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Accompanying document to the

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**BETTER CAREERS AND MORE MOBILITY: A EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP FOR
RESEARCHERS**

IMPACT ASSESSMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

{COM(2008) aaa final}
{SEC(2008) bbbb}

The proposal this Impact Assessment accompanies is one of five initiatives¹ planned in 2008 to follow up the 2007 Green Paper on how to achieve a more open, competitive and attractive European Research Area as part of wider efforts to transform the EU economy towards more knowledge intensive activities.

The 2008 Spring European Council confirmed investing in people and modernising labour markets, and investing in knowledge and innovation² as priority areas for the renewed Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs and highlighted the need to create a "fifth freedom" in Europe – the freedom of knowledge.

Researchers are the key agents for the creation and transfer of knowledge. Ensuring the availability of the necessary researchers is therefore indispensable for a competitive, knowledge-based EU economy. The results of the **public consultation** which followed the Green Paper, suggested that a single **labour market for researchers is the top priority for action at EU level**.

The **overall aim of the "European researchers' partnership" is to** make rapid and measurable progress **at national and EU level** towards making Europe a more attractive place for entering and pursuing a research career.

Despite some progress, the experience of **implementing the existing European strategies of mobility and careers and the Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment** (Charter & Code or C&C) , has revealed that the lack of an integrated framework addressing both career and mobility issues and of adequate engagement by the Member States, has led to slow and uneven progress.

Over the years Community legislation on social security coordination has particularly facilitated mobility of workers. When it was adopted, longer-term mobility was the rule. But as highlighted in the recent EU Job Mobility Action Plan³, the current rules adopted several decades ago might not cover as efficiently newer forms of mobility of workers, such as researchers, that frequently work on short-term contracts in different Member States.

There would therefore be considerable EU added value in a new initiative for researchers which could build upon other reforms and actions which are now underway various policy responses and alternative delivery mechanisms have been examined.

On the present legal basis, Community legislative action would only be possible in the areas of social security coordination and supplementary pension rights. However, a new implementing regulation coordinating social security schemes and a directive covering the portability of supplementary pension rights are currently under negotiation and the European Job Mobility Action Plan 2007-2010 aims to improve existing legislation and administrative practices regarding workers mobility. It would therefore be premature to recommend further action in these areas at this time. Instead the proposed partnership will explore the possibility of future legislative or other actions such as Council or Commission recommendations if clear evidence of deficiencies emerges during the implementation. **The final choice is for a**

¹ IP management by public research organisations; researchers; pan-European research infrastructures; international S&T cooperation; joint programming

² Presidency Conclusions European Council 13-14 March 2008

³ Mobility, an instrument for more and better jobs: The European Job Mobility Action Plan (2007-2010), COM(2007)773, 6.12.2007

Communication setting out a three-year partnership with Member States, contributing to the Lisbon objectives and process. The partnership with the Member States is expected to make a difference by introducing a dynamic process of concerted action and concentrating efforts and resources on key areas of mutual interest. Specifically, it is proposed that the partnership should make rapid, measurable progress to:

- systematically open recruitment;
- meet the social security and supplementary pensions needs of mobile researchers;
- provide attractive employment and working conditions; and
- enhance the training, skills and experience of researchers.

Through the partnership, **Member States can play their full role in the exact definition and implementation of the process**, targeting actions and priorities to their needs. **The Commission will seek to optimise existing Community instruments**, including those available through the FP7 People programme, to complement national actions and support the partnership. The impact of individual initiatives would be greatly increased by ensuring that they are planned and implemented in a coherent, consistent and mutually reinforcing way, based on commonly developed objectives and focussed on key areas. Actions should be **monitored at both national and EU-level according to commonly agreed indicators**. The partnership is expected to bring significant change for the benefit of researchers and the knowledge-based economy and society. It could help overcome structural, institutional, national and cultural obstacles to better careers and more mobility for researchers.

As for the other four ERA policy initiatives, **the overall governance will be overseen by the Competitiveness Council utilising the Lisbon process and national actions** to implement the initiative, reflected in the National Reform Programmes of the Member States.