

European initiative for advancing research assessment

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Need for reform of research assessment

- To reflect evolving research processes
 - ✓ Digital transition; Iterative and recursive; Collaborative and open
- To reflect increasing demands on research
 - ✓ Societal, environmental, economic challenges; Diversity of outputs
- To move away from inappropriate uses of journal- and publication-based metrics
 - ✓ Rewards quantity and publication venue rather than quality; does not reward sharing, collaboration and outputs other than publications
- To further support the quality of research and the attractiveness of research environments

✓ Requires a system and cultural change, involving institutions, funders and researchers



Community context

- Not a new initiative, e.g.:
 - San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)
 - The Leiden Manifesto for research metrics
 - Hong Kong Principles for research assessment
 - Magna Charta Universitatum (2020 revision)
 - ≻…
- With challenges ahead:
 - Limited and fragmented progress
 - Limited autonomy and legal/administrative frameworks.
 - Cultural and systemic change!

...but a call for collective action!





Political context

- Commission Communication on ERA (Sep 2020) proposed to improve the research assessment system
- **Council Conclusions on ERA** (Dec 2020) and on research careers (May 2021) invited the Commission to work with stakeholders to effect change
- Council Conclusions on the Future Governance of the ERA (Nov 2021) and the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-24 include priority action on reforming research assessment – interactions with ERAC and the ERA Forum
- EU Presidency conference and Paris Call on Research Assessment (Feb 2022)
- Council Conclusions on Research Assessment and Implementation of Open Science (June 2022)



Stakeholder consultations



https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/707440

- Scoping report in November 2021
- Summary of consultations with stakeholders throughout 2021
- Objectives, principles and actions that could be agreed between organisations responsible for the assessment of research, researchers, research units and research institutions
- Way forward for implementation



A stakeholder-owned initiative



Coalition of research funding organisations and research performing organisations (and their associations), national/regional assessment authorities and agencies, learned societies, and other organisations, all willing to take the lead in reforming research assessment



Vision

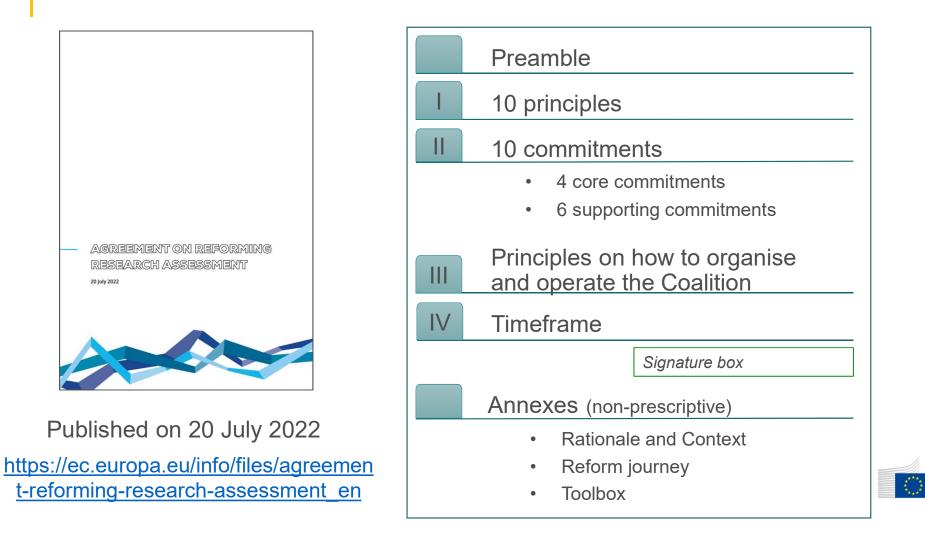
Assessment of research, researchers, and research organisations supports the **quality** and **impact** of research,

by **recognising the diverse outputs, practices and activities** that maximise the quality of research and resulting impacts;

this requires basing assessments primarily on **qualitative judgement**, supported by **responsible use of quantitative indicators**.



Structure of the Agreement



European

Commission

10 commitments

Core commitments:

- 1. Recognise the **diversity of contributions to, and careers in research** according to the needs and the nature of the research
- 2. Base research assessment **primarily on qualitative evaluation** for which peer-review is central, **supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators**
- **3. Abandon the inappropriate uses** in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular the inappropriate uses of journal impact factor (JIF) and h-index
- 4. Avoid the use of international rankings of research organisations in research assessment

Support commitments:

- Three commitments to **pilot** and enable the move towards **new criteria**, **tools and processes** for research assessment
- Three commitments to facilitate **mutual learning**, **communicate progress** and ensure that new approaches are **evidence-informed**



Rolling out the initiative

- Concrete piloting of changes to research assessment practices in research performing organisations, in research funding organisations, in evaluation agencies would then be rolled out over the coming years
- Constantly seeking to improve practices based on sharing of experience and evidence of what changes are leading to higher quality and impact of research
- In the process:
 - Important to continue to respect of the autonomy, profile, strategic goals and context of research organisations, and to allow for differences in implementation
 - ✓ Seeking to ensure that **national framework conditions** allow and support changes
 - ✓ Openness to **non-European organisations**



Bottom-up and Top-down



Stakeholder-driven coalitionMembers committed to pilot

- and implement changes in their research assessment criteria and processes
- Active mutual learning and sharing of experiences

National authorities

- Support to organisations willing to implement changes (importance of national framework conditions)
- Help preventing contradictions across different assessment systems and types (metrics trickle down)



Timeline

20 July 2022: Final Agreement published

28 September 2022: Launching the signature process and Coalition website (European R&I days)

13 October 2022 (tentative): 4th Stakeholder Assembly continuing discussions on governance and operations of the Coalition

1 December 2022 (tentative): Constitutive Assembly for the Coalition



European R&I days Sep 28



https://europa.eu/!Fr43pX

Plenary session : European initiative for reforming research assessment (17:45 – 18:30h)

- Mariya Gabriel (Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth)
- Sylvie Retailleau (Minister of Higher Education and Research, France)
- Marc Schiltz (President, Science Europe)
- Paul Boyle (Vice-President, European University Association (EUA)

Opening of Agreement for signature + CoARA website + early signatories

