



EC Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM)
Identification Committee Activity report
17 October 2015

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*Research and
Innovation*

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The European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, Carlos Moedas appointed an Identification Committee consisting of three high-level scientists to identify and propose a shortlist of candidates for the High Level Group of scientific advisors (HLG) under the new Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM).

The three members of the Identification Committee are Sir David King, Prof. Rianne Letschert and Mr. Antonio Vitorino. (See Annex 1 for short CV).

The works of the committee have been carried out in agreement with the SAM Identification Committee Terms of Reference and the corresponding statement of methodology (Annex 2). This report summarises the process and outcomes of the Committee's work at the end of its mandate (October 2014).

1. Context

As announced by President Juncker on 13 May 2015, the European Commission is setting up a new Scientific Advice Mechanism ("SAM"). It will support the Commission with high quality, timely and independent scientific advice for its policy-making activities. This will contribute to the quality of EU legislation, in line with the Better Regulation agenda.

The Scientific Advice Mechanism will draw on the wide range of scientific expertise in Europe through a close relationship with national academies and other bodies, as well as the expertise of a High-Level Group of Independent Scientists.

The tasks of the HLG are:

- (a) To provide the Commission with independent scientific advice on specific policy issues where such advice is critical to the development of EU policies or legislation and does not duplicate advice being provided by existing bodies. The advice provided by the group shall identify the most important and relevant evidence and empirical findings that can support decision making on the specified policy issues, including an assessment of the robustness and limitations of the evidence and empirical findings.
- (b) To support the Commission in identifying specific policy issues where independent scientific advice is needed.
- (c) To provide recommendations for improving the overall interaction between Commission policy making processes and independent scientific advice concerning any field of Union policy making.

2. Methodology/Timing

The Identification Committee started its work in July 2015 and met three times in the period up to 17th October 2015. The committee received operational support of a small secretariat run by the Commission. A systematic consultation of the scientific community was carried out to search for possible candidates for the HLG membership on the basis of the statement of methodology mentioned above.

The first meeting of the Identification committee took place on July 6th 2015 and was devoted mainly to the definition of the methodology to be followed and the planning of the full process.

Following the first meeting of the Committee, an open invitation was sent on 14th July 2015 to the main representative organisations of the scientific and policy

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community in Europe and it was also published on the SAM web-site. The consultation was done by means of a letter from the Committee to the President of each organisation inviting also the respective affiliated organisations to submit their nominations. The consultation was also open to other interested representative organisations of the research and scientific policy community.

The organisations invited to submit nominations reacted very positively to the request both proposing candidates directly and by inviting their respective national affiliates to do it. In response to the Committee's invitation, a total of 74 organisations nominated 162 candidates.

The nominations received covered a wide range of scientific disciplines with a high variability in terms of coverage of specific domains. The gender distribution of the nominations received was not balanced (20% female / 80 % male). However due to the very positive response to the consultation, the committee had no difficulty to recommend a group including high level suitable candidates respecting a proper gender balance.

The members of the Committee thoroughly examined the 162 nominations received. The process started right after the date of submission (10th September 2015). At their second meeting on 25th September 2015, the Committee established in full consensus a first short list composed of 50 candidates. The committee felt the need for carrying out personal interviews with potential candidates before making the final recommendation to the Commission regarding the composition of the HLG. On the basis of the preselected 50 candidates a final short list including 14 candidates to be interviewed was agreed by the Committee.

Interviews were organised with the identified candidates in order to determine their suitability and availability for the SAM High Level Group Membership. Depending on the availability of candidates, the interviews took place either through meetings in Brussels or through videoconference on 16-17 October 2015.

The candidates were interviewed in a structured way, i. e. a standard set of questions and a standard order of questions was applied in all interviews. All candidates had to describe their professional expertise as well as their experience in relation to science advice. They were also asked about potential conflicts of interest. In addition, candidates had to confirm again whether they could spend up to 40 working days per year as a member of the High Level Group or even 60 working days if they were elected as Chair or Vice-Chair.

3. Recommendations

After the interview process the Committee reached consensus and proposed to the Commissioner a short list of suitable candidates for the HLG. The short list included a recommendation for seven identified members to be appointed for the first two and a half years, renewable once. The Committee proposed to the Commission to place an additional group of five Members as a pool of candidates for replacement of members of the group during its first term of office.

4. Concluding Remarks

In line with the Statement of Methodology, the Identification Committee has formulated its recommendation for a group of seven members with different and complementary expertise to ensure a proper coverage of fields of science relevant for EU policy making.

The Committee has paid particular attention to achieving a proper gender balance in its recommendation that includes 42 % female representation. It has aimed at ensuring, to the largest extent possible, a high degree of diversity in the

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geographical origin of the proposed candidates. In addition, consideration has been given to younger next-generation leaders.

