



# **The European Research Area ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027 ERA Act Choose Europe for Science**

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European  
Commission

# The context

## 25years of ERA

**2002:** Creation of **European Partnerships**  
**2004:** Launch of what is now **Euraxess**  
**2005:** European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (**HR Excellence in Research Awards**)  
**2007:** Establishment of **European Research Council**  
**2009:** **European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) Regulation**  
**2015:** **European Open Science Cloud**  
**2021:** Launch of the **revamped ERA** with the Pact for R&I and ERA Policy Agenda **2022-24**  
ERA Policy Agenda 2022-25

## Choose Europe for Science

On **5 May** and on **23 May 2025**, the European Commission announced and further defined **the Choose Europe for science** Initiative to make Europe a **magnet** for researchers, ensure scientific freedom and help fast-track innovation from concept to market.

**April 2024:** Letta report “Much more than a market”

-> **5th Freedom**

**September 2024:** Draghi report “The future of European competitiveness”

-> **Research and Innovation Union**

**President Von Der Lyen “Political Guidelines” July 2024:**

-> **Research at the heart of the economy**

# 1. ERA and ERA Policy Agenda 2025-27



# 25 Years of European Research Area (ERA)

## What is the ERA? – Art. 179 of the Treaty

A single,  
borderless market for  
research, innovation  
and technology  
across the EU...

...where  
countries come  
together and improve  
their research policies  
and systems...

...and where there  
is free movement  
of researchers,  
knowledge and  
innovation.

# ERA Governance and Policy Framework



## Pact for research and innovation in Europe

- **10 values & principles**
- **4 priority areas**
  - Deepening ERA
  - Broadening ERA (green & digital)
  - Amplifying access to excellence
  - Advancing R&I investments and reforms



## ERA Policy Agendas

- Designed to contribute to the priority areas of the Pact for R&I, setting out the voluntary **ERA actions** which are defined and coordinated at Union level.
- **20 actions for 2022-24**
- **11+8 actions for 2025-27**



## ERA Governance

### ERA Forum (+ subgroups)

Expert group for coordination and implementation of the ERA, together with EU countries, Associated countries and stakeholders

### ERAC

high-level strategic policy body, providing advice

### Council

Decision making  
“Owner” of Policy Agenda



## ERA Monitoring

- **ERA Policy Platform**
- **Regular reporting:**
  - EU-level report
  - Country reports
  - Performance indicators



# Example of achievements

ref: 2<sup>nd</sup> EU-level Report (mid-2023 to end-2024)



## Open science

- **EOSC EU Node** launched; onboarding of candidate EOSC Nodes
- **EOSC Observatory** & **Federation Handbook** deployed



