The new ERA and the Charter & Code

Principles of the European Charter and the promotion of young human capital in the context of the new ERA

_Percorso di formazione sulle soft skill dei dottorandi_

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DG RTD - Unit A.3 - R&I Actors and Research Careers
The new European Research Area

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The ERA concept

• **2000**: ERA launched to reduce fragmentation of EU’s R&I system

• ERA conceived as a system of systems
  
  • Alignment on priorities, avoiding duplication – the problem is not money, but reaching critical mass
  
  • Analogies with common market: a common market for science.
  
  • Analogy with the four market freedoms – goods / knowledge, people / researchers, services / scientific tools including EOSC, capital / pooling-aligning investments
A journey throughout the ERA

Towards a European Research Area
‘The problem is not money but fragmentation of the efforts carried out at European level... So it is imperative that we mobilise resources and create a movement towards coherence of research policies in Europe. This is why I have launched the idea of a European Research Area.’
Commissioner Philippe Busquin, 18 November 2000

Focus
A better organisation of research in Europe by addressing the fragmentation, isolation and compartmentalisation of national research systems and the lack of policy coordination between Member States and the EU.

Priorities
- Large scale research infrastructures
- Coherent implementation of national and European research activities
- Mobile human resources
- Cohesion
- Attractiveness of the European R&D system
- Common social and ethical values

Achievements
- New instruments of FP6
- ERA-NET
- Article 185 and 187 initiatives
- EUREAXESS
- European Charter for Researchers
- Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers

Phase 2: The Fifth Freedom to Become a Reality | 2007 - 2012
The ERA: new perspectives
“We are gradually lifting the barriers to the freedom of movement of knowledge: we are making the "5th Freedom" a reality... Investing in R&D and innovation is not a supplementary burden but an indispensable investment in future jobs and growth.”
Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski, 2 December 2008

2009
ERA becomes a formal objective of the EU- Lisbon Treaty (Article 179 TFEU)

ERA National Action Plans on six agreed ‘ERA priorities’

- More effective national research systems
- Optimal transnational cooperation and competition
- An open labour market for researchers
- Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research
- Optimal circulation of, access to and transfer of scientific knowledge
- International cooperation

Phase 3: Strengthening the Partnership between the Commission, Member States and Stakeholders | 2012 - 2020
A reinforced ERA partnership for excellence and growth
Talk to any business leader and they will tell you that the quality of the research base is a major factor in their investment decisions. In today’s economy, no Member State or region can afford to neglect its knowledge base.
Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, 17 July 2012
The European Research Area: 20 years on

**Successes**

- 37 Research Infrastructures implemented with close to 20 billion euro in investment
- 7 billion euro in joint programmes between Member States
- Better research careers: Charter and Code for Researchers, EURAXESS
- European Open Science Cloud

**Points for improvement**

- 3% target not reached, lagging in private investment, public investment stagnated
- Significant divides in R&I performance across the EU
- More ambitious policy reforms
- Need to improve on translating R&I results to the economy and to support the transition and the recovery
- Progress to gender equality
- Better involvement of citizens and society

New political and social context: pandemic, climate and digital transitions, geopolitical shift.
Re-launching ERA

- Commission ERA Communication of September 2020, which proposed four new strategic objectives to revamp the ERA, a Roadmap of concrete joint actions, as well as new governance elements;

- The ERA Council Conclusions of 2020, which asked the Commission and Member States to roll-out the new ERA;

- The ERA Forum for Transition has been set up (as a Commission Expert Group);

- On 16 July the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe;

- The Council is preparing conclusions on the future ERA governance and the ERA Policy Agenda, as well as a Council Recommendation on the Pact for R&I;
Shaping the new ERA through 14 actions (1/2)

1. Reaffirm the target of 3% GDP on EU research and development investment and propose a new EU 1.25% GDP public effort target to be achieved by Member States by 2030.

2. Support Member States in the coordination and prioritisation of national research and innovation funding and reforms through an European Research Area Forum for Transition. Voluntarily commit 5% of national public research and development investments to joint programmes and European partnerships by 2030.

3. Support Member States that are below the EU average level of research and innovation investments to increase their investment by 50% in the next 5 years.

4. Support Member States that have lower performance in training their researchers to access and develop excellence and increase their number of highly cited publications by one-third over 5 years.

5. Develop common industrial technology roadmaps to maximise innovation in strategic areas like Artificial Intelligence, circular industries and resilient health industries.

