

UPDATES FROM THE ERA-RELATED GROUPS

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ESFRI

Since the last update, ESFRI's activities included:

1) 76th ESFRI Forum

The Forum meeting took place on 30 June – 1 July in digital format.

The main results were:

- Approval of the ESFRI Executive Board recommendations on New proposals to enter the Roadmap. 11 new Projects will enter the ESFRI Roadmap 2021;
- Discussion on the overall structure and discussion on the main elements composing the Roadmap 2021: strategy report, landscape analysis and graphical layout;
- Dr Jana Kolar was elected new ESFRI Chair. Her mandate will start on 1st January 2022.

Summary table of the 11 new Projects:

No	Acronym	Title	Lead	Estimated investment costs, mln EUR
1	EBRAINS	European Brain ReseArch INfrastructureS	FR	323,8
2	EIRENE RI	Research Infrastructure for EnvIRonmental Exposure assessment in Europe	CZ	348,3
3	ET	Einstein Telescope	IT	1.902,0
4	EuPRAXIA	European Plasma Research Accelerator with Excellence in Applications	IT	569,0
5	GGP	The Generations and Gender Programme	NL	18,2
6	GUIDE	Growing Up in Digital Europe-EuroCohort	IE	580,6
7	MARINERG-i	Offshore Renewable Energy Research Infrastructure	IE	8,9
8	OPERAS	Open Access in the European Research	FR	15,0

		Area through Scholarly Communication		
9	RESILIENCE	Religious Studies Infrastructure: Tools, Innovation, Experts, Connections and Centers	IT	130,3
10	SLICES	Scientific Large-scale Infrastructure for Computing/Communication Experimental Studies	FR	137,7
11	SoBigData++ RI	European Integrated Infrastructure for Social Mining and Big Data Analytics	IT	130,5

2) 77th ESFRI Forum

The Forum meeting took place on 21-22 September in digital format.

The main results were:

- Presentation of the first consolidated draft of the Strategy Report that will be Chapter 1 of the ESFRI Roadmap 2021;
- Presentation of the final version of the Landscape Analysis that will be Chapter 2 of the ESFRI Roadmap 2021;
- Approval of the public report from monitoring of 2016 ESFRI Projects;
- Approval of the final report on the ESFRI Landmark monitoring approach;
- Approval of the call for candidates for the ESFRI Executive Board and Working Group Chairs, which will start their mandates as of 1 January 2022;
- Approval of the ESFRI Activity Report 2019-2020;

A final decision on the new ESFRI Landmarks was postponed to 4 October to allow the relevant Projects to submit important documents critical for awarding the Landmark status.

Consequently, a formal decision on the content of the Roadmap was postponed to 14 October and it will be done by written procedure.

Finally, during the 77th ESFRI Forum, the 2nd ESFRI Open Session took place. It focused on the European Green Deal and featured RIs from the Energy and Environmental fields. The Open Session this time was open also to the members of the ESFRI Strategy Working Groups.

3) ESFRI Roadmap update process

The process is progressing according to schedule. The evaluation exercise for New Proposals is over and the Forum will approve the 2010 Projects monitoring outcomes on 4 October.

Work on the research infrastructures' landscape analysis is also over. The Forum approved the final version of the document in September.

A decision on the overall structure of the Roadmap was taken at the end of June and formal adoption of the Roadmap by the Forum is foreseen on 14 October by written procedure.

4) ESFRI Stakeholder Forum

The work on the preparation and setting up of the first ESFRI Stakeholder Forum has been proceeding.

The Programme Committee composed of three representatives from the Slovenian Presidency, three representatives from the ESFRI Executive Board and one representative from the European Commission held three meetings so far.

The first ESFRI Stakeholder Forum will take place on 8 December 2021 in Ljubljana. In the meantime, ESFRI will work on a broader roll-out of its updated stakeholder engagement strategy.

5) ESFRI Chair

The current mandate of the ESFRI Chair, Mr. Jan Hrusak, expires at the end of 2021. In accordance with its Procedural Guidelines, ESFRI decided to set up a Search Committee for a next Chair. The Committee started its work in February. Deadline for nomination was on 23rd of April and the Search Committee conducted the interview with the candidates.

During the plenary meeting in June, the ESFRI forum elected Dr Jana Kolar as next ESFRI Chair. Her mandate will start on 1st January 2022.

6) Methodology for monitoring the performance of ESFRI Landmarks

During the 77th ESFRI Forum, delegates approved the report on the methodology for monitoring the performance of ESFRI Landmarks with a roll-out planned to start in January 2022, under a coordination of a dedicated monitoring committee that will be set up by ESFRI.

7) ESFRI Days

The ESFRI Days will take place on 6 – 7 – 8 December in Ljubljana.

They will include:

- 6-7 December: 78th ESFRI Forum
- 7 December (afternoon): Public launch of the ESFRI Roadmap 2021
- 8 December: 1st ESFRI Stakeholder Forum

GPC

Since the last ERAC Meeting (3/4 June), GPC has met on June 15, and the next (last?) meeting is scheduled for December 2021.

