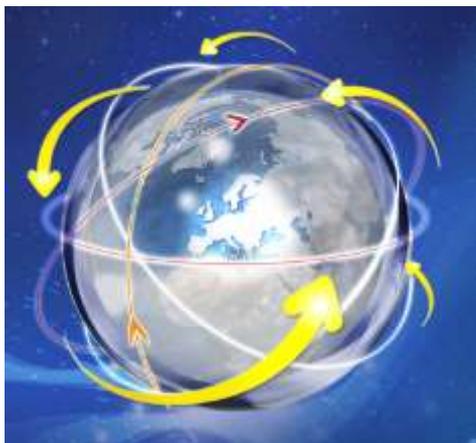


Implementation of the strategy for International Cooperation in Research & Innovation



The strategy

The strategy for the European Union international cooperation policy in research and innovation (R&I) was published in 2012¹ and aims to:

- strengthen the EU's R&I excellence, attractiveness and economic and industrial competitiveness;
- tackle global societal challenges;
- and support the EU's external policies.

The Strategy established the obligation to report every two years on its implementation. The second implementation report was adopted in October, 13². The report and its roadmaps for cooperation with key partner countries and regions are an important deliverable of the **"Open to the World"** policy³.

Fostering international cooperation in research and innovation is a strategic priority for the EU to allow access to the latest knowledge and the best talent worldwide, tackle global societal challenges more effectively, create business opportunities, and use science diplomacy as an influential instrument of external policy.

The report concludes that clear progress was accomplished towards the main objectives of the strategy, namely by:

Improving framework conditions for engaging in R&I

The European Commission stays proactive in improving the framework conditions for worldwide cooperation in R&I, including reciprocal access to programmes, mutual access to resources, fair intellectual property rights systems and mechanisms for co-funding. For instance, throughout the past two years, several co-funding mechanisms have been negotiated by the EC with different key country partners, like China, Brazil, India or Korea⁴. Thanks to these mechanisms, third country participants in Horizon 2020 projects that are not funded under the programme, can apply to their local funding agencies, confirming the importance that different countries attribute to Horizon 2020.

¹ COM(2012)497

² COM(2016) 657

³ "Open to the World" is part of the three goals set by Commissioner Carlos Moedas for EU's research & innovation policy, side by side with "Open Science" and "Open Innovation".

⁴ Up to October 2016, 11 co-funding mechanisms have been negotiated with: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong & Macau, India, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Russia and Taiwan. More information is available [here](#)

To give a concrete example, with the EU-China Co-Funding Mechanism (CFM) agreed in 2015, China committed to invest up to 30 million euro per year to support the participation of Chinese researchers in Horizon 2020. So far 19 proposals have been retained totalling about 12 million EUR of co-funding, covering areas like Food, Agriculture, and Biotechnologies, Water resources, New Materials, Energy and Health..

The CFM can prove to be a breakthrough in EU-China R&I relations, promoting stronger and more balanced cooperation between researchers under Horizon 2020.

Engaging in Science Diplomacy

The European Commission is engaging more in science diplomacy to build bridges in times of conflict, to develop shared strategies for good management of our planet, and to work on common standards for market access and trade. R&I is not only supporting the EU's external policies, but also ensuring that the EU maintains its position as a global leader.

For instance, the EU is one of the largest contributors to Arctic research and a supporter of transnational access to research infrastructure and open data for the region, using science to enable joint solutions and foster peaceful cooperation.

Concluding Association Agreements to Horizon 2020

The Association Agreements to Horizon 2020 are another good example of the EU efforts to develop shared strategies with its neighbours. An Association Agreement to Horizon 2020 allows research institutes, universities and individual researchers from the associated non-EU countries to access all opportunities offered by the Horizon 2020 on an equal footing with EU Member States.

In 2015, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia and Armenia have signed Association Agreements to H2020. It shows the commitment of the Union's neighbours to developing their scientific and innovation capacity, with the support of the EU. It also represents another step towards the EU goal of opening R&I to the world.

Building the Global Research Area

In a "Global Research Area" researchers and innovators are able to work together smoothly across borders, and scientific knowledge, technology and researchers circulate as freely as possible. The building of the "Global research Area" is proceeding step by step, with different priorities and actions.

The EU-CELAC (Community of Latin America and Caribbean States) Common Research Area (CRA) was declared a common objective at the June 2015 EU-CELAC Summit focussing on three pillars: mobility of researchers; access to research infrastructures and data; and jointly addressing common challenges such as health, climate change, energy and others.

Leading global initiatives

The EC is now leading multilateral R&I partnerships addressing global challenges in areas such as health, food, energy, water, climate change and the circular economy. For example, in response to the Zika outbreak in the CELAC region, the European Commission is launching several research projects totalling more than €35million. These projects address all of the important Zika research gaps, including the development of treatments, vaccines, and diagnostics, and form the core of a Latin-American and Caribbean preparedness research network to respond to future outbreaks. The European Commission coordinates its work in this area closely with international partners as part of the research funders' network [Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness](#) , working on important issues such as how best to ensure scientific data and results are rapidly shared in the case of an emergency.

Aligning policies with EU Member States

Strengthening the partnership between the EC and the Member States is an important aspect of the strategy. Cooperation with Member States takes place through participation of the EC and individual Member States in global multilateral initiatives or joint R&I programmes and calls. It also takes place through the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC), an advisory body with an active role as an exchange platform and networking with stakeholders.

The 'Partnership for R&I in the Mediterranean Area' (PRIMA), focussing on innovative solutions for food and water challenges, is a sound example of the work of the EU done in partnership with Member States.