



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Resolution on the developments in the governance of the European Research Area

*3016th COMPETITIVENESS Council meeting
Brussels, 26 May 2010*

The Council adopted the following resolution:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLS its Resolution of 14 January 1974 on the coordination of national policies and the definition of projects of interest to the Union in the field of science and technology which established a Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST)¹, replaced by Council Resolution of 28 September 1995 on CREST²;

RECALLS relevant Articles of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union concerning the objectives of the Union research policy and competence sharing between the Union and the Member States in the field of research, in particular as regards new emphasis to the development of the European Research Area (ERA);

RECALLS its Resolution of 15 June 2000 establishing a European Research Area (ERA)³ following the European Council of 23 and 24 March 2000 which agreed on the Lisbon Strategy;

RECALLS the conclusions of the European Council of 8 and 9 March 2007 which referred to the notion of well functioning knowledge triangle in the form of interaction between education, research and innovation, and of 19 and 20 March 2009 which called for urgent concrete measures to encourage partnership between business, research, education and training and to step up and improve the quality of investment in research, knowledge and education;

¹ Official Journal C 7, 29.1.1974, p. 2-4.

² Official Journal C 264, 11.10.1995, p. 4-5.

³ Official Journal C 205, 19.7.2000, p. 1.

P R E S S

RECALLS its Conclusions of 30 May 2008 on the launch of the "Ljubljana Process - Towards full realisation of ERA" 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 European Commission ("the Commission") with broad support from stakeholders and citizens;

RECALLS its Conclusions of 2 December 2008 on the definition of a 2020 vision for the European Research Area⁴ which invited future Presidencies to take this vision and its potential evolution into consideration in the development of their proposals for the future governance of the ERA and stressed the need to use the full potential of existing coordination structures such as CREST in dealing with ERA initiatives;

RECALLS the conclusions of the European Council of 11 and 12 December 2008, which called for the launching of a European plan for innovation, together with the development of the ERA and with reflection on the future of the Lisbon Strategy beyond 2010;

RECALLS its conclusions of 29 May 2009, to establish and regularly update a Roadmap for the implementation of the ERA Vision 2020 and to further engage in ensuring enhanced complementarity and synergies between Union policies and instruments such as the RTD Framework Programmes, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, Structural Funds, the Ljubljana Process, the Common Framework on Education and Training and the Bologna Process;

RECALLS its resolution of 3 December 2009⁵ on the Enhanced Governance of the European Research Area, which recognised the need to develop more coherent policy-making at European and Member State level; the need to establish the means to provide fresh and innovative impetus on the political level in order to be able to achieve the goals of the ERA; emphasised the need for regular exchange of views and interaction with the European Parliament, and considered that a revised mandate for CREST should be drawn up and approved by the Council by mid-2010, on the basis of principles as set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the resolution,

CONSIDERS that this more coherent policy making may also extend to research activities covered by the EURATOM Treaty, without prejudice to the procedures set up by this treaty and the powers of the bodies charged with implementing those procedures;

1. On this basis, and with a view to provide for better policy interactions relevant to the development of ERA:
 - a. EMPHASISES the need for improved support for policy interactions in the Council with respect to policy issues in the areas relevant to the knowledge triangle; and, in this respect, also the need to consider how the Council configurations could best address Research, Innovation and Higher Education issues to contribute to the full realisation of the ERA;
 - b. EMPHASISES the invitation to future Presidencies of the Council of the EU to consider convening well prepared and focused ERA Ministerial conferences when there is a clear added value in providing orientations for a strategic view on the ERA, as well as the agreement that such conferences could take the form of a broadened informal meeting of Ministers;

⁴ Official Journal C 25, 31.1.2009, p. 1-4.

⁵ Official Journal C 323, 31.12.2009, p. 1-4.

- c. INVITES the Commission to ensure that, in matters related to ERA, it provides a coherent and comprehensive consideration to research, innovation and education issues;
 - d. EMPHASISES the need for regular exchanges of views and interaction with the European Parliament on ERA issues;
 - e. ACKNOWLEDGES the current status of cooperation with countries associated to the Framework Programme.
2. With a view to implementing and developing the Council resolution of 3 December 2009 on the Enhanced Governance of ERA, AGREES that:
- a. CREST is renamed the European Research Area Committee (ERAC) (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) in order to better align its role with the new emphasis given to the ERA by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
 - b. The Committee is a strategic policy advisory body whose main mission is to provide timely strategic input to the Council, the Commission and the Member States on any research and innovation issue relevant to the development of the ERA and, in this respect, WELCOMES the Commission’s intention to pursue its active support to the Committee;
 - c. The Committee's mission as set out in this Resolution will be duly taken into account in the review of all ERA related groups that has to be initiated before the end of 2010.
3. AGREES that, in order to develop the ERA Governance structure as stated above, an adjustment of the terms of reference of CREST is necessary, and accordingly replaces the resolution of 28 September 1995 with a new mandate as set out in ANNEX to this Resolution.

