

The new governance structure of the ERA

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Background



- The need to reform the existing governance framework of the ERA was identified, in September 2020, as part of the European Commission's Communication on the new ERA.

Specifically it was highlighted that the new ERA structure should:

- Be made more effective and impactful.
 - Enable regular dialogues with the Member States to address priorities, implement strategies and monitor progress towards realising the ERA's objectives.
- The importance of reforming the governance structure was also reaffirmed in the new ERA Council Conclusions adopted in December 2020.



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- In the Conclusions, the Council called for the creation of a governance framework driven by the following principles:
 - Inclusiveness – Involving all Member States including regional authorities, the European Committee of the Regions, R&I stakeholders and civil society, where appropriate.
 - Effectiveness - Defining a lean governance processes to develop and implement the ERA actions.
 - Coherence - Striving for more exchange and cooperation between regional, national and EU-levels to address structural issues within and outside the remit of R&I policy.
 - Efficiency – Linking up with the proposed Horizon Europe strategic planning process to enhance the alignment of EU and national R&I policies.



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- Evidence-informed approach – Providing technical and expert assistance to Member States to improve national ERA monitoring activities.
- Relevance – Fostering a policy-driven and priority setting approach by ensuring an appropriate role for the Council through the organisation of regular policy debates and ERA Ministerial Conferences.
- Following the publication of the Communication and the adoption of the Council Conclusions, Member States agreed to, by the end of 2021, develop a new 'multi-level' governance model to help deliver a reformed and reinvigorated ERA.
- The Council Conclusions laying out the new ERA Governance Structure were approved by Research Ministers on the 26th of November 2021.

A new ERA Governance Framework



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Introduction

The Council Conclusions introduce a comprehensive redesign of the current ERA governance model, and aim to rationalise resources and strengthen the ERA's capacity for implementation, whilst also respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

The ERA governance architecture primarily sets out the roles, responsibilities and rules for:

- The Council
- European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC)
- ERA Forum
- ERA Groups (Expert, Related and Sub-Groups)



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The Council

- The Council will continue to act as the primary decision-maker and policy-guidance giver within the ERA governance architecture.
- The Council will be responsible for setting the mid-term priorities of the ERA, via an assessment of the ERA Pact for R&I and the ERA Policy Agenda.
- The Council can decide to provide additional political direction, through the use of policy initiatives such as Council Conclusions and Council Resolutions.
- The Council may organise ERA Ministerial Conferences to help contribute to work related to the progress of the ERA.



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ERAC



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- ERAC will be fully transformed into a high-level strategic policy joint advisory committee, in charge of providing early advice to the Council, Commission and the Member States on strategic R&I policy issues.
- ERAC will be responsible for:

1.

Initiating updates of the ERA Policy Agenda.

2.

Reflecting and providing advice on new R&I policy developments.

3.

Interacting with governance and coordination structures at similar levels in other relevant policy areas, such as higher education and industry.



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ERA Forum

- The ERA Forum for Transition is being transfigured into a permanent structure and will now be renamed the 'ERA Forum'.
- The ERA Forum will be responsible for:
 - Co-designing and coordinating the implementation of the ERA actions.
 - Analysing the monitoring and evolution of the implementation of the ERA Policy Agenda and the information provided through the ERA Policy Platform.
 - Acting as a facilitator for the preparation of additional candidate ERA actions and in fostering exchanges of best practices on national ERA policies.
- The ERA Forum will be co-chaired by the Commission and the Member States.

ERA Groups (Expert, Related and Sub-Groups)



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Expert Groups

- The European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) Steering Board will remain as permanent governance structures and continue their work as independent Commission Expert Groups.

ERA-related Groups

- The current format governing the ERAC dedicated configurations will discontinue, with the below groups no longer falling under the remit of the Council:
 - GPC (High Level Group on Joint Programming)
 - SFIC (the Strategic Forum for International Scientific and Technological Cooperation)



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- the Standing Working Group on Human Resources and Mobility
- the Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation
- the Standing Working Group on Open Science and Innovation
- The need for their continuation, this time in a different capacity, will be decided over the coming months.

Sub-Groups

- The ERA-related sub-groups will fall under the auspices of the Forum and be primarily chaired or co-chaired by the Commission and/or a Member State.
- The sub-groups will be established only when duly justified, will be outcomes-focused and objectives-bound, and will contribute to the implementation of the ERA actions.
 - Examples of these include the existing sub-groups on the Higher Education Initiative, Industrial Technological Roadmaps, and Knowledge Valorisation.
 - There is also an agreement that SFIC would be transformed into one of these new sub-groups.



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Involvement of other actors



- In addition to the previously mentioned governance formats and groups, the new ERA governance model also sets out the extent of the involvement of the other actors, namely the associated countries, third countries and stakeholders.
- The participation of these actors in the ERA governance structures will be done on a 'case-by-case' basis, with the possibility to:
 - Be invited to attend ERAC meetings for specific agenda topics.
 - Be consulted on agenda items related to the Commission's preparation of the ERA Policy Agenda and able to participate in the implementation of the Agenda, in those areas that are of relevance.
 - Co-chair a meeting of the sub-groups.

Next Steps



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Thank You

