



**Minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the  
European Commission's Group of  
Chief Scientific Advisors**

9 June 2022 (by videoconference)

Brussels, 9 August 2022

## Minutes

34th plenary meeting of the European Commission's Group of  
Chief Scientific Advisors  
9 June 2022 (by videoconference)

### **1. Approval of the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the 33rd plenary meeting have been adopted by written procedure and published on the [scientific advice mechanism](#) (SAM) website.

The draft agenda was adopted.

### **2. Nature of the meeting**

The meeting was held by videoconference and was closed to the public.

### **3. List of items discussed**

#### **Ongoing and possible future scientific advice**

- Éva Kondorosi updated the participants on conferences and meetings following the adoption of the scientific opinion on '*Cancer screening*' on 2 March 2022. The Advisors' recommendations were already having a strong impact. On 13 May 2022, the Advisors and experts from SAPEA (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies) had met with Commissioner Kyriakides (Health and Food Safety) and staff from her departments, to discuss further questions and a follow-up request for scientific advice from the Advisors.
- Nicole Grobert summarised progress on the scientific opinion on '*Strategic crisis management in the EU*'. Workshops had been held on cascading impacts on critical infrastructures and on a resilient economy. SAPEA was working on additional literature reviews on data management for crisis preparedness and management, on psychological aspects and mental health in crises and on cultural heritage under threat in crises. The SAM secretariat was linking the work on the crisis opinion to relevant activities and ongoing policy initiatives of other Directorates-General. Exchanges with the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) had highlighted the importance of considering the shortcomings of civil protection mechanisms, particularly in relation to cultural heritage. A sounding board was planned for 6 July 2022, and a stakeholder meeting and meetings with representatives of relevant Commission departments were planned for late summer 2022.

Nicole Grobert reported on the start of planned regular exchanges between the chair and deputy chair of the Advisors and the chair and vice chairs of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE), to explore possible synergies between the two advisory groups, particularly in the field of crisis management. They agreed that, pending EGE's approval, there would be three separate products for the crisis topic (the Advisors'

scientific opinion, the SAPEA's Evidence Review Report, and the EGE's statement) scheduled for publication by end of September 2022.

### **Potential future topics**

- Following Commissioner Kyriakides's remarks on a future request for scientific advice on '*Sustainable food consumption*', (working title) and pending a mandate from Commissioner Gabriel (Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth), the Advisors are ready to begin work on this topic.

### **Sandrine Dixson-Declève, chair of the Expert Group on the Economic and Societal Impact of Research and Innovation (ESIR)**

Sandrine Dixson-Declève introduced ESIR, its working methods and its objective to influence conversations and bring science into decision-making. ESIR, supported by a secretariat provided by the European Commission, consists of 16 Commission-selected experts with a variety of profiles and expertise from industry and policy.

She informed the meeting that ESIR's work was focused on four areas: 1) transformation in crisis, 2) missions and long-term visioning, 3) the future of research and innovation and how universities and academia have changed in time of crisis and 4) the future of work, migration and quality of life. ESIR is very flexible and has many connections to policy-makers.

Nicole Grobert then briefly summarised the work of SAM and their latest scientific opinions, emphasising a high degree of scientific rigour in the evidence-gathering process.

Both chairs agreed to continue to update each other on their current and future work, to explore areas of common interest further and to discuss potential opportunities for collaboration and synergies.

### **Discussion with Antonio Loprieno and SAPEA representatives**

Nicole Grobert updated the participants on the follow-up to the opinion on '*Cancer screening*', progress on the opinion on '*Strategic crisis management in the EU*' and preparatory work towards a possible future topic on *sustainable food consumption*. Antonio Loprieno informed the meeting about SAPEA's staffing situation and its revision of quality guidelines that should enable SAPEA to react faster and in different formats to Advisors' requests. Given the success of the 2022 conference on 'Scientific Advice under pressure', participants were considering holding regular conferences on this topic.

### **Outreach and synergies**

The SAM secretariat announced that it was developing a communication strategy and a new communication plan for each scientific opinion or statement and, with SAPEA, was discussing a more joined-up communication approach with a focus on joint SAM branding. The scientific opinion on '*Strategic crisis management in the EU*' would serve as pilot.

The SAM secretariat was in discussions with the European Parliament's Science and Technology Options Assessment (STOA) panel about a possible joint event on the future of scientific advice in the EU, to be held in the autumn.

**Next steps and conclusions/recommendations/opinions**

- SAM secretariat to explore with Advisors and SAPEA ways of addressing DG SANTE's additional questions and follow-up request to the '*Cancer screening*' opinion.
- Maarja Kruusmaa, co-leading Advisor for the crisis topic, and Tina Comes, chair of the SAPEA working group on this topic, to present at the European Civil Protection Forum on 28-29 June 2022.
- Crisis management team to continue work on the scientific opinion on '*Strategic crisis management in the EU*'.
- Sustainable food consumption team ready to begin work on the scientific opinion on '*Sustainable food consumption*'.

**4. Next meeting**

The next plenary meeting of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors will take place on 11-12 October 2022 in Brussels.

## **List of participants**

### Group of Chief Scientific Advisors

Nicole Grobert, Chair;  
Nebojsa Nakicenovic, Deputy Chair;  
Éva Kondorosi, Member;  
Maarja Kruusmaa, Member (morning);  
Alberto Melloni, Member;  
Eric Lambin, Member;  
Eva Zažimalová, Member.

### Science Advice for Policy by European Academies (SAPEA)

Antonio Loprieno, President All European Academies (ALLEA), Chair of SAPEA Board, agenda point 4;  
Rudolf Hielscher, SAPEA Coordinator, agenda point 4;  
Toby Wardman, SAPEA Head of Communications, agenda point 4.

### Other participants (invited experts)

Janusz Bujnicki, International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology in Warsaw, agenda points 2 and 3;  
Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Chair of the Expert Group on the Economic and Societal Impact of Research and Innovation (ESIR), agenda point 6.

### Observers

Jacek Kolanowski, President of the Young Academies Science Advice Structure (YASAS) & Vice-Chair of the Polish Young Academy, agenda point 4;  
Moniek Tromp, YASAS Vice-Chair, agenda point 4.

### European Commission

Gilles Laroche, DG RTD, Head of Unit 03 – Science Policy, Advice and Ethics;  
Jacques Verraes, DG RTD, Deputy Head of Unit 03 – Science Policy, Advice and Ethics;  
Ingrid Zegers, DG RTD, Unit 03 – Science Policy, Advice and Ethics, SAM team leader;  
Ramona Samson, DG RTD, Unit G1 – Common R&I Strategy and Foresight Service;  
Annabelle Ascher, DG RTD, Unit 03 – Science Policy, Advice and Ethics, Head of the Secretariat of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors;  
Vita Volante, DG RTD, Unit 03 – Science Policy, Advice and Ethics, Secretariat of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors.

Additional members of DG RTD, Unit 03 depending on topic discussion.