



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council Conclusions on 'Enhancing and Focusing EU International Cooperation in Research and Innovation: a Strategic Approach'

*3242nd COMPETITIVENESS (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)
Council meeting
Brussels, 29 and 30 May 2013*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING

- Its Conclusions of 29 May 2008 on the "Ljubljana Process - Towards realisation of ERA"¹, in which a "wide opening of the ERA to the world" constitutes one of the five initiatives identified in this context;
- Its Conclusions of 2 December 2008 on a "European partnership for international scientific and technological cooperation"²;
- Its Conclusions of 26 May 2010 on "Various issues related to the development of the ERA", inviting "Member States and the Commission to work towards coordinated positions in view of research related topics in international summits and fora"³.

¹ Doc. 10231/08
² Doc. 16763/08
³ Doc. 10246/10

P R E S S

- Its Conclusions of 26 November 2010 on the "Europe 2020 flagship initiative Innovation Union: Accelerating the transformation of Europe through innovation in a fast changing world"⁴, confirming that scientific and technological cooperation with third countries is an issue of common concern and coordinated approaches should be considered, wherever appropriate;
- Its Conclusions of 11 December 2012 on a "Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth"⁵ inviting Member States, stakeholder organisations and the European Commission to cooperate to realise the ERA and where it is recalled that the external dimension is a vital, cross-cutting and integral part of the ERA;
- The ERAC opinion on the "development of an ERA Framework"⁶ of 9 December 2011, highlighting the international nature of science and its political environment, following the SFIC opinion on the ERA Framework⁷ of 18 November 2011;

General

1. REAFFIRMS the need for developing a European Research Area (ERA) which is open and inter-active with the world;
2. REAFFIRMS that international cooperation in research and innovation is vital to the strengthening of the Union's excellence and attractiveness in research and innovation as well as its competitiveness, in tackling global societal challenges, in contributing to the Union's external policies, and that good international relations may, in turn, facilitate effective cooperation in research and innovation;
3. ACKNOWLEDGES the important progress towards improved international cooperation made through FP7 projects, including through the INCO Programme, and also by opening participation to third countries and contributing to the development of international cooperation flagship projects;
4. CONSIDERS that the global landscape has changed considerably over the past decade and that in particular the emergence of new and important players on the global scene calls for a new strategic approach to international cooperation;
5. WELCOMES the Commission's Communication "Enhancing and focusing EU international cooperation in research and innovation: A strategic approach"⁸ as an important contribution to the ongoing development of the ERA, and the dual approach of openness complemented with targeted international cooperation activities it advocates for Horizon 2020; the international dimension remaining thereby an important part of the ERA, in addition to the ERA priorities listed in the Council conclusions of 11 December 2012 on "A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth"⁹;

⁴ Doc. 17165/10

⁵ Doc. 17649/12

⁶ Doc. ERAC 1215/11

⁷ Doc. ERAC-SFIC 1356/11

⁸ Doc. 14000/12 (COM(2012) 497 final)

⁹ Doc. 17649/12

6. STRESSES the importance of ensuring that Horizon 2020 facilitates cooperation among researchers from across the globe on addressing shared challenges, while giving due attention to reciprocity and respect for intellectual property rights.

