

NEW ERA ACTIONS FOR THE ERA POLICY AGENDA 2025-2027
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<p>Action title: (Please use as a maximum two lines.)</p>	<p>Supporting the uptake of science into policymaking through the establishment of a European Science for Policy (S4P) ecosystem</p>
<p>Description of the action (Please explain the proposed action in a <u>simple, clear and communicable</u> narrative).</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>In October 2022, the Commission published the Staff Working Document (SWD) ‘Supporting and connecting policymaking in the Member States with scientific research’ (SWD (2022) 346 final of October 2022), introducing a pan-European debate on how to create and support a robust science for policy (S4P) ecosystem in Europe that reinforces and connects diverse national and sectoral ecosystems to deal with the complex issues today’s societies, and policymakers face and that strengthens democratic processes and deliberations in Europe.</p> <p>This SWD triggered a ministerial policy debate on “Science as an instrument to facilitate policy making in the Member States” in the COMPET Council meeting of 2 December 2022. The Ministers reflected on how to improve the use of scientific advice to develop public policies and expressed interest in establishing, developing, and networking S4P actors. They proposed for the Commission to play a key role in supporting further policy development of S4P across Europe.</p> <p>In June 2023 the ERAC held the Policy Debate ‘Towards a European Science for Policy ecosystem’ and adopted in September 2023 Summary Conclusions supporting the development of the European S4P ecosystem through an ERA Policy Action. The ERAC members recognised the need to setup a network of S4P coordinators to promote a regular S4P Policy Dialogue at European level, develop Guidelines and a S4P Code of Practice and called for sharing and exploiting existing knowledge, for example through Mutual Learning Exercises. ERAC underlined that the European S4P ecosystem should introduce clear division of roles and responsibilities among the S4P actors and be capable of building public trust, while respecting the diversity of the individual S4P ecosystems of the Member States. Research excellence and basic research funding are preconditions for the development of such an ecosystem and, thus, diversity of different types of actions is considered as a key factor.</p> <p>In this context, the ES Council Presidency has tabled Council Conclusions on ‘strengthening the role and impact of R&I in the policy making process in the Union’, including a chapter on ‘Science in the public policy process to improve the lives of citizens and strengthen democracy’, expected to be adopted in the COMPET Council meeting on 8 December 2023.</p> <p>Objectives</p>

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	<p>This action aims at supporting the uptake of scientific knowledge by policymakers and improving the quality of policies across Europe by establishing a European S4P ecosystem. The European S4P ecosystem will reinforce and (inter)connect the diverse national and sectoral ecosystems and - with due respect to the diversity of national S4P ecosystems - it will bolster our capacity to take on the complex challenges of our time in a legitimate, comprehensive, coordinated and efficient manner across Europe. In this context, the ecosystem is understood as an agile complex of organisational structures and entities, processes, capacities, networks and communication tools that interact to support the mobilisation, acquisition, transmission, synthesis, translation, presentation for use, dissemination and application of scientific knowledge in multi-level policymaking processes. The ecosystem will promote two-way communication channels to enrich the dialogue between the scientific communities and public policymakers in various policy domains.</p> <p>Ethics will become a design feature of scientific advice across all disciplines and contexts. The political and public deliberations around complex policies will be enriched, making explicit the scientific evidence informing policy decisions. This is a critical element in an era of mis- and disinformation. Furthermore, a functioning and transparent S4P ecosystem will support the independence, quality and objectivity of scientific advice.</p> <p>A key objective will be to understand the drivers behind a successful S4P ecosystem including the identification and provision of rewards and incentives to all actors across science and policymaking at multiple governance levels ensuring coordination and efficiency. This will help develop enabling organisational cultures and tackle systemic constraints and barriers.</p> <p>In the frame of the European S4P ecosystem, policymakers across Europe will be in the position to request science advice more frequently and more clearly, and they will have timely access not only to the best available science in a useful format, but also to actionable and fit for purpose scientific advice and science-informed policy options.</p> <p>Expected outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set up of a network of S4P coordinators in the R&I policy sector across Europe to hold a regular Policy Dialogue on S4P, to steer the co-creation of a European S4P ecosystem with a clear governance structure, roles, and responsibilities for the different stakeholders, enabling dynamic coordination and collaboration across different levels of governance.• Exchange and promotion of best practices, exchange of scientific knowledge and scientific advice to policymaking practices through a mutual learning exercise aiming to understand and disseminate existing models of S4P across
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	<p>Europe, identify challenges and possible solutions to improve the uptake of science in policymaking and to support the development of the European S4P ecosystem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a S4P Code of Practice and operational Guidance for the S4P actors and in particular, researchers, science advisors and policymakers and for the public. This framework will incorporate incentives structures, criteria for evidence quality, and best practices also ensuring that ethics will become a design feature of scientific advice across all disciplines and contexts. • Synergies with other ERA Actions <p>This action shall connect to other relevant ERA actions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ERA Action 3 on research assessment: <p>Scientific advice should be further promoted as a way of achieving societal impact, making sure that researchers and science advisors are involved duly in the policymaking processes and recognised and rewarded for taking part in S4P activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ERA Action 4 on research careers: <p>Policy engagement should be promoted as an important activity for researchers, as well as a possible complementary career path, notably by institutionalising knowledge brokerage in public administrations and scientific organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ERA Action 7 on knowledge valorisation: <p>There is a diversity of knowledge valorisation channels and tools. This includes using knowledge to inform policies, address persistent and new policy challenges and promote knowledge-based policy making. This action will complement recent and ongoing knowledge valorisation actions such as for the uptake of R&I results through standardisation activities, efficient intellectual asset management, citizen engagement and industry-academia co-creation.</p>
<p>Actors</p> <p><i>(Please explain who would take part in the action and who would benefit from it).</i></p>	<p>The action should be implemented by the Commission, the Member States, associated countries and actors covering all the stakeholders of the European S4P ecosystem such as Universities and Academies, learned societies, research performing and research funding organisations, research centres, research infrastructures, science advisors, scientific advice mechanisms, the Scientific Advice Mechanism of the European Commission (SAM), science advice structures, the EU agencies network of scientific advice (EU-ANSA), the European Science Advisors Forum (ESAF), the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE), the National Ethics Committees Forum (NEC</p>

