

## **A New ERA for Research and Innovation<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Policy document summary**

On 30 September 2020 the Commission adopted its Communication on “A New ERA for Research and Innovation“. In light of the of new challenges on the societal, ecological and economic level, the Commission introduces a new concept for ERA structured around two dimensions. The first dimension of the new ERA concept concerns deepening existing priorities and initiatives with the view to make European R&I system more efficient. The second dimension focuses on broadening ERA and setting up the new strategic objectives that will make ERA resilient towards the new challenges. Moreover, the Commission proposes to launch a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe as a non-binding initiative aimed to define the values and principles that will guide joint action of the EU Member States and deepen the implementation of the new ERA’s objectives. In addition, the Commission included ERA Roadmap in the Appendix of the Communication specifying the timeline for implementation of EU-level action.

### **Disclaimer**

This brief overview is intended to summarize the essential points from the EU institutions' policy document that are relevant for research performing and innovation institutions, without providing the full extent of information available in the original document. The focus of the overview is put on initiatives regarding circulation of highly qualified staff, especially researchers, relevant to the European Research Area. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission.

In its Communication, the Commission puts forward four strategic objectives that broaden ERA and make it more resilient towards the new challenges:

1. Prioritising investments and reforms
2. Improving access to excellence
3. Translating R&I results into the economy
4. Deepening the ERA

### **1. Prioritising investments and reforms:**

Prioritising investments and reforms involves aligning and facilitating EU and national R&I investments and reforms towards the priority areas such as delivering on the twin transition i.e. green and digital transformation of Europe’s society and economy.

As summed up in the Communication, the Commission:

- proposes that Member States re-affirm the 3% EU GDP R&D investment target and update it to reflect new EU priorities, including a new 1.25% EU GDP public effort target to be achieved by Member States by 2030 in an EU coordinated manner, to leverage and incentivise private investments

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<sup>1</sup> You can access the original document here: [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - A new ERA for Research and Innovation, COM/2020/628 final](#)

- supports Member States in the coordination and prioritisation of national R&I funding and reforms, between countries and with the EU, through dialogue and a dedicated ERA Forum for Transition. This will focus Member States common efforts, to voluntarily commit 5% of national public R&D funding to joint programmes and European partnerships by 2030.

**2. Improving access to excellence** involves carrying out actions aimed towards more excellence and stronger R&I systems across the whole of the EU where best practice is disseminated faster across Europe. Member States willing to increase the performance of their R&I system towards excellence should be encouraged and supported, building on dedicated Horizon Europe measures and complementarities with smart specialisation strategies under Cohesion Policy.

As summed up in the Communication, the Commission, the Commission:

- proposes that Member States lagging behind the EU average R&D investment over GDP direct their investment efforts to increase their total investment in R&D by 50% in the next 5 years. The Commission will support Member States to reform their R&I policies, also by targeting technical assistance to this end. It will facilitate the coordination and complementarity of national and EU programmes, and contribute to the deployment of the recovery package.

The Communication has set out that for the purpose of deepening the ERA, the ERA4You initiative will be launched with the aim to enhance the mobility opportunities for researchers to access excellence and expand their experience through dedicated mobility schemes between industry and academia.

The Commission has also proposed to:

- institute a dedicated work stream in the ERA Forum for Transition (i) to promote and monitor access to excellence of researchers and institutions from Widening Countries, with Cohesion Policy support, (ii) to support Member States to better integrate researchers in smart specialisation strategies in cooperation with industry, and (iii) help them design measures to support researchers in Widening Countries to improve their skills for excellence in the labour market. This should support low R&I performing countries to increase the excellence of their R&I systems. Member States lagging behind the EU average on highly cited publications should reduce the gap to the EU average by at least one third in the next 5 years.

**3. Translating R&I results into the economy:** R&I policies should aim at boosting the resilience and competitiveness of our economies and societies. This means ensuring Europe's competitive leadership in the global race for technology while improving the environment for business R&I investment, deployment of new technologies and enhancing the take up and visibility of research results in the economy and society as a whole.

As summed up in the Communication, the Commission will, in cooperation with Member States and stakeholders:

- support the implementation of the New Industrial Strategy by jointly developing common industrial technology roadmaps by the end of 2022 to align and link key

partnerships under Horizon Europe with industrial ecosystems, so as to ensure that efforts team up and that research results are known and rolled out faster in the economy.

### **Deepening the ERA:**

In the context of changes in labour market and economy, the Commission recognized the inadequacy of the existing ERA instruments for supporting researchers' careers and introduced a more comprehensive toolbox consisting of the following elements:

1. European competence framework for research careers which sets to address skills mismatches and achieve recognition of researchers' skills by identifying a set of core skills. This will make researchers' careers comparable and interoperable while also allow monitoring the trends in the research labour market careers, skills and talent.
2. measures under ERA4You initiative aimed at reinforcing inter-sectoral mobility and strengthening academic-business cooperation
3. targeted training opportunities under Horizon Europe
4. ERA Talent Platform as a one-stop shop portal for accessing the EURAXESS support services while also exploiting resources from Europass and EURES network

Besides introducing the new toolkit, the Commission Communication specified that the new concept of ERA encompasses enhancing practices towards Open Science. This involves making European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) a research and innovation data space and service platform that is fully articulated with other sectoral data spaces and open up to the wider public and private sectors. Moreover, as summed up in the Communication, the Commission will:

- launch a platform of peer-reviewed open access publishing;
- analyse authors' rights to enable sharing of publicly funded peer-reviewed articles without restriction;
- incentivise open science practices by improving the research assessment system.

Moreover, the Commission recognized that the use of research infrastructures for both research and technological applications contributes to the EU's broader policy priorities supporting industries and SMEs, with balanced scientific resources and access for researchers across the EU. For this purpose, the Commission will further support the work of European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) on improving the governance of research infrastructures ecosystem.