



European Research Council
Scientific Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL 80th PLENARY MEETING Videoconference, 29-30 April 2021

MINUTES

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON (ERC President ad Interim), Prof. Genevieve ALMOUZNI, Prof. Manuel ARELLANO, Prof. Paola BOVOLenta, Prof. Margaret BUCKINGHAM, Prof. Eveline CRONE, Prof. Ben FERINGA, Prof. Mercedes GARCIAL ARENAL, Prof. Gerd GIGERENZER, Prof. Liselotte HØJGAARD, Prof. Dirk INZE, Prof. Andrzej JAJSZCZYK, Prof. Eystein JANSEN, Prof. Michael KRAMER, Prof. Rodrigo MARTINS, Prof. Kurt MEHLHORN, Prof. Barbara ROMANOWICZ, Prof. Nicola SPALDIN, Prof. Jesper SVEJSTRUP, Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Prof. Alice VALKÁROVÁ and Prof. Milena ŽIC FUCHS.

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Waldemar KUTT, Jose LABASTIDA, Anthony LOCKETT, Mila BAS-SANCHEZ, Angela LIBERATORE, Laurence MOREAU, Niki ATZOULATOU, Dirk COSTENS, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Martin PENNY, Philippe CUPERS, Anisoara ULCELUSE-PIRVAN, Nikola CAR, Alice RAJEWSKY, Gwennael JOLIFF-BOTREL, Ben TURNER, Laura PONTIGGIA, Matteo RAZZANELLI, Dace RAMBAKA, Dagmar MEYER, Anna PELAGOTTI, Elena TOMA, Elena VOLPI, Ludmila OLIVERIUSOVÁ, Madeleine DRIELSMA, Samantha CHRISTEY, Noëlie AUVERGNE, Marcin MONKO, Monika POLINSKA-GENTENS, Francesca SGRITTA, Monique SMAIHI, David KRASA, Lino PAULA, Fiona KERNAN, David KURZ, Carlos GALVEZ, Katja MEINKE, Sabine SIMMROSS, Eleni ZIKA, Severina SHOPOVA, Brigitte ETIENNE.

Chairs of the meeting: Prof Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON (ERC President Ad Interim)

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency.

Thursday 29 April 2021

1. Welcome of ScC Members, Plans and Goals of Meeting

The meeting took place via videoconferencing for all participants. Prof Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON welcomed everyone and highlighted some main recent developments. He also welcomed two new Heads of Unit at the ERCEA, Ms Gwennael JOLIFF-BOTREL (D3) and Mr. Bernardus TUBBING (B1). In addition, he noted that the position of Head of Unit B5 (SH Unit) is open and the selection procedure is ongoing.

2. Adoption of the Agenda of the 80th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

The Draft Agenda of the meeting was approved by the Scientific Council (ScC).

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 79th Plenary Meeting

The ScC approved the Draft Minutes of its 79th plenary meeting.

4. Action Points Summary of the 79th Plenary Meeting

The ERCEA informed the ScC on the state of play of the various action points from the previous ScC plenary meeting in December. It was noted that the action points have either been completed or are work in progress.

5. Update on Recent Meetings and Activities

The ERC Interim President reported on his recent meetings and activities, including among others the Board meeting on 23 March 2021. In addition, the ERC Interim President noted the Workshop

organised on 16 April to Honour the Memory of Theodore PAPAZOGLU by the Greek Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH). Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS added that the event was very good and is still available to watch on Youtube ([Workshop to Honor the Memory of Theodore Papazoglou - YouTube](#)).

Furthermore, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON highlighted his recent meeting with the new Director General of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), Mr. Stephan QUEST. Also, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON mentioned recent developments as regards the association of Switzerland to the Framework Programme, which may be delayed. In addition, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON noted that things are progressing as regards the organisation of the ERC 10.000th grantee.

What is more, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON met with the Slovenian Minister for Science, Education and Sport, Dr. Simona KUSTEC.

In addition, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON mentioned as significant improvement his regular contacts with DG-RTD's Deputy Director General, Patrick CHILD, who has been assigned as a referent for ERC. He also noted his productive weekly meetings with Commissioner Mariya GABRIEL.

Prof. Eveline CRONE reported from recent meetings she attended. Those included a high level policy event for the start of Horizon Europe in the Netherlands on 4 March, where she participated in a one-hour table discussion with the Dutch Minister of Science Ingrid VAN ENGELSHOVEN and the Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Mona KEIJZER. The live streamed and highly interactive event has received a lot of attention via social media.

Moreover, Prof. Eveline CRONE attended the Final Panel Chairs Meeting on 9 March where she chaired the session on remote referees, as well as the general plenary session. In addition, on 11 March Prof. Eveline CRONE gave a presentation on the ERC to IGLO, with a focus on gender issues. Finally, on 31 March, Prof. Eveline CRONE gave a keynote speech at SISSA in Trieste on the occasion of the opening of the academic year at the invitation of Prof. Stefano RUFFO. The presentation took place in the presence of the Italian Minister of Universities and Research, Ms Maria Cristina MESSA.

