



European Research Council
Scientific Council

Established by the European Commission

ERC SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL 84th PLENARY MEETING 15-16 February 2022, Videoconference MINUTES

Scientific Council members present (in alphabetical order): Maria LEPTIN (ERC President), Genevieve ALMOUZNI, Paola BOVOLENTA, Eveline CRONE, Ben FERINGA, Mercedes GARCIAL ARENAL, Gerd GIGERENZER, Liselotte HØJGAARD, Dirk INZE, Andrzej JAJSZCZYK, Eystein JANSEN, Kurt MEHLHORN, Nicola SPALDIN, Jesper SVEJSTRUP, Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Alice VALKÁROVÁ and Milena ŽIC FUCHS.

ERC Executive Agency staff present: Laurence MOREAU, Jose LABASTIDA, Anthony LOCKETT, Mila BAS-SANCHEZ, Angela LIBERATORE, Eleni ZIKA, Victor LOSADA, Josefina ENFEDAQUE, Philippe CUPERS, Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY, Lino PAULA, Soudaina WALA, Niki ATZOULATOU, Anisoara ULCELUSE-PIRVAN, Anita KUCHARSKA, Nikola CAR, Philippe VIJGHEN, Gwennael JOLIFF-BOTREL, Ben TURNER, Laura PONTIGGIA, Dace RAMBAKA, Dagmar MEYER, Anna PELAGOTTI, Elena TOMA, Elena VOLPI, Eleni CHATZICHRISTOU, Madeleine DRIELSMA, Samantha CHRISTEY, Noëlie AUVERGNE, Marcin MONKO, Alice RAJEWSKY, Monique SMAIHI, David KRASA, Fiona KERNAN, Jhansi KOTA, Simona ROMAGNOLI, David KURZ, Srdjan PERKO, Rachel HARVEY KELLY, Line FREDSLUND VOLKERS, Konstantia VIGLI-PAPADAKI, Angela WITTELSBERGER, Janne SALO, Rumen TINKOV, Giuseppe BAMBARA, Alejandro RODRIGUEZ RAMOS, Miguel PESQUERA, Erica MORI, Jaime ROSER CHINCHILLA, Agni KORTSIDAKI, Katja MEINKE, Sabine SIMMROSS, Andrea POLYAK, Severina SHOPOVA and Brigitte ETIENNE.

Chairs of the meeting: Maria LEPTIN (ERC President)

Rapporteur: Severina SHOPOVA, ERC Executive Agency.

Tuesday 15 February 2022

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

The meeting took place via videoconferencing for all participants. The ERC President welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the main points to be discussed during the plenary meeting. Maria LEPTIN also welcomed Laurence MOREAU as acting Director as of 1 January 2022 and noted that one ScC member resigned for Conflict of Interest reasons. The ERC President informed the ScC that the selection processes for a new ERCEA Director was ongoing and good candidates had been pre-selected for the interviews. The ERCEA Acting Director reminded the ScC of recent appointments in the ERCEA Management team.

2. Adoption of the Agenda of the 84th Plenary Meeting of the ERC Scientific Council

The Draft Agenda of the meeting was approved by the Scientific Council (ScC). One point had been added under any other business, related to distribution of additional money from associated countries.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 83rd Plenary Meeting

The ScC approved the Draft Minutes from the 83rd plenary meeting.

– ***New Format of the minutes***

The ERC President explained that she had been working with the ERCEA staff to simplify and shorten the Minutes.

4. Action Points Summary of the 83rd Plenary Meeting

The ERCEA informed the ScC on the state of play of the various action points from the previous ScC plenary meeting in October.

5. Update on Recent Meetings and Activities

Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS reminded the ScC of the following upcoming meetings, where he would represent the ERC: Global Biodata Coalition on 1 March and HIRO (Heads of International Biomedical Research Organisations) meeting on 5 April.

Andrzej JAJSZCZYK reported that he attended several meetings in Poland where he had represented the ERC. Those included a webinar for an ERC Information day, organised by ERC and the Polish NCP where he had given a presentation on ERC and widening activities. The next ERC webinar would focus on Slovakia and take place on 23 February.

Maria LEPTIN reported from her recent meetings, as follows:

- A conference in Paris on Open Science organised by the French Presidency with the participation of the DORA Chair, representatives of the Initiative for Science in Europe and others from the publishing world, as well as important politicians. Maria LEPTIN had taken part in a panel with DG RTD's Director General and Marc SCHILTZ from Science Europe.
- Regular meetings with Commissioner Mariya GABRIEL who continued to be supportive of ERC;
- 50^{ème} Anniversaire du Congrès de la Conférence des Présidents d'Universités in Paris, on the margins of which Maria LEPTIN had good exchanges with the French Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Frédérique VIDAL;
- Meeting with the Turkish Ambassador to Brussels during which freedom of research had been discussed;
- Meeting with Katja BECKER, President of the DFG during which shared concerns about losing research freedom and how to approach research assessment had been discussed.

