



# Advancing with the reform of research assessment systems

*UEFISCDI Conference 2024 - Rethinking Research Assessment  
Bucharest, 14 November 2024*

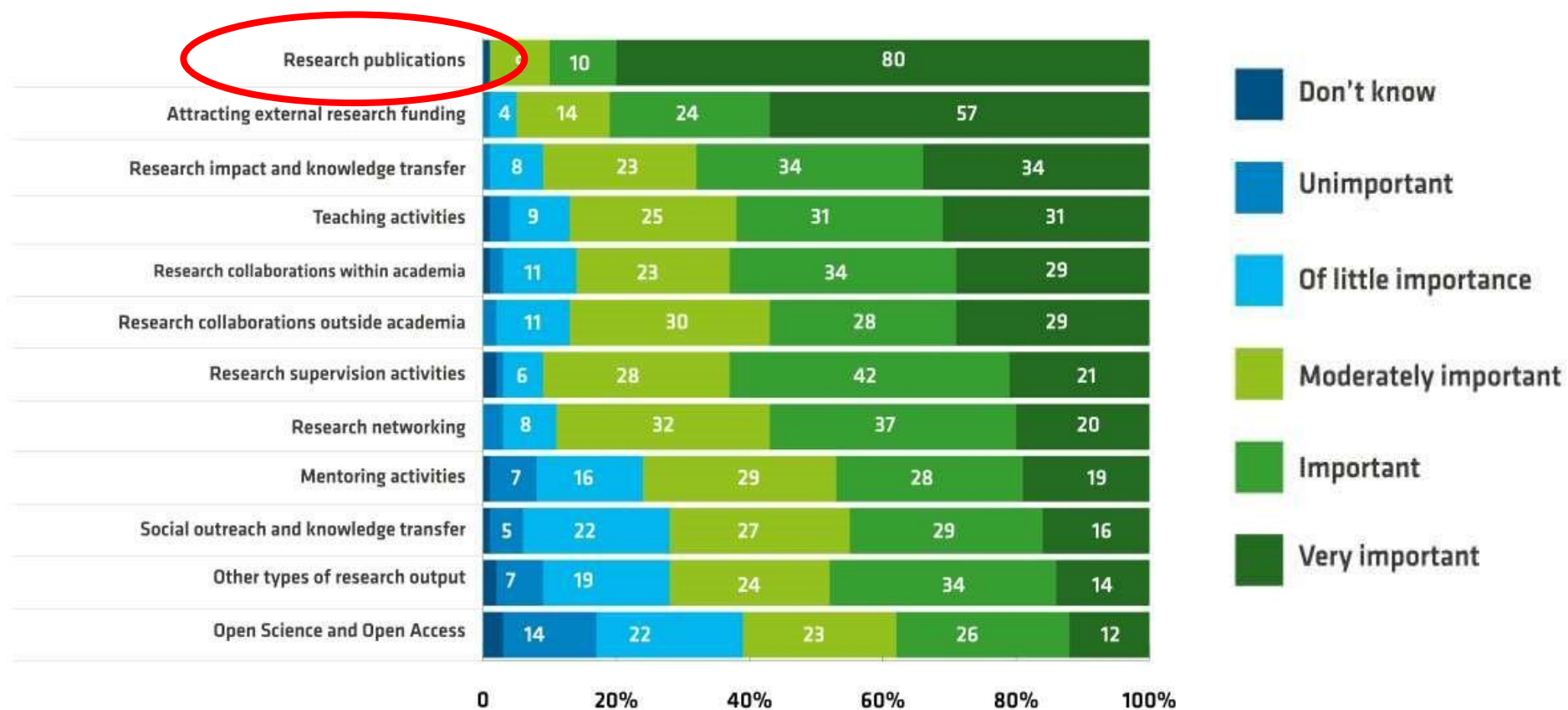
*Jean-Emmanuel Faure, Team leader for Research Assessment  
European Commission, DG Research & Innovation*