Prof. Andrzej JAJSZCZYK reported from recent meetings and events that he attended. He noted that on 19 March he attended an event organised by the Polish NCPs on the support to scientific careers in Horizon Europe where he gave a presentation on the ERC. Moreover, on 16 April the launch event of Horizon Europe in Poland took place in the form of a high level conference. The Polish Deputy Prime Minister, who is also responsible for development, labour and technology, took part in it as well as Commissioner Mariya GABRIEL who gave an opening pre-recorded speech mentioning the ERC.

Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS reported from his recent meetings and events. Those included the General Assembly of the European Network of Research Integrity Offices on 24 March where he presented the ERC and the ERC's policy on Conflicts of Interest. Moreover, he attended the Assembly of the Global Biodata Coalition (GBC) as decided by the ERC Scientific Council at its March plenary.

Prof. Geneviève ALMOUZNI reported that she had represented the ERC at the Gender Summit, which took place on 14-16 April. Furthermore, she noted her participation at an event organised by the French research organisation INSERM that focused on stimulating senior researchers to apply for ERC grants.

Prof. Michael KRAMER noted his recent participation in a meeting, together with Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, with a Thai delegation interested in establishing connections with ERC.

6. State of Play in the Preparation of Horizon Europe

The ERCEA gave an update on the state of play of the Horizon Europe preparations, including information on the recent developments as regards the reporting templates discussions and the adoption of Horizon Europe and the establishment of the ERC, as well as an update on the association of third countries to the Framework Programme and the state of play of the ERC Rules of Submission and Evaluation.

7. Results of the 2020 Exercise of the Qualitative Evaluation of Completed ERC Projects

The ERCEA gave an update to the ScC as regards the outcome of the qualitative evaluation of completed projects 2020 (SAP 2020).

8. New Members of Working Groups and Standing Committees

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON introduced the point and reminded the ScC that in 2019 the ScC looked into revising the composition and working methods of its Working Groups. Prof. Eveline CRONE and Prof. Kurt MEHLHORN were leading the Task Force on that. Given that several new ScC members have joined the ScC recently, the ScC agreed the renewed membership of its Standing Committees and WGs, including the following members per group:

- **Standing Committee on Panels (SCoP):**
 - Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON (Chair)
 - Eveline CRONE
 - Andrzej JAJSZCZYK
 - Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS
 - Manuel ARELLANO
 - Margaret BUCKINGHAM
 - Michael KRAMER
- **Standing Committee on Conflicts of Interest, Scientific Misconduct, and Ethics (SCoIME):**
 - Eveline CRONE (Chair)
 - Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON
 - Andrzej JAJSZCZYK
 - Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS
 - Mercedes GARCÍA ARENAL
 - Barbara ROMANOWICZ
 - Dirk INZE
- **Standing Committee for Programme Impact Monitoring and Evaluation (SC PRIME):**
 - Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS (Chair)
 - Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON
 - Eveline CRONE
 - Andrzej JAJSZCZYK
 - Gerd GIGERENZER
 - Eystein JANSEN
 - Jesper SVEJSTRUP
- **Working Group on Widening European Participation:**
 - Andrzej JAJSZCZYK (Chair)
 - Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON
 - Geneviève ALMOUZNI
 - Mercedes GARCÍA ARENAL
 - Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS
 - Alice VALKÁROVÁ
- **Working Group on Open Access, Research Data Management and Open Science more broadly:**
 - Paola BOVOLENTA (Chair)
 - Manuel ARELLANO
 - Margaret BUCKINGHAM
 - Barbara ROMANOWICZ
 - Jesper SVEJSTRUP
 - Milena ŽIC FUCHS
 - Nicola SPALDIN
- **Working Group on Gender Issues:**
 - Barbara ROMANOWICZ (Chair)
 - Geneviève ALMOUZNI
 - Manuel ARELLANO
 - Paola BOVOLENTA
 - Michael KRAMER

- Liselotte HØJGAARD
- Rodrigo MARTINS
- **Working group on Innovation and Relations with Industry:**
 - Kurt MEHLHORN (Chair)
 - Geneviève ALMOUZNI
 - Ben FERINGA
 - Andrzej JAJSZCZYK
 - Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS
 - Milena ŽIC FUCHS
 - Dirk INZE
- **Working Group Science Behind the Projects:**
 - Michael KRAMER (Chair)
 - Mercedes GARCÍA ARENAL
 - Gerd GIGERENZER
 - Eystein JANSEN
 - Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS
 - Liselotte HØJGAARD
 - Dirk INZE.

9. Update from the ScC Standing Committees and Working Groups

The various Standing Committees and WGs that met recently reported on their activities.

