Delegations will find in the annex Opinion on a renewed mandate of the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC), as adopted by the GPC at its meeting on 11 March 2015.

Opinion on a renewed mandate for the GPC

Proposal for a renewed mandate of the High Level Group on Joint Programming

1. The High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC) has been established in 2008 as a dedicated configuration of CREST (which since then became ERAC) in order to initiate and facilitate the Joint Programming Process (JPP) as defined in the Council Conclusions of 2 December 2008 (OJ C 24 of 2009, p. 3).
2. Since then the GPC, according to its initial mandate, has identified ten Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs), has developed Voluntary Guidelines for Framework Conditions for Joint Programming and has taken further initiatives in support of the advancement of the JPIs and the JPP.
3. Considering the current status of the JPP and the new requirements for a specific strategic advice within the European Research Area (ERA), in the view of a possible revision of its mandate, the GPC proposes that a renewed mandate could include the following tasks:

(a) delivering strategic and timely advice on the ERA priority area 2a "Optimal transnational co-operation and competition - Jointly addressing grand challenges" and on the whole progress towards the implementation of the ERA and its Roadmap in consultation and coordination with the European Research Area and Innovation Committee and the other ERA-related Groups, in respect of the ERA governance principles and structure agreed by the Council.

(b) with the aim of contributing to the consolidation and advancement of the ERA, being responsible for

- promoting alignment[[1]](#footnote-1) of national, regional and European strategies, programmes and activities for research and innovation with the strategic research and innovation agendas developed as the results of the JPP,

- improving the interoperability among European, national and regional research and innovation programmes/activities, thus facilitating transnational cooperation and also the sharing of information about activities in priority areas for societal challenges;

(c) contributing to the preparation of the debates and decisions of the Competitiveness Council on the JPP, within the mandate of ERAC and of the other ERA-related Groups, and without prejudice to the responsibilities of the Committee of Permanent Representatives;

(d) monitoring and assessing whether the initiatives resulting from the JPP (hereafter „the initiatives“) maintain coherence with their mission and perform adequately, within the frame of their rights and obligations, including the adoption and implementation of the Framework Conditions (FC) and Voluntary Guidelines mentioned under (h) below;

(e) without prejudice to the responsibilities of the European Commission, promoting access to funding instruments for the initiatives aimed at enhancing integration and EU added value, such as those currently known as „Coordination and Support Actions" for the set-up phase of the initiatives, „ERA-NET Cofund“ for conducting the research and innovation projects foreseen in the strategic research agendas of the initiatives and, when an adequate level of integration is achieved at scientific, managerial and financial level, the public-public or public-private partnerships, as per articles 185 or 187 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, respectively, monitoring the impact of the JPP on addressing the relevant societal challenges;

(f) representing the forum where the initiatives are invited to present on their plans and progress in relation to the funding instruments indicated under (e) above;

(g) seeking continuous co-ordination and consultation with the ERAC and the other ERA-related Groups, in order to streamline the respective reporting lines, avoiding the risk of fragmentation and duplication with respect to the relevant initiatives of the Council and the Commission;

(h) updating, whenever needed, the FC outlined in paragraph 8 of the Council Conclusions of 2 December 2008 and the set of Voluntary Guidelines aimed at implementing the FC and at establishing an enabling environment for the JPP, in the light of new developments in the fields of the challenges covered by the ongoing and possible future initiatives;

(i) developing and promoting governance guidelines for the initiatives, complementary to and coherent with the above-mentioned FC;

(j) further, when considered appropriate with respect to the progress of the ongoing JPP and identified societal challenges, identifying, upon proposal of its members and following broad consultation of the different regional, national and European scientific communities as well as, where appropriate, other public and private stakeholders, potential new themes for initiatives where joint programming of research and innovation activities appears beneficial for the solution of major challenges facing Europe and beyond;

(k) within this framework, evaluating each proposal submitted to it, on the basis of the criteria outlined in paragraph 9 of the Council Conclusions of 2 December 2008;

GPC Members

1. The GPC is composed of high-level representatives of the Member States, of Associated Countries and of the Commission.
2. The Commission supports the work of GPC within the remit of its competence, acting as a facilitator and promoting proactively the JPP and the initiatives.
3. The Council could periodically consider the opportunity to revise the mandate, status and reporting lines of the GPC.

Organisation

1. The GPC is chaired by an elected Chair (and Vice-Chair) from the Member States representatives, in accordance with the Council Conclusions of June 2011 (11032/11). The GPC governance should ensure gender balance.
2. The GPC regularly (and at least once a year) updates its work programme, to keep flexibility in dealing with issues of concern to the actors in the field.
3. The Member States and Associated Countries will confirm or revise in due time the nominations of their high-level representatives at meetings of GPC.
1. Alignment is defined here as “The strategic approach taken by Member States to modify their national programmes, priorities or activities as a consequence of the adoption of joint research priorities in the context of Joint Programming, with a view to implement changes to improve efficiency of investment in research at the level of Member States and ERA”, according to the report of the GPC Working Group on Alignment. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)