

“TRIO ROADMAP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION” – BUILDING A RESILIENT, SOVEREIGN AND SUSTAINABLE EUROPE –

BY THE TRIO PRESIDENCY OF GERMANY, PORTUGAL AND SLOVENIA

EUROPE’S NEW PATH IN THE WAKE OF THE CORONA PANDEMIC

Germany, Portugal and Slovenia holds the next Trio Presidency of the Council of the European Union at times of profound challenges and changes in the European and global landscape.

The coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath will ask from all of us to face new uncertainties and new risks. But it also offers the opportunity to explore new frontiers and to find sustainable solutions and innovative answers for a better future of mankind and our planet.

The current global crisis has made it clear beyond any doubt that not only our health systems are vulnerable to an extent which could not be foreseen, but also our economy, our “European way of life” and the democratic values of our societies in Europe and around the world are challenged too. It is also making it obvious that the recovery and progress will be significantly driven by research and innovation led solutions. The necessary political decisions have to be based on sound scientific knowledge.

We as a Trio Presidency stand determined to ensure jointly with all European bodies that Europe emerges from this crisis invigorated with new hope and energy. We want a Europe that is capable of acting with courage and with the necessary authority both internally and externally. We strive for a Europe which is carried by a true European spirit.

Germany, Portugal and Slovenia are convinced that the coming 18 months will be crucial in shaping the overall European Agenda and defining the role of Research and Innovation in exploring Europe’s new path in the wake of the Corona pandemic.

The Trio Presidency strongly believes that Research and Innovation are key drivers behind creating a resilient, sovereign and sustainable Europe in which our European values are very much alive. They act as the long-term life insurance policy for the future viability of the European continent.

MOBILISING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The Trio Presidency is committed to ensure that the potential of R&I is used fully across Europe, both for overcoming the current Corona crisis and its societal and economic implications, and for addressing the challenges Europe and the world were confronted with before the Corona outbreak.

To that end, the Trio started one year ago to develop a joint vision and joint objectives as the basis for a well coordinated and coherent roadmap of actions and initiatives that will shape the 18 months to come. On this solid foundation, we will coordinate closely in order to use the full duration of the three consecutive presidencies in a flexible and responsible manner to swiftly adopt and implement Research and Innovation related legislative acts and set the right direction by launching relevant and needed joint initiatives.

We will strengthen the Trio approach to the Presidency of the Council of the EU, not only by the current roadmap with its continuous implementation but also by ensuring stronger continuity and thematic coordination of Presidency events.

In order to fully mobilize R&I, substantial investments are needed – both at European level in the context of the future Multiannual Financial Framework including the European economic recovery plan (Next Generation EU) as well at the level of individual EU Member States. A smart and effective coordination of these investments is key.

Each presidency will update the roadmap at the beginning of its term and in cooperation with the Trio partners, in order to account for the most recent developments and to ensure the necessary flexibility in developing the political agenda.

This document builds also upon substantial work undertaken by preceding presidencies. The Finnish (second semester 2019) and the Croatian Presidency (first semester 2020) have both been involved in coordinating their priorities with those of the Trio.

The Trio Presidency is aiming for a close cooperation with the European Commission and the European Parliament in developing the respective dossiers.

The Trio Presidency acknowledges the essential role that the R&I stakeholders have to play in the coming years and calls on the different communities to engage actively both in the political debate and in the implementation of the envisaged concrete actions.

