each other? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = "Delimit more clearly" to 100 = "Seek out more synergies") | ERAC (incl. EC), other ERA-related groups, Council Secretariat |
| Do you think that rather than creating new permanent groups, the ERA advisory structure should more often work in ERAC ad-hoc Working Groups? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), other ERA-related groups, Council Secretariat |
| Should the ERA-related groups interact more with relevant ERA stakeholder organisations (such as EUA, LERU, EARTO, CESAER, Science Europe, and others)? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | All |
| Do you have concrete proposals on how to optimise the ERA governance with respect to the: …? | Multiple choice with comments:<br>option to check and provide a comment for each of the following:<br>• functioning of the ERAC Steering Board<br>• interaction between ERA-related groups<br>• link to the Research Policy Group<br>• cooperation with Commission Services<br>• involvement of ERA Stakeholders<br>• interaction with the Council<br>• cooperation with the Council Presidencies<br>• coordination with the national level | All |

C. **Individual assessments of the seven ERA-related groups (questions repeated for each group)**

The questions in this part of the survey deal with [ERA-related group XX]. The questions cover the following dimensions: 1. Scope of the group, 2. Organisation and working conditions, 3. Output, 4. Impact, 5. General assessment.

Remember that this review covers the period 2016 to 2018.

Replies to the questions in this section of the survey are not mandatory. If you do not want to answer a question, just skip it (without touching the slider). If you want to reply with 0 you need to move the slider.

| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| Do you think that the group's mandate covers its ERA priority sufficiently well and clearly?<br>Link to mandate. | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |


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| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| **Question only for GPC**: Should GPC be responsible to oversee all partnership initiatives and instruments? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), GPC, Council Secretariat |
| Would you say that the group's work and activities were in line with their mandate? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| **Question only for ERAC**: Does ERAC have enough time for substantial discussions? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), Council Secretariat |
| How would you rate the effectiveness of the Chair(s) and the Steering Board? | Two separate numerical scales for:<br>• Chair(s): 0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent<br>• Steering Board (if applicable): 0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| How would you rate the European Commission's participation in the group (e.g. participation of units with relevant expertise)? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Too passive; 100 = Too dominant) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| Please comment (optional). | Open comment field | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| Is the level of representation of the country delegates in the group adequate, i.e. are they in a position to speak and decide on behalf of their country? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| Please comment (optional). | Open comment field | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| How actively do country delegations participate in the debates and tasks (incl. subgroups)? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Not actively at all; 100 = Very actively) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| Do you think that the decision-making processes in this group are clear and transparent? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Fully disagree; 100 = Fully agree) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| How satisfied are you with the number of publications (reports, position papers etc.) produced by the group? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Very unsatisfied; 100 = Fully satisfied) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Secretariat |
| Overall, how substantial and practical do you find the group's publications (reports, position papers etc.) in general? | Numerical scale 0-100 (0 = Poor; 100 = Excellent) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Presidencies, ERA stakeholders, Council Secretariat |
| How relevant are the group's | Numerical scale 0-100 | ERAC (incl. EC), |


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| Question | Response type | Respondent groups |
|---|---|---|
| publications for your country/organisation overall? | (0 = Very irrelevant; 100 = Fully relevant) | Council Presidencies, ERA stakeholders, Council Secretariat |
| To what extent has your country/organisation taken up and/or implemented recommendations formulated by the group? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent) | ERAC (incl. EC), Council Presidencies, ERA stakeholders, Council Secretariat |
| To what degree has the group had an impact on the definition of priorities for the Presidency? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Very low extent; 100 = Very large extent) | Council Presidencies |
| In which respect do you see room for improvement for the group? Please choose an area and comment. | Multiple choice with comments:<br>option to check and provide a comment for each of the following:<br>• Mandate and scope of work<br>• Organisation and working conditions<br>• Output<br>• Impact<br>• Public visibility<br>• Other | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Presidencies, ERA stakeholders, Council Secretariat |
| How important do you consider the continuation of this group? | Numerical scale 0-100<br>(0 = Not at all important; 100 = Very important) | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Presidencies, ERA stakeholders, Council Secretariat |
| Please comment (optional). | Open comment field | ERAC (incl. EC), ERA-related group concerned, Council Presidencies, ERA stakeholders, Council Secretariat |

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