



Brussels, 5.4.2018
C(2018) 1919 final

COMMISSION DECISION

of 5.4.2018

**amending Decision C(2015)6946 on the setting up of the High Level Group of Scientific
Advisers**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Commission Decision C(2015)6946 of 16 October 2015 on the setting up of the High Level Group of Scientific Advisors¹ and in particular Article 3 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Commission Decision C(2015)6946 of 16 October 2015 established the High Level Group of Scientific Advisors ("the group").
- (2) Since its inception, the group has produced scientific opinions and explanatory notes at the request of the College, and has been asked to address further policy questions. The group has added capabilities to the policy- and decision-making apparatus of the Commission that are complementary to existing ones. The group has established synergies with and added value to existing advisory bodies within the Commission and other bodies, offices or agencies, including those of the Joint Research Centre. The name of the group should therefore be changed to "Group of Chief Scientific Advisors".
- (3) The members of the group currently have mandates of 30 months that start and end simultaneously and that are renewable once.
- (4) The group should always be able to function at full strength with seven active members, which requires that the process to replace members who resign, have to step down or whose mandate expires should be flexible and independent.
- (5) In order to ensure the cohesion and proper functioning of the group, the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation should be able to ask the group to advise him on a suitable profile for a candidate who is to replace a member who leaves the group.
- (6) The suitability of candidates who are to fill a vacancy should be assessed by an independent Identification Committee at the request of the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation. The Identification Committee should, moreover, ascertain that any candidate is actually willing to serve as member of the group.
- (7) Staggered mandates should be introduced to ensure the continuity of the operation of the group and to avoid abrupt changes in membership. Members should be appointed by the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation for a period of up to three years, renewable once, but not exceeding five years.
- (8) Members who resign, have to step down or whose mandate expires, shall be replaced by candidates appointed by the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/pdf/c_2015_6946_fl_commission_decision_en_827417.pdf

from a short list established by an independent Identification Committee. The Commissioner may ask the group to clarify the profile of a candidate to fill a vacancy in the membership of the group and can further involve the Identification Committee in the selection of appropriate candidates.

- (9) The public communication of science is important to engage citizens and civil society. The presence of communication skills in the collective skill set should be stressed.
- (10) The amendments develop the operational aspects of the group beyond its mere establishment. This should be reflected in the title of Decision C(2015)6946.
- (11) Decision C(2015)6946 should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

Decision C(2015) 6946 is amended as follows:

- (1) the title is replaced by the following:

'COMMISSION DECISION of 16 October 2015 on the setting up and operation of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors';

- (2) Recital 6 is amended as follows:

'(6) The group should be composed of highly qualified, specialised, independent experts, appointed in their personal capacity and who act independently and in the public interest. For their selection the Commission should be assisted by an independent Identification Committee. Selection should take place on the basis of objective criteria, following an open call for nominations.';

- (3) Article 1 is amended as follows:

'The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, hereinafter referred to as “the group”, is hereby set up.';

- (4) Article 3 is amended as follows:

- (a) paragraph 3 is replaced by the following:

3. Members shall be appointed by the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, following a selection process overseen by an Identification Committee and consultations in accordance with paragraph 8.;

(b) - paragraphs 5 and 6 are replaced by the following:

5. Once the nominations have been received, the Identification Committee shall help the Commission services in evaluating the nominations and identifying a short list of candidates covering all fields of science relevant for Union policy making.

6. The short list shall serve as a pool of candidates for replacement of members of the group.;

(c) in paragraph 7, point (d), is replaced by the following:

'(d) Beyond their proven reputation as scientists and researchers, the membership shall collectively bring experience in providing scientific advice to policy makers, acquired across a broad range of Member States and at European and international levels. That shall include skills in the public communication of science, as well as experience in areas such as data analytics and visualisation, involvement in legislative processes, studies of scientific advisory systems, and the wider political context in which the group is situated.;

(d) paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 are replaced by the following:

8. The Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation may ask the group for advice on the appropriate profile for a candidate. The Commissioner may furthermore ask the Identification Committee to ascertain itself of the suitability and willingness of specific candidates to serve as members of the group.

9. Members shall be appointed for a term of up to three years, renewable once. The length of two consecutive terms shall not exceed five years. Members shall remain in office until they are replaced in accordance with paragraph 10 or their term of office expires.

10. Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who resign, have to step down or who do not comply with the conditions set out in paragraph 2 of this Article or Article 339 of the Treaty shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and shall be

replaced.';

(5) Article 5 is amended as follows:

(a) paragraph 1 is replaced by the following:

'1. The members of the group shall be paid EUR 450 for each day of full attendance at a plenary meeting, EUR 225 for partial attendance and EUR 225/450 for each half/full day of remote work. They shall not have an employment relationship with the European Commission.';

(b) paragraph 4 is replaced by the following:

'4. All expenses related to the functioning of the group and of the Identification Committee shall be covered by the administrative expenditure of the Research and Innovation framework programme. Those expenses shall be reimbursed within the limits of the available appropriations allocated under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.'

Done at Brussels, 5.4.2018

For the Commission
Carlos Moedas
Member of the Commission