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Subject: Principles and values for international cooperation in research and
innovation

- Council conclusions (adopted on 10 June 2022)

Delegations will find in annex the Council conclusions on “Principles and values for international cooperation in research and innovation”, adopted by the Council at its 3877th meeting held on 10 June 2022.

Council Conclusions on principles and values for international cooperation in research and innovation

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

- its conclusions on 28 September 2021 on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation - Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world¹, in which it identified the Union's shared key principles and values in international research and innovation (R&I) cooperation and invited the Member States and the Commission to engage in a co-design process to further develop them;
- Council Recommendation (EU) 2021/2122 on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe², in which it recommended that Member States apply a set of values and principles for R&I in the Union, in close collaboration with stakeholders and promote them in their interactions with third countries in order to achieve a level playing field and common framework conditions;

¹ 12301/21

² OJ L 431, 2.12.2021

Introduction

1. NOTES that international R&I cooperation should aim to promote democratic values and cooperation for peace, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, access to the most up-to-date knowledge as well as collaboration between and circulation of talents in the world, especially young researchers; RECALLS that international R&I cooperation is necessary to face global challenges, creates economic opportunities in established and emerging markets and allows the global role of the Union to be reinforced through science diplomacy; EMPHASISES that international R&I cooperation is instrumental to strengthen the impact of R&I in developing, supporting and implementing Union policies and can play an important role in achieving overarching objectives, in particular environmental and climate objectives; RECOGNISES the important role of science diplomacy, inter alia in reinforcing the influence of the Union as a trusted global partner in science, technology and innovation;
2. HIGHLIGHTS the ambition of researchers and other research and development personnel, innovators, academics and students to collaborate internationally; UNDERLINES that the Commission and Member States should ensure that they are able to work freely with their partners from third countries in an environment based on principles and values shared by all actors, in order to ensure a balanced cooperation; STRESSES the importance to support higher education institutions, research infrastructures and technology infrastructures, and research and technology performing organisations through a coordinated European approach with a view to achieving balanced and mutually beneficial collaboration, which is part of the Union's soft power and capacity as a global standard setter.
3. STRESSES the importance of R&I cooperation with countries associated to the Union Framework Programme for research and innovation and with countries with a long-standing relation with the Union and third countries that share its principles and values in view of promoting them at international level, in the context of the global approach to Research and Innovation.

4. NOTES the need to rebalance, where appropriate, international R&I cooperation on the basis of reciprocity and a level playing field, following the principle “as open as possible, as closed as necessary”; NOTES the principles and values as presented at the Marseille Ministerial Conference of 8 March 2022 on a Global Approach to Research, Innovation and Higher Education and EMPHASISES that international R&I cooperation should be considered in the light of the Union’s principles and values and of the strategic interests of the Union, in particular to promote the Union’s technological sovereignty and the Union’s strategic autonomy while preserving an open economy;

Principles and values in international R&I cooperation

5. RECOGNISES freedom of scientific research as the right to freely define research questions, to employ sound scientific research methods, to challenge conventional wisdom and to propose new ideas and theories; and SUPPORTS the rights of researchers to publish, share, disseminate and communicate openly the results and data of this research, including through training and teaching, and to associate in representative professional or academic organizations without being disadvantaged by the system in which they work or by any censorship or discrimination;
6. STRESSES the importance of ethics and integrity and URGES to take ethical concerns into account in international scientific and academic collaboration, among others when research work involves human subjects and privacy, animal experimentation or the environment, including through independent and transparent ethical peer review processes; UNDERLINES that research integrity includes elements of trustworthiness, honesty, respect and responsibility in order to obtain reliable research results, in a transparent and reproducible manner, counteracting the spread of pseudosciences and misinformation, building and maintaining trust in science; INVITES the Commission and the Member States to base their international R&I cooperation on the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity;

7. HIGHLIGHTS research excellence as the main driver of international R&I cooperation; UNDERLINES that research excellence must also be assessed on the principles of ethics and integrity and should be fostered by a free and more balanced international circulation of researchers and knowledge;
8. CALLS FOR combating any discrimination and PROMOTES inclusiveness and gender equality, in particular equal opportunities in careers and the integration of a gender dimension in R&I activities;
9. ENCOURAGES Open Science in order to seek reciprocal consolidation and dissemination of research results through frameworks and strategies focusing on open and immediate access to scientific publications, as well as the structuring, preservation and, as far as possible, the opening or sharing of research data in accordance with the findable, accessible, interoperable and re-usable ('FAIR') principles, as well as software and source codes; SUPPORTS open science infrastructures, open participation of citizens in the scientific process, communication with society and open innovation;
10. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to foster and promote the improvement of the universal protection and enforcement of intellectual and industrial property rights, as well as the protection of privacy and personal data, in order to favour a balanced approach between the protection of stakeholders' interests and the economic and societal impact of knowledge valorisation;
11. RECOGNISES value creation and societal and economic impact deriving from fundamental research and from science, technology and innovation, in particular to address societal challenges through products, services, processes and solutions, as well as through the scientific knowledge contributing to evidence-informed policymaking; UNDERLINES that R&I should promote the well-being of people and other living beings in a sustainable and mutually respectful approach to all of the planet's environment and resources, economic and societal prosperity, and knowledge transfer;

12. ENCOURAGES societal and environmental responsibility and INVITES the Commission and the Member States to respond to the needs of society in their international R&I cooperation in order to achieve greater societal and environmental benefits and to promote the participation of stakeholders, local communities and citizens in the design and implementation of policies, by strengthening science dialogue and communication activities to support trust and engagement in science and innovation; ENCOURAGES solidarity and partnerships in particular with low and middle income countries and NOTES that international R&I cooperation is also a key instrument contributing to the development and reinforcement of a knowledge-based economy in these countries;
13. ACKNOWLEDGES the importance of risk management and security; RECOMMENDS that the Commission and the Member States take measures to counter foreign interference and manage the risks inherent in international R&I cooperation, while providing adequate precautions concerning the security of the Union and safeguarding intellectual and industrial property rights, the rules for the protection of privacy, personal data and infrastructures; INVITES the Commission and the Member States to draw on and develop further the good practices identified for example in the Commission Staff Working Document on “Tackling R&I foreign interference”³ in order to support their implementation;

Towards a multilateral dialogue on the principles and values of international R&I cooperation with key international partners

14. INVITES the Union’s key international partners in R&I cooperation to engage in a multilateral dialogue with the Union on the basis of these principles and values, notably to contribute to a robust and common framework for balanced and mutually beneficial international R&I cooperation for peaceful purposes, to establish a common basis for the respect of principles and values, to foster the establishment of a level playing field, to reinforce solidarity with low and middle income countries, and to work together to counter any foreign interference in R&I;

³ 5396/22

15. INVITES the Commission to prepare this multilateral dialogue in a coordinated approach between the Union and its Member States via the ERA Forum standing sub-group for the global approach to R&I.
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