## Inclusive research ecosystem

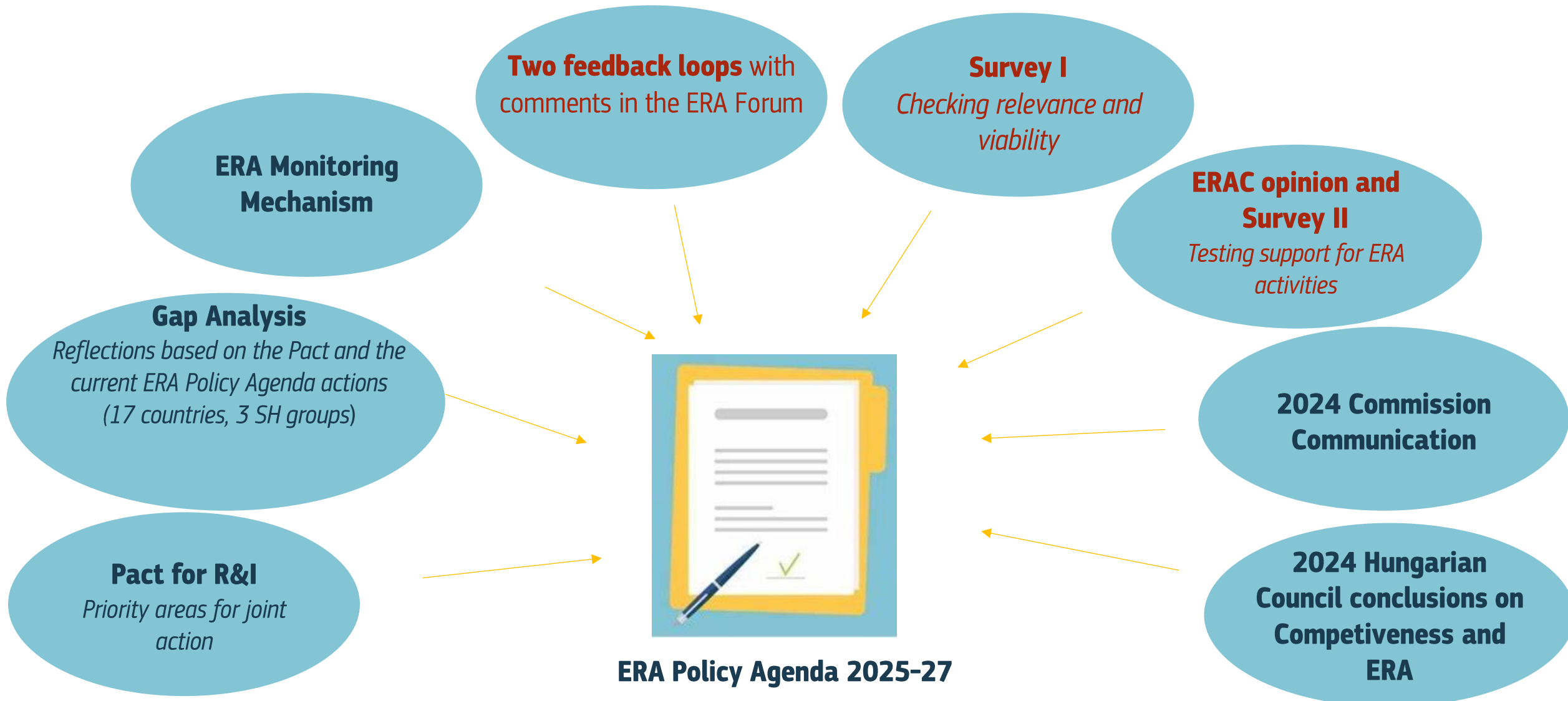
- Reform in research assessment (**CoARA**, 700+ orgs)
- Gender Equality Plans + Provisions tackling gender-based violence (projects **GenderSAFE**, **GENDERACTIONplus**, **INSPIRE**)



## Researcher careers & mobility

- **European Charter for Researchers** helped attract and retain talent
- **ERA Talent Platform** integrated new and existing career tools

# ERA Policy Agenda 2025-27: a full co-creation process!



# ERA Policy Agenda 2025-27 – where we have come from

**28 Feb  
2025**

COM  
proposal  
adoption



**8 May 2025**

RWP  
agreement



**14 May  
2025**

COREPER  
agreement



**23 May  
2025**

COMPET  
political  
agreement



**4 June 2025**

ERA Forum  
start of  
concrete  
implementation



# ERA Policy Agenda 2025-27: Agreed list of ERA Activities

## ERA structural policies

*'long-term ERA policies, which are not confined to individual policy agendas but still have a three-year workplan'*

1. Enabling open science
2. Research infrastructures
3. Inclusive and intersectional gender equality
- 4. Making research careers more attractive and sustainable**
- 5. Research assessment**
6. Upscaling knowledge valorisation capacities
7. Global Approach to R&I
8. SET Plan as a key component of ERA
- 9. Improving the articulation between R&I and higher education within ERA, unleashing the full potential of European R&I ecosystems**
10. Enhancing trust in science through citizen participation, engagement and science communication
11. Improve EU access to excellence

## ERA actions

*'which are new and to be completed within the three-year policy agenda'*

1. Equity in open science
2. Advancing the European science for policy ecosystem
3. AI in science in the EU
4. Enhancing research security
5. Accelerating R&I investments for Europe's industrial transformation and competitive sustainability
6. Accelerating new approach methodologies to advance biomedical research and testing for medicinal products and medical devices
7. A harmonised and coordinated framework to support integrity and ethics in R&I
- 8. An new era in research management**

# **Structural Policy:**

## **Improving the articulation between R&I and higher education within ERA unleashing the full potential of European R&I ecosystems**

### **Objectives:**

- Achieve better coherence between strategies, policies, programmes and funding for R&I and higher education. Closer cooperation and dialogue between those two areas at EU, national, regional and institutional levels;
- achieve stronger and more connected regional R&I systems and reduction of European innovation divide;
- improve knowledge, indicators and tools for implementing comprehensive cross-sectoral strategies, aligning innovation with broader societal goals;
- higher level of awareness on and improved complementarity between research and education;
- reduce fragmentation and regional divide within Europe's R&I landscape;
- strengthen cooperation between academic, public and private entities.

