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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Council
Subject:	Events and activities during the Spanish presidency - <i>Information from the Presidency</i>

Delegations will find attached a revised note from the Presidency on the “*Events and activities during the Spanish presidency*” with a view to the AOB items at the meeting of the Competitiveness Council on 8 December 2023.

Events and activities during the Spanish presidency - Information from the Presidency

During the semester of the Spanish presidency of the Council of the European Union, more than 40 events and activities have been organised during the Presidency related to Research and Innovation (R&I). These events have been held all over Spain, as well as in Brussels.

The Informal Ministerial Meeting on Competitiveness (Research) took place in Santander, on 27-28 July. During the meeting, ministers discussed the second Horizon Europe Strategic Plan and the role of Scientific Diplomacy in current times. On the first point, ministers agreed that strategic planning needs more dialogue with Member States, progress towards improved synergies, and greater alignment of priorities and programme contribution to Horizon Europe missions and partnerships. Regarding the role of scientific diplomacy, they stressed the importance of better coordination between external action and science and innovation policies, and of the importance of the future European scientific diplomacy agenda to improve the lives of Europeans, move towards the twin transitions, and strengthen the EU's role at global level under the European values of sustainability and social justice.

The Tenerife Declaration on “Global Dimension and Sustainability of Research Infrastructures” proposed by the Spanish Presidency during the Conference on Research Infrastructures in la Laguna, Spain, on the 25-26 September, has been endorsed by all Member States.

A total of 9 High-Level events and conferences have been organised jointly with the European Commission:

1. Conference on Cultural and Creative Industries, cities and citizens fostering sustainable development and well-being. 11 - 13 July. Barcelona. Focused on the promotion of R&I in the sector of creative and cultural industries (CCIs) as a productive sector. The **Barcelona Statement on Cultural and Creative Industries** includes the main conclusions of the event and includes a set of ten points of action to be undertaken by CCIs to strengthen cooperation.

2. Workshop on Science for Public Policy. 21 September. Madrid. Organised in collaboration with the JRC. Its objectives were to identify the main institutions, organisations, networks, policy frameworks and processes in Spain that promote the development of evidence-based public policies, as well as to foster this community of professionals in the science-policy interface, to exchange best practices and strengthen collaboration between countries.
3. Conference on Research Infrastructures: "Global Dimension and Sustainability of Research Infrastructures". 25 - 26 September. San Cristóbal de la Laguna. This high-level conference was structured around 2 axes: Sustainability challenges of Research Infrastructures, including resilience and the Global dimension of Research Infrastructures. The Tenerife Declaration on "Global Dimension and Sustainability of Research Infrastructures" has been endorsed by all Member States. This declaration focuses on the value of Research Infrastructures for international cooperation, seeking to boost a better territorially distributed Research Infrastructures ecosystem in Europe.
4. Conference on Personalised Medicine: the evolution of healthcare to improve people's lives. – 4-5 October. Valencia. Conference focused on the advances and challenges in R&I to progress in personalised medicine. Structured in three main themes: Personalised approaches to prevention, diagnosis and treatment; Infrastructures and data platforms for Personalised Medicine and Cooperation for Personalised Medicine.
5. Meeting of EU Research General Directors (ERAC). Málaga. 8 - 9 October. Informal meeting of Director-Generals for Research from the 27 EU member States and non-EU countries Associated to Horizon Europe.
6. Next Generation Innovators Summit. 09-10 October. Madrid. The Conference gathered together public and private representatives in the national, European and international innovation landscape, to review and discuss the progress and achievements of the New European Innovation Agenda and the contributions made by different initiatives at EU, national and regional level.

