

## Presidency Team

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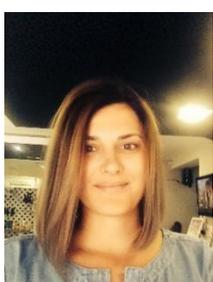


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# Outlining Research Priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency

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## Main objectives of the 18-month programme of the Council

Europe will only be able to meet tomorrow's challenges and maintain a solid research and industrial base if it steadily invests in its future. The three Presidencies will work closely together on the annual EU budget process and the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the period post-2020. Synergies, coherence, inclusiveness and consistency within European Structural and Investment Funds and between them and centrally managed funds will be promoted.

- Focus on investment in growth and jobs, including research and innovation, cross-border infrastructure, connectivity and education (Erasmus+, Connecting Europe Facility, Horizon 2020 as well as preparing the 9th Framework Programme, review of the ERA, in particular governance, the research window of the European Defence Action Plan, EURATOM Framework Programme).
- Cohesion policy post 2020 working towards simpler and more proportionate rules for the European Structural and Investment Funds and strengthening complementarity between EU funds.
- Encourage entrepreneurship and support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups by ensuring access to alternative forms of funding, foster investment in innovations, research and development, facilitating access to intellectual property products that are of particular importance for SMEs and ensuring systematic application of the 'think small first' principle.
- Enhance better skills for all in order to maintain high competitiveness and productivity at the labour market.

## **Bulgarian Presidency Priorities in Research and Innovation**

### **Overarching Priority:**

The Bulgarian Presidency is to steer the primary orientations for the negotiations on the Commission's proposals on the multiannual framework programme (2021-2028) for research and technological development as covered by Title XIX of the Treaty. Discussions will start on the structure, priorities and rules for participation.

The Presidency will work for more emphasis on the focus, the correlation between research and innovation, risk-taking and impact. With trans-national collaboration, the excellence principle and human resources development remaining cornerstones of the framework programme, the Presidency will focus on a more inclusive participation over the entire framework programme from different sectors and regions across the EU.

From the same perspective the Presidency will look for ways to more effectively link excellence to capacity building in real synergy with a new generation of Regional and Cohesion Funds. Such integrated approach should at the same time refresh, broaden and boost knowledge-based innovation's contribution to growth and jobs from and towards all of Europe's regions.

The Presidency will also try to support a broader dialogue on the support for next generation of EU researchers with a focus on open science skills including interdisciplinary methods, entrepreneurship and use of Big Data. In particular, a debate on a European Skills Agenda for young researcher will bring a new focus on the specific measures for supporting highly-qualified human resources. Alongside with fostering a highly skilled generation of researchers the Bulgarian presidency will try to keep an open discussion on the brain-drain phenomenon.

The Presidency will further boost the potential of the 3 O's concept as open science, open innovation and open to the world should bring a refreshed and reframed base for the strategic place of R&I beyond 2020.

**Bulgaria has set four additional priorities supplementing the realization of the Trio Council objectives:**

1. Accelerating the transfer of knowledge, data and research results in support of a new generation of innovators and researchers

On national and European level, there is an urgent need for innovation in a knowledge-based economy. The development of innovation is determined by the relationship between the public and private sectors and their joint ambition to increase the competitiveness. In relation with the new programming period and better regulation in the EU, comes the need for a new environment for PPPs and new models for cooperation, including fostering innovation procurement, better synergies and simplification among ESIF and EU programmes (especially on the state aid), intensified SME participation in PPPs and deepening the open data access and scientific results.

2. Maximizing sustainability of Research Infrastructures and opening to the industry and the society

During its Presidency of the EU Council, Bulgaria should support the process of analysis and preparation for the next phase of the European Strategic Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) Roadmap. In this regard, within the common objective of the Presidency Trio to strengthen the development of the European Research Area, incl. better coordination and utilisation of of the Pan-European research infrastructures, the Bulgarian Presidency will focus on discussions concerning the wider accessibility of the Pan-Research Infrastructures and enhanced relationships with industry in long-term prospective as that can enhance the impact when linked to territorial innovation priorities established in smart specialisation strategies and act as facilitators of trans-regional partnerships sharing common smart specialisation priorities, which would eventually build and implement joint investment projects.

3. Progressing the revision of the legal base for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

The Bulgarian Presidency will work on the revision of the EIT, assessing the regulations and quality, coupled with an overview of the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the EIT for 2021-2027.

4. Ensuring implementation of the “Euratom” programme for research and training during 2018-2020”

The Council under the Bulgarian Presidency will deliberate on achieving an agreement to adopt the Euratom Programme (the research framework programme for nuclear research) for 2018-2020.

5. Research and Innovation for Food and Nutrition Security and Quality Empowerment

In the prospect of the discussions on proposal of the EC on the next Multiannual financial framework and the 9th Framework Program for Research and Innovation, coupled with exploring the opportunities for promoting public-private partnership for increasing the processes of inclusive participation involving actors from different sectors, the project for a **Flagship conference** during the Bulgarian EU Presidency intends to provide a platform for discussions on increasing the impact of R&I for the whole food chain, in response to societal needs and expectations, climate change and globalization. To do this, Bulgaria will address, invite and involve a wide diversity of actors to build ***a shared and inclusive vision, boosting future investments in R&I*** in Europe and leveraging private investments and increasing synergies with public funding.

Within the overall European Research and Innovation context, this would mean **maximizing** the impact from R&I on industry, policy and society, and **making** difference for local and regional communities and enhancing their innovation potential.

## Calendar of Presidency events

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In the prospect of the discussions and preparations of the next Multiannual financial framework, the **Flagship events** planned during the Bulgarian Presidency aim to further explore opportunities for promoting public-private partnership for increasing the processes of inclusive participation, by providing the necessary platform for discussions on increasing the impact of R&I, in response to societal needs and expectations, climate change and globalization. To do this, Bulgaria will address, invite and involve a wide diversity of actors to build a shared and inclusive vision, boosting future investments in R&I in Europe and leveraging private investments and increasing synergies with public funding.

The **Council** work will be channelled by the Presidency for sustained political commitment to provide the impetus for Europe to further boost broad-based innovations and research excellence, and increase the impact of research and innovation results on markets. Within the overall European Research and Innovation context, this would contribute to the debate on the R&I policy which will lead up to the next **Multiannual financial framework of the EU and 9th framework programme**.

### Key Presidency events:

1. 8th University-Business Forum, February 2018

ESFRI Steering Board meeting – 21 March 2018

2. Conference *Research Infrastructures “Coupling excellence with inclusive innovation”*, 22-23 March, Sofia. The conference will seek to validate to policy makers, industry and society that excellence in science through long-term investments in research infrastructures is critical for tackling the rapidly changing grand challenges and increase overall innovation and competitiveness performance of Europe.

3. Conference *“Food 2030”*- 21-22 June 2018, Plovdiv. The High Level event will have a special emphasis on widening participation, inclusion, and enhancing the role of regions while promoting a multilayer partnership with the research community, industry and society

### Key dates for work in Council:

1. Informal Meeting of Research Ministers, 2 February, Sofia

2. RWP/ERAC Meeting, 14-16 March, Plovdiv

3. COMPET Council (Research), 13 March, Brussels

4. COMPET Council (Research), 29 May, Brussels