



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Conclusions on the launching of joint programming initiatives on 'Agriculture, food security and climate change', 'Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a new challenge for Europe', and 'A healthy diet for a healthy life'

*3035th COMPETITIVENESS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 12 October 2010*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

- The Commission Green paper of 4 April 2007, entitled "The European Research Area: New Perspectives"¹ in which one of the core objective was to ensure the coherence of national and regional research programmes and priorities on issues of European major societal challenges or opportunities relevant to all or many countries which require a new approach as regards research efforts beyond individual national capacity;
- Its Key Issues Paper (KIP) of 25 February 2008 by the Council ("Competitiveness")², in which the Member States and the Commission were encouraged to continue developing initiatives for joint programming of research in areas suited to such an approach, allowing a more strategic and better structured approach to the launch of new joint programmes and common calls for projects;

¹ 8322/07.

² 6933/08.

P R E S S

- The conclusions of the European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008³, which launched the new cycle of the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs (2008-2010) and which, with the aim of fully developing the potential for innovation and creativity of European citizens, confirmed that particular attention should be given to further initiatives for joint programming of research;
- The Commission communication of 15 July 2008, entitled "Towards joint programming in research: Working together to tackle common challenges more effectively"⁴, which called for the implementation of a process led by the Member States to step up their cooperation in the R&D area in order to better confront major societal challenges of European or worldwide scale, where public research plays a key role;
- Its conclusions of 2 December 2008 concerning joint programming of research in Europe in response to major societal challenges⁵, which established a dedicated configuration of CREST, the High Level Group for Joint Programming (GPC), to identify and substantiate the first list of a limited number of joint programming themes;
- Its conclusions of 3 December 2009⁶ and 26 May 2010⁷, welcoming the progress made in the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC) by identifying and substantiating the first and second wave of themes for JPIs with a view to the adoption of JPIs by the Council in due time, and inviting the Commission, within the remit of its competence, to contribute to the preparation of the joint programming initiatives which correspond to the themes identified and substantiated by the GPC, together with the state of play of research in the field of each of these themes, on the basis of which the Council will agree on joint programming initiatives;
- Its conclusions of 26 May 2010, welcoming the Commission recommendations and taking note of the state of play on the three joint programming initiatives "Agriculture, Food security and Climate Change"⁸, "Cultural Heritage and Global Change – A new challenge for Europe"⁹, and "A healthy diet for a healthy life"¹⁰;
- The conclusions of the European Council of 17 June 2010 finalising the European Union's new strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020 Strategy).¹¹

³ 7652/1/08 REV 1.

⁴ 11935/08.

⁵ Official Journal C 24, 30.1.2009, p. 3–6.

⁶ 17226/09.

⁷ 10246/10.

⁸ 9585/10.

⁹ 9387/10.

¹⁰ 9388/10.

¹¹ EUCO 13/10.

1. EMPHASISES that Joint Programming in research in the areas of the three proposed initiatives

- Agriculture, Food security and Climate change
- Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a new Challenge in Europe
- A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life

will contribute to the reduction of fragmentation of research efforts of Member States and will step up the mobilisation of skills, knowledge and resources, with a view to advancing research and innovation in these fields. In this context, also INVITES the Commission to offer support in the implementation of these initiatives while facilitating complementarity with the Framework Programme;

2. INVITES the Member States, participating in the framework of the three initiatives respectively, to:

- i. Develop a common vision, based on a multidisciplinary approach, on how cooperation and coordination in the field of research at the European level can improve addressing the challenges presented in the initiatives, in order to ensure the efficiency of the joint efforts of Member States.
- ii. Develop a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) establishing medium to long term research needs and objectives in the areas of the three initiatives. The Strategic Research Agendas should be further developed towards an implementation plan establishing priorities and timelines and specifying the actions, instruments and resources required for its implementation.
- iii. Jointly implement the Strategic Research Agenda, including via their national research programmes or other national research activities.
- iv. Set up a management structure in the field of the three initiatives respectively, with a mandate to establish appropriate conditions, rules and procedures for cooperation and coordination and to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Research Agenda. Such management structure should be lean, efficient and flexible and should take account of forthcoming voluntary guidelines on framework conditions to support the development and implementation of JPIs.
- v. Build on the existing expertise within the Commission and taking into account forthcoming voluntary guidelines on framework conditions when developing and implementing the Strategic Research Agenda and with a view to coordinating the joint programming initiatives with other Union activities in these fields.
- vi. Report regularly to the Council, through the GPC (or ERAC), on the progress and results of these JPIs, including lessons learned on achieving optimal efficiency.