### **Expected outcomes**

- Development of recommendations drawn up to design and implement strategies at institutional, regional, national and European level;
- The identification of current legal obstacles at regional, national, and European levels; of principles and main components necessary for the development of the legal framework for establishing the fifth freedom; recommendations for consolidating European HEIs at the forefront of global R&I;
- The identification of policies, mechanisms and incentives to foster more robust cooperation between HEIs and the other R&I actors;
- Ambitions roadmap adopted for ERA/EEA (higher education-related) strategic alignment.

# Structural Policy:

## Making research careers more attractive and sustainable

### Objectives:

- Foster recognition of the research professions, and the interoperability and comparability of research careers across sectors and Member States;
- Improve recruitment and working conditions, including aspects related to open, transparent and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R);
- Strengthen researchers' skills to foster inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary careers;
- Support better career development and progression and shape new investment pathways to reduce precarity and broaden the spectrum of career opportunities;
- Work towards a more balanced circulation of talents, including intersectoral flows;
- Ensure effective and reliable data from the Research and Innovation Careers Observatory (ReICO).


### Expected outcomes

- Co-created guidelines for the implementation of the Council Recommendation on a European framework for research careers
- A community of practice to share experiences and strengthen research careers at European, national, regional, and organizational level;
- A consolidated ReICO with the involvement of relevant actors outside the R&I community, and jointly eliminating gaps;
- Recommendations for better career development and career progression, including European tenure-track like models and related assessment and funding mechanisms;
- Co-created investment pathways to reduce precarity and ease career paths.

# Updated ERA Platform

Home > ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027

## ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027



The second ERA Policy Agenda outlines voluntary activities for the European Research Area (ERA) from 2025 to 2027. Similar to the first ERA Policy Agenda 2022-24, these activities aim to transform the priority areas set by the Pact for Research and Innovation (R&I) in Europe into concrete activities, bringing EU Member States, countries associated to Horizon Europe, R&I stakeholders and the Commission together to make the ERA a reality.

The 19 ERA activities have emerged from a unique collaborative process. EU Member States, the European Commission, countries associated to Horizon Europe, and R&I stakeholders have teamed up to shape the ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027. This process took place within the ERA Forum, guided strategically by the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC).

The ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027 has three main building blocks (see image below):

- The **policy narrative** sets the scene for the broader goals and ambitions and highlights the achievements and lessons learnt.
- **11 structural policies** outline long-term undertakings, embedded in national and European policy, such as open science, research infrastructures and research careers. While their vision requires efforts beyond the three-year work cycle, they still have specific objectives and a work plan to be achieved within the ERA Policy Agenda.
- **8 ERA actions** are filling specific gaps on new or emerging issues, such as artificial intelligence in science. They have time-bound objectives or are piloting an initiative, such as research security.

Over the next three years (2025-2027), the Commission, European countries and stakeholders will work together to achieve progress on these ERA activities. Find out more about each initiative by clicking in the image below.

Pact for R&I  
long-term vision for ERA

ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027  
3-year aspiration and mission

Policy Narrative

ERA Structural Policies

ERA Actions

## 2. ERA Act: state of play and way forward



# The ERA policy framework

## ERA Policy Agenda

- Non-binding instrument: Council Recommendation or Council conclusions
- Encouraging voluntary collaboration and commitments on certain ERA activities
- Adoption **May 2025**

## ERA in Horizon Europe

- Grant-based funding framework
- WIDERA work programme specifically supports the implementation of ERA Policy Agendas

## ERA Act

- Mission letter of Commissioner Zaharieva's
- Legal instrument to tackle enduring issues that cannot be solved through voluntary cooperation
- Propose measures to foster the free movement of research, knowledge and technology → 5th freedom
- Internal/external reflection started, proposal **planned for 2026**



# Context of the ERA Act

**April 2024:**  
**Letta report “Much more than a market”**  
**5th freedom**

**September 2024:**  
**Draghi report “The future of European competitiveness”**  
**Research and Innovation Union**

**September 2024:**  
**Mission letter of Commissioner Zaharieva**

*to “guarantee a ‘fifth freedom’, namely the free movement of researchers, scientific knowledge and technology. The aim will be to reduce fragmentation of research and anchor innovation and research into the Single Market and unlock more of its potential.”*

**February 2025:**  
**Competitiveness Compass**

*“to strengthen R&D investment and bring it up to the 3% GDP target, focus research support more on strategic priorities, reinforce alignment between the EU and Member States’ funding priorities, and foster the circulation of knowledge and talent across Europe.”*

