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### ***The Need for Policy Advice and Requisites of Advisory Activity\****

#### **Abstract**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is an ever-increasing demand for making far-reaching decisions that are based on scientifically sound recommendations. It is of essential importance that strategic decision-making in politics involves consultation with highly qualified scientists in order to ensure the consistency of taken decisions and the actual trends of the development of society.

In the European Union such approach is successfully used in the frame of European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) and the European Commission Joint Research Centre Board of Governors (EC JRC BoG), and the Latvian Academy of Sciences has become actively involved in both of them. National academies of sciences are the institutions that are increasingly sought for independent policy advice. Since the advisory function of national significance requires adequate resources, the national academies of sciences shall hereafter receive considerably greater financial resources for the performance of this activity.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is an increasing demand for making far-reaching decisions that are based on scientifically sound recommendations. It is of essential importance that strategic decision-making in politics involves advice from highly qualified scientists in order to ensure the consistency between the taken decisions and the actual trends of the development of society. The policy makers in all countries are becoming more and more interested in using scientific advice because this makes foresight possible and increases the popularity of wise politicians in public.

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\* The paper is printed as submitted.

Distinguished scientists from academies of sciences have always stood and will stand at the focus of attention for political power. In democratic countries politicians usually ask scientists to be their experts and advisors in solving strategic questions of state development.

Actually, in the European Union such approach is successfully used in the frame of European Academies Sciences Advisory Council (EASAC), in the European Commission Joint Research Centre Board of Governors (EC JRC BoG) and in the Council of the European Union Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST). These institutions work out science based documents for different level policy advice.

The Latvian Academy of Sciences has become actively involved in the work of all of the above-mentioned European Union level institutions. Independent policy advice is very welcome in this work. Since the advisory function of political significance requires adequate resources the national academies of sciences shall hereafter receive considerably greater financial support for the performance of this activity.

In this sense, a good tradition has been established in the Nordic countries where academies are receiving essential financial resources for preparing reports on politically sensitive topics. Very often these reports are successfully taken as advice in political decision-making. When national academies of sciences are actively involved in giving science-based policy advice and the latter is successfully used for the benefit of the development of society, the scientists gain great public trust. In this way, the national academies of sciences could raise the prestige of science in society. Besides, high prestige of science in society is needed to raise the role of the national academies of sciences in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.