

EU Research Trends - May 2016

This month you can read about the EIC, Open Access, New e-commerce rules, the evaluation of the 2nd Health Programme and much more.

Trends

Update on the European Innovation Council (EIC)

The European Commission launched the Call for Ideas on a European Innovation Council in February this year. The call was open from 16 February to 29 April 2016 and sought proposals from all interested parties on how a European Innovation Council could be designed to improve Europe's capacity to generate and scale up breakthrough innovations.

The Commission received more than 1000 replies and 170 supporting documents were submitted in response to the call for ideas. A first analysis shows that over 80 % of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the lack of disruptive market-creating innovation is an obstacle to growth in Europe. Many commented that although there is a wealth of good ideas and skilled people and many promising start-ups, companies are struggling to scale up.

More than 80 % of the respondents believe that there are gaps in the EU's support for such disruptive market-creating innovation, and several respondents pointed to the difficulty of navigating the range of innovation funding options available. Many stakeholders also called for dedicated support for disruptive innovations and improved access to risk financing, while the idea of a European venture capital fund was mentioned a number of times. A significant number of respondents have emphasised that support should be more joined-up so that companies can find suitable support as they progress along the innovation value chain.

Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, expressed his satisfaction with the response to the consultation: "The excellent response to our call for ideas shows that there is huge interest in Europe's innovation community in the idea of a European Innovation Council, and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed. We are analysing the responses carefully in order to design a European Innovation Council that boosts innovations with the potential to create new markets."

The European Commission is analysing the submissions and will publish a feedback statement in June 2016.

Exclusive: EU moves toward European Innovation Council pilot plan According to [Science Business](#), a preliminary proposal would base the European Innovation Council on Horizon 2020's SME Instrument. Under this proposal - which could be subject to further change - the new council would be created via the

gradual morphing of Horizon 2020's SME Instrument into a programme with no predefined topics and quicker grant award times. Because of its relatively flexible legal basis, the SME Instrument is considered a good place to base the EIC pilot. This idea is still not made public and the Commission will probably not go further with a specific plan before the full analysis of all position papers is analysed into detail.

More information

More information on the [European Innovation Council](#).

To see the list of submitted ideas, please follow this [link](#).

The position paper from Aarhus University is available [here](#).

Scientific papers must be free to access - and to reuse - by 2020

The published outputs of all publicly-funded research must be accessible free of subscription charges and available for reuse, science ministers from across the EU agreed at the Competitiveness Council meeting on May 27.

Currently, less than a quarter of all scientific papers are accessible on an open access basis, with the results of most publicly funded research only available by subscribing to scientific journals.

Each member state will follow its own route to open access, via either the 'gold' path, where journals stop charging a subscription and instead charge authors for publishing their papers, or the 'green' route, in which researchers deposit articles in an online archive open to everyone.

Member states also agreed that the data behind the articles and research should be made publicly available and easy to reuse, with the caveat that data, which affects "intellectual property rights, security or privacy", can stay behind closed doors.

Exemptions to the rule, based on intellectual property, security or privacy concerns, will also need to be formalised.

Open science task force

To complement the move to open access, Carlos Moedas unveiled a **new 25-person open science task force**, made up of representatives from universities, companies, publishers, research institutes, funding organisations and libraries, to advise the European Commission on open science and help promote best practices.

Further information

For more information on the European Commission's policies on Open Science, please follow this [link](#).

New rules to attract non-EU students, researchers and interns to the EU

Harmonised EU entry and residence rules to make it easier and more attractive for people from third countries to study or do research at EU universities were approved

by Parliament on May 11. The new rules clarify and improve conditions for non-EU interns, volunteers, school pupils and au pairs.

The new rules merge two existing directives (one on students and one on researchers) to ensure that:

- students and researchers may stay at least nine months after finishing their studies or research in order to look for a job or to set up a business, which should also ensure that Europe benefits from their skills,
- students and researchers may move more easily within the EU during their stay. In future, they will not need to file a new visa application, but only to notify the member state to which they are moving, for example to do a one-semester exchange. Researchers will also be able to move for longer periods than those currently allowed,
- researchers have the right to bring their family members with them and these family members are entitled to work during their stay in Europe, and
- students have the right to work at least 15 hours a week.