3. INVITES the Commission while fully preserving the character of JPIs as a Member States driven process to:
 - i. Act as a facilitator by suggesting complementary measures to support the Joint Programming initiatives. Those measures could include support to common coordination, the management structure and the establishment of the Strategic Research Agenda, the provision of data, information and analysis on the state of the art in this field at European and international level.
 - ii. Explore how to contribute with complementary measures to the Strategic Research Agenda as well as if and how to facilitate its implementation plan via EU funding instruments
 - iii. Look, in cooperation with the JPIs, into possible forms of consultation and cooperation on this subject with relevant stakeholders and other programmes at international level.
 - iv. Regularly report to the Council and inform the European Parliament on the overall progress and results of JPIs.

More specifically on launching of the three initiatives, the Council:

a) WITH REGARD TO THE LAUNCH OF THE JOINT PROGRAMMING INITIATIVE ON 'AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE' ("AFSCC")

4. RECOGNISES that agriculture and forestry are highly exposed to climate change since they directly depend on climatic conditions and that climate change is one of the main challenges to agriculture in feeding the world's population, projected to be 9 billion by 2050. This will increase food demand by 50% by 2030, in a period when demand for biomass for non-food purposes is predicted to grow strongly. In addition to coping with higher temperatures, water shortages and unpredictable climate conditions, agriculture should also try to reduce emissions (roughly 14% of global greenhouse gases - GHG). The agriculture, activities related to the exploitation of arable and other productive lands use in general are strongly related to the capability of biological processes to retain or release carbon. This is important with regard to the mitigation of climate change.
5. UNDERLINES that research must continue contributing to improving food supply and other production from natural resources, such as forestry, fisheries, aquaculture and animal production and health in a sustainable manner under these conditions. In addition, the knowledge must be translated into appropriate technologies and practices.

6. NOTES that much work is already conducted at EU, national and regional levels on AFSCC but these are very complex issues and current research may not fully address all aspects. RECOGNISES therefore that Member States would benefit from coordinating their actions to develop a stronger, better coordinated and more effective and sustainable response at the European level to address the challenge of food security and the threat brought by climate change, global population growth, and the increase in food and non-food demand.
7. INVITES the participating Member States to cooperate, notably
 - with the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research to ensure that the joint programming activities are coordinated with the wider agricultural research agenda.
 - with the EIT in respect with the designated Climate Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) and relevant future KICs.
8. RECOMMENDS that the following actions could be considered, subject to the needs identified by participating Member States in the Strategic Research Agenda, as part of an implementation plan:
 - a) analysing the state of the art in this field and identifying and exchanging information on relevant national programmes and research activities and similar international activities;
 - b) reinforcing joint foresight exercises and technology assessment capacities, in order to ensure that emerging and new threats are constantly monitored and regularly reported;
 - c) exchanging information, resources, best practices, methodologies and guidelines;
 - d) identifying areas or research activities that would benefit from coordination or joint calls for proposals or mobilisation of resources;
 - e) defining the procedures for research to be undertaken jointly in the areas referred to in point (d), and identifying the most appropriate instruments for implementation;
 - f) where appropriate, sharing existing research infrastructures or developing new facilities;
 - g) exporting and disseminating knowledge, innovation and interdisciplinary approaches within Europe and worldwide and promoting the effective use of research outputs to enhance European competitiveness and policy making for the benefit of the European citizens' well-being in a sustainable way;

- h) encouraging better collaboration between the public and private sectors, together with open innovation between different business sectors;
- i) considering the changing needs of consumers and those of the agri-food industry in the Union, as well as the increasing need for sustainability, when setting the objectives for related programmes.

b) WITH REGARD TO THE LAUNCH OF THE JOINT PROGRAMMING INITIATIVE ON ‘CULTURAL HERITAGE AND GLOBAL CHANGE: A NEW CHALLENGE FOR EUROPE’