According to the GPC 2021-2022 Work Programme the work of the GPC will be focused on the analysis and the report on **Impact of Joint Programming at national level** that will shed light on the impact of the Joint Programming Process itself and the principal means of implementing it – the Joint Programming Initiatives, at the national level. The task was led by ERA-LEARN project with a small Advisory body of GPC delegates from AT, FI and SI. Report has been published in May 2021. Despite the uncertain future of the GPC, it seems that the joint programming process will stay at the heart of the new partnerships approach under Horizon Europe and also in the form of some new ERA Actions. Thus, the results presented in this report are very relevant for the design of the new partnerships under Horizon Europe and new ERA Actions prescribed by EAR Policy Agenda.

To summarize the Report briefly:

Most countries share similar expectations from participation in the JPP and JPIs → joining national resources at European level to create critical mass necessary to tackle global challenges and creating common research and innovation agendas. These initial expectations were fulfilled at varied degrees across the countries. JPIs are considered to fall short in translating research results into usable inputs for policy-making and other stakeholders. The most relevant barrier to JPI participation is the difficulty to allocate national resources to JPI activities due to the absence of a relevant national programme, incompatibilities of the programme's own procedures and timing with those of the JPIs and incompatibility of annual national policy cycles.

Positive impacts mainly have to do with the opportunities offered for cooperation with other European countries on a bilateral basis, possibly as spin-offs from the JPIs partnerships, and with non-EU countries within the JPIs.

However, the impact of participation in JPIs extends beyond supporting research projects and influencing policies or structures at national level. It also relates to policy learning, improved capacity to manage transnational programmes and many benefits gained via mutual learning.

SFIC

Latest developments:

- The last Plenary meeting has taken place on 10th of June 2021. Beyond the update on ERA-related activities, the Africa Working Group and the Science Diplomacy Task Force, the Ad-hoc Task Force on the Bonn declaration and China related issues presentations were given by ERA-Learn and the European Commission regarding the global dimension of the European Partnerships.
- The day before the Plenary on 9th of June 2021 a dedicated workshop was organised to discuss the communication of the European Commission related to the "Global approach to research and innovation" and the related SFIC Opinion has been adopted on 23rd September 2021 (WK 11121/2021).
- The Ad-Hoc Task Force related to the follow-up of the Bonn declaration in the context of International Cooperation has finalised the work on the recommendations, which were published on 13th of July 2021 (ERAC-SFIC 1356/21) and where further cooperation is envisaged with stakeholders and the ERA Forum for Transition.
- The Working on Africa is currently developing on a new survey regarding the "Relations with China in Africa in the field of R&I" and has presented its work done so far at the HLPD STI Bureau meeting on 9th of September, further strengthening the dialogue with relevant stakeholders.
- The Task Force on Science Diplomacy is working on a final strategic document regarding a "Set of Recommendations on a EU Science Diplomacy Agenda" and had a related brainstorming meeting with representatives from the EEAS and other stakeholders at the beginning of September.
- China: the EU-KNOC initiative held its final event on 23rd and 24th of September 2021 with around 100 participants from the research as well as policy-making communities. The event featured the main outcomes of EU-KNOC and provided in depth information and the possibility to discuss the results of the studies developed. SFIC is currently developing a set of recommendations for the future collaboration with China based on the work of EU-KNOC, which we would be glad to present to ERAC once available.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair of SFIC have released a statement on the need to protect researchers, scholars and students as well as their families and project partners in Afghanistan who may be exposed to risks due to the current circumstances, supporting the plea of the researchers at risk network.
- The next Plenary Meeting will take place on 7th of October 2021 in a virtual format.

ERAC SWG on Gender in Research and Innovation (GRI)

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

- The **10th meeting of SWG GRI** took place on 21 June 2021; the next meeting is tentatively foreseen for 13 October 2021.
- The work of the following sub-group and task forces has been completed:
 - o **Task force on Gender Equality Plans:** The report [Gender Equality Plans as a Catalyst for Change](#) was adopted by SWG GRI and published in the public register of documents (ERAC 1202/21).
- The following reports on the work toward completion in the following:
 - o **The sub-group on gender and digitalisation** has prepared a background paper on the topic in cooperation with H2020 GENDERACTION project, which informed a series of three exploratory workshops for policy makers and other stakeholders. These exploratory workshops were organised by IE with participation of SWG GRI chair and PT representative for PT PRES and took place on 26 March and 15 April, with the support of external experts and presenting promising practices from MS. Information from the workshop series including recordings are [available here](#). The discussion paper will be finalised in October for circulation reflecting discussions at the workshops.
 - o **Task force on intersectionality, diversity and racisms:** The task force (IE, NL, NO, CH) has prepared the first strategic discussion that took place at the 10th meeting of SWG GRI in June 2021. Written input has been requested from delegations after the meeting. The discussion and input received indicate the need for further action on the issue of gender+ intersectional inequality and inclusiveness in line with the new ERA policy framework. At the moment, there is very little in terms of intersectionality and inclusiveness in R&I policy at the MS/AC level.
- **Cooperation with other ERA related groups:** SWG GRI has contributed to the work of the Triangle Taskforce both on Goal 1 (revision of assessment practices to reflect better Open Science and Gender Equality issues) and continues to engage with Goal 2 (revision of Charter and Code to incorporate better Open Science and Gender Equality considerations).
- **Cooperation with EU PRES:** SWG GRI representatives of the two trio PRES contributed to the preparation and drafting of the Ljubljana Declaration which the SI PRES introduced at the joint SI PRES GENDERACTION conference Deepening ERA through Gender Equality held on 8 and 9 July 2021 online. Recordings from the discussions are available at the conference website at <https://app.swapcard.com/event/deepening-era-through-gender-equality>
- **Communication and dissemination:**
 - o An update on SWG GRI activities in the first half of the year was prepared and circulated to SWG GRI as well as other relevant ERA stakeholders on 28 June.

