

# "ERA-NET actions"

## PROVISIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF ERA-NET ACTIONS AND THEIR PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

An issue paper serving as background document<sup>1</sup>  
Version: 27 July 2009

RTD B.1  
Coordination of national research programmes  
– Joint programming and major European initiatives

*Disclaimer*

*This document expresses solely the current views of Research Directorate General of the European Commission. Readers should not regard these views as a statement of the official position of the European Commission.*

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<sup>1</sup> This document intends to give information to support the preparation of ERA-NET actions under FP7

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*This document is a practical guide to the "ERA-NET" scheme of the Seventh Framework Programme. As the principles underpinning the scheme evolve, the document will be updated.*

# The “ERA-NET” Scheme

The ERA-NET scheme is one of the tools of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) to support the coordination of non-Community research programmes. It is implemented under both the Cooperation and Capacities programmes of FP7. Annex 4 to the Cooperation work programme provides the legal basis for the ERA-NET scheme and its implementation.

The ERA-NET scheme was first introduced in the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6). Given its success and long term perspective, the scheme is continued and reinforced in FP7. It is composed of:

1. ERA-NET actions to step up the coordination between national and/or regional research programmes. The description of these actions is the purpose of this issue paper.
2. ERA-NET Plus, a new type of action added to the ERA-NET scheme in FP7 and allowing, in a limited number of cases, Community financial support to be provided for "topping-up" of joint call for transnational research funding. The modalities of ERA-NET Plus actions are described in a separate issue paper called "*ERA-NET Plus actions – Provisions for the preparation of ERA-NET Plus actions and their practical implementation*" published on <http://cordis.europa.eu/coordination/fp7.htm>.

## 1 GENERAL ASPECTS

### 1.1 Objective

The objective of the ERA-NET scheme is to develop and strengthen the coordination of public research programmes conducted at national or regional level. It provides a framework to network and mutually open national or regional research programmes, leading to concrete cooperations such as the development and implementation of joint programmes or activities.

Networking and mutual opening require a progressive approach and long term perspective. The ERA-NET scheme therefore allows for new ERA-NET actions to be proposed in FP7 as well as for existing ERA-NETs of FP6 to expand further or reinforce their integration.

The ERA-NET scheme is expected to reduce the fragmentation of the European Research Area (ERA) by improving the coherence and coordination of national and regional research programmes carried out in the EU Member States or Associated countries. Furthermore, it enhances the complementarity and synergy between the Framework Programme and activities carried out in the framework of intergovernmental structures such as EUREKA, EIROforum and COST.

ERA-NET will also enable national or regional programmes to address fields which they would otherwise not have been able to address independently or to address collectively research fields that, due to the nature of the field, they prefer to address jointly.

### 1.2 History

During FP6 the ERA-NET scheme made concrete progress in structuring the European Research Area (ERA), and in achieving active participation of all Member States or Associated countries.

Some 70 ERA-NETs, covering a large range of research fields, were funded. It led to the coordination of hundreds of national or regional research programmes. For a full list of FP6 ERA-NET actions, see <http://cordis.europa.eu/coordination/projects.htm>.

The achievements of the ERA-NET scheme have been monitored closely since the start of the scheme; firstly by the "Horvat Expert Group" in 2006, secondly by a Commission internal survey conducted in 2007 and finally in a recently published large scale study, commissioned to gather evidence and detailed data on the impacts of the scheme since it was launched. A summary, as well as the full report, consisting of four volumes including detailed thematic reports and country reports, can be downloaded from the "Coordination of Research Activities website" [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/coordination/library\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/coordination/library_en.html).

Since the ERA-NET scheme started in 2002, a wide community of programme owners and managers have been accumulating valuable experience. There is tremendous scope for these experiences to be shared, not only for the benefit of current participants, but also for newcomers to ERA-NET actions and new ERA-NETs under FP7. The ERA-NET Learning Platform and the NETWATCH Information System provide tools and assistance for coherent implementation mechanisms and increased mutual learning, as well as information exchange within the wider ERA-NET community. These actions support ERA-NETs and their participants, in particular those which have started under FP7, and respond directly to the needs of the ERA-NET community. Their goal is to boost the knowledge networking of the ERA-NET community by bringing them closer together.

