



Press release

7 September 2010

Prof. Mas-Colell steps down as Secretary General of the European Research Council

The European Commission has today confirmed the resignation of the Secretary General of the European Research Council, Professor Andreu Mas-Colell. He returns to his career as distinguished Professor of Economics at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona. He commented *"I'm most grateful to the Scientific Council of the ERC and the European Commission for the opportunity to become intensely involved in two of the causes I'm passionate about: Science and Europe. Doing so from the vantage point of the ERC, an institution which is bound to have a remarkable impact on the structure and the competitiveness of European science, has indeed been a privilege."*

EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Máire Geoghegan-Quinn commented that *"Professor Mas-Colell's contribution to the ERC has been most valuable and I should like to thank him warmly for his commitment to this new organisation set up by the Commission to further frontier research. I am very pleased that this distinguished scholar and professor will be continuing his work for research and innovation in Europe as Chair of the Commission's High-Level Panel on the Measurement of Innovation."*

ERC President Prof. Helga Nowotny said: *"It has been a great privilege and pleasure to work with Andreu and on behalf of the ERC Scientific Council I would like to thank him warmly for his excellent contribution as Secretary General. The ERC has profited from his knowledge and rich experience, and his departure is a great loss. Andreu's personal qualities, including his great sense of humour, will also be missed by us all, but we now wish him a brilliant continued career as distinguished scientist."*



Jack Metthey, European Research Council Executive Agency Director (*ad. int.*) added:
"As ERC Secretary General, Andreu was the Scientific Council's permanent representative in Brussels and greatly facilitated the interactions between the Scientific Council and the ERC Executive Agency. Being both a distinguished scientist and a sharp science and innovation policy maker, he also largely contributed to establishing the credibility of the organisation in a crucial phase. I look back on our excellent cooperation with great appreciation and wish him all the best for his future endeavours in the field of science and research."

Background information

Professor Mas-Colell took up the post as ERC Secretary General on 1 July 2009 and was elected for two and a half years. His resignation took effect on 1 September 2010. Prof Mas-Colell was the second Secretary General of the ERC and followed Professor Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker who held the post from the launch of the ERC in February 2007 till the end of his mandate in June 2009.

Professor Mas-Colell continues his positions as Professor of Economics at Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona and Chairman of the Barcelona Graduate School of Economics. Formerly he was Professor of Economics at Harvard University (1981-96) and Professor of Economics and Mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley (1972-80). In 2006, he was President of the European Economic Association. He is also known for his highly successful initiatives as Minister of Universities, Research and the Information Society in Catalonia (2000-2003). He established a series of institutes, research infrastructures and a publicly funded innovative foundation (ICREA) for recruiting international top researchers. At the European level, Professor Mas-Colell took up the position as Chair of the High-Level Panel on the Measurement of Innovation in May 2010.

Set up in 2007, the European Research Council (ERC) is the first pan-European research funding organisation for frontier research. It aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe by supporting the very best, creative researchers. The ERC funds both top senior scientists ("ERC Advanced Grants") and younger, early-career researchers ("ERC Starting Grants"). Scientific excellence is the only selection criterion in the ERC's peer reviewed grant competitions. The ERC operates according to an "investigator-driven", or "bottom-up", approach and there are no thematic priorities.



Links

Prof. Mas-Colell's biography

<http://erc.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&topicID=481>

Press release on New Secretary General (2 July 2009)

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/Press_release_New_SecGen_02_07_09.pdf

ERC Scientific Council announcement (30 August 2006)

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/press_statement_erc_secgen_300806_en.pdf

Level Panel on the Measurement of Innovation

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/geoghegan-quinn/hlp/members/index_en.htm

ERC website

<http://erc.europa.eu>

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