



Press release

**Prof. Helga Nowotny appointed as new President
of the European Research Council (ERC)**

19 February 2010

Today the ERC Scientific Council unanimously elected Prof. Helga Nowotny, an eminent Austrian social scientist, as the new ERC President and chair of the Scientific Council. Prof. Nowotny is currently the ERC's vice-President and vice-chair of its Scientific Council. She will take office on March 1st, 2010.

The election followed the resignation of the first ERC President, Prof. Fotis C. Kafatos, announced in January, after three years of intensive and highly respected leadership of the ERC. Prof. Kafatos remains member of the Scientific Council and has been proposed, and unanimously voted, as ERC Honorary President.

Prof. Helga Nowotny was vice-president of the ERC Scientific Council until now. She is Professor emeritus of Social Studies of Science, ETH Zurich, and Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board of Vienna University. At the moment of the appointment, she commented "I thank my colleagues from the ERC Scientific Council for their trust and I will pursue with vigour and endurance our common endeavour to make frontier research the dynamic element in confronting the challenges ahead".

European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, Mrs Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, commented on the appointment: 'My congratulations and best wishes to Prof. Helga Nowotny and to the ERC. I am confident that Prof Nowotny will lead with ambition this truly pioneering European project. She is a fantastic role model for young women considering a science career. We need more like her'



José Manuel Silva Rodriguez, Director General for Research at the European Commission, remarked "I congratulate Helga for her election and I am confident that we will have an excellent cooperation with the ERC to make the best of research in Europe".

Jack Metthey, Director of the ERC Executive Agency, said "The unanimous election of Prof. Nowotny is the obvious recognition of Helga's tireless work and commitment, whilst a vice-chair, in making the ERC a success. My colleagues and I at the Executive Agency look forward with enthusiasm to continuing working with her in her new role."

Note to the editors

The European Research Council (ERC) is the newest, pioneering component of the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme (the "Ideas" specific programme). It has a total budget of € 7.5 billion (2007-2013). Set up in 2007, the ERC aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe by supporting and encouraging the best creative scientists, scholars and engineers of any nationality in any field of research, to work in European host institutions.

The ERC has supported up to now more than 900 research projects, led either by top senior scientists ("ERC Advanced Grants") or by younger, emerging research leaders ("ERC Starting Grants").

ERC structure

The ERC consists of a Scientific Council and an Executive Agency.

The Scientific Council, chaired until 1st March by Prof. Kafatos, composed by 22 European scientists, defines scientific strategy and methodology.

The Executive Agency, led by Dr. Jack Metthey, manages and implements the ERC's activities.

The ERC Secretary General, who is the permanent representative of the ERC in Brussels, is Prof. Mas-Colell, who was Professor of Economics at Harvard, Berkeley and Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona.



Annex

CV of Prof. Helga Nowotny

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/Prof_Helga_Nowotny.pdf

Links

Press release on the resignation of Prof. Fotis Kafatos:

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/Press_release_Kafatos.pdf

Prof Fotis Kafatos's announcement of resignation:

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/ANNOUNCEMENT_Prof_Kafatos.pdf

ERC website

<http://erc.europa.eu>

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