### **1.3 Fields of research**

Under FP7, the ERA-NET scheme has been reinforced by the introduction of a more strategic approach for the coordination and cooperation of national and regional research programmes, ensured by directly linking the ERA-NETs to the Themes of the Cooperation Programme and to the Capacities Programme.

Topics for the submission of ERA-NET proposals are identified in the annual work programmes of the individual Cooperation Themes and certain parts of the Capacities Programme<sup>2</sup>. Annex 4 of the Cooperation work programme provides an overview on which research topics ERA-NET proposals are called for.

ERA-NET actions should typically not cover very limited research areas. New ERA-NET actions should not overlap with other on-going ERA-NET actions or create further fragmentation. Where possible, complementarities to, or coordination with, FP7 activities should be ensured.

### **1.4 Definition of research programmes carried out at national or regional level**

"Research programmes carried out at national or regional level" should be understood as entire research programmes, or parts of such programmes, or similar initiatives. Such programmes should have all of the following characteristics:

- a) be strategically planned, i.e. be composed of a number of research projects focused on a defined subject area or set of problems, that are scheduled to run for a set period of time and that have a coordinated management,

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<sup>2</sup> Since both the Cooperation and Capacities programmes foresee the use of ERA-NET, the notion of "themes" in this issue paper covers both the Themes in the Cooperation programme as well as the Parts of the Capacities programme.

- b) be carried out at national or regional level, and
- c) be financed or managed directly by national or regional public bodies, or by structures (e.g. agencies) closely related to or mandated by public authorities.

## **2 FUNDING SCHEME TO BE USED**

ERA-NET actions will be implemented as coordination actions with Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) as the funding scheme to be used.

The Community contribution shall take the form of a grant consisting of a reimbursement of the eligible costs related to the action. It will be limited to the costs of the additional activities undertaken to implement the ERA-NET action.

ERA-NET actions do not provide any support for the research activities themselves i.e. the research itself will be funded from national or regional resources.

Specific limits to the maximum Community funding and duration of proposals for individual ERA-NETs might be set in the relevant work programmes.

## **3 PARTICIPANTS**

### **3.1 Typology**

The ERA-NET scheme is intended for programme owners and programme managers to identify national and regional programmes they coordinate or open up mutually.

Therefore, eligible partners for ERA-NET actions are only:

- § **Programme Owners:** typically national ministries/regional authorities responsible for defining, financing or managing research programmes carried out at national or regional level.
- § **Programme Managers** (such as research councils or funding agencies) are other national or regional organisations that implement research programmes under the supervision of the programme owners.
- § **Programme Owners** (typically national ministries/regional authorities) that do not yet have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting an ERA-NET proposal. Programme Owners that are planning and have committed to set up such a programme are also eligible if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination. This approach shall help and encourage countries or regions having less diverse research programmes (in particular new Member States) to be integrated in the ERA-NET scheme under FP7.

On top of the minimum number of participants legally required for an ERA-NET, other legal private entities such as charities which also manage research programmes, may participate and receive Community funding, if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination.

It should be stressed that research organisations or universities which are NOT programme owners or managers are NOT eligible partners for ERA-NET actions.

### 3.2 Number of participants

For ERA-NET Coordination and Support Actions, the minimum number of participants has been set at three independent legal entities financing or managing publicly funded national or regional programmes, each of which is established in a different Member State or Associated country.

Sole participants (as referred to in Article 10 of the Rules for Participation) may be eligible if the above-mentioned specific criteria for eligible ERA-NET partners are respected. A sole participant shall explicitly indicate which of his 'members' forming a sole legal entity, is either a programme owner or programme manager in the proposed action and indicate for these members, the respective national/regional programmes which are at the disposal of the proposed ERA-NET action.

It has to be emphasised that preference may be given to ERA-NET actions involving a more substantial number of Member States or Associated countries than the minimum legally required number of three in order to obtain a significant structuring effect at European level.

In duly justified cases cooperation at global level with Third countries from other regions in the world may be beneficial from a European point of view. Any participation of Third countries in ERA-NET is, in principle, possible and shall follow the general principles for Third country participation in FP7 as defined in the rules for participation (see below).

