UPDATES FROM THE ERA-RELATED GROUPS

ESFRI

The main activities of ESFRI in the last months included:

1) Implementation of the ESFRI White Paper "Making Science Happen"

Commission Communication of 30 September 2020 on 'A new ERA for Research and Innovation' highlights ESFRI achievement over the past 20 years and underlines the importance of state-of-the-art research infrastructures, accessible to all European researchers and companies, as the backbone of the global competitiveness and attractiveness of the European Research Area. The Communication also recognises the need to implement the vision for a more impactful ecosystem of research infrastructures in Europe expressed in the ESFRI White Paper and calls on ESFRI to improve its governance in view of its broader scope of activities.

In order to start realising the goals of the White Paper, ESFRI identified the first set of actions, which include:

- review of the ESFRI governance and support structure in view to improving their effectiveness;
- establishing ESFRI Stakeholder Forum to foster a dialogue and exchange of views and experiences with a broader range of research infrastructure stakeholders;
- implementation of the performance monitoring framework for research infrastructures on the ESFRI Roadmap.

2) ESFRI Roadmap update process

The 2021 ESFRI Roadmap update process is underway. The monitoring of Projects that entered the Roadmap 2016 has been finalized, as reported before the summer and the monitoring of Projects that entered the Roadmap 2010 started.

Following the extension of the deadline to 9 September 2020 due to COVID-19 outbreak, 18 new research infrastructure proposals were received for the ESFRI Roadmap 2021.

No	Acronym	Title	Lead	Partners with political support at ministerial level	Origin of Partners without political support	Estimated investment costs, mln EUR
1	DIPOH	Distributed Infrastructure on Population Health	BE	RO, RS, NL, LV, HR, FI, PT, MT	AT, CZ, ES, DE, US, FR, SI	50,7
2	EBRAINS	European Brain ReseArch INfrastructureS	FR	BG, EL, IT, NL, NO, ES, SE, CH, DK	DE	323,8

3	EIRENE RI	Research Infrastructure for EnvIRonmental Exposure assessment in Europe	CZ	AT, NL, SK, EL, IT, IS, DE	BE, FI, EL, NO, UK, US, FR, ES, SI, SE	348,3
4	EPTRI	European Paediatric Translational Research Infrastructure	IT	AL, CY, FI, EL, HU, IE, IL, LU, PL, PT, RO, ES, NL, UK, UA, RU	AT, BE, CA, FR, DE, NO, SI, CH, CZ	191,5
5	ET	Einstein Telescope	IT	ES, NL, BE, PL	UK, DE, CH, NO, HU	1.902,0
6	EuPRAXIA	European Plasma Research Accelerator with Excellence in Applications	IT	PT, HU, CZ, UK	FR, DE, PL, RU, SE, CH, CERN, CN, IL, JA, US	569,0
7	EuroNanoLab	European Nanofabrication Infrastructure for Laboratories	FR	CZ, EE, FI, IT, LV, LT, NL, NO, PO, RO, ES, SE	DE	319,0
8	FNH-RI	Food, Nutrition and Health Research Infrastructure	NL	IT, SK, BG, MK, PT, RS, IE, ME, HU, UK	BE, CA, DK, FI, DE, EL, IS, NO, SE, CZ, PL, SI	374,5
9	GGP	The Generations and Gender Programme	NL	HR, EE, DE, HU, ES, SE, PL, AT	FR, HR, DK, LT, NO, IT, CZ	18,2
10	GUIDE	Growing Up in Digital Europe-EuroCohort	IE	HR, EE, LV, PT, ES, HU, UK	AT, BE, FI, FR, EL, IT, LU, NO, SK, SI	580,6
11	JERICO-RI	Joint European Research Infrastructure for Coastal Observation	FR	HR, EE, IT, NO, ES, PT, NL, FI, EL,	DE, UK, DK, BE, FO, EL, IE, SE, MT, FR	103,6
12	MARINERG-i	Offshore Renewable Energy Research Infrastructure	IE	ES, PT, BE, UK	NO, NL, FR, IT, DE, DK	8,9
13	OPERAS	Open Access in the European Research Area through Scholarly Communication	FR	HR, IT, PT, DE, EL, NL, PL, UK	SI	15,0
14	RESILIENCE	Religious Studies Infrastructure: Tools, Innovation, Experts, Connections and Centers	IT	IL, BA, BG, NL, AL, EL	DE, FR, BE	130,3