EMPHASISES that this new mandate should be based on equal partnership to reflect the shared competence between the Member States and the EU, as well as on the joint commitment to bringing forward the agenda to fully realise the ERA.

The new mandate will take effect upon adoption of this resolution by the Council. The Vice-Chair, elected among the Member States' representatives, shall be appointed, the Steering Board shall be set up and the rules of procedure shall be drawn up in accordance with paragraphs 10, 12 and 17 of the mandate. This should be done by the end of 2010.

4. AGREES to review the mandate of the Committee by the end of 2012.
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MANDATE OF THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA COMMITTEE (ERAC)

1. CREST changes its name to European Research Area Committee – ERAC (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) to better reflect its renewed role as a strategic policy advisory committee in the framework of the governance of the European Research Area.
2. The Committee’s main mission is to provide timely strategic input to the Council, the Commission and the Member States on any research and innovation issue relevant to the development of the ERA, on its own initiative or on the request of the Council or the Commission;
3. With respect to its strategic policy advice mission, the Committee shall, in particular:
 - a. at an early stage, provide advice on the identification and design of strategic priorities for policy initiatives on research and innovation relevant to the development of the ERA, including the EU Framework Programmes and other relevant EU, national and intergovernmental initiatives;
 - b. provide advice on broad orientations for possible future policies and interaction between existing policies, at international, European and national levels, to contribute to the development of the ERA;
 - c. monitor the progress of ERA, while having regard to the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity, with special attention to the efficiency, accessibility, transparency and coherence of its different instruments and initiatives, including those defined in EU Framework Programmes, based notably on the criterion of European added value;
 - d. identify needs for independent, quantitative and qualitative, assessment and evaluation of ERA related policies and use the results of relevant assessments and evaluations to make recommendations for a faster and better progress of the ERA;
 - e. contribute to promoting the coordination of national research and innovation policies, where relevant, and to ensuring that national policies and Union policy are mutually consistent;
 - f. contribute to preparing any ERA Ministerial conferences, convened and organised under the auspices of the Member States holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union;
4. In addition to its main mission, the Committee shall also stimulate the voluntary evaluation of national policy mix and promote mutual learning exercises relevant to the ERA.-For these activities it may arrange for the set-up of voluntary ad-hoc temporary groups which shall carry out their work under the guidance of the Committee.
5. The Committee shall develop strategic interactions and coherence with other policy areas, in particular those related to the knowledge triangle; the Committee shall also strive to develop interactions and synergies with other relevant policy areas when appropriate.

Membership and observers

6. The Committee shall consist of two high level representatives responsible for research and innovation policies from each Member State, and the Commission (the "Members").
7. The Committee may invite representatives of the countries associated to the Framework Programme to participate in its meetings as observers for relevant agenda items. It may also invite other observers, including Members of the European Parliament when relevant items so require.

The Committee shall meet regularly, at least four times a year.

Organisation

8. The Committee shall be chaired by the Commission.
9. A Vice-Chair shall be elected among the Member States' representatives of the Committee by majority of its component members for a period of two years, renewable for another two year term.
10. The Secretariat of the Committee shall be provided by the General Secretariat of the Council.
11. The Committee shall have a Steering Board. It shall consist of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, assisted by the Commission services and the General Secretariat of the Council, a representative from each of the previous, present and next Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU, as well as up to two Members elected among Member States' representatives by majority of the Committee's component members for a period of 18 months.
12. The Vice-Chair of the Committee shall act as the Chair of the Steering Board. The Steering Board shall prepare the provisional annual Work Programme and draft agendas of the Committee meetings, according to the rules of procedure. After the agreement between the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Committee, these shall be submitted to the Committee for adoption.
13. The Steering Board shall rely upon the support of the Commission Services.
14. The Committee shall keep overview of other ERA related groups, which it shall cooperate with and consult, as necessary to attain its objectives. It can also base its deliberations on input from these groups. The Committee may also create temporary ad-hoc working groups with specific mandates to deal with questions relevant to its mandate.
15. Records and opinions of the Committee shall as far as possible record the consensual opinion of its Members and shall also make mention of minority views.
16. The Committee shall draw up its rules of procedure."