



EARTO Answer to EC Consultation on the draft Communication on State aid to promote Important Projects of Common European Interest

28th February 2014

Following the European Commission consultation on the draft Communication on State aid to promote Important Projects of Common European Interest, EARTO would like to acknowledge that the European Commission has made in this document a very important and positive proposal recognising the need to modernise state aid control in order to foster growth.

The draft communication clearly provides guidance to Member States on how they can support, in line with EU state aid rules, transnational projects which are of strategic dimension for Europe. EARTO believes this to be an important step forward in European R&D policy as those transnational projects will be key for Europe in the future. They will represent an important tool for EU economic growth and industrial competitiveness bringing together various knowledge, expertise, financial resources and economic actors from across Europe together aiming at tackling very important societal challenges not addressable otherwise.

Accordingly, the EARTO Working Group Legal Experts reviewed this draft framework carefully and would like to state its appreciative support for this draft Communication.

As a single comment in the text itself, EARTO would like also to suggest, in article IV.ii.Paragraph 4) in page 7, taking out the word "open" in the second sentence. We believe that the wording "non-discriminatory access to the infrastructure" already implies openness to a sufficient degree, while the additional word "open" is rather undefined and could give rise to (avoidable) problems in respect of interpretation later on.

EARTO is a non-profit international association established in Brussels, where it maintains a permanent secretariat. The Association represents the interests of about 350 RTOs from across the European Union and "FP-associated" countries.

EARTO Vision: a European research and innovation system without borders in which RTOs occupy nodal positions and possess the necessary resources and independence to make a major contribution to a competitive European economy and high quality of life through beneficial cooperation with all stakeholders.

EARTO Mission: to promote and defend the interests of RTOs in Europe by reinforcing their profile and position as a key player in the minds of EU decision-makers and by seeking to ensure that European R&D and innovation programmes are best attuned to their interests; to provide added-value services to EARTO members to help them to improve their operational practices and business performance as well as to provide them with information and advice to help them make the best use of European R&D and innovation programme funding opportunities.

EARTO Working Group Legal Experts: is composed of 25 corporate legal advisers working within our membership. Established autumn 2013, this Working Group has also produced an answer to the EC Consultation on the GBER. Our experts are also involved in the definition of the new DESCA Consortium Agreement model for Horizon2020.

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