

EUROHORCs vision for the realization of the European Research Area

Science progresses through a creative tension between competition and cooperation. In developing the European Research Area, EUROHORCs believes the same principle applies to research policy, funding and support. That is, Europe's greatest competitive advantage in pursuing research will stem from the capacity of the EU's member states and associated countries to collaborate seamlessly when it is in their collective interest to do so, but also pursue their own national strategies and policies where appropriate. The diversity of national research organizations, their understanding of, and responsiveness to their national research capacities, and their potential to innovate in pursuit of scientific excellence, should be acknowledged and strengthened by coordinating action at the European level.

It is critical, of course, for national research organisations to collaborate in pursuit of European and global level challenges, and to create an open market for research talent that creates opportunities for researchers and research institutions, and enhances the quality of research and innovation across Europe. For this to be achieved requires coordinated action between the European Commission, national governments and the national research funding and performing organizations of the countries of Europe. It is precisely to enhance the effectiveness of this cooperation that Science Europe is to be created, as successor of EUROHORCs. EUROHORCs welcomes the high priority which the European Commission has placed on research and innovation in its overall strategic plans, and acknowledges the strong desire to achieve concrete steps to establish a European Research Area by 2014. However, research and the development of research policy is an ongoing process, which will continue to evolve well beyond 2014.

In this context, EUROHORCs offers its vision of what the European Research Area should become. It contains seven elements:

1. Europe should comprise a single open market for the circulation of researchers. Researchers should be able to develop their careers by taking positions in research institutions in any country in the EU as easily as within their own country, thus enhancing opportunities both for researchers to pursue their interests and for institutions to attract the best talent.
2. Researchers should be able to collaborate on research projects with colleagues in other European countries much more easily.

3. Research policymakers in the European Commission, national governments and national research organizations should possess effective mechanisms to seamlessly coordinate research strategies to achieve critical mass in pursuit of national, European and global level scientific challenges.
4. Scientific excellence, and the appropriate institutional environment to support it, should be found throughout the countries of Europe. Europe should make a collective effort to achieve this.
5. The European Commission, national governments and national research organizations should have the capacity to act collectively and effectively in the development, maintenance and use of both large and medium scale research infrastructures.
6. European research should have the ability at the policy level to present a unified voice in interactions with the wider world, thus also enhancing the capacity of national research organizations to develop their own international priorities and partnerships.
7. Europe should act collectively where appropriate to communicate the insights and benefits of scientific research to the wider economy and society.

In essence, EUROHORCs envisions a European Research Area that is able to act flexibly and effectively at whatever scale is most appropriate to the challenge at hand. This means being able to address grand challenges where a pan-European response is required, and to work in more focused collaborations where there is an alignment of strategic interests, without reducing the ability or capacity of national organisations to pursue individual strategic priorities and respond to the needs of their individual national research communities and other stakeholders.

Next steps

While stating these ambitions is rather straightforward, achieving them is a complex task. In recent years, the national research organizations of Europe have done much to enhance their capacity to collaborate, and the European Commission, through the continued development of the Framework Programme (now Horizon 2020) and the establishment of the ERC has also made an important contribution. National research organisations can build further upon the work they have done, as many practical lessons have been learnt that will greatly facilitate future coordinated research activity and policy development.

EUROHORCs is well aware that a sound evidence based analysis is required in order to understand progress towards the realization of the ERA and inform further policy development. In response to a request from the European Commission, EUROHORCs and its successor Science Europe, once it is founded, are committed to carrying out this detailed analysis on behalf of its Member Organizations. The issues identified by the Commission that must be addressed to realize the ERA overlap strongly with the *EUROHORCs/ESF Vision on a Globally Competitive ERA and their Roadmap for Actions*. Since this document was produced, numerous Working Groups and ESF Member Organisation Fora have been convened to address the specific issues within the Roadmap. Over the next few months, we will develop a report that will provide the European Commission, our members and other stakeholders in the

European Research Area with an up to date resource on the progress achieved by national research organisations in the establishment of the ERA, any obstacles which delay further progress, and a plan for concrete steps which can be taken by to more fully establish the European Research Area by 2014.

The report will be overseen by a Working Group of EUROHORCs members, chaired by Franci Demsar. The detailed analysis of individual issues will be carried out by officials from EUROHORCs's member organisations with relevant expertise, supplemented by fresh data gathering from across our members.

EUROHORCs's/Science Europe's analysis will address all of the issues raised by the Commission, but it will vary in the extent of its analysis depending on the priorities and remits of our member organisations. As an association of research funding and performing organisations, cross-border collaboration will be a particular focus. For example, our report will include detailed analysis of the extent to which various models for cross-border funding have been implemented, including lead agency, money follows cooperation, and specific multi- or bilateral programmes.

Our report will also survey the extent to which national organizations currently support international mobility, and identify possible measures by which this support could be extended, as well as identifying remaining barriers to mobility and suggesting mechanisms to overcome them. PhD training and career development will also be considered. To the extent that is possible, we will seek to contextualize our analysis within the broader relevant policy context (e.g. welfare systems, economic policies, etc.)

Additionally, we will review the programmes and existing mechanisms for connecting European research to the world, thus enhancing continuous research collaborations with EU's neighbouring countries and regions (e.g. the Western Balkans, the Caucasus), BRIC countries and third countries. We will provide our perspective on the appropriate balance of activities between the European Commission, Member States and national research organisations in international engagement.

Furthermore, in the scope of Europe's 2020 vision to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the issues of dissemination, transfer and use of research results will be as important as the results of the research themselves. The issues of open access and intellectual property rights, as well the role of science in society for greater social cohesion and effective transfer and exchange of knowledge will be given a significant emphasis in the analysis. By assessing existing mechanisms in European countries and policies adopted by national research funding and performing organisations, the EUROHORCs/Science Europe position on further actions will be given.

Finally, we will aim to develop evidence based recommendations for effective approaches towards the realisation of shared funding and full exploitation of research infrastructures in Europe. Special focus will be therefore given to utilisation of existing capacities as well as further capacity building in the area of high and medium scale research equipment.

We will assess the strengths and weaknesses of these models and mechanisms, and identify specific obstacles that may be encountered in their wider application. We will provide clear

and actionable recommendations of how they could be more broadly applied and the most appropriate circumstances in which to do so, in order to most efficiently deliver each dimension of the ERA. This analysis will provide clear direction to establish an inclusive framework to further reduce the barriers to multinational collaboration for both strategic and curiosity-driven, bottom-up research.

EUROHORCs/Science Europe will present our analysis to the Commission and its Member Organizations no later than January 2012. We trust that the presence of Science Europe's Pilot Office in Brussels will enable ongoing dialogue between the Commission and EUROHORCs as we undertake the work described above, to ensure that we deliver an output that is greatly valued by the Commission and our Member Organisations alike.