

Science Europe Press Release: *for immediate release*

'The Diversity and Richness of the Different European Research Systems are a Strength', says Science Europe

(Brussels, 7 November 2014) As the European Commission and the EU Member States are reviewing the current Commission's approach to the European Research Area (ERA) and preparing an 'ERA Roadmap' for 2015, Science Europe has today released a position commenting on ERA policy and offering some suggestions for improvement.

In its Position Statement 'On Priority One of the 2012 ERA Communication', the association of major European Research Funding and Performing Organisations puts forward the results of its analysis of ERA policy, specifically focussing on Priority One of the ERA Communication 'More Effective National Research Systems', with the aim of contributing to the debate on the future of ERA policy.

"ERA policy is relatively young [...]. There is much that this policy can achieve by fostering dialogue and collaboration between national science policy makers", is said in the Statement. However, Science Europe considers that the current debate around the effectiveness of national research systems is too narrowly structured around the issue of funding models within a *"simple market analogy"*.

While *"competition is an important element in science policy and has a key role in fostering excellence"*, continues the Statement, *"there is no reason to assume that different countries need similar funding allocation policy mixes [...]. Different funding models can foster or hinder the pursuit of different strategies adapted to regional and national contexts"*.

Rather than reducing this priority to a matter of 'competitive versus non-competitive' funding, and considering that there is still limited knowledge on the complexity of the drivers behind the effectiveness of national research systems, Science Europe's members suggest re-thinking the current ERA policy approach in order to allow for more mutual learning.

"Our analysis of Priority One of the ERA Communication offers an example of the complexity and the challenges that Europe is facing in tackling the development of a European Research Area", said Amanda Crowfoot, Director of Science Europe. *"However, we believe that the diversity and richness of the different European research systems are a strength that needs to be preserved. Science Europe is very willing to engage with the European Commission and other stakeholders in the context of the revision of ERA policy"*.

The Position Statement can be downloaded at: <http://www.scienceeurope.org/downloads>

Science Europe comprises 52 Research Funding and Research Performing Organisations from 27 countries, representing around €30 billion per annum. It was founded in October 2011 with the aim of promoting the collective interests of members and providing them with a platform to collaborate at both policy and activity level.

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