15	SEEIIST	South East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies	ME	BG, MK (N. Macedonia), XK (Kosovo), AL, CH, HR, HU	SI, BA, RS	250,5
16	SLICES	Scientific Large-scale Infrastructure for Computing/Communication Experimental Studies	FR	CY, FI, EL, IT, LU, NL, ES, CH, PL	BE, HU, DE, NO, SE	137,7
17	SoBigData++ RI	European Integrated Infrastructure for Social Mining and Big Data Analytics	IT	EE, CH	UK, DE, FI, NL, FR, EL, BE, HU, ES, BG, SE	130,5
18	VAC4EU	Vaccine monitoring Collaboration for Europe	NL	IT, BE	FI, UK, DE, PT, ES, DE, FR	10,3

3) ESFRI meetings

Since the end of the summer break, ESFRI Executive Board met nine times. Four of these meetings included the Working Group Chairs.

In this period ESFRI also organised two Forum meetings in a completely digital format. The main agenda points focused on:

- The preparation of the ESFRI Roadmap 2021
- Agreement on the follow-up actions on the ESFRI White Paper and their implementation
- Discussion on the implementation of the Monitoring Framework
- Discussion on the Commission Communication on renewed ERA and Competitiveness Council conclusions
- Discussion on the evolution of ERA governance
- Terms of Reference of the ESFRI Executive Board
- European Open Science Cloud
- ESFRI Work Plan 2020-2021
- Presentation of the new European catalogue of research infrastructure services

4) European Open Science Cloud

ESFRI Task Force organised a second ESFRI-EOSC Workshop 'Research Infrastructures shaping EOSC' on 5-6 October 2020, a fully digital event due to recent developments related to COVID-19 pandemics. The event gathered over 250 participants.

The main conclusions of the event include:

- The thematic RIs as key stakeholders have to be better informed on the developments in EOSC - the EOSC vision & priorities have to be developed in collaboration with RIs. The EOSC research infrastructure Cluster projects funded under Horizon 2020 cover large thematic domains, which are needed to create the EOSC. These Clusters are mini EOSCs, acting both as producers and consumers of data and services, and are interacting with horizontal providers at national/regional/European level. There is an important existing expertise within RIs. Effective exchange of experiences and knowledge, across RIs, disciplines and at a national/international level, is very important for the effective development and use of the EOSC.
- It has to be ensured that EOSC addresses the actual research community needs. Either a strong forum or a role in governance is needed to solicit user / research community needs & inputs. EOSC users are very important and they can be seen as a KPI for the success of EOSC. End users have to find added value when using EOSC.
- A consensus on an interoperable metadata framework is needed and agreed with e.g. RDA. This in order to federate with national/thematic infrastructures. Collaboration with the HPC and EuroHPC community is also very important for the future as are the national building blocks and engagement of Research performing organisations.
- The EOSC Association membership fee does not cover the cost of operating EOSC, which will be substantial.

GPC

Since the last ERAC meeting, the GPC has held an online meeting on December 4. Next one is planned for March 23, 2021.

According to our 2019-2020 Work Programme there is one remaining task left – the work on **Impact of Joint Programming at national level**. The task will be led by ERA-LEARN project with a small Advisory body from GPC (3 delegates), with an extended deadline from the end of December 2020 to mid-2021.

Other issues that were addressed at the latest meeting:

- possible draft Work Programme 2021 – 2022 and discussion of the reasonableness and ambitions of the operation in the year 2021, concluding that work of the group will be discussed prior to next ERAC SB meeting and probably done in hibernation mode

- continuation of the role of Acting-Chair by elected Vice-Chair due to uncertainties surrounding the continuation of the GPC and upcoming reform of the ERA advisory structure

Main deliverables of 2019-2020 Work Programme:

- The 3rd monitoring exercise for the monitoring of Priority 2a based on ERA National Action Plans and Strategies was concluded and used as input for the Report on Monitoring National Action Plans for ERAC.
- The final Report by the GPC task force on [Openness and transparency of networks](#) was endorsed by the GPC on 18 March.

SFIC

Current developments within the Strategic Forum for International Cooperation in STI:

- SFIC has launched an opinion on a new European Research Area (ERAC-SFIC 1359/20) highlighting the importance of international cooperation and geopolitical dimension of the ERA. SFIC kindly asks ERAC to acknowledge this report also in the context of the further work related to the new ERA and its governance in 2021 and beyond.
The EC is planning a workshop with SFIC in mid-January 2021 in view of preparing the EC communication on the " Global Approach to research, innovation, education and youth.