ANNEX 1 – Members of the SAM Identification Committee

Sir David King

Sir David King was appointed as the UK Foreign Secretary's Special Representative for Climate Change in September 2013. He was previously the Government's Chief Scientific Advisor from 2000 – 2007, during which time he raised awareness of the need for governments to act on climate change and was instrumental in creating the Energy Technologies Institute. He also served as the Founding Director of the Smith School of Enterprise and Environment at Oxford; was Head of the Department of Chemistry at Cambridge University 1993-2000 and Master of Downing College at Cambridge 1995 -2000.

Sir David has published over 500 papers on science and policy, for which he has received numerous awards, and holds 22 Honorary Degrees from universities around the world. Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1991, a Foreign Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2002 and knighted in 2003, Sir David was also made an 'Officier of the French Legion d'Honneur' in 2009, for work which has contributed to responding to the climate and energy challenge.

Prof. Rianne Letschert

Prof. Rianne Letschert is professor of victimology and international law at the International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT), where she is also director. Her work combines legal analysis with social sciences methodology. She currently works on a large scale project assessing the impact of international judicial interventions on the wellbeing of victims of international crimes and society at large. She is a member of the Board of Governance of the Dutch Victim Support Organization, and expert consultant for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon on victim issues. In 2013, she was appointed to the Royal Young Academy of Sciences of which she became the chair in April 2015. She is a member of the Dutch Helsinki Committee, a non-governmental organization that promotes human rights and strengthens the rule of law and democracy, in particular in Europe. She is a member of the scientific Committee of NIAS (Dutch institute for advanced studies in the humanities and social sciences).

Mr. Antonio Vitorino

President of the Jacques Delors Institute and a lawyer by profession since 1982, he has been an associate at the law firm Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira & Associados since 2005. Former Professor of Constitutional Law and European Law in the University of Lisbon. Elected to parliament in 1980, he was Minister for Parliamentary Affairs in the government of Mario Soares (1983-85), then Deputy Secretary in the government of Macau (1986-87). He was a judge on Portugal's constitutional court (1989-94) before being elected MEP in 1994. In 1995 he became Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Portugal. In 1999 Antonio Vitorino was appointed European Commissioner for Justice and Internal Affairs, a post he occupied until 2004. As a representative of the European Commission he took part in both the convention which drew up the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Convention on the Future of Europe.

ANNEX 2 – Identification Committee – Statement of methodology

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1. Introduction

The members of the Scientific Advice Mechanism High Level Group of scientific advisors (SAM HLG) are appointed by the European Commission on the basis of a search process carried out by an independent Identification Committee. The Identification Committee carries out its work independently and transparently.

The current identification process relates to the appointment of SAM HLG members who will come into office in autumn 2015. The consultation exercise will contribute to this and possibly future identification processes. The Committee is publishing this methodology that it will adopt for this consultation, which draws on the approach followed by the European Research Council Scientific Council Identification Committee.

2. Consultation of the research and scientific policy community

The Committee intends to create a pool of possible candidates for SAM HLG membership covering all fields of science relevant for EU policy making. It is envisaged that the pool will be updated in order to provide candidates for future renewal of the HLG, including potential retirements or resignations.

The Committee considers it should actively consult the main organisations representative of the various segments of the research and scientific policy community at European level (see below). The consultation will be done by means of a letter from the Committee to the President of each organisation. The consultation will not necessarily be the exclusive source of candidates. It will be open to other interested representative organisations of the research and scientific policy community and the members of the Committee themselves to suggest other possible candidates. However, self-nominations will not be considered. All candidates, regardless of source of nomination would be considered by the Committee using the same process as described in Section 4.

3. Factors and criteria to be taken into account

The Committee considers that the factors and criteria for identification of SAM HLG members are as follows:

The composition of the SAM HLG must demonstrate that it can provide scientific advice for European Commission policy decisions which is authoritative and absolutely independent, combining wisdom and experience with vision and imagination. The credibility of the HLG will be built on the balance of qualities amongst the men and women who make it up, and they should collectively reflect the breadth of the research community across Europe. Members of the SAM HLG must individually have an undisputed reputation as research leaders and for their independence and commitment to research. Generally, they must be current or recent research practitioners, as well as those who have exercised scientific and policy leadership at European or world level. Consideration should also be given to younger next-generation leaders.

Members must reflect the broad disciplinary scope of research, embracing the natural sciences, medicine and engineering, as well as the social sciences, economics, and the humanities. However, they should not be considered as representatives of a discipline or of a particular line of research and should not perceive themselves as such; they should have a broad vision which collectively reflects an understanding of important developments in research, including inter- and multi-disciplinary research, and the needs for scientific advice for policy at European level.