6. Develop and test a networking framework in support of Europe’s research and innovation ecosystems, building on existing capacities, to strengthen excellence and maximise the value of knowledge creation, circulation and use.

7. Update and develop guiding principles for creating value from knowledge and a code of practice for the smart use of intellectual property.
Shaping the new ERA through 14 actions (2/2)

8. Deliver a **toolbox of measures to support researchers' careers**, through a mobility scheme, trainings and more, in order to make Europe more attractive for talent.

9. Launch a platform of **peer-reviewed open access publishing** and incentivise **open science practices** by improving the research assessment system.

10. Support the creation of **world-class research infrastructures** and establish an updated governance structure for research and **technological infrastructures**.

11. Develop a **roadmap of actions** for creating synergies between higher education and research, notably building on the dual role of universities.

12. Develop concrete plans with Member States to promote **gender equality**, as well as diversity and inclusiveness, in science, research and innovation.

13. Organise **citizen science campaigns** and hackathons to engage citizens, especially young people, in science and innovation.

14. Develop with Member States a new approach to set and implement **strategic priorities** for the European Research Area, through a **Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe**.
Empowering universities and surrounding ecosystems, as part of key synergy initiatives between EEA and ERA

- Higher Education Transformation Agenda empowering universities to modernise, covering education, R&I and service to society missions
- Toolbox of legal measures facilitating cross-border cooperation
- Investment strategy to deliver on the transformation agenda, in synergy with other EU and national funding programmes
- Protection of academic freedom
European framework for research careers

- comparable and interoperable research careers
- taxonomy of researchers’ skills and competences, new ESCO classification
- improving employability & entrepreneurial skills, reform research assessment

Accompanying measures

- Observatory to monitor trends (labour market, careers, skills, mobility)
- Revamped Charter & Code and new ERA Talent Platform (EURAXESS)

ERA4You initiative

- targeted mobility measures attracting talents to Widening countries
- mobility schemes between industry and academia, incentivising researchers to pursue careers outside academia
Promoting synergies and reinforcing knowledge

Digital Education Action Plan

- Help develop high-performing digital education ecosystems
- Enhance digital skills and digital transformation competences

European Education Area (EEA)

Enabling young people to benefit from the best education and training, and to find employment across Europe

- Spend time abroad to study and learn as norm
- Recognise school/ higher education qualifications across EU
- Access to high-quality education for everyone, irrespective of socio-economic background
- Strong sense of identity as a European, of Europe’s cultural heritage and its diversity.

European Research Area (ERA)

Skills Agenda

- Pact for Skills
- Strengthen skills intelligence
- Roll out the European Universities initiative and upskilling scientists
- Skills to support the green and digital transitions
- Skills for life
- Increase STEM graduates, foster entrepreneurial and transversal skills
The European Charter & Code and its implementation strategy

State of play and developments

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The “Charter & Code” and its implementation

- **Charter & Code**
  - 2005: EC recommendation 2005/251/EC
  - 2008: MECHANISM OF C&C IMPLEMENTATION

- **HRS4R procedure**
  - 2014: 'BEST EFFORT' OBLIGATION FOR BENEFICIARIES

- **H2020 MGA, Art. 32**

- **Strengthened HRS4R procedure**
  - 2017: OTM-R CHECKLIST ADDED TO THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- **Digitalisation of HRS4R**
  - 2018: E-TOOL OF THE HRS4R PROCESS

**Overall GOAL**: Foster an open, transparent, sustainable European labour market for researchers
Charter & Code
The cornerstone of research careers policy (former ERA priority 3)

The Charter
(the European Charter for Researchers)
- set of principles for the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers
- Provides a reference framework.

The Code
(the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers)
- Provides for transparency of the recruitment and selection process, ensuring equal treatment for all applicants
- Includes obligations for employers and funders
Commission Recommendation on Charter and Code
4 pillars to strengthen the ERA

40 principles in 4 Thematic Areas:

1. Working Conditions & Social Security - promoting and creating a stimulating and favourable working environment

2. Recruitment - assessing, attracting and retaining talent; international visibility

3. Training and Career Development

4. Ethical and Professional Aspects
Commission Recommendation on Charter and Code
4 pillars to strengthen the ERA

40 Principles

- Research freedom
- Dissemination and exploitation of results
- Recognition of the researcher’s profession
- Working conditions
- Stability and permanence of the employment
- Remuneration package (funding and salaries)
- Gender balance
- Career development
- Access to research training and continuous development
- Intellectual property rights
- Evaluation and appraisal systems
- Code of recruitment of researchers (OTMR)
HRS4R STRATEGY in a nutshell

