



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0068

Upcoming European Research Area (ERA) Act

European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2026 on the upcoming European Research Area (ERA) Act (2025/2951(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European (TFEU), and in particular Article 179 thereof,
- having regard to the Commission President's mission letter of 1 December 2024 to the Commissioner responsible for Startups, Research and Innovation,
- having regard to the 2026 Commission work programme (COM(2025)0870),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 28 February 2025 for a Council recommendation on the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2025-2027 (COM(2025)0062),
- having regard to the Commission's European Research Area (ERA) Scoreboard 2024,
- having regard to the report of September 2024 by Mario Draghi entitled 'On the future of European competitiveness',
- having regard to the report of April 2024 by Enrico Letta entitled 'Much more than a market',
- having regard to the report of October 2024 by an independent expert group chaired by Manuel Heitor, entitled 'Align, act, accelerate – Research, technology and innovation to boost European competitiveness',
- having regard to the Commission communication of 22 October 2024 entitled 'Implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) – Strengthening Europe's Research and Innovation: The ERA's Journey and Future Directions' (COM(2024)0490),

- having regard to the Council recommendation of 24 June 2025 on the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2025-2027¹,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 30 September 2020 entitled 'A new ERA for Research and Innovation' (COM(2020)0628),
 - having regard to Council Recommendation (EU) 2021/2122 of 26 November 2021 on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe²,
 - having regard to the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024,
 - having regard to the ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027,
 - having regard to the Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research,
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 December 2023 on young researchers³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2024 with recommendations to the Commission on promotion of the freedom of scientific research in the EU⁴,
 - having regard to the Commission Recommendation of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers⁵,
 - having regard to the questions to the Council and to the Commission on the upcoming European Research Area (ERA) Act (O-000007/2026 - B10-0006/2026 and O-000008/2026 - B10-0007/2026),
 - having regard to Rules 142(5) and 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy,
- A. whereas Article 179 TFEU establishes the objective of strengthening the Union's scientific and technological bases through a European Research Area (ERA) enabling the free circulation of researchers,

¹ OJ C, C/2025/3593, 30.6.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/3593/oj>.

² OJ L 431, 2.12.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2021/2122/oj>.

³ OJ C, C/2024/4183, 2.8.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/4183/oj>.

⁴ OJ C, C/2024/5713, 17.10.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/5713/oj>.

⁵ OJ L 75, 22.3.2005, p. 67, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2005/251/oj>.

scientific knowledge and technology, enhancing competitiveness and supporting all research activities;

- B. whereas the ERA Act represents a key opportunity to elevate European research by addressing structural challenges affecting the EU research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem, including insufficient coordination and cooperation, system fragmentation and uneven performance;
 - C. whereas the ERA Act can help realise the ‘fifth freedom’ by setting common standards, ensuring consistent rule application and contributing to the Single Market Roadmap 2028, and to create quality employment;
 - D. whereas the Union still lacks an integrated ERA that attracts and retains talent, owing to barriers such as inadequate prioritisation of R&I investment, with few Member States meeting the 3 % of GDP target, insufficient R&I policy coordination, continued fragmentation, performance disparities, and excessive administrative burdens for researchers and universities;
 - E. whereas the ERA Policy Agenda serves as a valuable non-binding framework guiding national and EU-level policies in line with the objectives of Article 179 TFEU, promoting voluntary coordination and cooperation between Member States and the Union; whereas these objectives must be complemented by provisions and incentives under the future ERA Act, and tools such as the European Semester, to provide a stronger foundation for a coherent and high-performing ERA;
 - F. whereas freedom of scientific research, including researchers’ independence and institutional autonomy, excellence, openness and social responsibility are core values of the ERA and essential to Europe’s democracy, competitiveness and innovation capacity, making Europe a safe haven for researchers from all over the world;
1. Supports aligning Union and national R&I priorities to ensure complementarity, increase cooperation between universities, research organisations, regions, Member States and industries, create an effective governance framework, make research careers and private investment more attractive, and achieve the Union’s 3 % of GDP research and development (R&D) investment target;
 2. Calls for a two-track approach of voluntary cooperation under the ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027 combined with legislative measures, including the ERA Act and complementary initiatives, to provide ERA with a binding and enforceable framework;
 3. Recommends that the ERA Act be a regulation to achieve the objectives of Article 179 TFEU, ensuring direct applicability across Member States, stimulating private investment in R&D, the free

