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Subject: DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON EUROPEAN MISSIONS

Delegations will find, attached, a Presidency text on the « Draft Council conclusions on European Missions » with a view to the Research working party meeting on 28 April 2022.

Changes in comparison to doc. 7721/22 are marked in **bold underline** for additions and in ~~strikethrough~~ for deletions.

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS**ON EUROPEAN MISSIONS**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

- Regulation (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe’s Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and laying down its rules for participation¹, setting out in particular the characteristics of European missions and identifying the areas in which missions could be established;
- Council Decision (EU) 2021/764 establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe’s Framework Programme for Research and Innovation², which, inter alia, defines the role of mission boards;
- its conclusions of December 2020³ on the new European Research Area, which refers to the principle of directionality, multi-level governance and involvement of citizens in order to maximise the impact of investments in research and innovation (R&I);
- its conclusions of September 2021⁴ on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation — Europe’s strategy for international cooperation in a changing world, highlighting the need to strengthen existing multilateral R & I partnerships and alliances;
- Council Recommendation (EU) 2021/2122 on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe⁵, which sets out the priority areas for joint action in the EU, including jointly addressing the challenges of the green transition and digital transformation, and increasing society’s participation in the European Research Area;

¹ OJ L 170/1, 12.5.2021

² OJ LI 167/1, 12.5.2021

³ 13567/20

⁴ 12301/21

⁵ OJ L 431, 2.12.2021

- its conclusions of November 2021⁶ on the future governance of the European Research Area and, in particular, **Action 10 of** the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024 ~~of the European Research Area, Action 10~~ of which aims to make European R&I partnerships and missions key contributors to the European Research Area;
- the European Commission communication of December 2019 on the European Green Deal⁷ and the European Commission communication of July 2021 on a Fit for 55 package: delivering the EU's 2030 Climate Target on the way to climate neutrality⁸;
- the European Commission communication of September 2021 on European missions⁹, which identifies five European missions;
- the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015, which serves as sources for the European missions' design and implementation;

I. Steering European R&I to support public policies that better respond to societal challenges

2. STRESSES that the main characteristics of a mission-oriented approach are:
 - a collaborative, transnational, inclusive, multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to address complex societal challenges through the development of a systemic and coordinated approach at EU, national, regional and local levels through relevant actors, **including private investors**, public policies and funding programmes and initiatives **within a set timeframe and measurable goals**;
 - the directionality element that aims at strategically guiding and prioritising R&I ~~and~~ **as well as** other sectoral investments at European **and national** levels as part of a process of strategic coordination between R&I and other relevant policy areas **to achieve an impact on society and policy-making through science and technology**;

⁶ 12301/21

⁷ COM(2019)640 final

⁸ COM(2021)550 final

⁹ COM(2021) 609 final

- the process of co-design, co-implementation and co-monitoring with **public actors, the private sector and civil society at** ~~citizens and~~ national, regional and local **level** ~~actors~~;
3. RECALLS that R&I is the basis for European missions and that achieving their objectives requires short, medium and long-term actions in all relevant sectoral policies by public actors, the private sector and civil society, as well as adequate funding; CALLS on, in particular, the Commission and the Member States to implement coherent public policies based on state-of-the-art scientific and technological advances in the framework of European missions, including policies that stimulate demand, promote knowledge valorisation and encourage behavioural change;
 - 3a.** RECALLS that Horizon Europe finances R&I activities only, whereas other activities are funded through each relevant programme in other sectorial policies, **according to the applicable rules of the respective programmes**; **RECALLS that the Strategic R&I Plan under Horizon Europe aims to promote synergies between Horizon Europe and other Union programmes and CALLS on the Commission to ensure substantial investments from other relevant Union programmes in support of European missions**;
 4. STRESSES the importance of research infrastructures in achieving the objectives of European missions, in particular through their multidisciplinary research capacities, including in social sciences and humanities; EMPHASISES their key role in the development of advanced technologies and methodologies and their links with the education and private sector; NOTES the importance of the European Strategic Forum on Research Infrastructures in order to guide the strategic development of ~~these~~ **infrastructure** ~~landscape~~ and foster **their** ~~its~~ contribution to the implementation of European missions; UNDERLINES that technology infrastructures can also contribute to the implementation of European missions;
 5. CONSIDERS that the societal challenges covered by the European missions are of a global nature; ENCOURAGES the Commission to promote international cooperation where this **contributes to** ~~is in line with~~ the objectives of the European missions, while ensuring respect for the EU's key principles and values and the protection of EU interests;

