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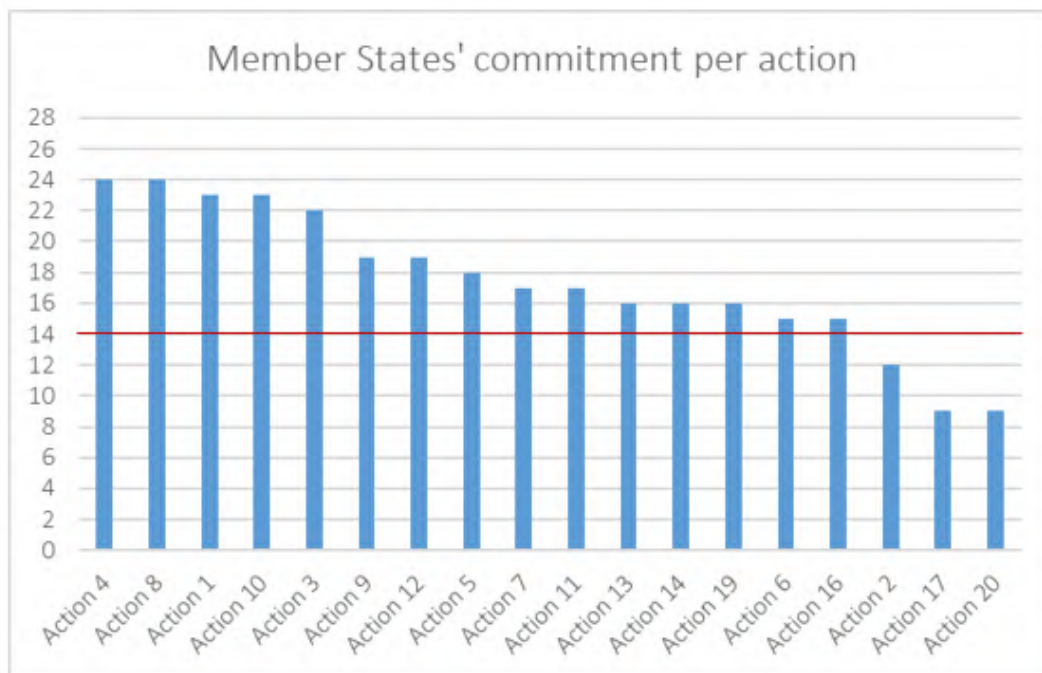
WORKING DOCUMENT

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	ERAC (European Research Area and Innovation Committee)
Subject:	Factual analysis of the commitments received on the ERA actions in the ERA policy agenda

Delegations will find attached document on the above mentioned subject with the view to the meeting of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) on 13-14 September 2022.
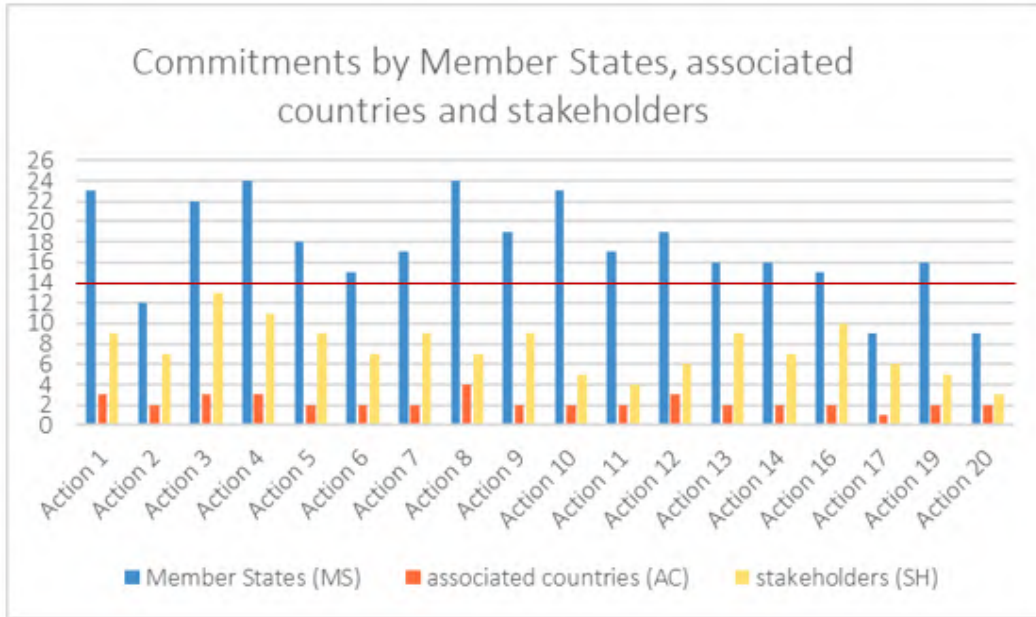
ANNEX – Agenda item 4 – Commitments to ERA actions

