



**European Cooperation
in Science and Technology
- COST -**

Brussels, 12 January 2012

Secretariat

COST 4102/12

DRAFT SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Subject : 183rd meeting of the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) held in Brussels on 30 November - 1 December 2011

The CSO President welcomed the participants¹, in particular the new CSO members attending for the first time: Mr Philippe de la Saussay (FR), Ms Vera Stercken (DE) and Ms Elizabeth Casbon (UK). She also expressed her gratitude, on behalf of the whole Committee, to the departing CSO members, namely Ms Michèle Baron (FR), Mr Omer Cebeci (TR) and Ms Marion Wolpers (DE), for their valuable contribution to COST activities and wishing them all the best for the future.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Committee adopted the agenda as set out in CM 5227/11² dated 4 November 2011.

¹ List of participants in Annex I.

² Agenda items in Annex II.

2. Approval of Summary of Conclusions of the previous meeting

The Committee approved the Summary of Conclusions of the previous meeting held on 17 - 18 May 2011 as set out in doc. COST 4156/11, with one precision to item 14: AOB on p.9, that would read: “The Swedish delegation proposed *that* a roadmap/overview of events, where CSO involvement and/or decisions would be expected *would be elaborated*.”

3. Approval of new COST Actions

The COST Office gave a presentation on the 30 new COST Actions³ that were proposed for funding from the 10th Collection date of 25 March 2011. The Committee approved the proposal for new Actions as set out in doc. COST 4158/11.

4. COST in the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020"

The President noted the proposal for the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation “Horizon 2020” presented by the Commission on 30 November 2011 and the need for COST to put forward its views and to position itself in this context. She presented a draft position paper following the discussions by JAF on 26 - 27 October 2011, outlining possible future developments and activities to further utilise the COST potential in the next FP. Delegations welcomed the draft position paper in general, while noting the preliminary nature of the discussion, before examination of the Horizon 2020 proposal. During the discussion the proposed increase in the number of Actions, and subsequently the resources of the COST Office to carry out its tasks as well as the appropriate level of the requested budget⁴ were raised.

³ A booklet illustrating the new proposals had been made available on the website in advance.

⁴ AT delegation has asked to add that COST can only position itself in this context without prejudice to the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF 2014+).

The President concluded the discussion by inviting delegations to provide written input on the draft to the Secretariat by 27 January 2012, with a view to discussion at the next JAF and CSO meetings. The aim would be to seek CSO approval on the paper at the Committee's next meeting. The finalised paper would be sent to the EU institutions with a view to the negotiations on Horizon 2020 legislative package.

5. Shaping COST for the future

- Implementation of COST Strategy, report of the WG

It was recalled that the CSO, at its meeting in May 2011 had established a WG with the mandate to formulate a proposal on the implementation of COST Strategy⁵. The WG had concentrated its work on two main tasks:

Task 1: Review of the evaluation process of Action proposals; and

Task 2: Management, monitoring and output of Actions.

The President outlined the process, highlighting in particular the involvement of the DC Chairs, who all had been willing to participate in the work. She presented the main conclusions as set out in the report from the WG that had been sent to delegations prior to the meeting. As concluded in the report the following issues - on which the WG had reached an agreement - were presented to the Committee for consideration:

Task 1:

- Implementation of the expertise grid.
- Involvement of external experts in the evaluation process.
- Elaboration of common guidelines for assessors.
- Adaptation of the evaluation criteria and their link to the output of the Actions.
- Revision of the proposal template and its link to the evaluation criteria.
- Harmonisation and streamlining of the feedback to the applicant.

⁵ Doc. COST 4147/11.

Task 2:

- Implementation of the impact analysis framework as proposed and defined by the COST Office.

Furthermore, the Committee had an exchange of views on the proposals which the WG had discussed, but not reached consensus upon, i.e.

- to consider a proposal scheme using one single (full) proposal and to eliminate the pre-proposal phase, and
- the assessment scheme involving independent external experts in an initial evaluation phase followed by a DC evaluation phase.