### 3.3 Participation and funding

Participants' location	Participation	Funding
European Union	Rightfully	Rightfully
Associated countries	Rightfully	Rightfully
International organisations of European interest	Rightfully	Rightfully
International cooperation partner countries	Rightfully over and above the minimum threshold	Rightfully
International organisations or third countries other than those referred to above	Rightfully over and above the minimum threshold	If at least one of the following conditions is met: (a) provision is made in the relevant work programme; (b) it is essential for carrying out the action; (c) funding comes from bilateral S&T agreement between Community and country where participant is established

## 4 ACTIVITIES TO BE SUPPORTED WITHIN AN ERA-NET

To advance the process of better European cooperation between research activities carried out at national or regional level, each ERA-NET will typically foresee an evolving set of activities in

which the coordination element gradually deepens, depending on the degree of maturity of the network.

They could follow a four step approach covering the following activities:

- (1) Systematic exchange of information and good practices on existing programmes
- (2) Definition and preparation of common strategic activities
- (3) Implementation of joint activities between national or regional programmes
- (4) Funding of joint transnational research

ERA-NET actions should be ambitious and aim to reach level 4. They should produce concrete results towards opening up of or cooperation between the participating research programmes. In particular, they should lead to sustained cooperation between national or regional research programmes, ensuring continuation beyond the duration of the ERA-NET action itself.

**ERA-NETs launched under FP6** wishing to submit a fully new proposal under FP7 have to propose a strong coordination action **directly and exclusively focusing on steps 3 and 4 alone**. Such a proposal shall aim to broaden the partnership and/or deepen the coordination between the relevant national or regional programmes in the concerned field. In particular, a global approach involving also non European research programmes is encouraged. The proposal should include a clear description of activities and achievements of the FP6 ERA-NET and demonstrate an ambitious set of activities going far beyond what has been achieved so far.

**New ERA-NETs**, which address new topics and without any previous experience from FP6, should address at least the first three steps, but are encouraged to aim at the “four step approach”, as described above.

All proposals should include a clear description of all participating research programmes and any pre-existing collaboration experience.

ERA-NET actions should address coordination activities developed by programme owners or managers at the level of their research programmes. For this reason, ERA-NET actions should not be directly related to specific scientific projects or to the work of individual scientists, nor should they focus on coordinating research policies.

#### **4.1 Networking of research programmes carried out at national and regional level including mutual opening of national or regional programmes**

The networking corresponds to the four steps identified above.

##### *4.1.1 Systematic exchange of information and good practices on existing programmes*

The goal of such activities is to gather information on the structure and programmes covered by each national research system. It could also improve communication, develop better reciprocal knowledge and promote trust-building among programme owners or managers in similar scientific and technological areas through a mutual learning process, and the systematic exchange of information and good practices.

“Information” should be understood as information on national and regional research and innovation activities such as national and regional programmes, funded projects, research priorities, evaluation practices, organisation and management.

Possible mechanisms for promoting the exchange of information are:

- § fora of research programme makers and programme managers;
- § short-term exchanges of programme managers;
- § benchmarking and dissemination of good practice;
- § use of electronic communication tools, including the use of common portals.

#### *4.1.2 Definition and preparation of common strategic activities*

This key part of the ERA-NET action should analyse the information gathered and identify the type of cooperation and the areas in which it can be undertaken. It should actively prepare and define activities under steps 3 and 4 which will ensure impact of the action and reduce the fragmentation of the European Research Area.

It should result in an **action plan**, which sets out common strategic issues and prepares for the concrete implementation of joint activities.

The following types of common strategic activities could be developed by programme owners and managers of national or regional research programmes:

- § identification of mutual complementarities between the programmes of the ERA-NET partners;
- § identification and analysis of research activities carried out by different programmes that have similar goals and that could lead to the design of future multinational schemes;
- § identification and analysis of practical and concrete networking activities and mutual opening mechanisms;
- § identification and analysis of barriers that hinder transnational cooperation activities such as, for example, administrative and legal barriers;
- § identification of new opportunities and gaps in research and stimulation of new interdisciplinary work on the basis of technology assessment and foresight analysis carried out at regional, national and European level;
- § design of common evaluation systems;
- § etc.

#### *4.1.3 Implementation of joint activities between national or regional programmes*

Experience from FP6 has shown that most of the knowledge and experience in coordinating national programmes is gained by trying to implement, if only in a pilot form, joint activities.