The new directive also provides for uniform entry conditions and better protection for interns and volunteers under the European Volunteer Scheme during their stay. Optional provisions are foreseen for other volunteers, school pupils and third-country au pairs, who will be covered for the first time by an EU law.

The directive enters into force the day after its publication in the European Official Journal. Member states will then have two years in which to transpose its provisions into their national laws.

Commission proposes new e-commerce rules to help consumers and companies reap full benefit of the Single Market

Brussels, May 25 2016

The European Commission today tabled a package of measures to allow consumers and companies to buy and sell products and services online more easily and confidently across the EU.

Delivering on its [Digital Single Market](#) and [Single Market](#) strategies, the European Commission has presented a three-pronged plan to boost e-commerce by tackling geoblocking, making cross-border parcel delivery more affordable and efficient and promoting customer trust through better protection and enforcement.

The e-commerce package is composed of:

- A legislative proposal to address unjustified geoblocking and other forms of discrimination on the grounds of nationality, residence or establishment;

- A legislative proposal on cross-border parcel delivery services to increase the transparency of prices and improve regulatory oversight;
- A legislative proposal to strengthen enforcement of consumers' rights and guidance to clarify, among others, what qualifies as an unfair commercial practice in the digital world.

More information

The official press release is available [here](#).

Brexit: Financial consequences if the UK chooses to leave the EU

Britain would face trade barriers if it left the European Union and its single market, the EU's financial services commissioner Jonathan Hill said on May 23. Hill stepped up warnings on the consequences for the City of London financial district if Britain votes to leave the EU in the June 23 referendum.

“If Britain leaves it is certain that there will be barriers to trade and that will damage the British economy, jobs and growth,” Hill told students at the London School of Economics.

Read the full speech [here](#).

Ex-post evaluation of the 2nd Health Programme 2008-2013

An ex-post evaluation report was published on May 10 and assesses the main outcomes - both the achievements and areas for improvement, of the Commission's 2nd Health Programme which ran from 2008-2013. The recommendations will be taken into account to improve the implementation of the third Health Programme (2014-2020).

The evaluation found that the Programme delivered valuable outputs with a clear link to EU health policy priorities and national priorities. It also provided EU-added value, particularly linked with the exchange of best practice and information between EU countries, in areas such as rare diseases, cardiovascular diseases and safety of organs for donation. The evaluation also found improvements in the second health programme, as compared with the first one (2003-2007). However, the dissemination of action outputs was found to be varied, and reaching key stakeholders was not systematically ensured. The evaluation also underlined the need for improvement in transforming outputs into results and tangible impacts. Finally, while synergies with the EU research programme were shown, the report found that use of funding instruments such as structural funds could be improved. Read the full report [here](#).

For more information on the Commission's health programmes, please follow this [link](#).

Commission issues Country-Specific Recommendations and takes fiscal decisions

As part of the Spring 2016 European Semester package, the European Commission on May 18 proposed its 2016 [Country-Specific Recommendations](#), setting out its economic policy guidance for individual Member States for the next 12 to 18 months. Investment is still low compared to pre-crisis levels but is gaining traction, also helped by the Investment Plan for Europe. Faster progress on structural reforms is necessary to boost the recovery and raise the long-term growth potential of EU economies. All Member States need to pursue responsible fiscal policies and ensure growth-friendly composition of their budgets. The Member States have advanced reforms over the last year, but the pace of such progress needs to be accelerated to contribute, as it should, to jobs, growth and investment.

In addition to efforts already identified and ongoing at European level, this guidance focuses on priority reforms to strengthen the recovery of Member States' economies by [boosting investment, implementing structural reforms and pursuing fiscal responsibility](#).

The recommendations also reflect the Commission's efforts to make the European Semester of economic governance more effective and relevant. The Commission has for example proposed fewer recommendations with a focus on key economic and social priorities identified in its Annual Growth Survey 2016.

The Commission has also taken a number of fiscal decisions under the Stability and Growth Pact.

For more information

[Overview table of Member States in the European Semester Country-specific recommendations 2016](#)

Informal ministerial meeting about EU Urban Agenda

Brussels, May 30 2016

The European ministers for urban development met with EU partner countries and European stakeholders to endorse the Pact of Amsterdam as a new step in the further development of the Urban Agenda for the EU, and to launch the first thematic partnerships between European cities.

The idea behind the Urban Agenda for the EU is to deploy smart solutions to stimulate collaboration for growth, quality of life and innovation in European cities. This new method is designed to exploit the growth potential of cities to the full, to successfully tackle social challenges.

