



EU-LIFE reaction to the EC communication on the new European Research Area (ERA)

On 30th September 2020 the European Commission released its communication “[A new ERA for research & Innovation](#)”. In line with previous contributions to the ERA strategy, including our latest [recommendations for ERA](#), **EU-LIFE welcomes the European Commission communication and expresses its strong support to the strategic objectives and actions for a new and strengthened European Research Area** and states below its first reaction.

Strong support to:

- **Overall vision and the four strategic objectives** of the new ERA
- Priority **to investments and reforms** at Member States level, public and private.
- Dedicated focus on **regions and Member States (still) lagging behind**, without compromising the quality of research and innovation.
- **Research and researchers at the centre** to create a truly European Research Area with a strong focus on **skills agenda, career development, mobility** and conditions **to nurture talent in R&I and beyond**.
- Focus on **ecosystems approach** to knowledge transfer.
- Prioritization of **gender equality, Open Science** and **FAIR data**.

Concerns:

- ERA Governance: **Engagement of all relevant stakeholders** and doers of the ERA, in particular, public and private **independent research institutes that contribute to excellent research & innovation** in Europe.
- ERA Governance: **Timely and frequent involvement of relevant stakeholders**, including international stakeholder organisations in all steps of the ERA from strategy to implementation.
- Stronger recognition is needed of **the institutional level as a driver of the ERA** since research-performing organisations are the ultimate enablers and drivers for the ERA’s aims.
- A too narrow vision of **research infrastructures**, in particular overlooking the key role of smaller research facilities at individual research institutes and universities across Europe.

EU-LIFE remains available to contribute to further development and implementation of the new ERA.

EU-LIFE and the ERA strategy

Since its creation in 2013, EU-LIFE is a strong supporter of the European Research Area and an active stakeholder supporting its policy and implementation. EU-LIFE has participated in the ERA stakeholders’ platform and its “doers” groups since 2015, and



had regular dialogue with the European Commission and the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC).

EU-LIFE is an organisation focused on research institutes and its core values are shared with the values of the ERA. We promote and develop initiatives with respect to ERA, engaging our community of practice as real “ERA-at-work”. We lead projects that make ERA a reality, building a common commitment towards gender equality and diversity in science, fair and transparent research evaluation, promotion of research careers at all levels, talent retention and mobility, professional technology transfer, high ethics standards, and open science. We do this by openly sharing information, developing guidelines and protocols, collaborative projects, exchange of students and staff among the 15 EU-LIFE members and associated partners in 15 European countries and by reaching out to national and European stakeholders.

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About EU-LIFE

EU-LIFE is an alliance of research centres whose mission is to support and strengthen European research excellence (www.eu-life.eu). EU-LIFE members are leading research institutes in their countries and internationally renowned for producing excellent research, widely transferring knowledge and nurturing talent. The basis for the foundation of EU-LIFE was the perception that there was a gap in the science policy landscape regarding the representation of independent research centres. Since its foundation in 2013, EU-LIFE has become a stakeholder in European policy participating regularly in the EC policy dialogue.

EU-LIFE Partners

Center for Genomic Regulation (**CRG, Spain**) | Central European Institute of Technology (**CEITEC, Czech Republic**) | European Institute of Oncology (**IEO, Italy**) | Flanders Institute For Biotechnology (**VIB, Belgium**) | Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research (**FMI, Switzerland**) | Institut Curie (**IC, France**) | Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland (**FIMM, Finland**) | Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência (**IGC, Portugal**) | International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology in Warsaw (**IIMCB, Poland**) | Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association (**MDC, Germany**) | Research Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (**CeMM, Austria**) | The Babraham Institute (**Babraham, United Kingdom**) | The Netherlands Cancer Institute (**NKI, The Netherlands**) | The University of Copenhagen Biotech Research & Innovation Centre (**BRIC, Denmark**) | Institute of Molecular Biology & Biotechnology (**IMBB FORTH, Greece, Associate Partner**)