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	Forum), science for policy practitioners, public administrations, public development agencies, policymakers, science communicators, scientific journalists, citizens, etc.
Expected impact <i>(Please describe the expected impact of the action (including outside the scientific community), paying attention to the fact that it needs to focus on concrete results and reachable deliverables).</i>	<p>The establishment of the European S4P ecosystem is expected to lead to coherent S4P approaches and increased sharing of existing knowledge and best practices across Europe, and thus support the design of better-quality policies, our competitiveness, and our Open Strategic Autonomy, as well as a closer mutual learning between EU Member States and associated countries.</p> <p>In this ecosystem, researchers, advisors, knowledge brokers and policymakers will work together to generate relevant scientific knowledge, to produce actionable and fit-for-purpose policy options based on the best available science and to better frame and tailor requests for scientific advice and/or policy options to inform their policies with the best available science, thus bridging the gap between scientists and policymakers, as well as contributing to more trust and better acceptance by societal and political actors and increased success rates for implementation.</p> <p>A European S4P ecosystem will also support further development and interconnection of the S4P ecosystems across Europe, for instance through knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices, competence building of researchers, offering complementary / alternative career paths and raising awareness about them, and rewarding researchers and science advisors for their engagement with policymaking.</p> <p>A European S4P ecosystem that will be based on commonly accepted research ethics norms and high levels of integrity will also further improve the quality, robustness and societal added value of the scientific evidence used and lead to a better social and policy endorsement of the scientific advice provided, also strengthening democracy. Scientific advice will be promoted as a living example of the added value of ethics and research integrity in policy and societal terms and as a democratic means for ensuring the trustworthy and meaningfully inclusive character of the S4P ecosystem.</p> <p>The European S4P ecosystem is also expected to contribute to increasing trust on multiple levels, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Trust among the S4P actors:</i> In a functional ecosystem, when scientists, science advisors, and policymakers engage in constructive collaboration right from the start of the policymaking process and share a common cause, the dynamics are favourable. This collaborative approach, balanced with guarantees of integrity and individual independence, enhances the likelihood that the relationships between the S4P actors will be grounded in trust. This dual approach of aligning collective objectives and ensuring independence is key to building a robust and trusting environment within the ecosystem.