7. 17th SET Plan Conference: Energy Research and Innovation for a Competitive Europe. 13-14 November. Viladecans. Its theme, "Energy Research and Innovation for a Competitive Europe", highlights the need to reinforce the research and innovation landscape, to enhance competitiveness and sovereignty of clean energy technology value chains within the EU.
8. Conference "MSCA: Diverse Research Careers to tackle Global Challenges". Toledo, Spain. 14 - 15 November. The Conference reflected on the role of MSCA as a programme with a global and intersectoral dimension that impact at local, regional and national level, and with a strong potential for contributing to the definition of policies and initiatives aimed at facing global challenges.
9. The EU-CELAC Senior Officials Meeting within the framework of the Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI) was held on 28 and 29 November 2023. This meeting was jointly organised by the European Commission and the current (Pro-Tempore) Presidency of CELAC, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with the collaboration of the Spanish Presidency.

In addition, there have been about thirty satellite events across Spain, and in Brussels (Belgium), in a wide variety of themes, from Open Science to Missions or International Cooperation in R&I.

Some of the satellite events organised in Spain were:

- EOSC and Open Aire, Madrid 19-23 September: The annual conference of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) Initiative, and the meeting of the Spanish members of the Assembly and Board of Directors of the EOSC together with the Commission, together with the European Congress organised by OPEN AIRE, to address open science strategies, their implementation and impact on the evaluation of scientific careers.
- EUROOCEANS: "One Ocean, One Decade, One Voice.", Vigo 10th October, was the meeting forum for researchers, policy makers and representatives of various sectors involved in planning strategies for the care, conservation and development of the ocean.

- The European Soil Mission Week, Madrid, 21-23 November, organized by the European Commission (Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development), together with the EU-funded PREPSOIL project and the European Soil Observatory (EUSO) and the Spanish Research Council (CSIC), to promote the Horizon Europe Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe' (Mission Soil) and raise awareness about the importance of the health of our soils and drive action to protect and restore them.
- Conference on Quantum Technologies in Europe, Madrid 22nd November, organized by the State Research Agency (AEI) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation (MAETD) in collaboration with QuantERA and Quantum Flagship, addressing the challenges facing the development of Quantum Technologies in terms of research and European policies to facilitate the delivery of scientific results to society and promote new opportunities to improve economic and social well-being. The Nobel Prize winners Prof. Serge Haroche, Prof. Anton Zeilinger, also Prof. Juan Ignacio Cirac participated in the conference.
- Science Europe's High-level workshop on the ERA: "Challenges for reciprocity and equitable scientific collaboration between Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean", Madrid, 29-30 November, co-organised by the Spanish Research Council (CSIC): to promote greater dialogue on the conditions and policies to promote international scientific collaboration between Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean; discuss best practices to ensure that international scientific collaborations between these regions safeguard principles such as academic freedom, integrity and reciprocity; and share the challenges and opportunities of existing international collaboration instruments, such as funding tools and research mobility programs.

The satellite events organised in Brussels were:

- Workshop on "Dark and Quiet Skies for the Present and future of Astronomy", on 10 July, intended to present the current situation, needs and challenges of Astronomy, the work done by COPUOS and the EU Space policy perspective.

- Workshop on “Deep Tech: Next-generation technology entrepreneurship for an innovative, resilient and competitive home market”, on 15 September, where prominent speakers discussed the potential of Deep Tech to create economic value and address the grand societal challenges of our time.

Finally, during December there are two High-level Events remaining foreseen:

1. Conference on Science Diplomacy. 18 - 19 December. Madrid. The first European Science Diplomacy Conference, it is aimed at advancing discussions on a framework for European science diplomacy, to strengthen the EU’s outreach, resilience and capacity to respond in a rapidly changing geopolitical and scientific-technological environment.
2. Inauguration of the Mare Nostrum 5 Supercomputer. 21 December. Barcelona: an exceptional pre-exascale High Performance Computer, built in collaboration with the European Union, Portugal and Turkey, it represents a significant leap forward in providing European scientists and industries with access to a highly diverse and cutting-edge High-Performance Computing (HPC) infrastructure and a suite of associated services.