II. Ensuring effective governance of European missions

6. STRESSES that the success of European missions requires an effective multi-level governance model between ~~a number of~~ **relevant** actors, **including private investors**, public policies, private initiatives and funding programmes; RECOGNISES the need to tailor the governance model to each of the European missions;
7. CONSIDERS that effective governance must be based on a horizontal and vertical approach in line with the respective responsibilities; DEFINES horizontal governance as coordination between **relevant** actors, **including private investors**, public policies, private initiatives and funding instruments and programmes at the same administrative level, and vertical governance as coordination between **relevant** actors, **including private investors**, public policies, private initiatives and funding instruments and programmes across multiple levels: European, national, regional and local;

A. Horizontal governance

9. RECALLS that the success of European missions is based on effective synergies between Horizon Europe, **including its partnerships**, and other relevant Union programmes in order to ensure coherent programming and co-financing; INVITES the Commission to put in place, **and subsequently into operation**, the necessary conditions to **ensure complementary actions of all relevant EU programmes** ~~create these synergies~~ both at the level of thematic programming and at the level of **individual projects** ~~participation in programmes~~; ACKNOWLEDGES the important effort made by the Commission to set up coordination bodies between its various departments to promote these synergies; UNDERLINES that the European missions' governance within the Commission should reflect the transformative and systemic nature of European missions; CALLS on the Commission to present a detailed mapping of the **actions to be undertaken and their corresponding** funding made available by other relevant Union programmes and initiatives, in order to ensure coherent thematic programming and implementation for each EU mission;

10. INVITES the Member States to take into account the specific objectives of European missions in their national sectoral programming and in EU programmes under decentralised management; CALLS on the Commission to put in place the necessary measures and administrative guidelines to promote synergies with EU programmes under decentralised management, in particular the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Development Fund+ (ESF+), Cohesion fund, Just Transition Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the National Strategic Plans (NSPs) of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP); RECALLS the importance of smart specialisation strategies and national recovery and resilience plans as a useful programming tool to contribute to the objectives of European missions;
- 10a INVITES the Commission to explore the option of establishing a labelling scheme for calls for proposals launched by ~~European~~ **Union** funding programmes other than Horizon Europe in order, inter alia, to facilitate the construction of missions' portfolios, to increase the visibility of the related initiatives and to gather their results, thus contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the European missions;
11. NOTES the strategic role of mission boards in formulating advice during the preparation and life cycle of European missions; SUGGESTS that this advice be taken into account at the appropriate political level by the Commission, given the cross-sectoral nature of European missions; INVITES the Commission to report to the ~~Strategic~~ Programme Committee of Horizon Europe on the results of the work carried out by the mission boards on a regular basis; RECALLS the importance of expertise on citizen engagement in mission boards;

12. STRESSES that horizontal governance efforts should also be undertaken at Member State level; ENCOURAGES Member States to put in place adequate governance structures to enable their **relevant** actors, **including private investors**, ~~public R&I and other~~ sectoral policies and funding programmes to contribute to the objectives of European missions; TAKES NOTE of the life-cycle character of missions involving specific actors, policies and instruments relevant at different stages of the governance process; STRESSES, therefore, that there is no single model of governance and that Member States are free to set up governance **arrangements** in line with their own structure and needs; INVITES **the Commission and** Member States to exchange best practices **on appropriate governance models for European Missions** ~~and the Commission to support these exchanges;~~

B. Vertical governance

13. RECOGNISES that effective coordination at European, national, regional and local decision-making level is essential for the success of European missions; INVITES the Commission and the Member States to ensure that these levels are properly linked; RECALLS the importance of the involvement of ~~Horizon Europe~~ Programme Committee **of Horizon Europe** to take into account the national context and opportunities to improve alignment with R&I activities carried out at national level;

14. STRESSES the need to analyse the relevance and potential of ~~regional, national and EU,~~ **national, regional and local** instruments, in particular partnerships, and intergovernmental instruments in order to contribute to the objectives of European missions; INVITES the Commission to carry out this review in close cooperation with other stakeholders; INVITES the Member States to identify national, regional and local programmes or initiatives, **including their results**, that can contribute to the success of European missions; ~~INVITES the Member States to inform the Commission of the results of these programmes and initiatives in an appropriate manner;~~ INVITES the Commission, in conjunction with the Member States, **to set a flexible methodology to allow Member States in the identification of such initiatives, including for example** ~~to explore~~ the possibility of labelling R&I projects or any other measure that may contribute to the success of European missions and their coordination with European, national, regional and local initiatives;

15. RECOGNISES the specific role of regional and local authorities in the implementation of European missions; STRESSES that local and regional authorities ~~can~~ play a key role in supporting demonstration initiatives to test solutions, including scientific and technological, with end-users;
16. NOTES that the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) are regional research and innovation ecosystems that bring together a diversity of actors and that the European universities alliances can also contribute to this dynamic, **notably under their R&I dimension**; INVITES, therefore, the Commission and the Member States to promote consistency between the achievement of the objectives of the European missions and the actions of the EIT and its KICs, as well as to promote the activities carried out by the European universities alliances **under their R&I dimension**;
17. TAKES NOTE of the ERA Hub tool to strengthen the capacity of regional research and innovation ecosystems, create framework conditions for collaboration and interconnect these at European level; INVITES the Commission to assess the potential of the ERA Hubs to support the objectives of the European missions;