# 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

# Current rewards system

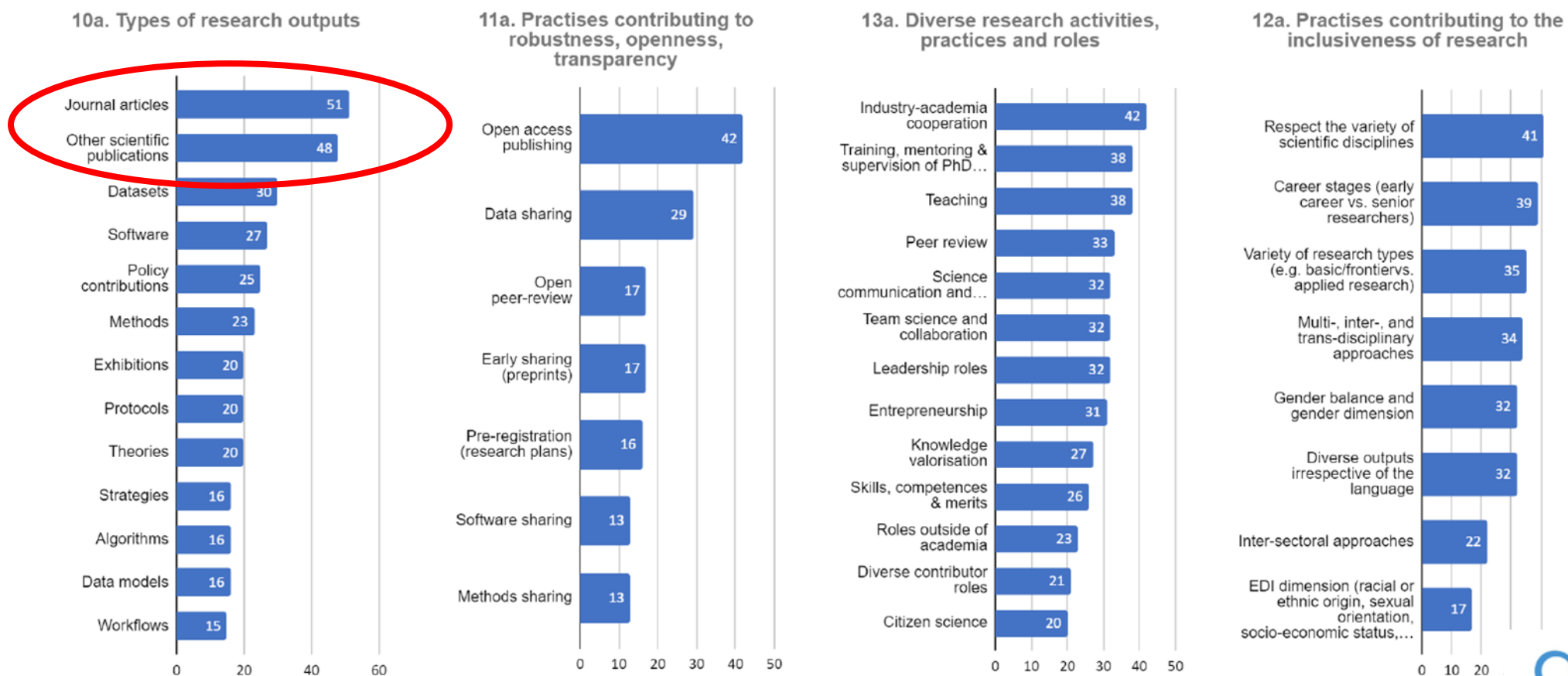
“Which types of academic work matter most for research careers?”



