

THE GERMAN COUNCIL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES PROVIDES
ADVICE TO THE GERMAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE
(LÄNDER) GOVERNMENTS ON THE STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT
OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH.

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Annual Plenary Meeting of the European Advisory Councils for Science, Research and Innovation Policy in Cologne

The presidents and secretaries general of various advisory councils for science, research and innovation policy from thirteen different European countries have met in Cologne on Thursday, November 10th, for their annual plenary meeting. Altogether, 20 participants represented Switzerland, Austria, the Low Countries, the Baltic States, Finland, Denmark, France, Great Britain as well as the Czech Republic.

The annual plenary meetings of the European Advisory Councils for Science, Research and Innovation Policy serve the purpose of discussing relevant topics of science policy. This year's meeting focused on grand societal challenges. Taking the position paper *Grand Societal Challenges as a topic for science policy* by the German Council of Science and Humanities as a point of reference, the group discussed implications of grand challenges for research as well as for science policy.

The participants agreed that society nurtures rising expectations regarding the role of science policy in addressing grand societal challenges. The current European Framework Programme "Horizon 2020" triggered the discussion about grand societal challenges in many European countries. It should however be made clear that these challenges do not only serve as a rationale for science funding, but call for adjusting science policy to other policy areas and making the selection of grand challenges more transparent for society.

„We had a constructive meeting with thorough and fruitful discussions“, concluded Manfred Prenzel, Chairman of the German Council of Science and Humanities at the end of the meeting. He was very pleased because “it shows that in spite of prominent inter-European dissonances, we agree on fundamental questions.”

Note

The introductory speech of Professor Manfred Prenzel „Grand Societal Challenges as an Issue for Research and Innovation Policy“ can be downloaded [here](#).

The position paper “Grand Societal Challenges as a Topic for Science Policy” can be downloaded [here](#).

Furthermore, you can order a copy by email at the head office of the Council of Sciences (post@wissenschaftsrat.de).

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