



2ND EU-LEVEL REPORT

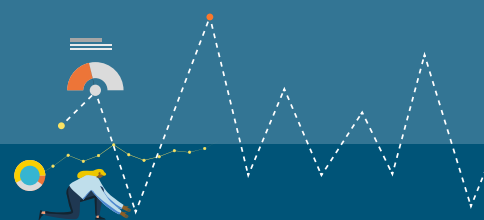
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ERA POLICY AGENDA

TRACKING PROGRESS, GUIDING POLICY AND STRENGTHENING EUROPE'S R&I FOUNDATIONS

The second 18-month EU-level Report on the European Research Area (ERA) maps the implementation of **17 ERA actions** from July 2023 to December 2024. It thus provides a qualitative and policy-driven yardstick for **monitoring Europe's research and innovation (R&I) progress**. As well as supporting policymaking by giving a strategic overview of achievements, gaps and challenges, the report outlines Europe's continued efforts to build more cohesive, inclusive and competitive R&I ecosystems.

PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

Significant milestones have been reached across all 4 ERA Priority Areas. These achievements are helping build a borderless, competitive and resilient knowledge economy that can navigate global challenges and strengthen Europe's R&I excellence.



ERA PRIORITY 1

Deepening an internal market for knowledge



- Launched in October 2024 as the first node of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) Federation, the **EOSC EU Node** helps researchers share knowledge and reuse research outputs.



- A European digital one-stop shop is being developed to help researchers and institutions tackle foreign interference while upholding academic freedom.
- A 2024 study entitled **Improving access to and reuse of research results**, publications and data for scientific purposes evaluates EU copyright and research data rules and addresses issues like high costs of accessing research and legal uncertainties about its use.



- A **European Charter for Researchers** has been drawn up to promote research careers and help Europe attract and retain R&I and entrepreneurial talent.



- The **2024 Strategic Landscape Analysis** gives an overview of Europe's research infrastructure and proposes ways of enhancing its sustainability through better alignment with priorities such as the green and digital transitions.



- Introduction of gender equality plans as a criterion for obtaining Horizon Europe funding has boosted gender equality in research, educational and public bodies, with spillover effects in the private sector.



- Now with over 700 members, the **Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment** has developed some 150 action plans and provided grants to support reform of research-related assessment systems and boost the quality and impact of research.



ERA PRIORITY 2

Supporting the green and digital transition



- Part of 5 EU Mission Implementation Platforms, **NetZeroCities** drives knowledge-sharing to advance mission objectives.



- The revised **SET Plan** guides green energy policy, emphasising digitalisation, circular economy, and workforce upskilling.



- Launched in November 2023, the **Industry 5.0 Community of Practice** promotes human-centric tech and now connects 200+ members across Europe.



- Boosting academic collaboration, the **European Universities Initiative** brings together 570 higher education organisations in 65 alliances.



ERA PRIORITY 3

Amplifying access to excellence & innovation



- **Excellence Hubs** launched under Horizon Europe strengthen regional innovation in Widening Countries by creating linkages between academia, research organisations, businesses, local governments and civil society.
- Fostering smart specialization, **Regional Innovation Valleys** unite 148 regions to reduce fragmentation and align strategies.



- €315 million invested through **Horizon Widening Actions** to strengthen research ecosystems in less intensive regions.



- The **European Competence Framework for Research Managers** (RM COMP) supports the professionalisation of research management roles, offering guidance on career paths and skills for research managers.



ERA PRIORITY 4

Coordinating R&I investments and reforms across Europe



- Structural reforms are needed to reduce institutional fragmentation and make research careers more attractive. The **European Semester**, **Structural Funds** and **Seal of Excellence** are key to driving structural reforms in R&I.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF A STRONGER ERA: KEY FIGURES AND STATISTICS

65

European University
Alliances across 35 countries

148

regions engaged in
Regional Innovation
Valleys

116

Research Managers'
Ambassadors active via
initiatives such as
RM ROADMAP and CARDEA

5

EU Mission Implementation
Platforms launched

3%

research and development
(R&D) investment target has yet
to be fully realised

+

Steady increase in open-access
publication rates

HOW TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE ERA?

The ERA is at a pivotal point in its development, with a constellation of initiatives lighting the way forward. To truly unify Europe's knowledge ecosystem, ambition must be matched by strategic alignment, inclusiveness and a long-term vision. Reaching the ERA objectives requires deeper co-creation, harmonised public-private investment and systemic change with societal uptake of research at its core.

The report highlights good practices that can enhance future initiatives, including:



Strengthening Member State and stakeholder engagement
to make it more focused and action oriented



Increasing the impact of the ERA Policy Agenda
and the long-term sustainability of ERA initiatives



Widening the scope of the ERA Policy Agenda
and bridging gaps between R&D, industrial application and
societal uptake



Addressing disparities within and between participating countries
by tackling inequalities in R&I performance



DISCOVER MORE INSIGHTS
FROM THE EU-LEVEL REPORT



European
Commission

For each ERA Priority, the EU-level Report presents a detailed overview of the specific objectives of each Action, the initiatives undertaken during the review period, and an overall assessment of progress towards achieving these objectives over 2022-2024.