ERA-NET actions are therefore encouraged to develop and implement, early on in the project, common, joint, strategic activities such as, for example:

- § Clustering of nationally funded research projects:  
This type of clustering will be done where useful complementarities or mutual reinforcement of ongoing nationally or regionally funded research programmes can be achieved. Activities to achieve this purpose will involve the identification and the selection of projects and the organization of activities such as workshops and working groups among scientists involved in the nationally or regionally funded research projects. Such activities should have programmatic objectives that go beyond a simple exchange of information between researchers.

- § Systematic use of multinational evaluation procedures:  
This measure could contribute to the integration of multinational evaluation practices in national or regional research systems (covering proposal, project and programme evaluation). This could involve the identification of common evaluation criteria and methods of implementation.
- § Developing joint training schemes:  
The development of joint training schemes or activities such as co-supervised theses and international PhD schemes could be envisaged, provided that they form an integral part of wider co-operation in research.
- § Developing schemes for mutual opening of facilities or laboratories:  
The development of schemes to facilitate mutual access to facilities or laboratories in one country, for scientists from another, could be envisaged.
- § Common schemes for programme monitoring and evaluation, including joint monitoring or evaluation.
- § Specific cooperation agreements or arrangements between participating programmes, preparing the ground for further transnational research programmes and assuring that legal barriers are removed.
- § Schemes for personnel exchange in the context of the above activities.

#### 4.1.4 *Funding of joint trans-national research actions*

The strongest form of networking would consist of funding and implementing a joint programme of transnational research projects or actions. This would be expected to involve setting up a common strategy, a joint work programme, common (mutually open) or joint calls for proposals or tender, a common transnational evaluation system and a common plan for dissemination of results or experiences. In such schemes, projects funded out of a common or joint call for proposals should involve at least two teams from two different countries.

In this context, several possibilities could be envisaged:

- a) Each country or region would pay for the participation of its own researchers and research activities (joint call with a virtual common pot);
- b) Countries pool funds in order to finance projects resulting from a joint call for proposals, according to commonly agreed evaluation criteria. This entails transnational flows of national funding (joint call with a common pot);
- c) A mix of (a) and (b);
- d) Other forms of joint research funding, not necessarily based on joint calls might be developed.

Experience from ERA-NETs in FP6 has shown that not necessarily all participants participate in the joint transnational programme or call (variable geometry approach).

The consortium should provide the Commission with a general overview of the progress of the jointly funded projects (to assure synergies if appropriate and/or avoid overlaps with FP funded projects and provide indicators of impact attributable to the ERA-NET action). The assessment of the impact of the action will be an important reporting requirement for ERA-NET actions.

Please note that ERA-NET does not provide any support for the research activities themselves i.e. the research itself will normally be funded from national or regional resources.

## **4.2 Management of an ERA-NET**

Given the long-term nature of the cooperation inside an ERA-NET, the partners will be advised to establish a "coherent management framework", with dedicated staff, to coordinate their activities and to ensure a continuity of operation. Management tasks could include:

- § scientific and administrative management of the activities of the ERA-NET, including communication with the Commission and reporting;
- § ensuring that high standards of scientific excellence are maintained throughout the activities of the ERA-NET;
- § ensuring that gender equality is promoted within the ERA-NET;
- § ensuring that ethical rules are respected.

Costs related to management activities can be supported under the ERA-NET CSA.

## **5 THE PROPOSAL STAGE**

### **5.1 Calls for proposals**

Topics for the submission of ERA-NET proposals are identified in the annual work programmes of the individual Cooperation Themes and certain parts of the Capacities Programme. Annex 4 of the Cooperation work programme provides an overview on which research topics ERA-NET proposals are called for.

### **5.2 Content of a proposal**

The guide for proposals for the respective calls inviting the submission of ERA-NET proposals describes in detail the structure and content of ERA-NET proposals. They consist in general of the following elements:

1. *Scientific and/or technical quality, relevant to the topics addressed by the call*
  - Concept and objectives of the ERA-NET action
  - Contribution to the coordination of high quality research
  - Quality and effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms, and associated work plan
2. *Implementation*
  - Management structure and procedures
  - Individual participants
  - Consortium as a whole
  - Resources to be committed
3. *Impact*
  - Expected impacts listed in the relevant work programme
  - Spreading excellence, exploitation results, dissemination knowledge
4. *Ethical issues*

### 5.3 Evaluation of proposals

The fundamental principles governing the evaluation process are:

