



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**RECH 154
COMPET 166**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat

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Subject: Outcome of proceedings of the Council (Competitiveness) on 21-22 May 2007
- Council Conclusions on Research Infrastructures in the European Research Area

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on Research Infrastructures in the European Research Area as adopted on 22 May 2007.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON
RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES
IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

RECALLING its Resolutions on "establishing a European Area of Research and innovation" of 15 June 2000¹, "making a reality of the European Area of Research and Innovation" of 16 November 2000² and "Investing in Research for European Growth and Competitiveness" of 22 September 2003³; its conclusions of 27 June 2001 on "Infrastructures in the European Research Area"⁴, and of 25 and 26 November 2004 entitled "Future European Policy to support Research"⁵ and the decision No 1982//2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013)⁶;

THE COUNCIL

1. ACKNOWLEDGES the excellent work of the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) in developing an initial European Roadmap for new and to be significantly upgraded Research Infrastructures⁷ of pan-European interest, on the basis of a mandate from the Council of November 2004; RECOMMENDS that ESFRI updates this roadmap at regular intervals in order to cope with the rapid evolution of scientific and technological needs; WELCOMES the catalytic support foreseen under the 7th EC Research Framework Programme for the preparatory phase of European Research Infrastructures, in particular the projects contained in ESFRI roadmap;

¹ O.J. C 205, 19.07.2000, pp. 1-3.

² O.J. C 374, 28.12.2000, pp. 1-3.

³ O.J. C 250, 18.10.2003, pp. 2-3.

⁴ Doc. 9932/01 (Presse 243).

⁵ Doc. 14687/04 (Presse 323).

⁶ O.J. L 412, 30.12.2006, pp. 1-41

⁷ "ESFRI, European Roadmap for Research Infrastructures, Report 2006, Luxembourg" (EU Publications Office) 2006.

2. NOTES that Europe's main global partners are strongly investing in modern large-scale Research Infrastructures; STRESSES the importance of starting the implementation of projects such as those contained in the ESFRI roadmap;
3. INVITES the Member States to develop or strengthen their national roadmaps and strategies on Research Infrastructures, to develop long-term plans for the investments and to coordinate their future activities among themselves, taking account of the orientation proposed by ESFRI, thereby generating economies of scale and enabling a more efficient development and use of research capacities within the European Research Area; OBSERVES that not all fields of science in Europe are equally well structured and organised; CALLS on the communities that are less well structured to integrate further and be more proactive at European level;
4. INVITES the Member States to facilitate the dialogue with a view to forming strong variable-geometry groups of Member States interested in the joint construction and operation of the projects contained in the ESFRI roadmap and to use the occasion of European conferences on Research Infrastructures, in particular the 4th European Conference on Research Infrastructures, scheduled to take place in Hamburg in June 2007;
5. NOTES the potential of financial instruments such as the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) and the Structural Funds for complementing the regional, national or European funds for the implementation of projects in the field of Research Infrastructures; STRESSES the importance of developing synergies between these different funding sources and invites the Commission to encourage such synergies;
6. NOTES that access to Research Infrastructures and specialised services remains a priority for the research community in Europe; STRESSES the need for a continued focus of these activities throughout the duration of FP7;
7. RECOGNIZES that some of the infrastructures on the ESFRI roadmap have a global dimension, and INVITES the Commission and Member States to explore the potential for international co-operation with the main global players in appropriate fora.