- By 30 August, the Commission received written commitments from 26 Member States[1], four associated countries[2], the Committee of the Regions and 17 stakeholder organisations[3].
- Based on these written commitments, 15 ERA actions passed the threshold defined in the Council Conclusions adopted in November 2021 (= i.e. at least half of the EU Member States need to support an ERA action).
- With 26 Member States committing, Actions 4 (research careers and mobility) and 8 (research infrastructures) received most support.
- Actions 2, 17 and 20 have not reached the threshold.

Commitments by Member States, associated countries and stakeholders

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	17	19	20	Total
Austria (AT)																			13
Belgium (BE)																			18
Bulgaria (BG)																			7
Croatia (HR)																			4
Cyprus (CY)																			11
Czechia (CZ)																			18
Denmark (DK)																			13
Estonia (EE)																			18
Finland (FI)																			11
France (FR)																			16
Germany (DE)																			18
Greece (EL)																			6
Hungary (HU)																			14
Ireland (IE)																			6
Italy (IT)																			14
Latvia (LV)																			8
Lithuania (LT)																			14
Luxembourg (LU)																			0
Malta (MT)																			5
Netherlands (NL)																			16
Poland (PL)																			11
Portugal (PT)																			18
Romania (RO)																			8
Slovakia (SK)																			10
Slovenia (SI)																			10
Spain (ES)																			17
Sweden (SE)																			10
Total	23	12	22	24	18	15	17	24	19	23	17	19	16	16	15	9	16	9	

Blue box = written commitment

Preliminary conclusions

- ➢ Based on these commitments, **15 actions** received sufficient support from the Member States to **go ahead**. The respective follow-up activities are designed on operational level and with the involvement of the ERA Forum.

- ➢ Those **three actions**, which do not pass the threshold yet, will need to be **re-visited** at an appropriate point in time. The Commission still considers activities related to these actions as relevant activities for the implementation of ERA and invites Member States to include respective information in the upcoming ERA monitoring mechanism and the policy platform.

- ➢ Those actions, which start to be implemented, will be open for **hopping-on**. Member States will be kept up to date about such developments.

Commitments of Member States, associated countries and stakeholders on individual actions

Action 1 – Enable Open Science

- **23 Member States (MS), 3 associated countries (AC) and 9 stakeholders (SH)** so far committed to the action.

- Most MS have been developing a new **national strategy for Open Science policy** and the mainstreaming of open science practices and **FAIR** principles across national research funding programmes.

- Most countries have national action plans for the creation of national platforms and data services to enable the connection of national/regional research infrastructures to the **EOSC** platform.

Action 2 – EU copyright and data legislative framework for research

- **12 MS, 2 AC and 7 SH** so far committed to the action.

- MS, AC and SH indicated their availability to share **best-practice**, participate in workshops and provide feedback on the Commission analysis on barriers and possible measures.

- Some countries have ongoing **national activities**, e.g. national taskforce, long-term university projects and new copyright laws. SH have been quite active in this area, e.g. through publishing statements.

Action 3 – Reform of Research Assessment

- **22 MS, 3 AC and 13 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Most countries as well as SH are supportive of the **coalition** of European research funders and research performers and will encourage national stakeholders to join (MS, AC) or might participate themselves (SH). They also expressed interest in periodic exchanges between the ERA Forum and the Coalition.

- Many countries have ongoing **national activities** to reform or improve their research assessment systems. The action is seen as a valuable tool to support national processes and help developing new tools and criteria for research assessment and overcoming barriers to reform.

