



A European initiative to reform research assessment: state of play and next steps

Kostas Glinos

European Commission, Head of Unit Open Science

CNRS, 15 November 2021, Paris

Science in digital transition

- Re-inventing the scientific process?
- Is the system fit-for-purpose?

Science in society: a new reality?



Source: <https://thenorwichradical.com/2017/01/12/post-truth-politics-and-the-war-on-intellect/>

Some of the challenges

- Focus on 'stars' rather than collaboration
- Skewed perceptions of quality; reproducibility
- Publishing in a market where client is not the king
- Obsession with rankings
- Risk-averse research
- Hyper-publishing and hyper-authorship
- Fight for funding
- Gaming the system

Is open science the answer?

Improve the practice of R&I

- Openly accessible scholarly publications
- Early sharing of all research outputs
- Research data management and all data FAIR
- Reproducible results
- Societal engagement and responsibility

Develop proper enablers

- **Rewards & incentives** to adopt open science practices, with appropriate metrics
- Appropriate skills and education, including for research integrity
- Open research infrastructures including the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC)
- Legal and regulatory environment for data and copyright

Involving all the actors

Engaging internationally

Changing research culture

Has COVID-19 accelerated a long-term shift?

- Broad consensus that **Open Science accelerates scientific discovery** and that FAIR and open data can save lives
- **Some positive trends in Open Science practices' uptake:** e.g. early and fast share of results through increased use of preprints; publishers temporarily opening up some of their publications
- But **more action** will be necessary to make Open Science the “new normal”
 - Reforming the **research assessment system** to provide incentives and rewards
 - **Data infrastructures** inadequate for responding to a pandemic
 - **Publishing models** need to become more transparent and agile

You get what you reward

- Objective of the Commission: **facilitate and speed up reforms to research assessment**
- Towards a research assessment system that:
 - Promotes qualitative judgement with peer-review, supported by a more responsible use of quantitative indicators;
 - Considers the value and impact of a diversity of research outputs;
 - Incentivizes open collaboration and early knowledge and data sharing;
 - Rewards the diversity of tasks of researchers, and supports team science.
- Not a new objective but a new initiative
- Coherence between research and academic assessments necessary

Getting the consultation right

- The Commission is consulting research funders, research performers, policy makers, and other stakeholders, in order to best frame a European initiative
 - Meeting with 130 representatives (17-18 March 2021)
 - Close to 30 bilateral meetings with stakeholders (May-November)
 - Session organised in the R&I Days (24 June)
 - Stakeholders' Workshop of the ERA Conference (27 October)
 - Participation in several workshops and meetings organised by stakeholders
- Consultation of EU Member States and Associated Countries
 - Meeting in March with National Points of Reference on Scientific Information
 - Input from the Triangle Task Force of ERAC
 - ERAC plenary meeting of 30 September
 - ERA Forum meeting of 8 October

Getting the European initiative right

- An **alliance** of funders, research performing organisations (including universities) and national evaluation agencies, willing to take the lead in reforming the current research assessment system
 - Agreement on **principles** and **actions** between funders and performers;
 - Building on DORA and other declarations;
 - **Committing signatories to act** according to a roadmap for delivery;
 - **Joint ownership** of the initiative by the participating organisations;
 - **Monitoring** of progress.

Next steps

- Finalise the **consultations**, publish a **report**, and organise a **meeting with stakeholders** (8 December 2021).
- Translate the agreed rationale, principles and actions, into a **draft Memorandum of Understanding**, and introduce a timetable for reforms.
- **Political announcement** of the initiative at an event of the French Presidency on 4 & 5 February 2022.
- **Roll out** the initiative during 2022.

Thank you



© European Union 2021

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.

