

Statement by Fabiana Scapolo

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) as one of the Directorates General (DG) of the European Commission (EC) provides customer-driven scientific and technical support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of European Union policies. Its seven research institutes are distributed across five sites in Europe (Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain) with its headquarters located in Brussels.

The mission of the Joint Research Centre is to provide customer driven scientific and technical support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of European Union policies.

As a service of the European Commission, the Joint Research Centre functions as a reference centre of science and technology for the Union. Close to the policy-making process, it serves the common interest of the Member States, while being independent of special interests, whether private or national.

The JRC has about 2750 permanent and temporary staff. It is active in the policy areas of energy, transport, environment, climate change, competitiveness, safety of food and consumer products, security, crisis management, and nuclear safety and security. The principle customers of the JRC are the policy-making Directorates General of the European Commission. The JRC also provides scientific-technical support to other EU institutions such as the European Parliament. The JRC cooperates with relevant EU agencies through exchanging data and information, providing informatics tools and risk assessment models. It provides support to the Member States in areas where it has a special competence (e.g. environmental and civil crisis management, anticipation, nuclear forensics and damage assessment). In the frame of the EU's enlargement, the JRC also assists accession and candidate countries in the take-up of the body of EU law (so-called *acquis communautaire*).

The main customer DGs of the JRC are the DGs for Energy and Transport, Enterprise and Industry, Environment, Climate Change, Agriculture and Rural Development, Health and Consumer Policy, and Research and Innovation.

The JRC bases its strategy on the need to meet the Grand Challenges facing the EU and world set by the Lisbon Treaty and the Europe 2020 Strategy, and specifically to support the strengthening of the European Research Area (ERA). The ERA provides the JRC with its strategic research policy context as we address the challenges and priorities of Europe 2020.

In order to be more pro-active, the JRC is developing its capacity to anticipate future policy-relevant areas potentially requiring action. The JRC has started building a corporate capacity to provide **horizon scanning and foresight intelligence**. This includes:

- Scanning of the scientific landscape and alerting the JRC community, networks and customers to significant developments of policy relevance.
- Providing in depth studies using foresight methods and analyses in selected areas with the support of expert networks from Member States and the international scientific community.
- Providing support to policy DGs and other EU institutions when joint interests call for systematic investigations of new or critical areas of work.

This capacity will support the further development of the JRC, consequent work programmes and, where relevant, provide input to other Commission services. It will enable the identification and monitoring of emerging scientific, technological or policy areas that the JRC and policy DGs may want to address in the years ahead. The horizon scan and foresight activity will use JRC competences, experts from other Commission services, and experts from outside organisations.