

DECISIONS

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2021/2241

of 13 December 2021

on the composition and the mandate of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 179(1) and Article 240(3) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Council Resolution of 14 January 1974 ⁽¹⁾ established a Scientific and Technical Research Committee (Crest). That Resolution was replaced by Council Resolution of 28 September 1995 ⁽²⁾, which was then amended and completed, first by Council Resolution of 28 May 2010 ⁽³⁾, which changed the name of Crest to the 'European Research Area Committee', then by Council Resolution of 30 May 2013 ⁽⁴⁾ which changed that name to the 'European Research Area and Innovation Committee' (ERAC), and then by the Council conclusions of 1 December 2015 on the review of the European Research Area (ERA) advisory structure.
- (2) On 1 December 2020, the Council adopted conclusions on a new European Research Area ('new ERA'), defining it as a researchers-centred, value-based, excellence as well as impact-driven area, in which researchers, knowledge and technology are supported and can circulate freely.
- (3) On 26 November 2021, the Council adopted conclusions on the future governance of the new ERA, in which it highlighted that the new ERA and its priorities require the comprehensive redesign of the current ERA governance, and confirmed ERAC as the high-level strategic policy joint advisory committee, which is to provide early advice to the Council, the Commission and the Member States on strategic research and innovation (R&I) policy issues.
- (4) The Council agreed to revise ERAC's mandate, in order to reflect the governance of the new ERA and to limit the membership of ERAC to representatives from the Member States and from the Commission who have a high executive level of responsibility for R&I policies. The Council also acknowledged the added value of the co-chairing of ERAC by such representatives of the Member States and of the Commission.
- (5) ERAC's mandate should therefore be revised,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. The revised mandate of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee is hereby adopted.
2. The text of the revised mandate is set out in the Annex.

⁽¹⁾ Council Resolution of 14 January 1974 on the coordination of national policies and the definition of projects of interest to the Community in the field of science and technology (OJ C 7, 29.1.1974, p. 2).

⁽²⁾ Council Resolution of 28 September 1995 on Crest (OJ C 264, 11.10.1995, p. 4).

⁽³⁾ Council Resolution of 28 May 2010 on developments in the governance of the European Research Area (ERA) – see document ST 10255/10 at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu>.

⁽⁴⁾ Council Resolution of 30 May 2013 on the advisory work for the European Research Area – see document ST 10331/13 at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu>.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 13 December 2021.

For the Council
The President
J. BORRELL FONTELLES

ANNEX

Mandate of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC)

TASKS OF THE COMMITTEE

Article 1

1. The European Research Area and Innovation Committee ('the Committee') is a high-level strategic policy joint advisory committee, providing early advice to the Council, the Commission and the Member States on strategic research and innovation (R&I) policy issues.
2. The Committee's tasks shall include the following:
 - (a) to advise on strategic policy orientation and future trends that require the refinement of Union and national, including regional, R&I policies, including on the current and the next Union R&I Framework Programme and other relevant R&I-driven Union initiatives;
 - (b) to initiate updates of the ERA policy agenda, by providing early strategic advice informed, among other things, by consideration of the progress made in ongoing ERA actions;
 - (c) to reflect and provide advice on new policy demands which fulfil the ERA policy agenda criteria, throughout the implementation of the ERA policy agenda;
 - (d) to interact with governance and coordination structures at a similar level in other relevant policy areas, such as higher education and industry.

Article 2

The Committee shall provide its advice, and deliver opinions and reports, at the request of the Council or the Commission or on its own initiative.

COMPOSITION

Article 3

1. The members of the Committee shall be the Member States and the Commission ('members').
2. Each member shall appoint up to two representatives to the Committee who shall have a high executive level of responsibility for R&I policies.
3. A member who is unable to attend a Committee meeting may appoint a replacement for that meeting or delegate his or her functions to another member. The co-Chairs and the Secretariat of the Committee shall be informed thereof in writing before the meeting.

CHAIRPERSONS AND SECRETARIAT

Article 4

1. The Committee shall be co-chaired by a Member State representative and a Commission representative.
2. The Committee shall, by a majority of its members, elect a co-Chair from among the representatives of the Member States. The term of office of such co-Chair shall be for a period of three years, renewable once.
3. The Member State whose representative is appointed as co-Chair of the Committee and the Commission shall have one additional representative on the Committee for the co-Chair's period of office.
4. The co-Chairs shall have no voting rights.

Article 5

In the event of one of the co-Chairs being unable to fulfil the duties as co-Chair, that co-Chair shall appoint a replacement in agreement with the other co-Chair.

Article 6

The General Secretariat of the Council shall provide the Committee's secretariat services.

PROCEEDINGS

Article 7

If a vote is requested, opinions and reports shall be adopted by simple majority of the members. Each member shall have one vote. The Committee shall report on minority or dissenting views expressed in the course of the discussion.

Article 8

Only members may speak during the Committee meetings. However, in exceptional circumstances, the co-Chairs may agree otherwise.

Article 9

Representatives of countries associated to the R&I Union Framework Programme, as well as of relevant third countries, external experts and stakeholders may be invited to relevant Committee meetings, as appropriate, for specific agenda items and in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

Article 10

The Committee may, in duly justified cases, entrust *ad hoc* temporary Task Forces with specific tasks.

Article 11

1. The Committee shall be convened twice a year. If the situation so requires, the co-Chairs shall also convene a special Committee meeting.
2. Committee meetings shall normally be held in Brussels, but may be hosted by the country holding the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

Article 12

1. The Committee shall have a Steering Board. The Steering Board shall consist of the ERAC co-Chairs and one representative of each of the Member States of the incumbent and the subsequent Trio Presidencies of the Council of the European Union.
2. The Steering Board shall select and prepare topics for the strategic discussions of the Committee, supported, as necessary, by the *ad hoc* Task Forces of the Committee.

Article 13

The Commission shall inform the Committee of the work of the ERA Forum on a regular basis.

Article 14

The Committee shall adopt its own Procedural Arrangements in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.
