

EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
COMMITTEE
High Level Group for
Joint Programming

Secretariat

ERAC-GPC 1302/11

NOTE

Subject: **Summary conclusions of the 15th meeting of the High Level Group for Joint Programming (GPC), held in Brussels on 6 May 2011**

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Sándor ERDŐ, representative of the Hungarian Presidency of the EU.

The High Level Group for Joint Programming (GPC) drew the following conclusions:

1. Approval of the provisional agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in doc. CM 2739/11.

2. ERA review

- **Information by the Chair on discussions in ERAC on ERA policy, ERA instruments, ERA-related Groups and ERA framework**

The Chair presented the main developments concerning ERA as resulting from the discussions undertaken during ERAC meeting of 28-29 April in Budapest. The Chair concentrated on:

- ERAC opinion on ERA related instruments (ERAC draft report on ERA-related instruments as prepared by ERAC ad-hoc working group on ERA-related instruments, chaired by Mr Dan Andrée)

Following the request by the Council in 2009 to review ERA-related instruments, with the advice of ERAC, taking into account the FP7 interim evaluation, and with a view to consider the best ways to improve and simplify the "ERA-landscape", the ERAC ad-hoc working group set up for this purpose asked delegations for input on this issue. On the basis of the analysis of this input, and the analysis of available evaluation exercises, studies and other relevant sources, the ad-hoc working group prepared a draft report with ten recommendations.

The main recommendations are as follows:

- Work towards more harmonisation, interoperability and alignment
- Building CSF on the positive aspects of FP7
- Streamlining CIP in the CSF
- Integrate Research and Innovation better to realise the Innovation Union
- A common framework for Support to coordination of national/regional programmes and durable cooperation
- Review the support instrument for policy development and learning
- Consider strengthening the innovative financial instruments and the use of procurement rules
- Create more synergies between CSF and Structural Funds

- Give a sound impact assessment for legislative instruments to realise ERA
- Involve the intergovernmental organisations 'smarter' in CSF and ERA.

The report can be submitted to the Council and the Commission in line with the Council Conclusions on the FP7 Interim Evaluation of 9 March 2011 where the Council "*calls on the Commission to assess carefully the experience gained from the FP7 instruments, taking into account the opinion of ERAC, with a view to developing a coherent and streamlined portfolio of instruments to be proposed for the future programme*". This report can act as an input to ERAC's overall advice to the Commission on the future Common Strategic Framework.

- ERA Framework

During ERAC meeting of 28-29 April in Budapest the Commission delivered a presentation including:

- the progress in the realisation of the ERA
- the evolving policy and legal context
- the key objectives to realise
- and remaining obstacles to be removed.

It contained more detailed information on the work planning, the impact assessment, the stakeholder consultation and a timetable with milestones.

As far as the timelines are concerned:

- public stakeholder consultation: June - September 2011
- ERAC Opinion: in November 2011
- inter-service consultation: April 2012
- adoption of the ERA Framework: June 2012.

- ERAC advice on the review of ERA-related groups

The Chair recalled the background:

- The Council, in its conclusions of December 2009, agreed that a review of ERA related groups should be started by the end of 2010.
- The ERA Groups to be reviewed included the GPC, Strategic Forum for International Cooperation (SFIC), ERA Working Group for Knowledge Transfer (WG KT), Steering Group for Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM).
- Ms Jane Peters (UK delegation in ERAC) was appointed as Rapporteur to this review. The Groups concerned, including the GPC, gave their input as invited by ERAC. On that basis the Rapporteur prepared her final version of the report.
- Draft ERAC advice on the review of ERA-related groups was adopted on 5 May 2011.
- The Hungarian Presidency intends to prepare Council conclusions on ERA which are planned to be adopted at May Competitiveness Council.
- ERAC Chair intends to meet with the Chairs of ERA Groups to discuss their contribution to ERA Framework.

Some delegations urged the incoming Polish presidency to carefully plan for the GPC meetings to address these issues during the second half of 2011, as it is probable that further discussion and input from the GPC on these issues will be required then.

3. Follow-up of the biennial report on Joint Programming

- **Information by the Belgian delegation**

The Belgian delegate recalled that the biennial report was adopted in 2010 under the Belgian Presidency. It was sent to the Group (hard copy sent by post in December/January). It can be also downloaded from the website.

In the report some outstanding changes were identified (addressed to in the meeting):

- A moratorium proposed on selecting new JPI themes in order to first learn from the 10 selected ones.
- The 2010 Guidelines on Framework Conditions is a living document which will require updating and refining.
- JPIs will have to be monitored closely allowing the Member States to learn from their experience (perhaps NETWATCH could be used).
- The role of the Commission in the JP process.
- The interaction between the JPIs and other EU research and innovation actions, programmes and projects.
- Different ways to involve industry more closely in JPIs should be considered.

The delegate underlined also the need to focus on the themes not covered in the meeting, such as:

- Stumbling blocks in implementing JPIs (financial, political, structural and organisational). A good idea could be to organise a learning event (perhaps under the Polish Presidency).
- Follow-up of the usage of the Framework Conditions (launched by the BE Presidency in December 2010 with little feedback).