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) is the mechanism to implement the principles set forth in the C&C:

- **Voluntary, structured and monitored auditing mechanism**, centered on a *continuous assessment* cycle

- Based on **gap-analysis** and **action plans** for ongoing monitoring, self-assessment, peer reviews
HRS4R – A long term commitment

**INITIAL PHASE**
- Endorsement of the C&C
- Application for the HR Award:
  - Gap Analysis
  - OTM-R
  - Initial Action Plan Design
- 12 months

**IMPLEMENTATION PHASE**
- Implementation of the Action Plan
- Implementation of the Revised Action Plan
- 24 months
- 36 months

**AWARD RENEWAL PHASE**
- Implementation of the Improved Action Plan
- Implementation of the Further Improved Action Plan
- Renewal with Site Visit
- Renewal without Site Visit
- 36 months
- 36 months

**Institution**
- European Commission
Beneficiaries must take all measures to implement the principles set out in the C&C, in particular regarding:

- working conditions
- transparent recruitment processes based on merit
- career development

**Best effort obligation**: “must be proactive and take specific steps to address conflicts between their policies and the principles set out in C&C”

Beneficiaries should keep appropriate documentation about the steps taken and measures put in place.
C&C and HRS4R: statistics

Awarded organisations 2010-2021

- 1300 Institutions have endorsed the Charter & Code principles
- 630 research institutions from over 40 Countries received the HR Excellence in Research Award
- 67 new institutions were awarded in 2019
- 72 new institutions were awarded in 2020
- 60 awarded in 2021

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r/dashboard
In 2021 (to-date):

- 180 assessments
- 18 site visits already performed + 20 in preparation*
- Over 100 institutions are currently preparing for the Award (initial phase)
- Over 200 organizations currently preparing for renewal

*As of the date of this update.
HRS4R: reported benefits observed by experts and institutions

• **Process itself** (framework for institution strategy)
  - Catalyst for change
  - giving support for internal processes and developing good practices;
  - bringing essential human resource policies into the foreground of institutional policy-making

• **Internationalization**
  - Raises awareness of European and international context to all staff;
  - Participation in international networks and sharing best practice on issues such as career development and supervision
  - Supports open-mindedness; facilitates change in internal process, …

• **Improvement & Progress**
  - put researchers at the core of process and engages all categories of researchers to define activities tailored to different career stages;
  - it creates favorable conditions for research career development and develops career support actions;
  - Promotes equal opportunities
  - Improves researchers’ status and working conditions
  - Foster in-house transversal cooperation
  - showcases achievements that would go collectively unseen otherwise…
HRS4R: reported benefits
observed by experts and institutions

- **Visibility**
  - Increased national and international visibility
  - Demonstrates a commitment to good working conditions and career development for researchers
  - Induces cultural change, promotion and support of a European network and a collection of best practices

- **Attraction and mobility**
  - Enhanced ability to attract and retain high caliber staff
  - Promotion of the commitment and strengthen the attraction, development and retain of national and international researchers and staff to pursue research excellence
  - Contributes to the reestablishment of a symmetry in brain mobility

- **Added value**
  Added value to funding applications (Art 32 compliance)…
ERAC Taskforce (HRM, Open Science, Gender)

40 principles

- A more ambitious C&C - Potential review through the lenses of:
  - Human Resources and Mobility trends
  - Open Science
  - Gender

- Desk research

- 4 Webinars with MS delegates, experts/stakeholders

- Analysis of results & consultation:
  - End of 2020

- ERAC- PT Presidency Workshop
Study on ERA Priority 3

General Objectives:
- Taking stock of existing policy measures (Charter & Code, HRS4R, EURAXESS)
- Defining needs of transformations to review/revamp/strengthen the policy measures:
  - Recommendations on the future set-up and development of existing measures
  - Recommendations on additional new policy activities/tools/measures to achieve the same objectives under the renewed ERA.

Specific Objectives:
- Content, outreach and added value
- Process
- Challenges and needs
- Governance and stakeholder engagement
Thank you for your attention

For questions and procedural support, please write to RTD-Charter@ec.Europa.eu