- § **transparency:** in order to provide a clear framework for managers of RTD programme/activities who are preparing funding proposals, the process by which funding decisions are reached, both the principles and the practice, must be clearly described and available to any interested party;
- § **fair treatment:** all proposals should be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate or the identity of the proposers;
- § **impartiality:** all eligible proposals are treated impartially on their merits, following an independent review;
- § **efficiency and speed:** the procedures must be designed to be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation and respecting the legal framework and accountability within which the RTD programme is to be managed;
- § **ethical considerations:** any proposal which contravenes fundamental ethical principles (particularly those set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union), or which does not fulfil the conditions set out in the work programme or in the call for proposals, may be excluded from the evaluation and selection process at any time.

The evaluation procedure will be further described in the Commission's evaluation manual and in the relevant Work Programmes and Guides for Applicants.

#### 5.3.1 Peer review

The evaluation of proposals will involve a single stage submission procedure. The Commission will arrange the evaluation of proposals received according to the principles of "peer review" by independent experts. The proposals will not be evaluated anonymously but could be evaluated remotely.

#### 5.3.2 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria against which research proposals will be judged are set out in article 15 of the Rules for Participation. For the 'Cooperation' specific programme these are:

- § scientific and/or technological excellence;
- § relevance to the objectives of these specific programmes<sup>3</sup>;
- § the quality and efficiency of the implementation and management;
- § the potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results.

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<sup>3</sup> **Relevance:** A proposal may be **partially relevant** if it addresses only marginally the topic(s) of the call, or if only part of the proposal addresses them. Such conditions will be reflected in the evaluation of the first criterion ('S/T excellence'). The degree to which a proposal is relevant to the objectives of a call will be reflected in the evaluation of the third criterion ("impact"). Proposals that are clearly not relevant to a call ("out of scope"), will be rejected on eligibility grounds before the evaluation.

The evaluation criteria below apply to ERA-NET actions as specified in the Annex 4 of the Cooperation Work Programme and the respective Guides for Applicants:

<b>Evaluation criteria applicable to Coordination and support actions (Coordination)</b>		
<b>S/T QUALITY</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>
<b>“Scientific and/or technological excellence (relevant to the topics addressed by the call)”</b>	<b>“Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management”</b>	<b>“Potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results”</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soundness of concept, and quality of objectives</li> <li>• Contribution to the coordination of high quality research</li> <li>• Quality and effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms, and associated work plan</li> </ul> <p>Additional criteria specific for ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The management should be supported by a suitable governance structure involving the participating organisations at an appropriate level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures</li> <li>• Quality and relevant experience of the individual participants</li> <li>• Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance)</li> <li>• Appropriateness of the allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (budget, staff, equipment)</li> </ul> <p>Additional criteria specific for ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In reference to the applicable work programme, does the proposed ERA-NET / ERA-NET Plus action pool the necessary resources between national programmes and the Community and does it represent <u>the most appropriate type of public funding for this pre-defined area</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution, at the European [and/or international] level, to the expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic/activity</li> <li>• Appropriateness of measures for spreading excellence, exploiting results, and disseminating knowledge, through engagement with stakeholders, and the public at large.</li> </ul> <p>Additional criteria specific for ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants should be the key actors within their national or regional research systems.</li> <li>• The ERA-NET activities should lay the foundations for a durable cooperation between the partners involved.</li> <li>• Is there a clearly identified and agreed European added value through a variable geometry approach?</li> </ul>

## **6 CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP**

### **6.1 Content of the Grant Agreement**

The Grant Agreement with the Commission will establish the rights and obligations of participants. It might include among others:

- § A core text specifying the scope, duration, amount of the Community grant, reporting schedule and payment modalities, and the list of initial participants;
- § A technical annex (annex I) containing the objectives of the ERA-NET, a description of the joint activities, a description of the role of the participants, a description of the deliverables, ethical provisions, and a description of the management and governance structure;
- § General conditions (annex II) common to all FP7 funding schemes, covering standard legal and administrative provisions, the IPR regime if necessary, and standard financial provisions among others
- § some forms (e.g. form A for the accession to the contract)

Furthermore during contract negotiation<sup>4</sup> each participating organisation in an ERA-NET is required to:

- § Identify the research programme(s) with which they participate in the respective ERA-NET or ERA-NET Plus,
- § Identify their role (Programme Manager or Programme Owner),
- § Programme Owners provide confirmation for Programme Managers that these are mandated to manage their programme,
- § Ensure to provide to the NETWATCH information system all information needed on the programme and its implementation.