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	<p><i>Trust of citizens in both science and governance:</i> on the long term-impact of a well-functioning S4P ecosystem that includes the active engagement of citizens, politicians and other societal actors, the broad diversity of contributions to policymaking that researchers can make will be recognised and will be expected to maximise the quality of research and the resulting impacts, leading to high quality policies that benefit the society and the well-being of the citizens. Science advisors need also to recognise the limits of scientific knowledge and the variety of interests at stake that inform and influence policymaking. Integration of scientific insights in the policy design, deliberation and future implementation can reinforce the democratic process - as it will be less likely to lead to arbitrary decision-making by policymakers and politicians - and ultimately improve people's lives.</p>
<p>Why do we need this action?</p> <p><i>(Please indicate the need for this action in view of implementing the <u>Pact for R&I and achieving the ERA objectives</u> and explain why its <u>objective cannot be reached through existing programmes/activities</u>. What is the action's <u>added value</u> at national and European level as well as for stakeholders? How does it <u>make a change</u> and how is <u>co-creation</u> ensured?)</i></p>	<p>Scientific knowledge and evidence play an important role in supporting policymakers in comprehending policy challenges, evaluating various policy alternatives, designing effective interventions, and taking informed decisions. The EU and the Member States can respond more adequately to the complex problems that our societies are bound to face when policy actions are informed by scientific knowledge in a structured manner, especially in today's poly-crisis landscape, where policy problems are characterised by a mixture of complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity.</p> <p>ERA will offer an efficient forum to connect to other relevant ERA actions, on research assessment (ERA Action 3), research careers (ERA Action 4), knowledge valorisation (ERA Action 7) and citizen engagement (Action 14). Also, activities of the proposed ERA Action can be connected with initiatives in the area of public administration reform and better regulation in support of the use of evidence in policymaking.</p> <p>Implementing Pact for R&I and achieving ERA objectives</p> <p>Value creation and societal and economic impact: the establishment of the European S4P ecosystem will foster Europe's leadership in knowledge creation by making use of knowledge in society and supporting the wellbeing of our citizens. Evidence informed policymaking has the potential to shape better policies and within the European S4P ecosystem the required strong multidisciplinary interconnection between actors and cross-sectorial collaboration will be achieved, while close interactions with public authorities and public administrations will be ensured.</p> <p>Ethics and integrity of R&I: Integrating interdisciplinary research ethics and integrity norms and practices into the foundations and the actual operation of the S4P ecosystem enhances the impact and policy uptake of scientific advice. This approach fosters ethically sound decision-making in both science and governance and strengthens citizens' trust in the science-for-policy ecosystem,</p>

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	<p>as they understand that policies of this kind are essentially based on the highest ethics standards and take a wide range of values and societal concerns into account.</p> <p>Free circulation: In the context of the European S4P ecosystem, circulation of researchers across Europe and exchanges between academia and public administrations will be promoted through intersectoral mobility schemes covering exchange programmes, fellowships etc. Scientific knowledge, data and tools shared through open science practices will remain a core element for collaboration, while researchers trained and skilled in the S4P interface will better disseminate and exploit their work using established S4P channels.</p> <p>Coordination, coherence and commitment: The European S4P ecosystem will bring together and foster the capacities of the existing national S4P ecosystems by promoting coordinated actions in response not only to emergencies, but also to achieve medium- and long-term common policy objectives across Europe. It will facilitate transnational cooperation, promote flexible collaborations and provide to the Member States the space they need to join forces to speed up the achievement of political priorities, such as the green and digital transitions.</p> <p>Societal responsibility: a well-functioning European S4P ecosystem that recognises the broad diversity of contributions to policymaking that researchers can make and maximises the quality of research and the resulting impacts and involves citizens, has the potential to lead to high quality policies that benefit society and the well-being of the citizens. Through the implementation of policies that improve people's lives and by introducing balanced awareness raising activities, citizens' trust in science will be strengthened as scientific knowledge will be understood as a key factor that results in better decision-making. In parallel, citizens' trust in governance will be fostered by understanding that proposed policies are not shaped by unfounded arbitrary decisions but have transparent objectives and are informed by science.</p>
<p>Additional information (For example, timing and milestones, which already could be envisaged, can be indicated.)</p>	<p>- European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Sarvaranta, L., Bravo-Biosca, A., De Marchi, B. et al., <i>Futures of science for policy in Europe – Scenarios and policy implications</i>, Publications Office of the European Union, 2023, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/121857</p> <p>- European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Webb, P., Sonnino, R., Fraser, E. et al., <i>Everyone at the table – Transforming food systems by connecting science, policy and society</i>, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/440690</p>

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