Commission proposal for ERA Act, planned for **2026**

## ! ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE ERA ACT:

Strengthen the capacity and performance of EU R&I ecosystem, crucial to protect the EU’s position as a global scientific leader and bolster innovation and economic competitiveness to close the persistent innovation gap

with other global players

# Competitiveness Compass

Objectives of ERA ACT:

R&D investment (3% GDP target)

issue: lack of investment

Strategic priorities, reinforce alignment of funding priorities

issue: fragmentation

Foster the circulation of knowledge and talent across Europe

issue: administrative barriers, higher individual costs for researchers

## Areas of potential intervention

***NOT EXHAUSTIVE, NOT DEFINITIVE***

Equitable RDI investment across ERA

Knowledge valorisation

AI in research

Open science

Freedom of scientific research

Gender equality

Research infrastructures

Research security

Mobility of researchers

Employability and working conditions of the researchers

# Areas of potential intervention



## PROBLEM DEFINITION

### Equitable RDI investment across ERA

- Underinvestment in R&I

### Ethical, responsible use of AI in research

- Fragmented AI guidance
- Lack of centralized whistleblowing mechanism for AI misuse

### Knowledge valorisation

- Limited IP incentives for researchers
- Fragmented IPR ownership
- Fragmented patent and licensing

### Freedom of scientific research

- Political interference
- Lack of enforcement and non-compliance mechanisms

### Gender equality

- Limited effectiveness and enforcement of GEPs

### Open science

- Barriers to access / reuse of publicly funded R&I results related to rights transfer

### Research infrastructures

- Unexploited conditions for ERICs

### Research security

- Lack of coherence and consistency of approach in R&I relations with third countries

### Mobility of researchers

- Recognition of diplomas and qualifications
- Visa regime for 3rd country researchers

### Employability and working conditions of the researchers

- Fragmented legal and administrative frameworks



European  
Commission

# ERA Act

Equitable RDI investment  
across ERA

Mobility of researchers

AI in research

Open science

Gender equality

Research security

Employability and  
working conditions of  
the researchers

Research  
infrastructures

Knowledge valorisation

# Innovation Act

Institutional investors

Regulatory sandboxes

Burden reduction

Cost of failure

Legal definition of  
startups / scaleups /  
innovative company

Innovation policy  
coordination

Attracting talent

Access to research and  
technology  
infrastructures

# Call for evidence



- **Estimated publication:** second week of June on the '[Have Your Say](#)' portal
- **Duration:** 4 weeks
- **Aim:** to collect general evidence regarding the problems facing the development and full achievement of the ERA, along with stakeholders' views on feasible solutions that could be supported by legislation at EU level
- **Targeted respondents:** all stakeholders from national and regional administrations and research and innovation communities

# Next steps



-> YOUR INPUT WELCOME



### 3. Choose Europe for Science





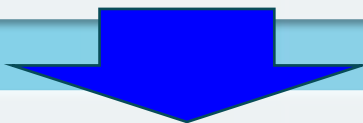
*"I believe that Europe can and should be the best place to do science and research in the world – a place that attracts and retains researchers, both international and European, in particular those who are in search of a safe and supportive research environment. To ensure that Europe can be that place, we must enhance our 'pull factor'. We must offer the best opportunities for scientists and researchers."*

**Commissioner Ekaterina Zaharieva**  
European Parliament Plenary – 31 March 2025

COMMISSION MOBILISATION



ERA FORUM SURVEY ON MS INITIATIVES



New – 23 MAY



**Choose  
EUROPE**

for SCIENCE

A snapshot of initiatives in the European Union to support researchers worldwide

## **A SNAPSHOT of initiatives at EU, national and regional levels open to researchers worldwide**

### **EU LEVEL**

- EUR 500 million package for 2025–2027, including:
  - a seven-year ‘super grant’ under ERC
  - MSCA ‘Choose Europe for Science’ pilot in 2025
- EUR 230 million for ERA Chairs (2026–2027)
- Legislation on the Freedom of Scientific Research / ERA Act
- Visa Strategy
- Relocation and career support by EURAXESS
- New fellowship scheme for researchers at risk (Widera WP2026)
- ....