- 9. EMPHASISES that Europe’s cultural heritage is one of the world’s most diverse and rich patrimonies that attracts millions of visitors every year to monuments, historical city centres, archaeological sites and museums, and that this heritage is an important component of individual and collective identity contributing to the cohesion of the European Union and playing a fundamental role in European integration by creating links between citizens.
- 10. NOTES that European cultural heritage is of exceptional economic importance for the tourism industry, generating an estimated annual revenue of EUR 335 billion, and many of the 9 million jobs in the tourism sector are linked to it directly or indirectly. The market for conservation of this heritage is estimated at some EUR 5 billion per year.
- 11. RECOGNISES that the combined effects of climate change, other environmental changes, human interventions and security risks threaten Europe's cultural heritage. In particular, climate change may lead to cultural heritage assets being irreversibly damaged or lost because of their fragility and age. In addition, disasters and security risks threaten the physical [nature of] cultural heritage assets as symbols and icons of European cities and sites.
- 12. NOTES that in order to develop strategies to prevent that those combined risks to Europe’s cultural heritage produce irreversible damage, concerted actions are needed and RECOGNISES therefore that Member States would benefit from coordinating their actions in view of constructing a fully operational European Research Area on cultural heritage preservation and strengthening Europe’s leadership and competitiveness of the research in this field.
- 13. RECOMMENDS that the following actions could be considered, subject to the needs identified by participating Member States in the Strategic Research Agenda, as part of an implementation plan:
 - a) analysing the state of the art in this field and identifying and exchanging information on relevant national programmes and research activities and similar international activities;

- b) reinforcing joint foresight exercise and technology assessment capacities, especially regarding the impact of global change on cultural heritage assets and the preventive and conservation responses;
 - c) exchanging information, resources, best practices, methodologies and guidelines;
 - d) identifying areas or research activities that would benefit from coordination or joint calls for proposals or mobilisation of resources;
 - e) defining the modalities for research to be undertaken jointly in the areas referred to in point (d), and identifying the most appropriate instruments for implementation;
 - f) considering the changing needs of visitors and consumers when defining the objectives for cultural heritage research programmes.
 - g) where appropriate, sharing existing research infrastructures or developing new facilities such as coordinated databanks or the development of models for studying deterioration processes;
 - h) encouraging better collaboration between public and private sectors, as well as open innovation between different research activities and business sectors related to cultural heritage; including tourism, sustainable maintenance and construction or reconstruction of sites, buildings or landscapes and related business services;
 - i) exporting and diffusing knowledge, innovation and interdisciplinary methodological approaches within Europe and worldwide and promoting the effective use of research outputs to enhance European competitiveness and policy making for the benefit of the European citizens' well-being in a sustainable way;
 - j) creating networks between centres dedicated to cultural heritage research.
- c) WITH REGARD TO THE LAUNCH OF THE JOINT PROGRAMMING INITIATIVE ON ‘A HEALTHY DIET FOR A HEALTHY LIFE’**
14. EMPHASISES that health of the citizens is essential also for growth and prosperity in the Union. In this context TAKES NOTE that in the last three decades the levels of overweight, obesity and diet related diseases (such as the type 2 diabetes, allergies, stroke and cancer) in the population of the Union have risen dramatically, particularly among children, and that the trend of poor diet and low physical activity across the population of the Union is worsening.
 15. NOTES that putting in place cost-effective measures to improve citizens’ state of health could contribute to economic benefits for society and improvements in future productivity and competitiveness.

16. RECOGNISES the benefits that could be achieved in the field of food and health through a common approach to prevention of diet-related diseases, which would provide for coordination of research on the impact of socioeconomic factors, lifestyles, physical activities and diet on health, contributing significantly to construction of a fully operational European Research Area on prevention of diet-related diseases and strengthening leadership and competitiveness of the research activities in this field.
17. RECOMMENDS that the following actions could be considered, subject to the needs identified by participating Member States in the Strategic Research Agenda, as part of an implementation plan:
- a) analysing the state of the art in this field and identifying and exchanging information on relevant national programmes and research activities and similar international activities;
 - b) reinforcing joint foresight exercise and technology assessment capacities, especially for the identification of areas or research activities that would benefit from coordination or joint calls for proposals or mobilisation of resources;
 - c) exchanging information, resources, best practices, methods and guidelines, particularly in relation to large cohorts and clinical studies;
 - d) defining the procedure, including quality criteria, for research to be undertaken jointly, in the areas referred to in point (b), and identifying the most appropriate instruments for implementation;;
 - e) where appropriate, sharing existing research infrastructure or developing new facilities such as coordinated databases, biobanks or models for data extrapolation to humans;
 - f) exporting and disseminating knowledge, innovation and interdisciplinary approaches within Europe and worldwide and promoting the effective use of research outputs to enhance European competitiveness and policy making for the benefit of the European citizens' well-being in a sustainable way;
 - g) encouraging and supporting closer collaboration between the public and private sectors, together with open innovation between different business sectors;
 - h) creating networks between existing centres specialising particularly in research related to diet, lifestyle and prevention of disease;
 - i) In addition to research targeted on the whole population, encouraging research oriented on food, health and nutritional problems of risk and fragile groups in the European society."