Action 4 – Research careers, talent circulation and mobility

- **24 MS, 3 AC and 11 SH** so far committed to the action.

- There is a wide range of **national initiatives** on research careers, mobility and human resource development already in place can contribute to the objectives of the **European framework for research careers**.

- Most countries as well as SH are already active or interested in the **exchange of best practices** and in the **development of mutual learning exercises**. The importance of skills (e.g. entrepreneurial), inter-sectoral mobility, and measures to ensure balanced talent circulation is underlined by many.

- There is broad **support for EURAXESS** and the co-development of an **ERA Talent Platform,** and for contributing to the **observatory on careers.**

Action 5 – Gender equality and inclusiveness

- **18 MS, 2 AC and 9 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Countries and SH want to participate in **regular policy dialogues and mutual learning exercises** and provide information on national policies and strategies promoting gender equality and inclusiveness, with the goal to develop of a common concept and policy approach.

- A **large variety of national activities** on different aspects of gender equality are ongoing, e.g. national policies, institutional support, awareness campaigns, capacity building, task forces. Countries committed to **sharing information and data.**

Action 6 – Protect academic freedom in Europe

- **15 MS, 2 AC and 7 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Many MS described their interest in participating in a **mutual learning exercise** on foreign interference, the **task force** validating the work of experts on monitoring academic freedom and the OSINT dashboard.

- Some MS highlighted their willingness to organise **national workshops/stakeholder groups** on tackling foreign interference, while others have ongoing SH activities on this

topic. SH are very supportive of this action, offering their expertise and having several ongoing activities.

Action 7 – Upgrade EU guidance for a better knowledge valorisation

- **17 MS, 2 AC and 9 SH** so far committed to the action.

- MS (23 countries) co-created the action through an ERA Forum subgroup on Knowledge Valorisation (**Council Recommendation expected by end of 2022**). **SH** highlighted their **active involvement** in this action and expressed their **wide support**.

- Most countries as well as SH are already active/interested in the **sharing of best practices, workshops and mutual learning exercises**. Some national ongoing and planned activities include performance agreements with universities and projects on knowledge & technology transfer for research organisations.

Action 8 – Strengthen Research Infrastructures

- **24 MS, 4 AC and 7 SH** so far committed to the action.

- It seems that countries have very **well established structures for their participation** to Action 8 including the ESFRI Forum, ERICs and the follow up of on-going and/or setting up of planned activities.

- MS describe **investment and support from various funding sources** including support from national funding programmes, Horizon Europe, EU Cohesion policy funds and Recovery and Resilience Facility.

- Czechia has chosen research infrastructures as one of the top **Czech EU Council Presidency priority** and the Czech EU Council Presidency will host relevant events – the International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI, icri2022.cz) and meeting of the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI).

Action 9 – Promote international cooperation

- **19 MS, 2 AC and 9 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Building on their former participation in SFIC, countries wish to continue their shared work to promote R&I international cooperation in a positive, secure environment based on reciprocity.

- Some MS and SH find that the there is high **complementarity between Action 9 and Action 6** because of foreign interference being part of Action 6.

Action 10 – Make EU Missions and partnerships key contributors to the ERA

- **23 MS, 2 AC and 5 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Countries and SH point out their engagement in many Missions and partnerships already. Many countries take part in the TRAMI-project supporting member States to implement the Missions, as well as in the Partnership Knowledge Hub.

- Many countries and SH that committed to the action are interested in mutual learning exercises and the exchange of best practices.

- Countries build national structures and/or set up bodies for coordination purposes, to network actors and to establish stakeholder engagement in implementing the Missions.

- A few countries have devoted specific funding to support Missions and Partnerships and to intensify links with national programs and activities.

Action 11 – An ERA for green transformation

- **17 MS, 2 AC and 4 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Most of the countries are planning to build further their activities based on the ERA Pilot on Green Hydrogen activity (Action 11.1) and they have developed a national strategy.

- Action 11.2 and the revamping and revision of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan is equally a priority for all countries that support Action 11.