The informal ministerial meeting on urban development endorses the Pact of Amsterdam, which offers new potential for further development of the Urban Agenda for the EU. In thematic partnerships, the European Commission, member states, cities and other partners set about tackling urban issues with the aim of:

1. Improving European legislation (better regulation);

2. Achieving better access to and use of European funds;
3. Improving the sharing of knowledge and collaboration between cities.

Further information

[Towards an Urban agenda for the EU](#)
[The Urban agenda for the EU Factsheet](#)
[Pact of Amsterdam](#)

Update on the migration challenge

On 18 May 2016, the European Commission adopted its latest progress report on the EU's emergency relocation and resettlement schemes. Overall, progress remains unsatisfactory since the Commission's second report, despite signs of increased preparation for future action: few relocations have taken place since mid-April, though the pipeline of future relocations has been strengthened. Progress has been made on resettlement as part of the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, but must be accelerated to avoid migrants returning to irregular routes.

Relocation

In its First Report on Relocation and Resettlement on 16 March, the Commission set a target of relocating at least 20,000 persons by mid-May. This target has not been met. Only 355 additional persons have been relocated during the latest reporting period, bringing the total number of relocated applicants from Greece and Italy to 1500. Relocation efforts were again made by only a few Member States and associated Schengen States.

Resettlement

Based on the information received from the participating States, 6,321 people were resettled by 13 May 2016 under the resettlement scheme of 20 July 2015.

The number of resettlements from Turkey continues to increase as Member States finalise their assessments of files referred to them by Turkey, via the UNHCR. Since 4 April 2016, 177 Syrians have been resettled from Turkey. Sweden has received the largest number (55), followed by Germany (54), the Netherlands (52), Finland (11) and Lithuania (5). Another 723 applications have already been accepted and the applicants are waiting to be transferred to 7 different EU Member States.

In total, 19 Member States and 1 Associated State have indicated that they foresee over 12,000 places for resettlements from Turkey. Around 2,000 resettlements are currently planned between May and July 2016, subject to a corresponding number of Syrians being returned from Greece under the 1:1 scheme.

In order to address the migration crisis, the Commission has launched a call under the topic: [The European Union and the global challenge of migration](#). The research to address this challenge should focus on one or two of the following dimensions: 1) An

integrated approach to migration and development and 2) EU policy coherence and migration. The call is expected to open in October 2016.

More information

[Communication from the Commission: Third Report on Relocation and Resettlement](#)

For more information on the European Agenda on Migration, please follow this [link](#).

Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council, 30-31 May 2016

Main results

Youth

The Council adopted conclusions on the role of the youth sector in preventing and combating the violent radicalisation of young people. The conclusions highlight the invaluable contribution that youth work, voluntary and cultural activities and sport can make in reaching out to young people who might otherwise be more vulnerable to radicalisation. They also stress the need to undermine and challenge existing violent extremist ideologies and to counterbalance them with appealing non-violent alternatives and to support parents, siblings, peers and others in contact with young people who are at risk, providing them with information on existing support systems and counselling possibilities. Ministers discussed how youth policy can best contribute to support youth identity development. Ministers agreed that young people need more than ever a strong and positive identity to be able to successfully participate in education, the labour market and society at large and that this could be developed through integrated educational networks. These networks will also help them to build resilience against anti-democratic influences and forces.

Education

The Council adopted conclusions on developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training, acknowledging the positive aspects of the Internet and social media, but also highlighting the potential threats and dangers they can present. The conclusions stress the fundamental role of education and training in helping young people to become media-literate and responsible citizens of the future. The conclusions are also a follow-up to the Paris declaration of March 2015 which highlights the key role that education has to play in promoting citizenship and the Union's fundamental values. Ministers agreed that one of the areas in need of strengthening was young people's ability to think critically and to exercise judgement so that they were able to grasp realities, to distinguish fact from opinion, and to resist all forms of indoctrination and hate speech. Ministers also discussed the future of higher education in Europe, in anticipation of a forthcoming Commission proposal.

More information

[Outcome of the Council meeting](#)

Horizon Prize - Birth Day

The Horizon Prize on reducing maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality - the Birth Day Prize - will be awarded to the contestants who demonstrate a novel solution to improve the outcome of facility-based deliveries, which might be of clinical, technological or managerial nature, or a combination of these. Any solution must take full account of relevant social factors and have the potential of scaling up rapidly.