As regards possible changes to the proposal scheme for new Actions it was concluded that further analysis, including information on financial consequences, would be needed for a thorough discussion. The President proposed to proceed by looking into the evaluation process in different domains during the next evaluation round. In this context it might be useful to involve a few external experts to follow the process in order to provide further insight for an evidence-based decision-making.

In conclusion, the Committee welcomed the agreements reached within the WG, in particular the impact analysis framework that had been prepared by the COST Office. The Committee encouraged the COST Office to take immediate action on issues within its remit, where appropriate, and finally, invited the COST Office to prepare a document to be presented to the CSO on matters that would require further consideration or approval by the CSO.

6. COST Strategic Initiatives

The President welcomed the Chairs of the Domain Committees to a joint session and presented the current framework and documents on strategic initiatives (COST 207/08, COST 4171/10) as well as the political context (EU 2020, Innovation Union, Horizon 2020). She noted the need to establish a coherent and transparent policy for selecting strategic initiatives, through e.g. establishing a dedicated budget to DCs for such initiatives. After the presentation the topic was further discussed in three break-out sessions, guided by the following questions:

- The role of the DCs regarding the development of strategic activities,
- The DC interface with CNCs and COST Office to ensure maximum impact of strategic initiatives,
- The process for development, approval and assessment of initiatives.

6bis. Outcome of the break-out sessions

The Chairs⁶ of the break-out sessions reported to the Committee in plenary session, followed by some questions by participants. After the discussion the President thanked delegations and the DC Chairs for their valuable contributions. She noted that a draft proposal on the preparation and approval procedures of strategic initiatives would be discussed by JAF with a view to presenting a proposal to the next CSO meeting for approval. Regarding initiatives that are in the pipeline, the Committee agreed that these would be subject to the approval by an *ad hoc* Committee, composed by the CSO President, CSO Vice-President, the COST Office Director (and possibly one JAF member).

7. Information on output of finished Actions

The COST Office gave a presentation on ending Actions with examples from all COST domains. The Committee welcomed the presentation and agreed that such a presentation should be given at each CSO meeting. The discussion focused on indicators: number of publications, PhDs, joint papers, patents, guidelines, links with other RTD frameworks etc. and the need to seek a harmonised approach to present evidence-based output. The importance of good IT tools to provide relevant data and statistics to measure the output and impact of Actions was highlighted.

⁶ Chairs: Ángeles Rodríguez Peña, Primož Pristovšek, Lieve Van Daele.
Rapporteurs: Ursula Castro, Christer Halen, Matteo Razzanelli.

8. Information from

- CSO President

- = The CSO President informed the Committee of her activities in 2011 based on a note dated 16 November 2011. She noted her intention to continue providing regular updates by e-mail between CSO meetings including, wherever possible, advance information on her activities.
- = As regards the COST-ESF relationship the Committee was informed of the High Level Group meeting on 25 October and of the changes in the ESF management as from January 2012. The President had been invited to attend the ESF General Assembly (GA) on 23-24 November 2011 in Strasbourg. Both CSO President and ESF CEO had informed the GA of the ongoing work on a roadmap towards more autonomous COST Office and for a smooth transition to a new implementing structure after FP7. It was noted, however, that no written information was yet received from the ESF about the separation after FP7. A short exchange of views followed, during which delegations raised questions regarding the future implementing structure: a possible tender in this respect, as well as the possible use of COST Office Association (COA). The BE delegate raised some concerns regarding the COA status as an AISBL (which is not an international organisation), also referring to the experience of EUREKA. It was generally agreed that the question of the future implementing structure needs to be addressed urgently, and therefore this item will appear on the agenda of the next CSO meeting.
- = As regards the budgetary situation it was recalled that, following the positive FP7 mid-term evaluation of COST, additional 30 MEUR had been released to COST. The Committee was informed that this would allow raising the budget for Actions to respond to the demand by Actions, whose budgets remain unchanged since six years⁷. The Committee noted the intention of the COST Office to increase the Action budget⁸ and invited the COST Office to provide an information note on the financial situation to the CSO.