6. State of play of Horizon Europe implementation

– ***Update on the association of third countries***

The ERCEA reminded the ScC of the list of countries that had already signed an association agreement. As regards the UK and Switzerland, there had been no progress recently, including no ongoing talks with Switzerland. Some campaigning had been organised by the scientific community, pleading to keep science out of politics. As regards category "d" countries and association to the framework programme, the ERCEA noted that Canada had now expressed concerns about joining the ERC calls.

• ***Update on reporting templates***

The ERCEA reported to the ScC on the state of play of the reporting templates.

7. ERC Work Programme 2023

The ERCEA reminded the ScC of the state of play of the Draft Work Programme 2023 and had an exchange with the ScC on outstanding points.

8. Update from the ScC Standing Committees and Working Groups

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

– ***Standing Committee on Panels***

Maria LEPTIN reported that the Committee had lost three members and they needed to be replaced. Geneviève ALMOUZNI had agreed to join as representative of the LS domain and Mercedes GARCIA-ARENAL of the SH domain. Nicola SPALDIN had been asked and accepted to represent the PE domain. The three nominations were agreed by the ScC.

– **Standing Committee COIME**

Eveline CRONE noted that CoIME needed one more member and Liselotte HØJGAARD had agreed to join the Committee. The ScC approved her nomination.

– **Standing Committee PRIME**

Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS reported from the kick off meeting for the thematic studies of ERC impact on the progress of science and other ongoing activities of the Committee.

– **WG on Open Science**

Paola BOVOLenta reported on the Open Science WG activities and stressed that with the departure of several ScC members the membership of the WG would need to be enhanced. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS had re-joined the WG to replace Jesper SVEJSTRUP, who had left as he had joined the GIWG. Nevertheless, the WG would need more representatives of the PE and SH domains.

– **WG Science Behind the Projects**

Dirk INZE reported from the SBP WG, including a reminder of the SBP calendar of activities.

– **WG on Innovation**

Kurt MEHLHORN reported on recent WG activities.

– **WG on Widening European Participation (WEP)**

Andrzej JAJSZCZYK reported from recent activities of the WEP WG.

– **Gender Issues WG (GDWG)**

Geneviève ALMOUZNI reported from recent activities of the GIWG, also noting that two ScC members recently joined the WG but one slot could still be filled.

9. Update from the ScC Task Force on Research Assessment

Maria LEPTIN updated the ScC on recent discussions at the TF on Research Assessment.

10. Communication Activities and Forthcoming Events

The ERCEA reported on recent activities, including the developments related to the Public Engagement with Research Award, the ERC Magazine and forthcoming webinars in widening countries. Information on the ERC 15th Anniversary event organized by CNRS on 28 February was shared with the ScC.

11. Update on the Conference on the Future of Europe

Maria LEPTIN and the ERCEA reminded the ScC members of the background on the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE). It was noted that originally the idea for the conference and engaging with the EU citizens had come from French President Emmanuel MACRON. One of the objectives of the conference had been highlighted as increasing the legitimacy of the EU but also searching for new ideas, through running a series of events and panels with citizens. As there had been no specific topic dedicated to research, out of the 9+1 topics identified on the online platform of the conference, the ScC promoted a campaign to motivate the scientific community to speak up. Various citizens and scientists have been supporting publicly some particular ideas related to research on the conference's platform. However, all efforts have not led to achieving a lot of traction. WGs per topic had been established, managed mainly by EU and national politicians. Their tasks would be to summarise all the ideas that have been put forward by the citizens. To that end, Maria LEPTIN reported from her recent meeting with Commission Vice-President Věra JOUROVÁ.

Wednesday 16 February 2022

12. Lump sums

The ERCEA Continuous Improvement project team gave an update to the ScC on Lump Sum project.

13. Continuous Improvement Exercise outcomes

– *ERCEA Feedback to Policy (F2) setup*

The ERCEA informed the ScC of the Knowledge Management Steering Committee (KMSC) launched in November 2021 and the Scientific Impact and F2P sector created on 1 December, both actions were direct outcomes of two Continuous Improvement projects.

– *ERCEA Knowledge Management Steering Committee*

The ERCEA informed the ScC on the state of play of the Knowledge Management Steering Committee (KMSC).

14. Operational Issues Reporting

– *Update on calls*

The ERCEA gave an update on the submission of StG 2022, CoG 2021 provisional results and the submission of PoC 2022 Deadline 1. The overall timeline of calls 2021 was shared with the ScC members.

15. Any Other Business

-Distribution of associated countries contributions between the calls

The ERCEA informed the ScC on the expected additional funds coming from Associated Countries. The ScC unanimously agreed to the 2021 additional credits amounting to €117 941 777.16 for the StG2021 call and in case some 2021 additional credits would remain available after exhausting the StG2021 reserve list, these would be allocated to CoG2021.

-Reimbursement of ScC members costs

The ERCEA informed the ScC members that a new team had been assigned the task of following up the reimbursements of the ScC members.