The objective is a demonstrated reduction in maternal and/or newborn morbidity and mortality and/or stillbirth during facility-based deliveries.

For more information, please follow this [link](#).

Science and Policy Making: towards a new dialogue

The 2nd International Network for Government Science Advice Conference
29-30 September 2016, Brussels

Background

“Science advice has never been in greater demand; nor has it been more contested.”

The most complex and sensitive policy issues of our time are those for which the available scientific evidence is ever-growing and multi-disciplined, but still has uncertainties. Yet these are the very issues for which scientific input is needed most. In this environment, the usefulness and legitimacy of expertise seems obvious to scientists, but is this view shared by policy-makers?

Objectives

A two-day conference will take place in Brussels, Belgium, on Thursday 29th and Friday 30th September 2016. Jointly organised by the European Commission and the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA), the conference will bring together users and providers of scientific advice on critical, global issues. Policy-makers, leading practitioners and scholars in the field of science advice to governments, as well as other stakeholders, will explore principles and practices in a variety of current and challenging policy contexts. It will also present the new Scientific Advice Mechanism of the European Commission to the international community. Through keynote lectures and plenary discussions and topical parallel sessions, the conference aims to take a major step towards responding to the challenge best articulated by the World Science Forum Declaration of 2015:

“The need to define the principles, processes and application of science advice and to address the theoretical and practical questions regarding the independence, transparency, visibility and accountability of those who receive and provide advice has never been more important. We call for concerted action of scientists and policy-makers to define and promulgate universal principles for developing and

communicating science to inform and evaluate policy based on responsibility, integrity, independence, and accountability.”

The conference seeks to:

- Identify core principles and best practices, common to structures providing scientific advice for governments worldwide
- Identify practical ways to improve the interaction of the demand and supply side of scientific advice
- Describe, by means of practical examples, the impact of effective science advisory processes

The Programme Committee:

Eva Alisic, Co-Chair of the Global Young Academy

Tateo Arimoto, Director of Science, Technology and Innovation Programme; The Japanese National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies

Peter Gluckman, Chair of INGSA and Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor, New Zealand (co-chair)

Robin Grimes, UK Foreign Office Chief Scientific Adviser

Heide Hackmann, International Council for Science (ICSU)

Zakri Abdul Hamid, Science Advisor to Malaysia’s Prime Minister, member of UN Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Board

Theodoros Karapiperis, European Parliament, Head of Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA), European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) - Science and Technology Options Assessment Panel

Johannes Klumpers, European Commission, Head of Unit - Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) (co-chair)

Martin Kowarsch, Head of the Working Group Scientific assessments, Ethics and Public Policy, Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change

David Mair, European Commission - Joint Research Centre (JRC)

Rémi Quirion, Chief Science Advisor Quebec

Flavia Schlegel, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for the Natural Sciences

Henrik Wegener, Executive Vice President, Chief Academic Officer, Provost at Technical University of Denmark, Chair of the EU High Level Group of Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM)

James Wilsdon, Chair of INGSA, University of Sheffield

Relevant Documents

- [Agenda](#)
Draft Conference Programme with confirmed speakers
- [Area map](#)

Horizon 2020 Information Day: Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency & Raw Materials

14 September 2016, Brussels

The European Commission is organising an Information Day to present the 2017 calls for proposals of Horizon 2020's Societal Challenge 5 "Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials".

Representatives of the research community, business, and public authorities are invited to join the event on Wednesday, 14 September 2016 in the European Commission's Charlemagne building.

Further information

- [More information \(registration from July\)](#)

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Forum 2016 - Where business and research talent meet

29 June 2016, Brussels

The objective of this event is to discuss the role of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) in helping researchers to develop their careers outside academia, and in business in particular.

In the morning, representatives of EU institutions, MSCA fellows, businesses and universities will discuss intersectoral mobility of researchers and contribute to strengthening the programme.

The afternoon session will provide "Tips and Tricks" on MSCA and in particular on the new "Society and Enterprise" Individual Fellowships panel launched on 12 April 2016. The event will also feature an exhibition and networking area with businesses, researchers and universities organisations.

Further information

- [More information and registration](#)

Comments or questions should be directed to [Rikke Edsjö](#).