

## Global Approach to R&I<sup>1</sup>

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### Policy document summary

On May 18, 2021, the Commission adopted a Communication on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation, which serves as Europe's new strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation in a changing world. The Communication reaffirms the EU's commitment to international openness and fundamental values in research and innovation, and calls for strengthening the EU's role in supporting multilateral research and innovation partnerships.

### 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.

The Commission Communication introduced a new strategy for the global approach to research and innovation. The primary goals of this strategy are to strengthen the EU's role in fostering multilateral research and innovation partnerships grounded in openness, fairness, respect for fundamental rights and values, and the promotion of the EU's strategic autonomy. In the Communication, the Commission outlined various actions aimed at achieving the objectives of this new global approach to research and innovation, categorized as follows:

1. Reaffirming the EU's commitment to international openness and fundamental values in research and innovation
2. Rebalancing the EU's global approach to research and innovation
3. Coordinating global efforts to collaboratively address global challenges
4. Tailoring cooperation with priority countries and regions

The Communication emphasized that the EU's research and innovation collaboration with international partners should focus on the following priorities:

- Academic freedom, integrity, and institutional autonomy
- Research ethics and integrity
- Gender equality, diversity, and inclusiveness
- Open data and open science
- Standards

<sup>1</sup> You can access the original document here: [European Commission. \(2021, May 18\). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation: Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world \(COM\(2021\) 252 final\).](#)

- Evidence-based policymaking

The Communication also urged the EU to establish principles for international cooperation in research and innovation by 2021 and to promote these principles in multilateral discussions with partner countries and international forums. Additionally, the Commission indicated its intention to negotiate targeted roadmaps for research and innovation cooperation with non-EU countries that have strong research and innovation capabilities. These non-binding roadmaps will outline the framework conditions, identify milestones, and establish implementation timelines, serving as a reference for future bilateral cooperation. Furthermore, the Commission plans to issue guidelines for addressing foreign interference aimed at EU research organizations and higher education institutions. These guidelines will focus on protecting fundamental values by ensuring academic freedom, integrity, and institutional autonomy, while safeguarding students, researchers, innovators, and key research findings from coercive, covert, deceptive, or corrupt foreign influences.

### **Leading Global Efforts for a Fair Green Transition**

The Communication emphasizes the EU's commitment to maintaining its leadership in the global transition to green technology by forming strategic partnerships and collaborating with technology leaders on various initiatives, including:

- All-Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance
- Mission Innovation initiative
- Group on Earth Observations (GEO)
- International Bioeconomy Forum
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
- Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
- International Resource Panel (IRP)
- New European Bauhaus

### **Promoting the Digital Transition**

The Commission Communication outlines that the EU's international collaboration in research and innovation should enhance global digital partnerships in alignment with the key pillars of the 2030 Digital Compass. These international digital partnerships will primarily focus on:

- Human-centric policies and regulations
- Improved solutions for digital connectivity
- Strengthened innovation partnerships within digital research and innovation ecosystems

- Increased emphasis on key technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, blockchain, the Internet of Things, big data, space data, and the application of digital technologies in areas like green transition, health, and education

### **Strengthening Cooperation on Global Health**

According to the Communication, the Commission aims to enhance global health cooperation by contributing to the medium- and long-term agenda focused on health security, preparedness, and strengthening health systems. Additionally, the Commission will support the establishment of a global health joint initiative under the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership, collaborating with Member States, Horizon Europe-associated countries, and African nations to address infectious diseases and public health emergencies in sub-Saharan Africa.

### **Promoting Innovation**

The Communication stresses the importance of the EU promoting innovation worldwide by creating international innovation partnerships based on reciprocity with countries and regions open to entrepreneurship and investment. It further advocates for these partnerships to support the development of soft landing programs and startup collaborations between the EU and non-EU countries, complementing the international aspects of European Cluster Partnerships and the Start-up Europe initiatives, as well as the network of EU Digital Innovation Hubs.

### **Modulating Cooperation with Priority Countries and Regions**

In addition to establishing multilateral global innovation partnerships, the EU aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation with industrialized non-EU countries and emerging economies. The EU will enhance its collaborations with the United States, China, India, Russia, and other major scientific powers such as Canada, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. The Communication also calls for integrating cooperation with EFTA countries, the Western Balkans, Turkey, countries under the European Neighbourhood Policy, and the United Kingdom, including through associations with Horizon Europe. To support the objective of enhancing cooperation with priority countries and regions, the Communication encourages deepening partnerships with Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and other regions and countries.