Source: [EUA Open Science survey of Universities, 2019](#)

# Recognising diversity in research remains a challenge

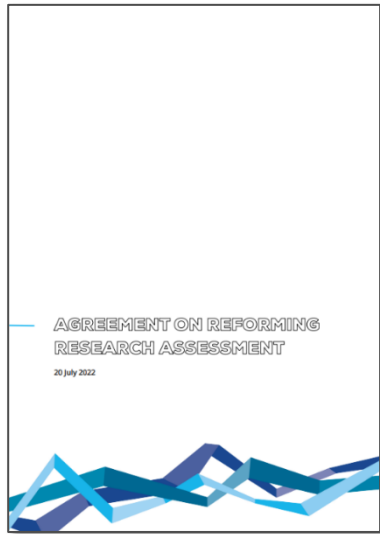
What outputs and practices “are taken into account in research assessment at your institution at the moment?” (respondents: 54 organisations from 19 European countries)



Source: [GraspOS Landscape survey, 2023](#)

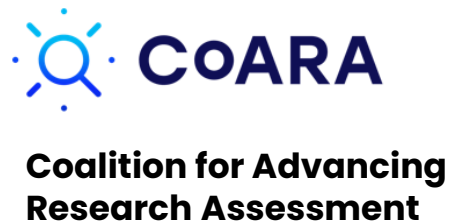
# Initiative for reforming research assessment

Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment  
July 2022



796 signatories  
(11 November 2024)

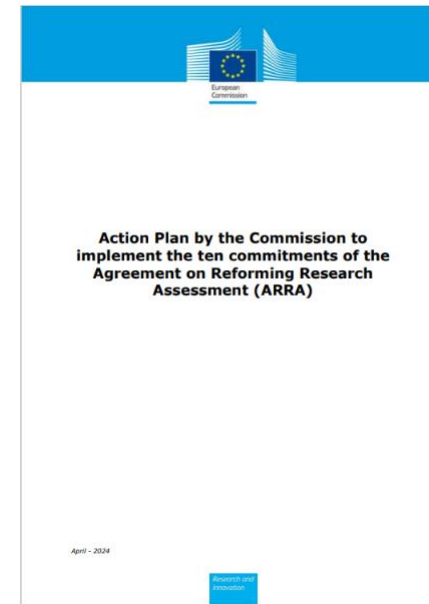
Coalition Constitutive Assembly  
December 2022



697 members of CoARA  
(11 November 2024)

Ongoing

- **Action Plans** by the signatories of the Agreement
- **Implementing commitments** by the signatories
- **Work of 13 CoARA Working Groups**
- **Work of 16 National Chapters**



122 Action Plans  
(11 November 2024)

# Common vision

Assessment of research, researchers, and research organisations, **recognises 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**.

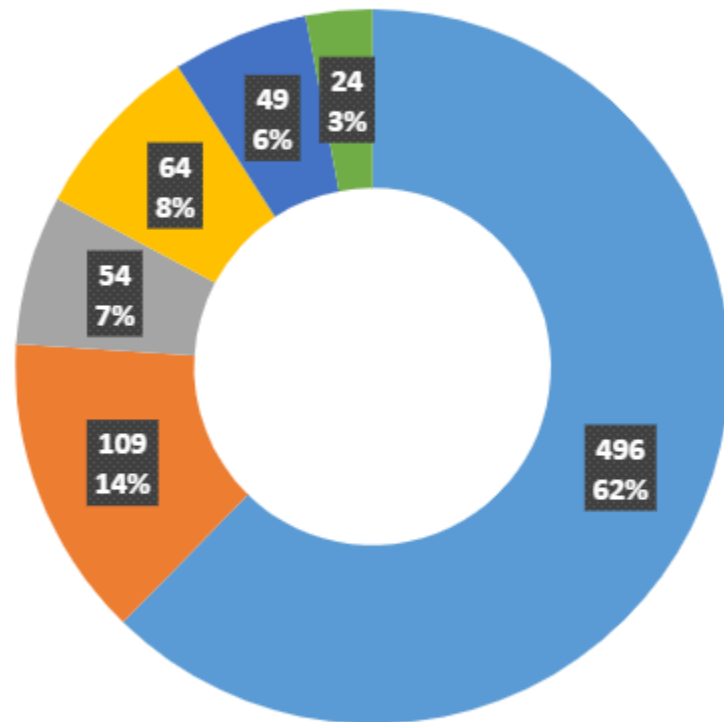
## 4 core commitments:

1. **Recognise the diversity** of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with 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 inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics**, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index
4. **Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations** in research assessment