- Some MS, AC and SH have so far expressed support and shared best practices for ERA4FutureWork (Action 11.3)

- Horizon Europe, ESIF and national programs support many of the on-going Green Hydrogen activities in which countries participate.

Action 12 – Accelerate the green/digital transformation

- **19 MS, 3 AC and 6 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Many Countries indicate that they have developed or are about to develop **national action plans, roadmaps or strategies** to accelerate the green and digital transition.

- Some Countries mention **specific national funding initiatives** to support the transitions.

- Countries are committed to **improve engagement with stakeholders and civil society**.

- Some Countries and SH expressed their willingness to participate in **Mutual Learning Exercises**, exchanges of best practices, and relevant groups and fora.

Action 13 – Empower higher education institutions

- **16 MS, 2 AC and 9 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Overall there is interest in following the initiative and engaging into increasing synergies with education at European level; some MS warn about possible confusion on the branding (excellence initiative vs. universities initiative).

- There is general willingness to **share knowledge and experiences** and to actively engage universities, and interest on the side of countries and stakeholders in a **mutual learning exercise** on excellence initiatives.

- General interest in joining the **Task Force on a joint support mechanism** for alliances of higher education institutions but no explicit commitment to the suggested pilot action

- SH are very supportive of this action, offering their expertise, including towards a **Connected Universities initiative** to support the digital transition, and having several ongoing activities.

Action 14 – Bring science closer to citizens

- **16 MS, 2 AC and 7 SH** so far committed to the action and list a broad variety of ongoing national and international activities.

- **14.1:** DE continues the **Plastic Pirates** initiative and supports Europeanisation efforts. AT and GR plan to join the initiative. Several SH ready to participate in the EU-wide rollout of the initiative. NO ready to support as observer with information and experience in relevant processes.

- **14.2:** No explicit expression of engagement with respect to the **European City of Science** from the side of MS, but GE and NO interested in options for AC to participate in the initiative. Also several SH want to engage.

- **14.3**: Some support from MS and SH for the idea of a **EU Science Media Network**. NO enquires about involvement of EEA/EFTA countries.

- **14.4:** Many countries and SH expressed interest in developing a concept note for, and a participating in a **Mutual Learning Exercise**. Some concrete ideas on possible activities are presented.

Action 16 – Improve EU-wide access to excellence

- **15 MS, 2 AC and 10 SH** so far committed to the action.

- There is some interest in further exploring the **Policy Support Facility** (PSF) to support national processes towards excellence.

- There are examples from non-Widening countries on **bilateral programmes and initiatives** fostering cooperation with WIDERA countries, which could be interesting for mutual learning.

- Widening countries present ongoing **national reform processes** as well as **instruments** to help develop national research organisations' capacities and capabilities towards excellence.

- SH are very supportive of this action, offering their expertise and having several ongoing activities.

Action 17 – Enhance public research institutions' strategic capacity

- **9 MS, 1 AC and 6 SH** so far committed to the action.

- Two MS express interest to participate in a **task force** of experts to define the needs for research management and contribute to its professionalisation.

- Some concrete ideas for activities under the four proposed fields for activities (recognition, upskilling, networking, capacity-building) are presented by MS and SH.

- A variety of **national programmes and activities** at governmental level and on the level of universities are described as ongoing. SH present a variety of activities as well.

Action 19 – Establish an efficient and effective ERA Monitoring Mechanism

- **16 MS, 2 AC and 5 SH** so far committed to this action.

- Countries and SH indicate a general commitment to **co-create the ERA Monitoring Mechanism**.

- Some Countries consider **Mutual Learning Exercises and exchanges of best practices** on monitoring.

- Some Countries have in place or are about to set up **national monitoring tools/systems**.

- Countries mention the intention to set up **national coordination** processes.

Action 20 – Support to the prioritization, coordination and direction of R&I investments and reforms

- **9 MS, 2 AC and 3 SH** so far committed to this action.

- Countries and SH mention:

  ➢ taking part in the process to reflect on the voluntary investment targets (e.g. technical workshops)
  ➢ links to the national plans for recovery and resilience
  ➢ taking part in policy dialogues
  ➢ activities supporting technology/knowledge transfer between academia and businesses
  ➢ developing a national ERA Action Plan.