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INFORMATION NOTE

**PEER REVIEW OF THE MOLDOVAN R&I SYSTEM
UNDER THE HORIZON 2020 POLICY SUPPORT FACILITY**

To support countries in reforming their research and innovation (R&I) systems, DG Research and Innovation set up a '**Policy Support Facility**' (PSF) under Horizon 2020, aimed at "improving the design, implementation and evaluation of R&I policies". The PSF provides best practice, leading expertise and guidance to Member States and Associated Countries (on a voluntary basis) through a broad range of services to address their specific needs.

There are three main services offered by the Horizon 2020 PSF to the Member States and Associated Countries: (1) **Peer Reviews** of national R&I systems; (2) **Specific support** to countries and (3) **Mutual learning** exercises on specific R&I topics.

The PSF is **demand driven** and respond to requests made by Member States and Associated Countries on a voluntary basis. To organise this process, the Commission issues an annual request (via the European Research Area and Innovation Committee) for expressions of interest for the PSF services.

The first **expression of interest** was launched already in 2014 and served as basis for the finalised start-up activities of the PSF: (1) The Peer Review of Bulgaria¹, (2) A mutual learning exercise on policies to support business R&I investment; and (3) A 'pre-Peer Review' of Hungary aiming at preparing the ground for a subsequent full peer-review.

The Moldovan authorities expressed their **interest for an independent Peer Review of their R&I system** by a **letter of the President of the Academy of Sciences from 26 May 2015**. In parallel with the Moldovan Peer Review several other activities are being launched under the PSF, i.e. Specific Support to Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia; Peer Reviews of Ukraine and Hungary and several mutual learning activities among interested countries on such topics as public-private partnerships, evaluation of grant schemes or on R&D tax incentives.

Peer Reviews of national R&I systems are **independent in-depth assessments of a country's R&I system carried out by a panel of experts** and leading to **concrete recommendations to the national authorities** on reforms necessary to strengthen their R&I system.

¹ <https://rio.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/library/horizon-2020-policy-support-facility-peer-review-bulgarian-research-and-innovation-system>

Those Peer Reviews stand in the tradition of previous peer review models under the auspices of CREST and ERAC by offering a methodology, a slim structure based on two short field visits with stakeholder group interviews, and the exploitation of qualitative and quantitative analyses. Findings reflect the degree of information and insight provided by the reviewed country. The advantage of this design lies in the short-termed availability of systemic expert impressions and in the timely commitment of external feedback to practical policy issues. The process is tailored to specific country needs i.e. the country requesting the PSF activity chooses the scope of the review and the adequate time in the policy cycle. The country's high level political commitment, its assurance of maximum coordination between the public authorities operating in R&I, and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders ensures the visibility and the proper follow-up of the peer review.

In their **letter of 26 May 2015**, the Moldovan authorities specified a number of focus areas for the Peer Review. In line with this request, **the aim of this Peer Review is to provide external advice and operational recommendations to the Moldovan authorities** on possible reforms to undertake within the framework of their new National Strategy for Science and Development 2014-2020 **in line with the above mentioned focus areas**:

- (1) Increasing the efficiency of public R&I funding and the quality of the R&I performing bodies and instruments;*
- (2) Improving the policies for human resources and mobility of researchers;*
- (3) Boosting business innovativeness and science-business links; and,*
- (4) Increasing R&I impact by properly defining the policy instruments*

The main expected outcome of the Peer Review is a **report**, including a set of key policy messages highlighted upfront, each one supported by a number of concrete and operational recommendations, backed up by evidence and analysis. Recommendations should be feasible to implement (actionable) in the national context, backed by evidence, best practice, and analyses of similar approaches and reforms introduced in other countries. For that purpose, the Peer Review will be undertaken by a **PSF panel** composed by **four independent experts**: Mr. Krzysztof Gulda (Chair, Poland), Mr. Manfred Spiesberger (co-rapporteur, Austria) Mr. George Bonas (co-rapporteur, Greece), Ms. Francien Heijs (expert, Netherlands) and **three peer experts**, being senior officials from Austria, Romania and Estonia. The Commission acts as Observer and Facilitator of the PSF reviews.

The PSF panel will visit Moldova twice. Firstly on **7-9 December 2015** to meet all Moldovan authorities involved in the R&I policies as well as the wide range of institutions and stakeholders. A proposal for the structure, main messages and draft recommendations of the Peer Review report will follow and the PSF panel will present the preliminary findings to Moldovan stakeholders during a second field visit in Chisinau on **27-29 January 2016**. On the basis of the various documents received and analysed, as well as in-depth discussions with various experts and the comments received at the meetings during the two field visit, the PSF panel will prepare the Peer Review report by **15 March 2016**. The report and the recommendations will be presented to the Moldovan R&I community still in March 2016.

For all the questions regarding the design and the activities of the Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility, please contact RTD-PSF@ec.europa.eu.



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