



European Research Council
Scientific Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

69th PLENARY MEETING, Brussels

26 February 2019

MINUTES

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Prof Manuel ARELLANO, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, Prof Paola BOVOLENTA, Prof Eveline CRONE, Prof Ben FERINGA, Prof. Andrzej JAJSZCZYK, Prof. Michael KRAMER, Prof. Kurt MEHLHORN, Prof. Barbara ROMANOWICZ, Prof. Martin STOKHOF, Prof. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Prof. Janet THORNTON, Prof. Isabelle VERNOS, Prof Michel WIEVIORKA and Prof. Fabio ZWIRNER.

Scientific Council members excused (in alphabetical order): Prof. Margaret BUCKINGHAM, Prof. Tomas JUNGWIRTH and Prof. Giulio SUPERTI-FURGA.

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Pablo AMOR, Mechtild MAY, Jose LABASTIDA, Theodore PAPAZOGLU, George-Eric TE KOLSTE, Angela LIBERATORE, Laurence MOREAU, Niki ATZOULATOU, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Martin PENNY, Michel VANBIERVLIT, Anthony LOCKETT, Thierry PROST, Carmen GARCIA FERNANDEZ, Laura PONTIGGIA, Elena TOMA Matteo RAZZANELLI, Ben TURNER, Mike MUGABUSHAKA, Madeleine DRIELSMA, Severina SHOPOVA, Christine SCHIEL, Brigitte ETIENNE, Diane BASTIANELLI.

Chair of the meeting: Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON, ERC President.

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency.

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

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON welcomed everyone and outlined the goals of the meeting. He welcomed two new ScC members, Prof. Manuel ARELLANO and Prof. Ben FERINGA who briefly introduced themselves. The third new ScC member, Prof. Lene VESTERGAARD-HAU, could not attend the meeting for administrative reasons. Furthermore, Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON excused Prof. Tomas JUNGWIRTH, Prof. Margaret BUCKINGHAM and Prof. Giulio SUPERTI-FURGA who could not attend the plenary meeting. The ScC was also informed that Prof. Christopher CLARK has decided to resign from the ScC.

2. Adoption of Agenda of the 69th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

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

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 68th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council in Brussels in December 2018

The Scientific Council approved the Draft Minutes of the previous plenary meeting.

4. Action Points Summary of the 68th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

The ERCEA/A1 informed the Scientific Council of the state of play of the action points from the previous Scientific Council plenary meeting.

5. Update on Recent Meetings and Activities

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON reported to the ScC members on his recent trips and meetings and in particular his participation at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos and the AAAS Annual meeting, held in Washington this year. During both trips he met many high-level stakeholders and had fruitful exchanges. As in previous years, the ERC's participation at WEF was successful.

6. Update on the Negotiations of the Horizon Europe Proposal

The ERCEA/A1 reported on the state of play of the negotiations. The Commission had adopted its proposal for the EU budget for 2021–2027 in May last year and its proposals for the individual programmes including Horizon Europe in early June. The original aim had been to agree the overall budget and the programmes before the European Parliament elections in May 2019, but the European Council had already decided that it would not agree on the budget before Autumn 2019.

Since the Commission's proposals were put forward, the European Parliament and the Member States have been negotiating the detailed content of the various programmes, including Horizon Europe.

The ERC President noted that the 94 G€ budget proposed by the Commission for Horizon Europe and the 16.6 G€ proposed for the ERC concern a European Union consisting of 27 Member States (and not 28), making the increase significantly higher.

7. Communication Activities Update

The ERCEA/A2 reported on recent communication activities and highlighted upcoming opportunities for members of the Scientific Council to get involved in the ERC's external communication. A communications training will be organised for ScC members on 19 June, which will focus on media interviews, public speaking and science communication.

In addition, the ScC was informed that the ERC will take part in the European Researchers' Night on 27-28 September and communication activities are being planned around the ScC October plenary meeting in Krakow.

Finally, the preparations for the ERC policy event, to take place on 3 December, are advancing.

8. Horizon 2020 Participant Survey: Report and Action Plan

The ERCEA/Dept D gave an update on the follow-up of the Horizon 2020 Participant Survey Report and Action Plan. The ScC was reminded that overall the 2018 beneficiaries survey yielded a very positive result and the participants' satisfaction was high.

9. Remit of the Standing Committee for Programme Impact Monitoring and Evaluation

Following the ERC Board meeting of 18 January 2019, the ERCEA/A1 presented to the ScC the proposal for the constitution of the Standing Committee for Programme Impact Monitoring and Evaluation (SC PRIME) for adoption.

The delegated tasks were discussed and the following were approved by the ScC:

- To guide the implementation of the ERC Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and review the outcome of the performed activities, including programme resource allocation;
- To consolidate, prioritise and present to the Scientific Council new proposals for monitoring and evaluation activities, in particular concerning the assessment of the scientific impact of the programme;
- To consider and recommend updates of the ERC overall scientific strategy on the basis of findings coming from studies commissioned under its responsibility; and
- To consider and propose further adjustments to the ERC M&E Strategy based on experience and best practices of other research funding organisations, and taking into account legislative changes, when appropriate.

Finally, as regards its composition, it was agreed that the Committee would have the following membership: the ERC President and Vice-Presidents together with three more ScC members,

each representing a domain. The three additional members of the Committee will be nominated once the global revision of the Working Groups and Committees functioning is discussed. Prof. Janet THORNTON agreed to Chair the Committee on the request of the ERC President who formally delegated the task of Chair to her.

10. Reporting from Standing Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups

The ERCEA/A1 reported, on behalf of the Widening European Participation (WEP) WG, on some Draft Modifications to the ERC ScC Guidelines for the Visiting Fellowship Programmes. Following a discussion, the changes were agreed by the ScC. The revised version of the guidelines will consequently be uploaded on the ERC web site.

The Standing Committees on Conflicts of Interest (CoIME) and Panels (CoP) reported on their recent activities.

11. Organisation of a ScC Members Retreat (Initial Conclusions from the Workshop)

Prof. Jean-Pierre BOURGUIGNON proposed to extend the ScC April plenary meeting with one day and have a Retreat of the ScC in Lisbon on 5 April afternoon and 6 April morning. The proposal was agreed by the ScC.

The ERCEA/Dept B reported from the Workshop with 2017 and 2018 Panel Chairs (and 2019 Synergy Panel Chairs) on evaluation and funding, which took place the week before. It was noted that, before the Workshop, the Final Panel Chairs meeting with all Chairs of the 2018 calls, took place. During the Final Panel Chairs meeting a discussion on recommendations by the panels also took place.

As regards participation at the Workshop, the very high level of engagement of the Panel Chairs was to be noted. It was a big exercise, which required a lot of valuable support from many Scientific Officers (SOs), but it was certainly worthwhile in view of the high quality of the exchanges and in relation with the preparation of the forthcoming retreat.

12. Operational Issues Reporting: Evaluation Analysis

The ERCEA/Dept B gave an update on the state of play of ongoing evaluations and in particular the **AdG 2018 call**.

13. Any Other Business

The ScC held a closed session under this agenda item.