- The 3rd virtual, informal SFIC Plenary meeting took place on 2nd of December 2020 from 10:30 to 15:30. On the day before the Chair and Vice-Chair have hosted a virtual Strategic Workshop to prepare the Work Programme for 2021 and 2022 (see documents WK 14315/2020 and WK 14148/2020 for reference) utilising a Howspace-platform to gather contributions and facilitate discussion before the workshop.

- Africa: SFIC has approved the mandate for a new Working Group on Africa on 19th of October 2020 (WK 11317/2020) and the Working Group has presented its Draft Work Plan in the virtual Plenary meeting (see WK 13588/2020). Currently the group is preparing to launch a survey to delegations, with special focus on innovation cooperation with Africa.

- Science Diplomacy: SFIC has launched a Working Paper on "Anchoring science diplomacy in Horizon Europe developing specific subjects and activities" on 21st of September 2020 (ERAC-SFIC 1357/20).Moreover the Task Force on Science Diplomacy has launched an online survey to map national activities in the field on Science Diplomacy on 25th of November 2020 (Deadline 10th of January 2021).

- Innovation: With view to innovation aspects, SFIC has issued a working Paper on "SFIC considerations regarding an enhanced integration of innovation elements in its work" on 28th of October 2020 (WK 11863/2020) and has integrated these aspects in the Plenary meeting agenda and Tour de Table on 2nd of December.

- China: the European Commission has scheduled a second meeting with EU Member States representatives (China core Group) on 12th of November 2020. The issues covered in the meeting were the Upgrading of China Knowledge in Europe and Considerations about areas of cooperation and non-cooperation with China. The first ad-hoc meeting on the exchange of best practises will be held on December 17th and the second on January 18th 2021.

- CELAC: Members of SFIC have contributed to the national level preparation and have attended the Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation Senior Officials Meeting JIRI SOM on 30th of October 2020. In the STI Senior Officials Meeting SFIC was shortly introduced and offered as a peer learning experience for Latin American and Caribbean countries.

- Communication: Regarding external communication the chair is regularly posting on LinkedIn and the SFIC activities are presented on the ERA Portal https://era.gv.at/directory/35

ERAC SWG on Gender in Research and Innovation (GRI)

The following main actions have been achieved and are under way:

- The 7th meeting of SWG GRI was held on 25 September online and the 8th meeting of SWG GRI was held on 2 December 2020 online.
- Election of chair and vice-chair took place, with the current chair and vice-chair confirmed in their positions for the second term.
- A draft WP 2020-2021 was circulated for comment and discussed at the 8th meeting, with a deadline for adoption on 17 December 2020, after which it will be passed to the ERAC Steering Board.
- SWG GRI members liaised with their respective national authorities in relation to the negotiation of the gender-related provisions in the Council Conclusions on the new European Research Area.
- SWG GRI Opinion on the Commission Communication on ERA was circulated for comment and discussed at the 8th meeting, with a deadline for adoption on 17 December 2020, after which it will be delivered to the Commission, ERAC and ERA stakeholders.
- The work of the following sub-group and task forces is underway:
    o Task force on Gender Equality Plans (co-led by IE, NO and chair): the task force drafted a survey for Members which was circulated to delegations, with a deadline for completion by 15 January 2021. A report on the state of GEP implementation at MS level with recommendations is anticipated for March 2021.
    o Task force on intersectionality, diversity and racisms (led by IE): The task force will prepare a strategic discussion for the next SWG GRI meeting.
    o The sub-group on gender and digitalisation is working on a mutual learning workshop to take place online in Feb 2021.
- **Policy developments at national level:** Members shared information at the 8th meeting about recent developments related to GE policy in R&I with presentations from CZ and NO.
- **Cooperation with other ERA related groups**: SWG GRI is contributing to the work of the triangle task force consisting of SWG HRM/OSOI/GRI the objective of which is to revise the Charter and Code, with a view to update/revise OSOI and gender aspects.
- **Cooperation with the Commission**: SWG GRI chair is in contact with the Gender Sector regarding the task force on GEPs with a view to feeding the development of the GEP requirement in Horizon Europe.
- Dissemination plan and its execution:
    o The chair was invited to write an opinion piece [for the American Physics Society Tackling Academia's Publication Inequities](#) on the role of publishers in tackling gender inequalities in relation to COVID-19 which builds on the SWG GRI position paper on the gendered impact of COVID-19 on research and researchers.

