

**NEW ERA ACTIONS FOR THE ERA POLICY AGENDA 2025-2027**  
**TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONSULTATION PROCESS**

<p><b>Action title</b></p> <p><i>(Please use as a maximum two lines.)</i></p>	<p>Reforming the Assessment Systems for research, researchers and institutions to improve their quality, performance and impact</p>
<p><b>Description of the action</b></p> <p><i>(Please explain the proposed action in a <u>simple, clear and communicable</u> narrative).</i></p>	<p>The way research projects, researchers, research units, and research institutions are assessed is fundamental for a well-functioning R&amp;I system. The current assessment systems are still very much based on a limited set of research outputs and activities, mainly publications, and dominated by some inappropriate uses of a number of indicators and methods gauging the quality, performance and impact of research.</p> <p>However, with ERA Action 3 of the ERA Policy Agenda for 2022-2024, reforms to research assessment have been initiated through an Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (between stakeholder organisations), which provides a vision and direction in the form of 10 Commitments; and through a coalition of signatories, CoARA, that provides a platform for mutual learning and collaboration. National dialogues have also been initiated between national authorities and research organisations to identify potential barriers and solutions in a national context. If the commitments enshrined in the Agreement are properly addressed by the signatories, one can expect some first significant changes within five years after signature of the Agreement (roughly in 2027).</p> <p>The initial expected outcomes of ERA Action 3 have already been delivered or are well under way, however the reform of research assessment is a long-term effort, and continued follow-up and support are needed, notably in the context of the ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027. The proposed action is a follow-up to ERA Action 3. It aims at new expected outcomes, taking into account the achievements of ERA Action 3, with 2027 as its new policy horizon.</p> <p>A critical issue in the coming years will be to monitor/establish how much change in relation to research assessment systems will have effectively been implemented. Concomitantly it will be important to identify potential gaps and tackle potential remaining barriers. The objective of this new action is therefore to monitor changes in national framework conditions and report relevant innovations in national research funding agencies, to monitor the progress made by research organisations with changes to their assessment criteria, tools and processes, to identify gaps in reforms, and to identify additional support measures that may still be required. Accordingly, this new action has two expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The monitoring of progress made in reforming research assessment;</li> <li>• The analysis of support measures still needed (for the implementation of changes, global alignment, synergies with other European initiatives and actions, etc.)</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Actors</b></p> <p><i>(Please explain who would take part in the action and who would benefit from it).</i></p>	<p><b>Individual research organisations</b> (universities, research centers, research infrastructures, research funders, etc.) have the responsibility of defining their assessment criteria and processes and are in charge of implementing reforms.</p> <p><b>CoARA</b> brings together research organisations willing to collaborate on defining improvements to research assessment.</p> <p><b>National authorities</b> play an important role, by helping to develop the policies and legislative framework necessary for, and which encourage and support reforms of research assessment. They also facilitate coordination between stakeholders at national or regional level.</p> <p>The <b>Commission</b> supports and facilitates reforms, including through financial contributions from the Framework Programme, through building synergies with other European initiatives, and through global dialogue and cooperation.</p>
<p><b>Expected impact</b></p> <p><i>(Please describe the expected impact of the action (including outside the scientific community), paying attention to the fact that it needs to focus on concrete results and reachable deliverables).</i></p>	<p>In the <b>short and medium term</b>, the proposed action will allow the assessment of the level of progress made in terms of reforming research assessment. Furthermore, it will allow the identification of gaps, of limiting or blocking factors, and measures to address these.</p> <p>In the <b>long term</b>, reforms of the assessment system are expected to improve quality, performance and impact of research and contribute to more attractive research careers. Better recognition of knowledge and data sharing and open collaboration including societal engagement will lead to increased trust in the research and innovation system and its outputs.</p>
<p><b>Why do we need this action?</b></p> <p><i>(Please indicate the need for this action in view of implementing the <u>Pact for R&amp;I and achieving the ERA objectives</u> and explain why its <u>objective cannot be reached through existing programmes/ activities</u>. What is the action's <u>added value</u> at national and European level as well as for stakeholders? How does it <u>make a change</u> and how is <u>co-creation</u> ensured?)</i></p>	<p>The ‘Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe’, adopted by the Council in November 2021, emphasises research assessment systems as essential to comply with the principle of ‘pursuit of excellence’ and to reward quality according to research being of world-class, results being verifiable and reproducible, and transparent methodologies and processes allowing reuse of results. The Pact also identifies the further development of research assessment systems as a priority area for joint action in the Union.</p> <p>Under the ERA Policy Agenda for 2022-2024, ERA Action 3 has initiated reforms to research assessment. All three expected outcomes for ERA Action 3 have already been delivered or are well under way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CoARA, a coalition of European research funders and research performers who agree on a new approach for research assessment was created following wide and inclusive consultations.</li> <li>○ The implementation plan of the coalition to roll-out the new approach, including pilots in different domains, progressed well with the selection of CoARA Working Groups that are just starting to operate. In addition, the</li> </ul>

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	<p>signatories of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment are developing their Action Plan to implement the Agreement commitments, due one year after signature (mainly by end of 2023).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National dialogues between national authorities and research organisations have been initiated to identify potential legal and administrative barriers and solutions in a national context. National dialogues are implemented through dedicated national working groups and workshops, or National Chapters under CoARA. This will ensure that national framework conditions are conducive to reforms.</li> </ul> <p>CoARA and stakeholder organisations are now expected to work on reforms during the coming years, in accordance with the Agreement.</p> <p>However, progress made will need to be measured. Also, policy dialogue at national level and work will need to continue to address remaining obstacle and improve enabling frameworks. This work will require contributions from and dialogue between all relevant actors, including individual research organisations, national authorities, CoARA and the Commission.</p>
<p><b>Additional information</b></p> <p><i>(For example, timing and milestones, which already could be envisaged, can be indicated.)</i></p>	<p>The first expected outcome could take the form of a study identifying the changes implemented in national frameworks (both of legal and administrative nature) and relevant innovations in national research funding agencies, identifying the outcomes from CoARA Working Groups, and mapping the Action Plans from the signatories of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment and the changes implemented. It would also identify gaps in the changes implemented.</p> <p>The second expected outcome could be achieved by surveying the signatories of the Agreement, national authorities, and CoARA, for identifying additional support measures that would still be needed for changes to be fully deployed.</p>