In some cases, special conditions could be added to the contract.

## **6.2 Consortium agreement**

The participants may wish to conclude a consortium agreement even though the Commission does not require it. Such a consortium agreement could include:

- § the decision-making processes they will use;
- § conflict resolution issues;
- § extension of the consortium;
- § aspects concerning defaulting partners;
- § the sharing out of tasks and resources among the participants;
- § the management of the Community contribution;
- § specific arrangements concerning intellectual property rights to be applied among the participants who will contribute to the generation of knowledge, in compliance with the general arrangements stipulated in the contract;
- § any other provision necessary to ensure an effective governance and a sound management of ERA-NET.

## **7 POSSIBLE EVOLUTION OF AN ERA-NET**

The work plan and the composition of the consortium can be modified under the responsibility of the consortium through appropriately defined modalities among the partners.

The overall total EC funding granted to the ERA-NET is normally not increased: for additional EC funding to be granted a proposal requesting additional funding has to be submitted and selected and the topic must be covered in the relevant call and/or work programme.

### **7.1 Modification of the technical content**

The execution plan for the remaining life of ERA-NETs may be modified, notably following the review, with the agreement of the Commission, taking into consideration:

- § progress achieved by the consortium in its various activities;
- § global scientific and technological developments in the field;
- § the need for re-orienting foreseen activities or introducing new ones as a consequence of any evolution of the ERA-NET;
- § other relevant factors.

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex 1: Participant declaration (page 16ff)

## **7.2 Changes in consortium membership**

The consortium may itself decide to take in new members without additional financing. The contract will specify the procedures to be followed. All modifications will require the agreement of the Commission and, may require a contract amendment.

## **8 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ASPECTS**

The rules relating to intellectual property proposed for the Seventh Framework Programme are intended to apply to all FP7 activities, including the ERA-NET actions.

As an illustration, the IPR rules for FP7 would apply to any documents, software or databases created in the context of a networking or a mutual opening of research activities.

The IPR rules for FP7 will not apply to the results of the national or regional programmes being coordinated or networked. These results will be governed by the respective applicable national or regional rules.

## **9 FOLLOW UP AND MONITORING**

The Commission services will monitor the project so as to ensure proper execution of the work according to the terms of the contract, to protect the Community's financial interests and to ensure maximum synergy and coherence with other actions within the Seventh Framework Programme.

A project officer will be assigned to follow-up each ERA-NET. Persons with the appropriate expertise may assist the project officer.

If appropriate, a review could be organised by the project officer. It would consist in a strategic analysis examining in particular what the European added value of the ERA-NET action is in reference to the work programme applicable and will analyse the work performed against the contract established.

The consortium should provide the Commission with a general overview of the progress of the jointly funded projects (to assure synergies if appropriate and/or avoid overlaps with FP funded projects and provide indicators of impact attributable to the ERA-NET action). The assessment of the impact of the action will be an important reporting requirement for ERA-NET actions.

## **10 INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE**

In order to obtain information on the ERA-NET scheme and receive advice and support to organizations which are preparing a ERA-NET proposals, various "National Contact Points" (NCPS) have been established in Member States and Associated States. The NCP database is accessible at the following address: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html).

Other relevant information on the ERA-NET scheme can be found on <http://cordis.europa.eu/coordination/fp7.htm>.

Furthermore, any questions on the ERA-NET scheme can be addressed to the Commission via Internet: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries>.

## ANNEX 1: PARTICIPANT DECLARATION

### Instructions for the Annex A "Participant Declaration" to the Grant Agreement for ERA-NET and ERA-NET plus actions

The ERA-NET scheme is intended for Programme Owners and Programme Managers to identify national and regional programmes they coordinate or open up mutually. Therefore, eligible partners for ERA-NET and ERA-NET Plus actions are only:

- **Programme Owners:** typically national ministries/regional authorities responsible for defining, financing or managing research programmes carried out at national or regional level.
- **Programme Managers** (such as research councils or funding agencies) are other national or regional organisations that implement research programmes under the supervision of the programme owners.
- **Programme Owners** (typically national ministries/regional authorities) that do not yet have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting an ERA-NET proposal. Programme Owners that are planning and have committed to set up such a programme are also eligible if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination. This approach shall help and encourage countries or regions having less diverse research programmes (in particular new Member States) to be integrated in the ERA-NET scheme under FP7.