# An Agreement and Coalition

- **Commitments** for changes
  - ✓ Previous recommendations and declarations: not successful enough in triggering changes
  - ✓ Agreement including principles, commitments and a timeframe
- Space for **mutual learning and collaboration**
  - ✓ Supports and facilitates the implementation of the Commitments by the members
- Driven by **stakeholders**
  - ✓ Respects the autonomy, profile and strategic goals of research organisations and allows for differences in implementation
- **Critical mass** of stakeholders
  - ✓ Avoids disadvantage of first mover
  - ✓ Various types of research organisations involved; coherence across the various assessment systems

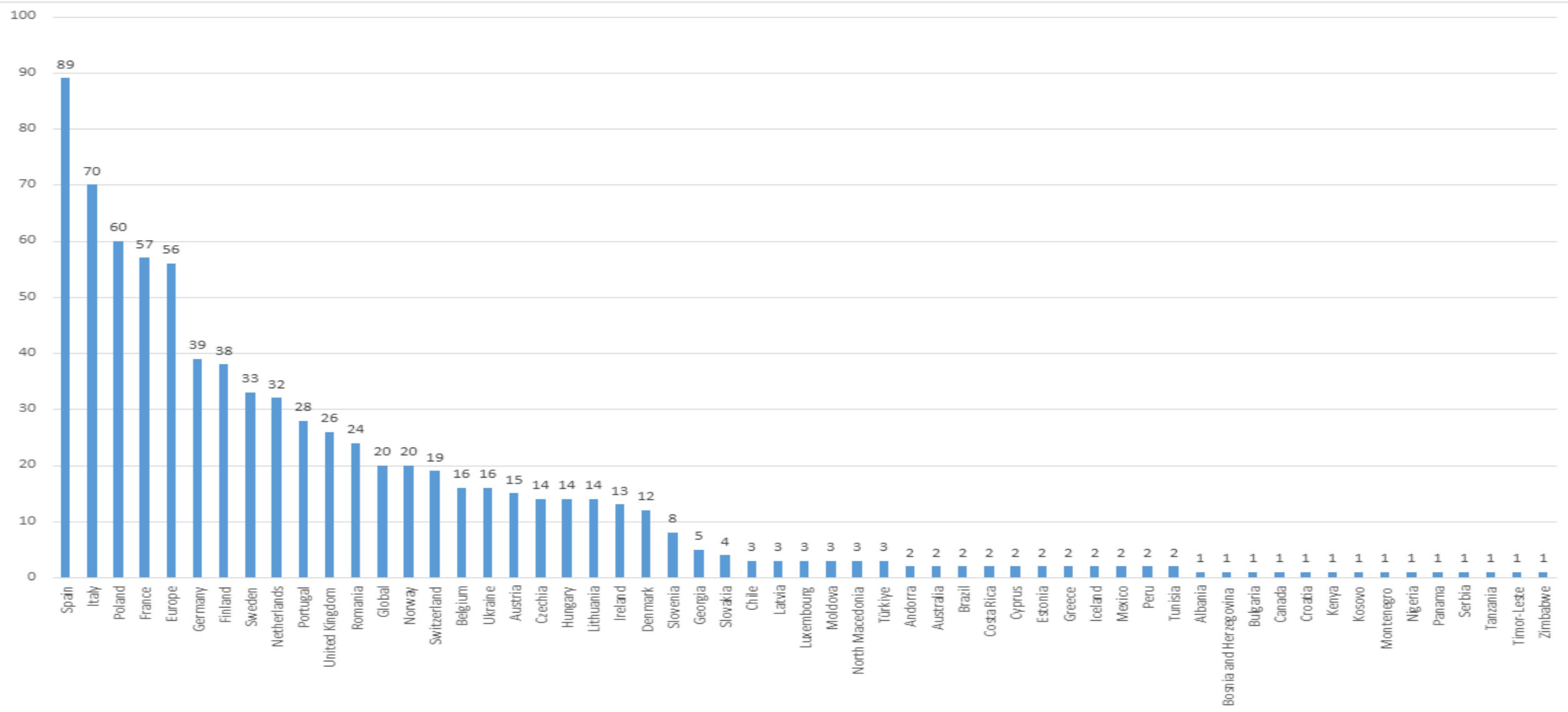
# Agreement signatories (as on 11 November 2024)



