



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on the first steps towards the realisation of the European Research Area (Vision 2020)

***2945th COMPETITIVENESS
(Internal market, Industry and Research)
Council meeting
Brussels, 29 May 2009***

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLS:

- the green paper entitled "European Research Area: New Perspectives"¹ adopted by the Commission on 4 April 2007, which proposed a number of priority objectives with a view to deepening and widening the ERA so that it fully contributes to the renewed Lisbon Strategy;
- its conclusions of 23 November 2007 on the Future of Science and Technology in Europe² which recognised that specific actions were needed to ensure sufficient human resources for R&D, to give a high priority to public investment in science and research and to stimulate higher levels of private investment in R&D;

¹ Doc. 8322/07 + ADD 1.

² Doc. 14693/07.

P R E S S

- its resolution of 30 May 2008 on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer activities and Code of Practice for universities and other public research organisations³;
 - its conclusions of 30 May 2008 on the launch of the Ljubljana Process - Towards full realisation of ERA⁴ aiming to establish an enhanced governance for the ERA based on a long-term vision on ERA developed in partnership by Member States and the Commission with broad support from stakeholders and citizens;
 - its conclusions entitled "Family-Friendly Scientific Careers: towards an Integrated Model"⁵ which reaffirmed the need to develop a comprehensive set of measurable indicators, relevant statistics and comparable data in view of supporting concrete measures to promote and develop better work-life balance conditions and invited the Commission and the Member States to develop an integrated model of scientific careers based on an appropriate policy mix ensuring family-friendly environment for researchers;
 - its conclusions of 26 September 2008 on better careers and more mobility: a European partnership for researchers⁶, which established a partnership between Member States, associated States and the Commission aiming at improving the professional situation of researchers in Europe and increased mobility through an approach combining complementarity and consistency between national and Community levels;
 - its conclusions of 2 December 2008 on the definition of a 2020 vision for the European Research Area⁷ which is part of the first phase of the Ljubljana Process and serves as the basis for the development of the future ERA governance;
 - its conclusions of 2 December 2008 on "joint programming of research in Europe in response to major societal challenges"⁸ and on "a European partnership for international scientific and technological cooperation"⁹;
 - the work of the Czech Presidency in taking forward the implementation of the ERA Vision 2020.
1. EMPHASISES that the process of implementation of the 2020 Vision for the European Research Area (ERA) is a key element for ensuring the coherent development of policies and measures at EU and national level in view of the realisation of full potential of ERA.
 2. ACKNOWLEDGES that the full realisation of the ERA Vision 2020 is strongly dependent on the quick progress in the implementation of the Ljubljana Process, therefore, WELCOMES the intention of the incoming Presidencies to address the possible ways of enhancing the governance of ERA.

³ Doc. 10323/08.

⁴ Doc. 10231/08.

⁵ Doc. 10212/08.

⁶ Doc. 13671/08

⁷ Doc. 16767/08.

⁸ Doc. 16775/08.

⁹ Doc. 16763/08.

3. RECOGNISES the influence that R&D targets and indicators can have as part of a wider toolbox in the context of the Lisbon Strategy and their influence on stimulating policy reforms and on increasing public investments in research, development and innovation.
4. INVITES the Commission, together with the Member States:
 - to examine the options around the design of future target(s) and/or political objectives, in view of coordinating EU and Member States policy efforts for the post-2010 period while taking account of the priorities and specificities of Member States;
 - to further develop its work to identify a limited and consistent set of indicators which will serve as an operational tool consistent with the Council political objectives and strategies to monitor progress towards full realisation of the ERA, taking into account the ERA Vision 2020 and broader framework conditions.
5. ENCOURAGES the Member States and the Commission to develop steps leading to an evaluation culture covering all key relevant research policy measures in the ERA in order to use research results for an efficient and effective use of resources at regional, national and European level;
6. STRESSES that the knowledge triangle provides an appropriate framework in the context of the Lisbon strategy to define and coordinate in a more consistent and comprehensive way knowledge related policies and measures at regional, national and EU levels with the aim of promoting Europe's competitiveness and addressing the major societal and technological challenges.
7. In this context, CALLS on the Member States and the Commission to further engage in ensuring enhanced complementarity and synergies between Community policies and instruments¹⁰ as well as between regional, national and intergovernmental initiatives¹¹ and programmes and all other relevant stakeholders in Europe related to the knowledge triangle.
8. RECOGNISES the efforts made in the past years to improve research careers, conditions for work – life balance and adequate circulation of European research talents. NOTES, however, that actions at both national and European levels need to be stepped up around common objectives, including mutual learning activities, in order to accelerate progress in making research careers in Europe more attractive and to attract the world's best brains to European research institutes and universities.
9. CALLS AGAIN, therefore, on the Member States, together with the associated countries and the Commission, to concretely engage in the European Partnership for Researchers and to step up their efforts to define national objectives and specific actions as agreed in September 2008.

¹⁰ Such as Framework Programmes, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, Structural Funds, the ERA Ljubljana Process, the common framework on Education and Training and the Bologna Process.

¹¹ Such as EUREKA and COST.

In this context, WELCOMES the proposed priority actions concerning the European partnership to improve attractiveness of RTD careers and the conditions for mobility of researchers in Europe, prepared by Ministers Biltgen and Gago in response to the French Presidency request¹², and ENCOURAGES the Member States to step up their efforts aiming at effective and timely implementation of National Action Plans in this area.

In addition, INVITES future Presidencies, in cooperation with the Commission, to promote a more coordinated approach related to the research, education and social policies at European level and to consider the possibility to organise joint meetings of relevant Council formations.

10. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of the development of joint visions for research infrastructures at European level, and ACKNOWLEDGES the fact that the ESFRI Roadmap has acted as a catalyst for national roadmaps and/or programmes, in many cases. In this context, STRESSES the need to analyse the level of financing of networking activities and access to the research infrastructures at European level and to reflect on their potential strengthening.
 11. TAKES NOTE of the attached Presidency Status Report¹³ on the implementation of the ERA Vision 2020 highlighting the progress achieved in the most advanced areas, and INVITES the future Presidencies, in cooperation with CREST, to establish and regularly update a Roadmap for the implementation of the ERA Vision 2020, based on the work done by the current Trio Presidencies. »
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¹² **Doc. 10003/09.**

¹³ The report can be found in document [9956/09](#).