

Implementation of the European Research Area (ERA)

Strengthening Europe's Research and Innovation



#EUResearchArea October 2024

The **European Research Area** (ERA) is an initiative aimed at creating a **single, borderless market** for research, innovation and technology across the European Union. It fosters the free mobility of researchers, scientific knowledge, and technology, allowing EU Member States to work more effectively together on research programmes and initiatives.

Since ERA's revamp in 2020, significant progress has been made, specifically through the **co-creation of the ERA Policy Agendas**, which set out voluntary actions for Member States, Horizon Europe Associated countries, stakeholders and the European Commission within three-year time frames. Still, gaps remain with public and private investment in research and development well below the target of 3% of gross domestic product (GDP), which was set at the 2002 Barcelona European Council.

The **Communication on the ERA** will make the free movement **of researchers, scientific knowledge, and technology a reality**, by further integrating and strengthening the European Research & Innovation (R&I) ecosystem, making it the engine of Europe's future competitiveness and growth.

What is the Communication about?

Take stock:

Outlining the changes of the past four years.

Assess progress:

Looking at the four ERA strategic objectives, endorsed by the Council in the Pact for Research and Innovation (R&I).

Identify remaining challenges:

Setting the direction for future activities.

Progress in key areas

Prioritising investment and reforms

- Cohesion Policy Funds and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) drive reforms and have mobilised over €90 billion in investments for R&I
- Expert support to Member States, through Horizon Policy Support Facility and Technical Support Instrument

Improving access to excellence

- Over €1 billion invested in Widening actions, e.g. Teaming and ERA-Chairs
- European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) actions
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
- Reinforcing Research Management capabilities

Translating R&I results into the economy

- Launch of the European Innovation Council (EIC) supporting breakthrough innovation
- Joint industrial technology roadmaps with Member States and stakeholders for the green and digital transitions
- Practical guidance to Member States (for exploitation of research results, intellectual asset management and standardisation)

Deepening the ERA

- Comprehensive measures to make research careers more stable
- Making infrastructures more accessible
- Supporting gender equality



Scope for further action

Prioritising investment and reforms

- Improving investment conditions
- Removing regulatory barriers to business financing, scale-up and deployment of innovations
- Greater coordination on joint priorities

Improving access to excellence

- Continued simplification of administrative procedures
- Better information sharing on available opportunities

Translating R&I results into the economy

- Attract more private investments to boost innovation
- Remove regulatory, legal and administrative barriers that make Europe less attractive for investors and innovators
- Extend the use of innovation procurement and tackle skills shortages

Deepening the ERA

- Address obstacles to talent mobility
- Find solutions for long-term funding of infrastructures and make them universally accessible

Outlook to the future



Make the single market for researchers a reality by further integrating and strengthening the European R&I ecosystem



Mobilise all Member States and stakeholders around joint priorities with sectoral and competitiveness policies



Address the investment gap in research & innovation



Remove remaining regulatory barriers and administrative burden