⁷ The annual budget for Actions is calculated based on the participating countries, the average being 100.000 EUR for 19 participating countries.

⁸ The announcement for the next Open Call will be modified accordingly.

- CSO Vice-President

The CSO Vice-President informed the Committee of the meeting of the COST National Coordinators on 29 November 2011, noting that a more detailed report will be provided to the next CSO meeting. The CNC gatherings are considered very useful and therefore the intention is to organise such a meeting once a year back-to-back to a CSO meeting.

- Delegations

= The DK delegate informed the Committee of the main meetings and conferences during the DK EU Presidency in the first half of 2012.

= The SE delegate informed the Committee that he is no longer a member of the EUREKA High Level Group, encouraging CSO members who are members both in COST and EUREKA committees to actively contribute to increasing synergies between the two frames.

= The CY delegate informed the Committee of the COST Information day that had been organised in September.

= The CZ delegate informed the Committee of a COST Impact Day on 15 November 2011.

- COST Office

The Director of the COST Office gave a presentation on the new organisational chart of the COST Office, a draft roadmap and timetable of activities until September 2013 and informed the Committee of her missions and meetings in 2011.

9. COST Grant System

The COST Office Director recalled the results of the survey amongst the grant holders that were presented to the CSO in May 2011 and noted that the COST Office had continued to examine possibilities for further improvements to the COST Grant System (CGS). These findings were briefly presented to the Committee. The Committee took note of the intention of the COST Office to further analyse the various aspects of the CGS and to present, when appropriate, a proposal for a revised CGS to be considered by the CSO.

10. (a) Future CSO and JAF meetings

The Committee examined the list of meetings for 2012 and approved the proposal for an additional CSO meeting to be held in March 2012. The list of future meetings is set out in doc. COST 4155/1/11 REV 1.

(b) Report on COST Visibility events

The Committee took note of the information that had been circulated to delegations prior to the meeting, namely the Report on the "Networks of Science and Technology" exhibition at the European Parliament on 18-20 October 2011; and the Report on "Event strategy for the visibility of COST in 2011".

11. Any other business

The President presented statistics regarding the COST international cooperation: reciprocal agreements, neighbouring countries' participation and the participation by non-COST institutions (currently 151 participations in 122 running Actions from 18 countries). It was recalled that the CSO will discuss international cooperation at its meeting in June 2012. In this context, Ms Ülle Must (EE) volunteered to join the COST WG on International Cooperation⁹, to replace the departing member, Mr Omer Cebeci (TR).

The Committee was informed of the requests approved by the JAF Group since the CSO meeting in May. A note had been circulated to delegations and it was recalled that the information is available to delegations on-line. The AT delegate asked the COST Office to provide delegations an update of the current participation, with a view to the forthcoming discussions on COST international cooperation.

⁹ Composition of the WG: Rita Ward (IE), Chair; members: Helga Mieling (AT) and Gorm Bramsnaes (DK), supported by the COST Secretariat and the COST Office.

List of participants

<u>PRESIDENT</u>	:	Ms Ángeles RODRIGUEZ PEÑA
<u>VICE-PRESIDENT</u>	:	Mr Primož PRISTOVŠEK
<u>AUSTRIA (AT)</u>	:	Ms Helga MIELING
<u>BELGIUM (BE)</u>	:	Ms Lieve VAN DAELE
<u>BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BA)</u>	:	Mr Ammar MIRASCIJA
<u>BULGARIA (BG)</u>	:	-
<u>CROATIA (HR)</u>	:	Mr Damir JELICIC
<u>CYPRUS (CY)</u>	:	Ms Constantina MAKRI
<u>CZECH REPUBLIC (CZ)</u>	:	Mr Jaroslav CIHLAR Mr Josef JANDA
<u>DENMARK (DK)</u>	:	Ms Gorm BRAMSNAES
<u>ESTONIA (EE)</u>	:	Ms Ülle MUST
<u>FINLAND (FI)</u>	:	Ms Arja KALLIO Mr Raimo PULKKINEN
<u>fYR of MACEDONIA (MK)</u>	:	-
<u>FRANCE (FR)</u>	:	Ms Michèle BARON Mr Philippe de la SAUSSAY
<u>GERMANY (DE)</u>	:	Ms Vera STERCKEN Ms Marion WOLPERS Ms Friederike BEULSHAUSEN
<u>GREECE (EL)</u>	:	Mr John BARTZIS
<u>HUNGARY (HU)</u>	:	<i>regrets</i>