ERAC SWG on Human Resources and Mobility (HRM)

- **The (new) Chair, Ms. Cecilia Cabello, of the SWG HRM** was officially elected by written procedure as of October 10. Unfortunately, no delegate has come forward to present themselves as candidate for vice Chair so this remains vacant. At next meeting the Chair will insist on finding volunteers for this position since it is important.
- The **next SWG HRM meeting** was held on November 18. This meeting was organized to be back-to back with the European Commission Euraxess network Bridgehead Organizations (member state and associated countries' representatives). The discussion focused on various issues but the main purpose it to improve the relationship between the policy (ERAC SWG HRM) and implementation (Euraxess BHO) dimensions. The agenda included the following aspects:
  - o European Commission New ERA Communication
  - o Policy session on Research Careers
  - o Accompanying measures to research careers policy
  - o Next steps for collaboration (ERAC SWG HRM and Euraxess BHO)
- **Other issues addressed at the next meeting (18/Nov) included:**
  - o Draft Work program 2021-2022
  - o Elections for Vice-chair
  - o Updates from Triangle Task forces subgroups
- **The communication plan has been updated**:
  - ▪ At the Austrian ERA portal information of the SWG HRM in the governance section specific for the SWG will be uploaded.
  - ▪ The European Commission will also include information of the SWG HRM at the European EURAXESS webpage at the EURAXESS Policy Library.
- The Joint Task force between ERA related groups have been working in the subgroups has defined (OSI-GRI-HRM). The context and objectives of the this TRIANGLE TASK FORCE (as it is called) is the following:
  - o **Subgroup for GOAL 1:** Recommendations on training, incentives and evaluation of researchers with an OSI and gender perspective. Two meetings have taken place and surveys have been launched to the OSI group and are currently being completed by HRM and GRI groups.
  - o **Subgroup for GOAL 2:** Reviewing and potential update of the Charter & Code at the light of the future of ERA developments. Bilateral meetings with different stakeholder have taken place showing high interest in the C&C revision and the third meeting webinar is scheduled for November 6.
- The Chair has collaborated with the organization of the ERAC Workshop (December 15).

ERAC SWG on Open Science and Innovation (OSI)

[Last meeting (online) took place on 15 October. Next (online) on 15 December.]

o The SWG OSI Opinion Paper **Open Science and Open Innovation in times of pandemic** will be adopted by written procedure on 11 December by the SWG OSI. The paper is based on evidence – collected through desk research and via a dedicated register (see below) – and presents the opportunities and challenges that the coronavirus crisis has brought in terms of open science and innovation practices. It provides concrete policy recommendations that relate to Open Access to publication, Open Research Data, Open Science services, infrastructures and tools, Open Science related principles and policies, (Open) Science Communication and Science of Open Science. A specific focus is put on the need of involving all disciplines, including social sciences and humanities, in the production, validation and dissemination of scientific knowledge that relates to complex and multidimensional crises (such as the COVID-19 one).

o The SWG OSI **Open Register of Open Science and Open Innovation initiatives in the context of the pandemic** will be annexed to the Opinion Paper and contains information about Open Science and Open Innovation initiatives taken at institutional, national, European and international level, with a dedicated section on social sciences and humanities.

o SWG OSI delegates continue to work within the two "goal" subgroups of the **joint taskforce (OSI-HRM-GRI) on training, incentives and evaluation in OS&OI**. A survey that covers the current state of policies and achievements in these matters has now been filled in collectively by delegates of SWGs OSI, HRM and GRI. The analysis thereof will be conducted in December 2020 and January 2021. On the one hand, it will provide further evidence to be integrated to the guidelines paper on which the "goal 1" of the joint taskforce is currently working. On the other hand, an in deep analysis and discussion of the survey results will be the object of a dedicated publication by the joint taskforce in 2021. A particular focus is to investigate to what extent – and under which conditions - taking into account Open Science in research assessment can also contribute to favor gender equality and inclusiveness.

• At its 15 December meeting SWG OSI will discuss its next **2021-2022 Work Programme** which will be approved through written procedure before the end of the year.