circulation of researchers, scientific knowledge and technology, and contribute to reducing single market fragmentation;

4. Reaffirms the importance of freedom of scientific research and institutional autonomy; calls for the ERA Act proposal to be accompanied by a separate legislative proposal with a distinct legal basis protecting the fundamental freedom of scientific research, including minimum standards for researchers' rights, ethical conduct, integrity and institutional independence, and supported by effective monitoring mechanisms;
5. Calls for the ERA Act to include the Union target of investing at least 3 % of Union GDP in R&D by 2030, complemented by national targets for total R&D expenditure, contributing to the Union objective; calls on the Member States to improve coordination of R&D investment through national roadmaps and targets to ensure complementarity of public and private funding; acknowledges that research-focused companies and industries are key to driving private investment, achieving the 3 % target, and fostering quality jobs;
6. Calls for provisions to strengthen private participation in the EU R&I ecosystem through closer coordination and public-private partnerships, to address persistent investment gaps and market fragmentation and to complete the capital market union to accelerate knowledge valorisation, reinforce technological sovereignty and support regional innovation ecosystems;
7. Calls for increased support for public research by strengthening funding for European programmes such as Horizon Europe; encourages Member States to increase financial resources for universities and public research organisations;
8. Calls on Member States to undertake reforms to remove barriers to the free circulation of researchers and knowledge, and to enhance cross-border collaboration and innovation, with a view to making Europe an inclusive and attractive global research community;
9. Recommends that the ERA Act use planning, measurable metrics and monitoring, reporting and evaluation tools, and that it strive to ensure a balance between research fields and basic and applied research;
10. Calls for strengthened governance of the ERA, and for existing policy and monitoring instruments to be rationalised;
11. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to enhance coordination between national and EU R&I initiatives in line with overarching ERA priorities, ensuring synergies across national and Union funding instruments and policies to strengthen Europe's global scientific and technological leadership;

12. Calls for stronger and more inclusive European innovation and technology ecosystems to promote cooperation between universities, research institutions, start-ups, SMEs and industry to ensure effective and secure knowledge transfer and better uptake of results by European companies, and to promote up- and re-skilling, and lifelong learning; stresses the need to address the R&I disparities among Member States, particularly those with lower R&I performance, to improve their participation in Union programmes;
13. Stresses that a functioning ERA requires the free circulation of researchers and knowledge, and cross-border collaboration; calls for concrete measures to facilitate and simplify researchers' career paths, especially young and early-career researchers, improve mobility, mutual recognition of qualifications, and facilitated visa procedures; reiterates its support for a European Charter for Researchers; notes that remote and hybrid work create opportunities for researchers to work in other Member States without relocating;
14. Urges the Commission and Member States to advance gender equality and equal opportunities in R&I, especially in under-represented sectors, while decreasing the gender pay gap;
15. Stresses the need to ensure the open and secure circulation of knowledge, improved accessibility of research infrastructure, knowledge valorisation and the ethical, trustworthy use of emerging technologies, including AI, in line with EU values and fundamental rights; underlines the importance of research security, integrity and effective dissemination of publicly funded research, including in libraries, while ensuring protection of intellectual property rights;
16. Recommends that the ERA Act be aligned with existing and future initiatives, such as the Innovation Act, the Pact for R&I, the Framework Programme and the European Education Area, to ensure mutually reinforcing reforms, innovation uptake, talent mobility and funding;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.