C. Governance of the mission portfolio

18. STRESSES the importance of coherent management of projects and actions financed at European, national, regional and local level contributing to the objectives of the missions; RECALLS that European missions must be implemented through a portfolio **approach** of instruments, including R&I projects, constituting **consisting in** a coherent group of activities; NOTES that the mission portfolio should reflect the entire value chain, including **aspects related to** Social Sciences and Humanities; RECALLS, therefore, the importance of fundamental research in building the portfolio, as well as the relevance of projects with high innovation potential and high risk level, for example in key and strategic sectors for the Union supported by the European Innovation Council (EIC);

19. STRESSES the importance of a mission portfolio management, ~~ensuring~~ **promoting** the necessary flexibility in programming, implementation, portfolio composition and reorientation throughout the implementation of the EU mission's life-cycle; REQUESTS the Commission to regularly inform the Member States of the methods used in the management of the mission portfolio and of the progress made;
20. RECALLS that the mission portfolio should include instruments, ~~including R&I projects,~~ funded at European, ~~or at~~ national, regional and local level; ENCOURAGES the Commission and Member States to exchange best practices on mission portfolio management at national and EU level; RECOGNISES the importance of strategic foresight activities in order to take account of anticipated scientific, technological and socio-political disruptions in carrying out European missions;

III. Citizen engagement

- 21 AFFIRMS that addressing societal, environmental and economic challenges can only be achieved through a strengthened relationship between decision-makers, science and society; NOTES that the COVID-19 pandemic and some of the challenges of the green and digital transitions, such as climate change or the challenges underlying the development of key digital technologies , have shown the importance of strengthening the science-society relationship; STRESSES the importance of reinforcing society's confidence in science, **promoting knowledge based critical thinking skills** and counteract the spread of pseudosciences and misinformation; RECOGNISES that strengthening citizens' active role and engagement in research and innovation is one of the means to achieve this;
22. HIGHLIGHTS citizen engagement in science, as it promotes awareness and behavioural changes ; this is all the more important in the context of European missions, as they ultimately aim to improve the lives of citizens; STRESSES the importance to **actively involve** ~~reach out to~~ young people, women, **persons with disabilities** and ~~vulnerable~~ citizens **living in vulnerable situations**;

23. RECALLS that for the full success of European missions, **EU-wide** citizen engagement should take place from the first stages of identification of specific European missions and throughout their planning, implementation and monitoring; INVITES the Commission ~~and Member States~~ to set up a public engagement and communication plan for each mission and assess the effectiveness of such plans in the process of monitoring, evaluation, review and follow-up of European missions; **INVITES Member States to also set up similar public engagement and communication plans as appropriate; CALLS on the Commission to actively facilitate the sharing of best practices on citizen engagement in European Missions;**
24. RECALLS that higher education and research **and technological** institutions are at the interface between science and society and play an active role in strengthening democratic values and practices, preparing students for active citizenship and civic engagement and fuelling public debate with science-based information; ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to make every effort to enable higher education and research institutions to act as ~~mediators~~ **intermediary** between European citizens and European missions, in order to promote their ownership at national, regional and European level and to encourage societal change ;

IV. Monitoring, review and evaluation of European missions

25. RECALLS that **an assessment of the first European missions and the** review of the European missions areas is to be carried out by the Commission no later than 31 December 2023 and before the adoption of any decision on creating new missions ~~within the existing European missions areas~~ or continuing, terminating or redirecting ongoing European missions; **RECOMMENDS that no new missions within the existing mission areas are launched nor new mission areas are proposed, prior to ensuring that current missions are successfully implemented;**

26. STRESSES that European missions must benefit from a transparent and robust monitoring and evaluation system based on the objectives of each European mission to reflect its systemic and dynamic dimension;
27. UNDERLINES that this monitoring and evaluation system must also allow for a periodic assessment of the progress made in relation to the milestones and objectives of the various projects and activities contributing to the European missions, in order to ensure that it is on track and achieves the objectives set;
28. INVITES the Commission to develop methodologies and processes for monitoring and analysing European missions **based inter alia on existing expertise, with specific quantitative and qualitative key performance in indicators** adapted to the specificity of the mission-oriented approach, including its systemic nature, and to inform the Council thereof;
UNDERLINES the importance of establishing a mechanism for assessing the impact of European missions;
- 29. INVITES the Commission to present to the Council measures to stimulate and enhance the knowledge developed in the framework of European missions in Europe, in order to ensure that all countries in Europe can benefit from the results.**
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