4. Joint Programming Initiatives and European Innovation Partnerships

- **Progress on the Pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, links to More Years, Better Lives JPI**
- **Information by the Presidency on the AHA Pilot Steering Group**
- **Discussion**

The Commission representative presented the state of play of the Pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing and the key links between EIP and JPI (presentation sent to the Group after the meeting).

The Hungarian Presidency gave the following information on the AHA Pilot and the first meeting of its Steering Group:

- The European Innovation Partnerships are at the core of the Innovation Union Flagship initiative. The Pilot was specifically mentioned in the conclusions of the European Council of 4 February 2011.
- The central aim of the AHA Pilot is to use the European public and private funds spent on research and innovation more efficiently. The results should directly benefit patients and citizens.
- The development of the Pilot project has been supported by the Hungarian Presidency.
- During the March meeting of the Competitiveness Council the ministers adopted conclusions. Its specific point was the establishment of the high level Steering Group (SG). The participation of the representatives of ES, BE, HU and PL at ministerial level was welcome.
- The first meeting of the SG was held on 2 May.
- The SG includes Member States, regions, industry, health- and social care professionals, elderly and patient organisations and other interest groups. It is chaired by Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes and by the Commissioner for Health John Dalli. The work of the SG is assisted by Sherpas who prepare the agenda for the meetings.
- The SG's main task is to draw up a strategic implementation plan (SIP), analysing barriers to innovation, existing instruments and programmes, and identifying key activity area, and define a set of recommendations to achieve the partnership's objectives.
- On the basis of the discussion the Commission will establish specific themes. Working groups will be dedicated to these themes. The main topics may include education, nutrition, prevention, secondary and tertiary prevention and funding aspects.
- The next meetings of the SG will take place on 7 July and 4 October.

The presentations were followed by a discussion. Many delegations underlined the importance of cooperation, links and synergies between EIP and JPI. Asked about the divisions of competences for the AHA Pilot between different DGs, the Commission clarified that DG SANCO and DG INFSO are both co-leading in close collaboration with DG RTD. Cooperation is sought with DG ENTR, DG EMPL and DG REGIO. The delegates asked also about the possible future EIPs. The Commission underlined that there is only the Pilot which is running and it would be evaluated later in the year. On the basis of the evaluation further decisions would be taken.

5. Guidelines for Framework Conditions on Joint Programming: Urban Europe JPI workshop on Forward Looking Activities

- **Presentation by the Austrian delegation**
- **Discussion**

The Austrian delegation delivered a presentation on “Global Urban Challenges – Joint European Solutions” (sent to the Group after the meeting). Afterwards, the discussion follow in which the delegations underlined the need of and the difficulties in sharing experience.

6. Progress towards launching of the second wave Joint Programming Initiatives

- **Information by the Commission**
- **Exchange of views**

The Commission representative presented the situation concerning the maturity of the second wave JPIs and the timelines for the expected recommendations:

- More Years, Better Lives (Demographic Change) - Mature, Commission Recommendation in June 2011
- Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans - Mature, Commission Recommendation in September 2011
- Urban Europe - Mature, Commission Recommendation in 4th quarter 2011
- Water Challenges for a Changing World - Mature, Commission Recommendation in 4th quarter 2011

- The Microbial Challenge - Mature, Commission Recommendation in 4th quarter 2011
- Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe (Clik'EU) - Still to provide commitments from Member States + State of Play. Meeting on 30 May 2011. Recommendation probably in December 2011.

Some delegations asked about the place of the JPIs in the Common Strategic Framework. The Commission underlined that it is premature to establish that since the consultation process is on-going.

The Commission specified also what a "firm commitment" may be interpreted as: a letter from the minister or another appropriate body to commit resources (no requirement for an existing programme in the given area).

Some delegations asked how the Commission will proceed regarding the reintroduction of the CSAs in the FP7 Work Programmes 2012. The Commission replied that all the services responsible for a mature JPI have been instructed to be ready to financially support the JPI.

7. Ways to involve industry

- **Presentation by the Spanish delegation**
- **Exchange of views**

The Spanish delegation delivered a presentation on "Ways to involve industry in Joint Programming" (sent to the Group after the meeting).

Delegations voiced the following issues:

- The necessity to involve people from industry in the JP process (e.g. in management boards) since their knowledge and experience can help to solve the grand societal challenges.
- The need to involve the industry early in the process.
- Strengthening the links between JPIs and EIPs.
- The need for the activities suitable for the participation of the industry.

The Chair invited the delegations to send their ideas in writing to the Spanish delegation. The Polish delegation declared the intention to continue this subject.

8. Monitoring of Joint Programming Initiatives – the possible future role of NETWATCH

- **Presentation by the Commission (JRC/IPTS)**
- **Exchange of views**

The Commission representative delivered a presentation on the possible future role of NETWATCH (presentation sent to the Group after the meeting). Afterwards, the Chair invited the delegations to exchange views. In general, the delegations supported the idea to use NETWATCH and they encouraged the JPIs to use it.

The advantages mentioned included the following:

- facilitating monitoring
- more transparency
- coherence of the projects
- better mutual peer-learning
- better harmonisation.

9. Polish Presidency programme

- **Presentation by the Polish delegation**

The Polish delegation presented the Polish Presidency programme (presentation sent to the Group after the meeting).