



## The Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union 1 July – 31 December 2017

### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Estonia is holding the presidency of the Council of the EU for the first time over the second half of 2017. This is a worthy task for Estonia as it celebrates its anniversary – the centenary of the Republic of Estonia is in 2018. Our aim in the field of research and innovation during that time is **to increase the role of research in promoting societal and economic development in the EU.**

The main topic during the Estonian Presidency will be the **interim evaluation of the research and innovation programme Horizon 2020**. It is the largest research programme in the world (75 billion euros) and the interim evaluation provides essential input for designing the programme for the next period. During the discussions on Horizon 2020 interim evaluation results we want to contribute to the creation of a simpler and more coherent programme.

Estonia has two priorities that will be the focus points for political level discussions on Horizon 2020:

#### **1) Impact and value of research: providing rationale for investing in research and innovation**

In the midst of the debate of the future of EU, the Estonian Presidency aims to build a case for supporting ambitious investments in excellent and high-risk research and innovation. To achieve this, we want to build a stronger narrative on the broad impact and societal value of European excellent research that would speak to a wider audience at EU and national level. The results of the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 as well as a wide array of recent studies on impact will enable the Council to promote policies that support increased trust and impact between excellent research, innovation and society.

#### **2) Increased coherence and openness of EU research and innovation partnerships**

We aim to take forward the discussions of the next Framework Programme and contribute to creating a more coherent and accessible funding programme. In particular, we wish to focus on the role of partnering approach in the Framework Programme as we have witnessed increasing complexity of partnering instruments and initiatives in Horizon 2020. By partnering instruments, we mean Public-Public Partnerships (P2Ps), such as ERA-NETs, Article 185 programmes and Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs), Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), such as Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs), contractual Public-Private Partnerships (cPPP), Knowledge and



Innovation Communities (KICs) of European Institute of Innovation and Technology and FET Flagships. Based on these instruments, many new thematic initiatives have been launched in Horizon 2020. This has made the landscape difficult to navigate for Member States as well as participants, especially newcomers. Estonian Presidency will start a debate on how to apply the partnering approach more successfully and rationalize the landscape.

At the Council research working party we are planning in-depth discussions on several other key topics related to the Horizon 2020 interim evaluation, e.g. the ones specified in the H2020 regulation.

As the **main output of our presidency** we foresee Council conclusions on the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 and future orientations for the next Framework Programme.

#### **Key dates for work in Council:**

1. Informal meeting of Research Ministers, 25 July 2017, Tallinn;
2. RWP/ERAC meeting, 21-22 September, Tartu;
3. COMPET Council (research), 1 December 2017, Brussels.

#### **Key Presidency events:**

1. European Union Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS), 22-27 September, Tallinn;
2. Conference 'European Research Excellence - Impact and Value for Society', 12 October, Tallinn.  
*In addition to the official conference programme, side events will be hosted by European Research Council on Widening Participation on 11 October and SAPEA (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies) on Science for Policy on 13 October;*
3. Manufuture 2017, 24-25 October, Tallinn;
4. Conference on Nature-based solutions: From Innovation to Common-use, 24-26 October, Tallinn;
5. Conference on Embedding digital into societal challenges, 7 December, Brussels.

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