

# MEETING OF MINISTERS OF THE VISEGRÁD GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Budapest, 9 December 2013

## **Joint Statement on the Enhanced Collaboration of the Visegrád Countries within the ERA**

We believe that together the Visegrád countries have a near perfect combination of size, resources, location, skills, and ambition to become a major hub for innovation within Europe and internationally. It is only by acting together that we can achieve the necessary scale of RDI to impact global markets consistently and significantly. This forum provides an excellent opportunity to build bridges to jointly overcome these gaps.

Addressing the issue of the regional dimension of research and innovation, the following intervention areas should be considered: the stimulating role of financing from the national budgets, the role of cohesion policy and smart specialisation, and the actions under Horizon 2020. Possible synergies resulting from their respective coordinated implementation shall help reducing these regional disparities.

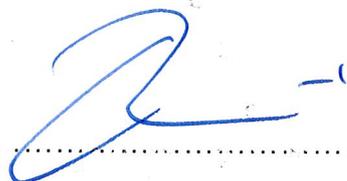
It is our belief that the success of the process of spreading excellence and widening participation in ERA activities, and thus closing the research and innovation divide, will depend on enhanced strategic cooperation and collaboration between our countries. Therefore we believe that it is us, the “widening countries”, who have to increase synchronisation of our respective policies, incentivize collaboration of our organizations, and even perform joint actions to achieve these widening targets.

The V4 countries are facing several common challenges in the field of research and innovation – but then again, we have several common strengths and opportunities as well. Therefore we strongly believe that our countries can play a pioneer role in the widening process. The main instrument to implement this is better transnational coordination of our policies, and even dedicating our resources to joint transnational activities.

The Ministers of the V4 countries responsible for research and innovation express their commitment to engage in cooperation in the above mentioned areas. The Ministers decide to enhance strategic harmonisation of their efforts and to form an expert process to analyse the situation, investigate good practices, reveal concrete cooperation opportunities, and identify areas for further action.

The provisions laid down in the Joint Statement will continue to be the subject of annual evaluation done by the Ministers during their meetings in the framework of the Visegrád Group Presidency.

Signed in four identical copies in English language on 9 December 2013.



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