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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	<i>AOB for the meeting of the Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space) Council on 28-29 November 2024:</i> Reinforcing the independence of the European Research Council (ERC) - <i>Information from Denmark, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden</i>

REINFORCING THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL **(ERC)**

Information from Denmark, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden

Currently there are many discussions taking place on the future direction and structuring of the European research and innovation landscape. It's important to identify the needed changes and establishing what is serving us well, and will continue to do so. This note focuses on one particular item in the latter category.

The ERC has been a cornerstone of the EU Framework Programmes for research and innovation and the European Research Area since FP7, and is today globally recognised for funding excellent research and supporting ground-breaking science through continent-wide competition.

A key enabling and foundational element of the ERC has been its independent governance and implementation structure. The ERC Scientific Council is the guarantor of scientific quality, integrity and continued relevance of the programme. The organisation built around the ERC has proven its worth as an implementing structure and has established extensive expertise and a solid reputation – not least because it has continuously been able to act independently in a timely manner.

The independent governance and implementation model mirrors that of many national research funding bodies and programmes around the world. We therefore welcome the unequivocal statement of support on the independence of the ERC by the commissioner-designate in her recent written answers to the European Parliament, and wish to join this call to secure the ERC's continuous strength, reputation and proven ability to deliver as an independent organisation.