### **MS LEVEL**

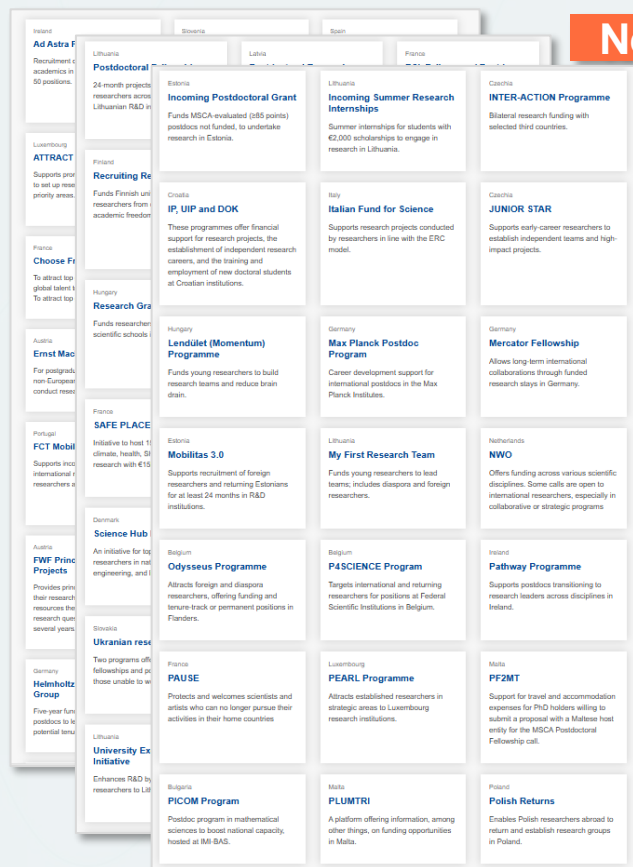
#### **OVER 60 MEASURES**

- grants, relocation package, fellowships...
- Diaspora programmes
- support to EU measures
- ...



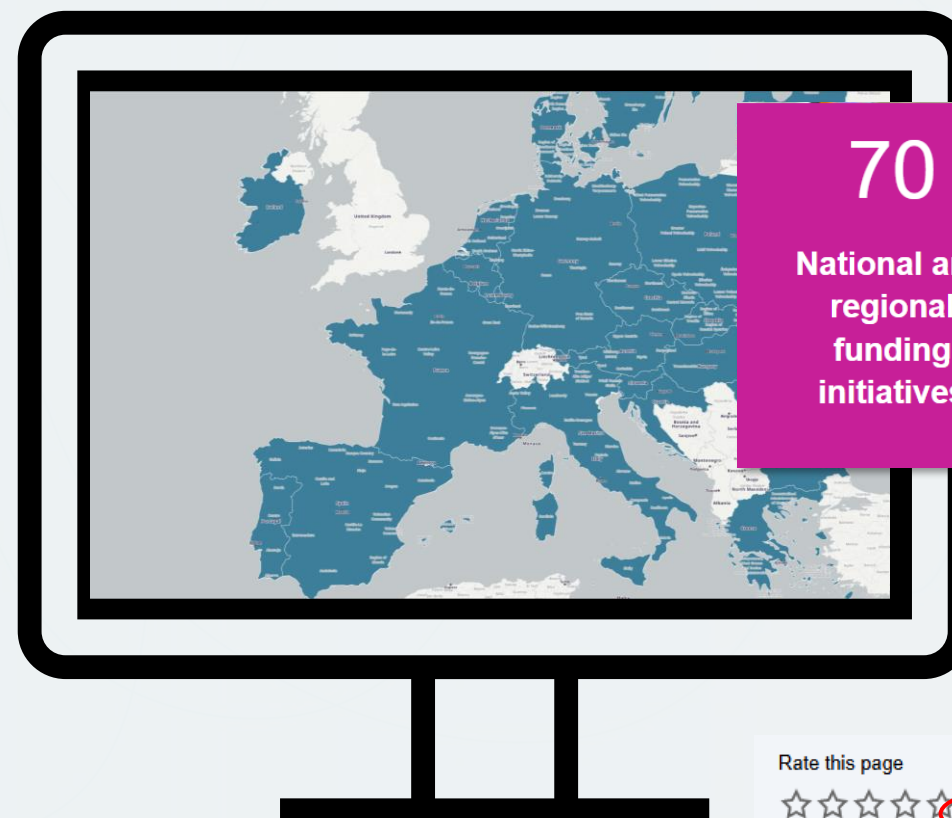
# Choose Europe for Science dedicated webpage

**EURAXESS DEDICATED WEBPAGE:** A continuously updated list of national and regional initiatives is now available on the EURAXESS platform.



New

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>



Rate this page



or give us more feedback



***“Science builds our future.  
Our mission is clear:  
we want the brightest  
minds to “Choose Europe”***

**Von der Leyen in STOA 5/6/2025**

**Thank You!**