10. Update on Work Programme 2022

The ERCEA reported on the state of play of the Work Programme 2022. It was noted that the text as established by the ScC had been transmitted to DG-RTD by the ERC Interim President on 30 March. The next step is its adoption by the European Commission, after an Inter-Services Consultation (ISC) gives all Directorates General a chance to comment on the draft and the Programme Committee to ask questions.

11. ERC Contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe

The point was introduced by the ERC Interim President. He noted that a decision has been taken some time ago at a high political level on the initiative of the French President Emmanuel MACRON to organise a Conference on the Future of Europe. Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON has been discussing with the Heads of Cabinets of the three Commission Vice-Presidents who have been put in charge of the conference, as well as with EP representatives and the Portuguese Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Manuel HEITOR to make the topic of research and innovation visible on the agenda of the conference.

Furthermore, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON highlighted the list of nine themes that have been agreed for the conference. Those include the following: Climate change and the environment; Health; A stronger economy, social justice and jobs; EU in the world; Values and rights, Rule of Law, Security; Digital transformation; EU democracy; Migration; Education, culture, youth and sport and an extra 10th topic called Other ideas. In addition, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON noted that an Advisory Board will be established for the conference. The ScC then discussed possible ways for the ERC to contribute to the conference and in particular for the ERC Scientific Council to mobilise the involvement of the scientific communities in the preparation.

Friday 30 April 2021

12. Communication Activities Update and Forthcoming Events

The ERCEA Communications Unit reported on recent communication activities. It was noted that the Communications team is in the final stages of preparation of the ERC 10.000th grantee announcement and the celebrations of the ERC 10.000 grantees. All ScC members are welcome to join ERC and celebrate. A high-level number of speakers has been organised, including the President of the European Commission, the President of the European Parliament and the Portuguese Minister of

Science, Technology and Higher Education, Manuel HEITOR, on behalf of the Council's Presidency. Also, Commissioner Mariya GABRIEL will intervene live in the event as well as the Chair of the ITRE Committee of the European Parliament. Moreover, a social media campaign will be launched next Thursday, in addition to the 10.000th grantee campaign. What is more, audio podcasts and various communication materials have been prepared, such as a modern and dynamic mini website, text interviews, original photos and a teaser video. The Communications team invited the ScC members to share on social media all of the above.

Furthermore, the Communications team has updated the information about the projects funded by ERC and the relevant data on the ERC website. The projects and data have been the most popular part of the website. The idea has been to make it more visual and interactive for the website visitors.

The ScC was informed that the Advanced grant call results publication has generated various reactions in online and print media. There has been good media coverage (250 published articles within the first week).

The ScC was also informed on the state of play of the preparations for the next edition of the Public Engagement with Research Award Ceremony to be concluded in 2022.

Finally, the ScC members were informed that the Communications Unit has also been working together with the ERCEA Scientific Department on the ERC COVID-19 session for the EU Research & Innovation Days.

13. Operational Issues Reporting: Evaluation Analysis

– Update on calls

The ERCEA gave an update on the state of play of the 2021 calls, namely the StG and the CoG calls, which were the very first calls launched under Horizon Europe.

- Follow-up (Action Points 8 and 9 of the March Plenary) on the participation of researchers from Widening Countries

The ERCEA Scientific Department shared with the ScC some information as regards the participation of researchers hosted in Widening Countries and the participation of researchers that are nationals of Widening Countries.

14. The Future of Panel Meetings

The ERCEA Scientific Department presented some options on future possible panel meetings' arrangements to the ScC.

15. Any Other Business

Evaluation panel meetings in Fall 2021

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON asked the ScC's agreement to continue with the remote evaluation planning in Fall 2021 for the StG call Step 2 in October and the CoG call Step 1 panel meetings, as well as for the Initial Panel Chairs Meeting for the AdG call, scheduled to take place on 16 September. Given the uncertainty of the situation with the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was noted that this would be the safest option and also it would allow the ERCEA to provide clarity to the panel members who need to organise their planning and contact them on time.

The ScC members agreed that the above-mentioned evaluation meetings should be organised remotely.

Farewell to Dirk COSTENS, Head of Unit D1

The ERCEA Director, Waldemar KÜTT and Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON thanked Dirk COSTENS for all his dedication and hard work during his involvement in the ERCEA as now the time has come for him to retire. His persistent approach to problem solving has been much appreciated. Dirk COSTENS noted that in his 30 years of service in the Commission ERC has been the best place to work for and he has done so with great pleasure. He also added that ERC is absolutely necessary for the future of Europe.

Final Panel Chairs Meeting

Prof. Margaret BUCKINGHAM reminded the ScC that a lot of useful feedback has been noted from the Final Panel Chairs Meeting in March and the ScC should further discuss it at a ScC plenary meeting. Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON confirmed the importance of the input given by the panel chairs.

12:00 Close of the Meeting