

Horizon Europe and the ERA Need All European Forces, Switzerland Included

Brussels, 5 July 2021

Horizon Europe and the development of the European Research Area (ERA) both aim to strengthen the European Research and Innovation (R&I). Over the years, the EU Institutions have acknowledged that collaboration with strong partners is essential to reach this goal. This need was reasserted at various occasions, including in numerous sections of the [Horizon Europe reference documents and legislation](#).

Accordingly, Science Europe calls for:

- the inclusion of all European R&I powers in the development process of the ERA.
- full association of Switzerland to Horizon Europe, alongside Norway, Iceland, and the United Kingdom, respecting the scope and nature of the different association agreements.

Inclusion of all European R&I powers in the development process of the ERA

Non-EU European countries, such as Norway, Iceland, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland, are long-term partners of the EU. They are home to world-class research institutions that collaborate with EU-based organisations and are ranked among the most competitive and innovative countries in the world. They contribute to the excellence of the ERA.

The ERA, as a political vision for research and innovation in Europe, must include all these countries in order to actively and constructively create a globally competitive European R&I ecosystem. Science Europe therefore calls for their engagement, from the earliest stage of ERA's preparation, in order to achieve ERA's high ambitions.

Full association of Switzerland to Horizon Europe

The European Commission recently announced in the Horizon Europe [Programme Guide](#) that Switzerland was not in the list of countries with which association negotiations are being processed or where association is imminent. Switzerland will therefore be considered a third country for the start of Horizon Europe. This development is very unfortunate for the European R&I, and for the R&I community that intensely collaborate within and outside of the EU Framework Programmes.

The political context between Switzerland and the EU must not impact R&I collaboration. Weakening the collaboration and downgrading Switzerland to third country status will lead to a lose-lose situation. More than ever, Europe must unite its forces.

There is no doubt that the long-established close cooperation between the EU and Switzerland in the domain of R&I is mutually beneficial. Science Europe believes that this essential collaboration must continue and be protected by all means.

Further Links

- [Open Letter on the Participation of Switzerland under Horizon Europe by the European STI Councils and Advisory Bodies and other Science Organisations](#) (32 signatories as of 2 July 2021)

About Science Europe

Science Europe is the association representing major public organisations that fund or perform excellent, ground-breaking research in Europe. It brings together the expertise of 38 of the largest and best-known research organisations in the world to jointly push the frontiers of how scientific research is produced and delivers benefits to society. They collectively invest over €23.9 billion each year on research in 28 European countries. Science Europe member organisations cooperate with each other, aware of the benefit that the outcome is greater than the sum of every individual member. Science Europe advocates science and the scientific community to help build the European Research Area (ERA) and shape the global scientific agenda.