**During contract negotiation each participating organisations in an ERA-NET or ERA-NET Plus action is required to:**

- Identify the research programme(s) with which they participate in the respective ERA-NET or ERA-NET Plus,
- Identify their role (Programme Manager or Programme Owner),
- Programme Owners provide confirmation for Programme Managers that these are mandated to manage their programme,
- Ensure to provide to the NETWATCH information system all information needed on the programme and its implementation.<sup>5</sup>

**Please use the enclosed Annex A with the letterhead of your own organisation, complete and sign accordingly.**

*Note: On top of the minimum number of participants legally required for an ERA-NET, other legal private entities such as charities which also manage research programmes, may participate and receive Community funding, if their participation is well justified and adds value to the overall programme coordination. Please note that research organisations or universities which are not programme owners or managers are not eligible partners for ERA-NET actions.*

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<sup>5</sup> The NETWATCH website ([www.ec.europa.eu/netwatch](http://www.ec.europa.eu/netwatch)) provides information, analysis and mutual learning on transnational R&D programme cooperation. Information about the ERA-NET will be disseminated via the NETWATCH web site and its participants will have access to the information given by NETWATCH and the tools it offers. In exchange, NETWATCH requests the ERA-NET to contribute to the NETWATCH information base. One of the related responsibilities of the ERA-NET participants is to provide information on the participating national or regional programmes. In addition the coordinator or other designated person from the ERA-NET need to regularly provide information about the activities of the ERA-NET to NETWATCH.

**ANNEX A to the Grant Agreement for ERA-NET and ERA-NET plus actions**  
(To be filled out by each participant, please copy this text onto the letterhead of your own organisation)

**Participant declaration for the [ERA-NET / ERA-NET Plus action] [Acronym of the ERA-NET/ERA-NET Plus]**

The undersigned [*Name of the authorised representative*] declares that [*name of participating organisation*] will participate with the following research programmes carried out at national or regional level in the [ERA-NET / ERA-NET Plus action] [Acronym of the ERA-NET/ERA-NET Plus]:

**[Title of the research programme]<sup>6</sup>**

- [*name of participating organisation*] is **Programme Owner and Programme Manager** for the above mentioned programme.
- [*name of participating organisation*] is **Programme Owner** for the above mentioned programme. The organisation in charge of its implementation as Programme Manager is [*name of the organisation acting as Programme Manager*] and I declare that they have been mandated to manage the programme.
- [*name of participating organisation*] is **Programme Manager** for the above mentioned programme. The Programme Owner for this programme is [*name of the organisation being the Programme Owner*] and they have provided a declaration confirming the mandate to manage the programme on their behalf<sup>7</sup>.

(if applicable:)

- [*name of participating organisation*] is a **Programme Owner** that does not yet have a running or fully fledged research programme for the participation in [Acronym of the ERA-NET], but is planning and committed to set up such a programme.

Further, the undersigned declares to ensure that [*name of participating organisation*] will contribute to NETWATCH by providing the necessary information on the respective research programme(s).

Name and signature

Date and stamp

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<sup>6</sup> In case you participate with more than one research programme: please duplicate this part for each programme.

<sup>7</sup> If the Programme Owner is participating in the ERA-NET/ERA-NET Plus action only its participants declaration is needed. **Please use Annex B in case the Programme Owner is not part of the consortium.**

**ANNEX B to the Grant Agreement for ERA-NET and ERA-NET plus actions**

(To be filled out by Programme Owners not participating in the consortium.  
Please copy this text onto the letterhead of the Programme Owner responsible  
for the research programme.)

**Declaration for the [ERA-NET / ERA-NET Plus action] [Acronym of the ERA-NET/ERA-NET Plus]**

The undersigned [*Name of the authorised representative*] declares that [*Name of participating organisation acting as Programme Manager*] has been mandated by [*Name of the organisation being the Programme Owner*] to manage the following research programme[s]:

**[*Title of the research programme(s)*]**

Name and signature

Date and stamp