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Beyond their proven reputation as scientists and researchers, the membership should collectively bring experience in providing scientific advice to policy makers, acquired across a broad range of EU Member States, and at European and international levels. This could include experience in areas such as the public communication of science, data analytics and visualisation, involvement in legislative processes, studies of scientific advisory systems, and the wider political context in which the SAM HLG is situated.

The membership should reflect the range of scientific institutions which provide policy relevant advice; it should include those with experience in advisory councils and committees, government scientific advisors, academies of science and learned societies, universities and research institutes, for example. Members who have gained experience in more than one country could be valuable to the HLG, and some members may be drawn from outside Europe.

A balance between men and women shall be sought.

4. Methodology

To draw up the list of candidates, the organisations consulted (and others who wish to nominate individuals) will be asked to provide suggestions of persons who in their estimation:

- Have the highest eminence as scientific leaders and the qualifications and experience reflecting the criteria set out above;
- Are available and willing to work as a member of the SAM HLG independently of any other interest, and
- Would be expected to have the trust and confidence of the scientific community and of policy makers.

The Committee will regard the names and personal details of candidates as confidential. The committee will only consider candidacies that will be accompanied by a short statement by the nominating organisation regarding the qualifications and broader profile of each candidate, adequate for it to make an informed judgement. This would be expected to include:

- A synopsis of the candidate's background and curriculum vitae;
- Relevant professional experience (e.g. universities, scientific institutions, business, government, etc., indicating also any administrative or scientific advice to policy experience);
- Major publications and other significant works and prizes;
- Broader aspects of the candidate as appropriate (e.g. country of residence, experience abroad, nationality).

It is recommended to use the attached template in order to provide information about the qualifications of the proposed candidates. The Committee recognises that the availability of persons to participate in the SAM HLG will be affected by the precise duties of the latter. It should be noted that the SAM HLG is expected to meet at least 6 times per year for 1 day meetings which are held normally in Brussels or other European cities and are conducted in the English language. The maximum number of days per year HLG Members are expected to devote to these tasks is up to 40 working days (including meetings and remote work). In the case of the chair-person and deputy chair-person the maximum number of days is up to 60 working days.

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While nominations of individual candidates would not be any guarantee of selection, the Committee would expect that the nominating bodies would establish the willingness of candidates to serve before their names were forwarded to it.

5. Main representative organisations to be consulted

- EASAC (European Academies' Science Advisory Council)
- EUROCASE (The European Council of Applied Sciences and Engineering)
- ALLEA (All European Academies)
- FEAM (Federation of the European Academies of Medicines)
- Academia Europaea (organisation representing individual scientists and scholars)
- Young academy of Europe
- Business Europe
- EARTO (European Association of Research and Technology Organisations)
- EIRMA (European Industrial Research Management Association).
- ESF (European Science Foundation)
- EUA (European University Association)
- SCIENCE EUROPE (Association of European Research Funding Organisations and Research Performing Organisations)
- LERU (League of European Research Universities)

These organisations will be invited to submit nominations. At the same they will also be asked to invite their respective national affiliates to submit their application directly in order to simplify the process. The Committee also welcomes other interested representative organisations of the scientific community to put forward high level nominations during the same period of consultation. The consultation exercise will be publically announced through our website <http://ec.europa.eu/sam> inviting other groups representing European research to submit their nominations.

6. Provisional timetable for the further work of the Committee

The provisional schedule for the next stages of the Committee's work is as follows:

- July 2015 – consultation letters sent to representative organisations
- 10 September 2015 – Deadline for receipt of proposed candidates and relevant information
- September / Mid October 2015 - evaluation of candidates / assessment of availability
- October 2015 – confidential proposal to the European Commission and report of the Identification Committee

7. Electronic address for the consultation

Organisations should send the nominations to the following electronic address: EC-SAM@ec.europa.eu

ANNEX 3: List of consulted organisations that provided nominations for members of the Scientific Advice Mechanism High Level Group of scientific advisors (SAM HLG)

- EASAC (European Academies' Science Advisory Council)
- EUROCASE (The European Council of Applied Sciences and Engineering)
- ALLEA (All European Academies)
- Academia Europaea (organisation representing individual scientists and scholars)
- Young academy of Europe
- Business Europe
- EIRMA (European Industrial Research Management Association).
- ESF (European Science Foundation)
- EUA (European University Association)
- SCIENCE EUROPE (Association of European Research Funding Organisations and Research Performing Organisations)
- LERU (League of European Research Universities)

On top of the nominations provided by the above mentioned organisations, a total of 63 organisations provided nominations in line with the statement of methodology. These include affiliated organisations to the main organisations consulted, such as national academies and universities and also other organisations.