- Universities and their associations
- Research centres, research infrastructures, and their associations
- Public or private research funding organisations and their associations
- Academies, learned societies, and their associations, and associations of researchers
- Other relevant non-for-profit organisations involved with research assessment, and their associations
- National/regional authorities or agencies that implement some form of research assessment and their associations



# Agreement signatories (as on 11 November 2024)



# Role of the European Commission

- ERA Action - Facilitating the setting up of favorable national/regional framework conditions

ERA  
Forum

- Signed the Agreement end of 2022, member of CoARA (as research funder)
- Evolution of assessment practices for EU funding of R&I
- Synergies with other EU policy initiatives (e.g. ORE, EOSC, Open Science, European Universities Alliances, Researchers)

CoARA

- Financial support to reforms and CoARA activities from Horizon Europe
- Co-chair CoARA Working Group on “*Improving practices in the assessment of research proposals*”
- Member of other CoARA Working Groups
- Observer in CoARA Steering Board

- Foster global alignment and cooperation with other regions worldwide

# Some changes to assessment already implemented for the main Work Programme part of Horizon Europe

- **Award criteria:**
  - ✓ open science practices, and gender dimension in R&I content, under “excellence”;
  - ✓ diversity of research results from previous work and expertise to practice open science, under "quality and efficiency of the implementation"
- **Application and reporting forms:**
  - ✓ describe up to 5 relevant achievements in applications;
  - ✓ deliver Gender Equality Plans;
  - ✓ deliver Data Management Plans;
  - ✓ describe open science practices;
  - ✓ report on broad spectrum of research results
- **Peer-review process:**
  - ✓ Not asking applicants information relating to JIF, journal prestige, H-Index, etc.
  - ✓ Instruct peer-reviewers to disregard the JIF of publications listed by applicants as major achievements
- Set up **Open Research Europe** where each article has a dedicated page of article-level metrics

# CoARA Working Group on the assessment of research proposals

- **Improve practices in the assessment of research proposals**, ultimately supporting higher quality and more impactful projects
  - ✓ In line with the principles and commitments of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment
  - ✓ While respecting the autonomy of each member
- **Lines of work**
  - ✓ **Criteria** and **processes** for the selection of research projects and **innovative procedures** (WP1)
  - ✓ Selection of and guidance to **reviewers** on responsible research assessment practices (WP2)
  - ✓ **Information requested** from applicants (WP3)
- **Co-chaired** by the European Commission, the German Research Foundation (DFG) and Knowledge Foundation Sweden (KKS)

# Membership

(11 November 2024)

*Academies, learned societies,  
associations of researchers*

**eurodoc**

The European Council of Doctoral  
Candidates and Junior Researchers



**ÆRG**  
Association of ERC Grantees



**GLOBAL  
YOUNG  
ACADEMY**



**IFSAM**  
International Federation of Scholarly Associations of Management

*Research centres*

**HUN-REN**

Hungarian Research Network

*National  
agencies*



*Others*

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École d'ingénieurs du numérique



**Berlin University  
Alliance**



UNIVERSIDADE  
LUSÓFONA

*Public or private funders  
and their associations*



**Swiss National  
Science Foundation**



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EMERGENTES  
Inserm

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agence nationale  
de la recherche



**ARRS**  
SLOVENIAN RESEARCH AGENCY



**INSTITUT  
NATIONAL  
DU CANCER**



**FNP** Foundation for  
Polish Science



Executive Agency for Higher  
Education, Research, Development  
and Innovation Funding

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FOUNDATION**



**ACADEMY OF FINLAND**

**FWF**



**Estonian  
Research Council**

**FORTE:**

Swedish Research Council for  
Health, Working Life and Welfare

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# Thank you



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