ERAC SWG on Human Resources and Mobility (HRM)

The activity in the past few months has been focused on primarily to support to the on-going studies and the Triangle Task Force.

The HRM Chair and other HRM delegates have actively been participating in the two studies that have been commissioned by EC RTD: “Study on Policy Measures within ERA Priority 3 Open Labor Market for Researchers” and the “Study to evaluate the ERA policy framework/ERA monitoring”.

- “Fostering research careers in Europe: tools to support implementation of the new ERA” held on 21 April 2021.
- “Supporting research careers in the context of the new ERA: EURAXESS and the ERA Talent Platform” held on 19 May 2021.
- Study to evaluate the ERA policy framework/ ERA monitoring mechanism (3 events): “Workshop on key issues relating to monitoring and indicators to support the implementation of the New ERA Communication held on June 10 and “Workshop on the key issues relating to the development of the new ERA policy framework” held on June 18. Validation seminar on “Study to evaluate the ERA policy framework/ ERA monitoring mechanism” held on Sept 10.
- The preliminary reports and results are being reviewed. Input, comments and suggestions have been provided.

The Triangle Task force between ERA related groups (OSI-GRI-HRM) is finalizing its work. The update and results of the Triangle Task Force are the following:

- **Subgroup for GOAL 1:** *Recommendations on training, incentives and evaluation of researchers with an OSI and gender perspective.* This subgroup is chaired by the OSI Chair with participation from HRM/GRI representatives. The final draft of the Guides Recommendations document has been completed and was presented to ERAC.
- **Subgroup for GOAL 2:** *Reviewing and potential update of the [Charter & Code](#) at the light of the future of ERA developments:*
 - This subgroup is chaired by a Spanish HRM delegation with participation of OSI/GRI representatives. The first draft of the revision has been completed and presented. The final webinar held on June 23.
 - An open consultation process has begun during the summer and is still on going to receive inputs from stakeholders (until October 1). A stakeholder webinar to validate the proposed revision of the C&C will be organized as well as with the delegations of the three SWG. The next SWG HRM meeting will be scheduled once the Subgroup of goal 2 (C&C revision) is ready to be presented to the delegations (late October).

ERAC SWG on Open Science and Innovation (OSI)

[Last meeting (online) took place on 1 June. Next meeting on 12 October.]

- The ERAC **guideline paper** (Goal 1) on research evaluation in a context of Open Science and gender equality has been further disseminated by the EUA (<https://eua.eu/news/716:erac-%E2%80%98triangle-task-force%E2%80%99-guideline-paper-on-%E2%80%98research-evaluation-in-a-context-of-open-science-and-gender-equality%E2%80%99.html>). At national level contacts are taken with RPOs and/or RFOs to discuss the paper and its use in evaluation policies, like for example with the **Belgian CREF** (Council of the Rectors of the French Community of Belgium).
- SWG OSI delegates continue to work on the Charter and Code within the second “goal” subgroup of the **joint taskforce (OSI-HRM-GRI) on training, incentives and evaluation in OS&OI**.
- The SWG OSI Task Force on **research integrity** with delegates from EE, FI, FR, HR, LV and RO, together with the EU Commission, continues its work of identifying the opportunities as well as the obstacles in regard to **an optimal** cross-fertilization between OS and RI policy domains. Webinars are foreseen with RI offices (FR, FI, AT), the European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO), with the EU funded projects SOPs4RI (<https://sops4ri.eu/>) and ROSIE (which is a project on responsible open science) as well as with ALLEA, in light of their revision of the Code of Conduct for RI.
- Next OSI meeting on 12 October will include a larger than usual panel discussion on **Citizen Science**, presenting SI, FR and AU national initiatives on Citizen Science, the National German Citizen Science plan, an institutional example from the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, as well as the Commission initiatives in the field of Citizen Science and the lessons learned from the COST Action on Citizen Science. The ambition is to take stock of the current stage of Citizen Science in the EU, which is deemed as an important dimension of Open Science on which SWG OSI had not worked in deep until now.