<u>ICELAND (IS)</u>	:	Ms Ásgerður KJARTANSDÓTTIR
<u>IRELAND (IE)</u>	:	<i>regrets</i>
<u>ISRAEL (IL)</u>	:	Mr Husam MASALHA
<u>ITALY (IT)</u>	:	Ms Giulia ROTUNDO
<u>LATVIA (LV)</u>	:	<i>regrets</i>
<u>LITHUANIA (LT)</u>	:	Ms Aisté VILKANAUSKYTE
<u>LUXEMBOURG (LU)</u>	:	Mr Carlo DUPREL
<u>MALTA (MT)</u>	:	Ms Janet MIFSUD
<u>NETHERLANDS (NL)</u>	:	Ms Yvonne SCHAAP
<u>NORWAY (NO)</u>	:	Ms Trude DYPVIK
<u>POLAND (PL)</u>	:	Mr Marek ZDANOWSKI
<u>PORTUGAL (PO)</u>	:	Ms Fernanda SOUTO-SEPULVEDA
<u>ROMANIA (RO)</u>	:	Ms Cristina ANANIA
<u>SERBIA (RS)</u>	:	Ms Biljana STOJANOVIC
<u>SLOVAKIA (SK)</u>	:	Mr Milan DADO
<u>SLOVENIA (SI)</u>	:	Ms Dagmar SZILAGYI
<u>SPAIN (ES)</u>	:	<i>regrets</i>
<u>SWEDEN (SE)</u>	:	Ms Birgitta BOMAN Mr Stefan CAIRÉN
<u>SWITZERLAND (CH)</u>	:	Ms Eva KLAPER
<u>TURKEY (TR)</u>	:	Mr Omer CEBECI Mr Arif ADLI
<u>UNITED KINGDOM (UK)</u>	:	Ms Elizabeth CASBON

COMMISSION,
DG Research & Innovation : Mr Markku WARRAS

COST OFFICE : Ms Monica DIETL
Mr Matthias HAURY
Ms Ursula CASTRO
Mr Christer HALEN (*item 6 and 6bis*)
Mr Matteo RAZZANELLI (*item 6 and 6bis*)

COUNCIL SECRETARIAT
DG C II : Ms Ulla MESIÄ

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DC Chairs (item 6 and 6bis)

FA	Javier PUEYO
ISCH	Marc CABALL
BMBS	Roland POCHET
FPS	Sjur BAARDSEN
ESSEM	Ipek ERZI
ICT	Soulla LOUCA
TUD	Cristina PRONELLO
CMST	Dieter SCHINZER
MPNS	<i>regrets</i>

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Approval of Summary of Conclusions of the previous meeting

Item for approval

3. Approval of new COST Actions

Items for discussion

4. COST in the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020"
5. Shaping COST for the future
 - Implementation of COST Strategy, report of the WG

Joint session with Chairs of Domain Committees (items 6 and 6bis)

6. COST Strategic Initiatives
 - Presentationfollowed by break-out sessions (in three groups)

- 6bis. Follow-up of the breakout sessions

Information items

7. Information on output of finished Actions
8. Information from
 - CSO President
 - = *COST-ESF relationship*
 - Delegations
 - COST Office
 - = *organisation chart*
 - = *activities*
 - COST Secretariat
 - Commission
9. COST Grant System
10. (a) Future CSO and JAF meetings
 - (b) Report on COST Visibility events
11. Any other business