In light of this, the Trio Presidency will therefore focus **on the following priorities** in particular:

1. We are fully committed to further develop the overarching European Agenda focusing on Green Deal and Digitalization and making research and innovation a strong pillar in its implementation.
2. We as the Trio Presidency will activate the full potential of the European Research Area (ERA) policy framework to achieve a new quality of transnational cooperation in Europe. This means in particular by launching joint ERA initiatives.
3. These initiatives will focus among others on the improvement of the working conditions of European research communities and setting-up the necessary new governance mechanisms that will meet the new political aspirations concerning the ERA, such as its smart directionality and the coordination with other policy areas.
4. We consider the diversity in Europe as a strength; we aim for mobilizing every Member State's potential in research and innovation; therefore, we consider the goals of improving "inclusiveness" and guaranteeing "excellence" not as contradicting elements but as inherent features of a systematic and engaging approach to European transnational cooperation.
5. The heart of the ERA is "Knowledge". We are convinced that ERA must and will become a driver of change in a Europe in which the respective research and innovation communities, society, science, business, industry and policy-makers collaborate at various levels as active partners in the production, transfer, dissemination and exploitation of knowledge.
6. The political course for this is to be laid at the start of the Trio Presidency through a Communication from the European Commission, the envisaged "Bonn Declaration" on ERA, and Council conclusions to be adopted at the November 2020 Council Meeting of research ministers.

7. The Trio Presidency will focus in the next 18 months – among others – on the following concrete actions:
- a. Swift adoption of the Horizon Europe regulation and the accompanying legislative acts, notably the specific programme.
 - b. Swift adoption of the new legal and strategic Framework of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology.
 - c. Swift adoption of the legislative package for the future institutionalised European Partnerships (Art. 185, 187 TFEU) with the aim to fully use their potential in contributing to a sustainable and strong European recovery and innovation led growth.
 - d. Affirmation of the undisputed importance of sustainable and reliable public investments in R&I, in particular on curiosity driven research, and based on common **ERA values and principles** as main precondition for a R&I based resilience of Europe against external and internal crises.
 - e. Launching an **ERA lighthouse initiative** on better **European resilience against and preparedness for potential future pandemics** or other threats to public health (i.e. cancer), based on the experience and the achievements of the ERAvsCorona Action Plan.
 - f. Launching **strategic joint ERA initiatives** in support of agreed European-wide political priorities, notably the **Digital Action Plan, Europe's industrial strategy and the Green Deal** to strengthen Europe's technological sovereignty and autonomy in key strategically important areas, in particular with respect to R&I driven human centric Artificial Intelligence and green hydrogen as core component of a sustainable European energy system.
 - g. Preparing new **strategic joint ERA initiatives** in support of providing **smart directionality for R&I driven contributions to the SDGs**, in particular with respect to the management of natural resources, notably on sustainable oceans and seas.
 - h. Launching **strategic joint ERA initiatives** for improving the **interaction of the European R&I communities with society**, in particular with regular European-wide citizen science campaigns (and with the 'plastic pirates' as pilot initiative with support of the European Commission and linked with an invitation for other Member States to join).
 - i. Launching **ERA policy initiatives** on the **improvement and modernisation of working conditions for the public science communities**, in particular with respect to researchers' careers and the implications of open science practices on reward systems.
 - j. Setting-up a **new ERA governance system** in close cooperation with the EU and the R&I stakeholders that meets the need for a dynamic and activated ERA and that reflects the multi-level reality in Europe's R&I system.
 - k. Promote and support existing and seek new **innovative platforms and approaches**, in particular with a targeted use of the European Universities Initiative and other strategic alliances of European public research organisations as models for enhancing synergies between ERA and European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and thus **improve the cooperation within the broader Knowledge policy framework**, encompassing higher education, research and innovation policies.
 - l. Addressing the international dimension of the European research and innovation policy. Initiatives, conferences during the period of the Trio-presidency will focus on

the Cooperation with Africa and the Western Balkans in the field of science and research.

8. We acknowledge against the background of the above stated the strong and trustful partnership with the European Commission in the preparation of our Presidencies which has been based on shared values and the conviction that Europe has to stand united more than ever.

SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

The above objectives and measures address the joint overarching ambition which Germany, Portugal and Slovenia share as members of the Trio Presidency of the Council of the European Union, namely for Europe to emerge from the current crisis stronger, more equitable and more sustainable. Research and innovation make a vital contribution to this endeavour and help to set the stage for the future viability of our continent. They stand for a Europe that provides its citizens with the best opportunities and which can stand its ground in the world of tomorrow.