Roadmaps for international cooperation

7. INVITES the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, to systematically consider where international cooperation can add strategic value in implementing Horizon 2020 and CALLS on the Commission therefore, in conjunction with the relevant Programme Committee configurations, to consider where international cooperation could play a particularly valuable role in the Horizon 2020 work programmes;
8. STRESSES the importance of seeking common interest and mutual benefit in international cooperation activities, in particular in relation to Horizon 2020, and INVITES the Commission, working in close cooperation with the Member States, to identify priorities for international cooperation on the basis of Horizon 2020 and of the results of FP7 projects;
9. INVITES the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, to further explore how the innovation dimension of international cooperation can be strengthened, including in the context of cooperating with the developing countries;
10. STRESSES the importance of coordinating this process closely with the on-going international policy dialogues and RECOGNISES that added value for the Union can be found not only in cooperating with the industrialised countries and emerging economies, but equally so in deepening the cooperation with the enlargement and neighbourhood countries and the developing countries, on the basis of mutual benefit;
11. INVITES the Commission to prepare multi-annual roadmaps for cooperation with the strategic partners of the Union, which will identify priorities and instruments for activities within Horizon 2020 for international cooperation on research and innovation; CALLS on the Commission to ensure that the Member States are involved from an early stage in the process of identification of partner countries and areas for international cooperation and in the preparation and development of the multi-annual roadmaps;
12. INVITES the Commission to present the first roadmaps by the end of 2013, to indicate their correlation to Horizon 2020 work programmes, and to regularly report on how they are being implemented.

Common principles

13. RECOGNISES the importance of developing common principles to facilitate international cooperation in research and innovation in order to create a global level playing field;

14. INVITES the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States and partner countries, as well as taking into account the work done by relevant stakeholder organisations at European level, to develop such common principles on issues such as responsible research and innovation, research integrity; peer review; promotion of gender equality and the gender dimension in research and innovation; researcher careers; fair and equitable treatment of IP; and open access to publicly funded research publications and to research infrastructures;
15. REAFFIRMS the invitation to the Member States, relevant stakeholder organisations and the Commission to promote the development of such common principles with the Union's international partners, and to undertake further work in the areas covered by these common principles, including through an active participation in the work of the Global Research Council and other appropriate fora.

Strengthening the partnership between the Commission and the Member States

16. STRESSES the importance of strengthening the partnership between the Commission and the Member States, and also relevant stakeholder organisations where appropriate, to ensure that Union and national activities are complementary and mutually reinforcing;
17. EMPHASISES that this partnership between the Commission and the Member States is a crucial element of the EU's strategic approach to international cooperation in research and innovation, including more regular consultation with the Council about the Union's international activities with relevance for STI policies and its full involvement in line with the Treaties, particularly in the preparation of joint declarations on research and innovation, and in the design, development and implementation of the EU's international agreements;
18. RECALLS the close cooperation needed with Associated Countries in the development of the ERA;
19. ACKNOWLEDGES the important advisory work of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC), its contribution to mutual learning and its role in promoting coordination of international cooperation priorities of Member States, for instance, as regards the India initiative and the building up of the Indo-European Research and Innovation Partnership; and ENCOURAGES SFIC to continue its advisory work with its initiatives such as with India, China, the USA, Brazil and others;
20. In this respect WELCOMES the implementation of activities promoting full involvement of Member States in joint priority-setting, such as the establishment of Groups of Senior Officials;
21. INVITES SFIC, in light of the new strategic approach proposed by the Commission, to contribute to the design and development of the multi-annual roadmaps in collaboration and open discussion with the relevant stakeholders, while developing joint research and innovation agendas between the Union, Member States and strategic partners in third countries;

22. INVITES SFIC to contribute to the development of the common principles for the conduct of international cooperation in research and innovation, notably through the provision of relevant advice and the sharing of information on international cooperation policies and activities and best practice developed at national level;
23. INVITES SFIC, in pursuit of creating synergies between national and European initiatives, to continue its efforts towards sharing of information on Member States' and the Union's international R&D&I cooperation policies and activities.

Implementation, governance and evaluation

24. ENCOURAGES the Commission to make full use of the programming process and governance structures of Horizon 2020 in a coherent manner when implementing the new strategy;
25. INVITES the Commission to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategy and to report on progress every two years, including through using indicators such as those presented in the accompanying Staff Working Document¹⁰ to the Communication;
26. ASKS the Commission to promote the international dimension of research and innovation within the activities of the Research and Innovation Observatory, and, where appropriate, in surveys or consultations on the ERA."

¹⁰ Doc. 14000/12 ADD1.