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## SYNERGY BETWEEN SCIENCE POLICIES OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: ALLEA EXPERIENCE

**Abstract:** ALLEA assembles the academies in Europe that bring together the best researchers across all disciplines in all nations. The membership of ALLEA is diverse: from learned societies to research-performing organisations; from grant-givers to think-tanks; from leading G 8 nations to emerging economies. This reflects also the diversity of Europe. In short, ALLEA activities address the framework conditions that enable European research to perform at its best; exchange experiences and develop best practice; change regulatory and educational and publication cultures; address issues of (science) policy advice at European and trans-regional level; foster excellence in science and scholarship and high ethical standards in the conduct of science; support efforts ensuring the freedom of science and enhancing access to good science education; interact with policy makers, the media, and others for the benefit of science at large. ALLEA offers a platform to member academies to discuss their multilateral science and science policy engagements in Europe and beyond and to formulate joint statements.

Currently, ALLEA functions on the basis of its two Standing Committees (on IPR and on Science & Ethics) and two Working Groups (on Science Education and on Evaluation), but more will be launched soon. ALLEA has participated in the discussions about restructuring the ESF/EuroHORCs by stressing the interests of researchers in addition to the interests of research funders. ALLEA is establishing a new Task Force on monitoring science policy in Europe in order to activate Academies to contribute critically and constructively to the process of building the ERHEA: topics to be treated will include such questions as the restructuring of the research landscape in Europe, the meeting of „grand challenges”, the launching of the next FPs, the funding format of the European Research Council, the optimizing of partnerships between science organisations in Europe and worldwide, the analysis of EC and ERAB strategy documents, and of the role of Academies, the various dimensions of the project „innovation union” etc. The role of young scientists and scholars in the shaping of future science policy must be enhanced – here the concept of Young Academies, supported by ALLEA, is vital. Many activities of National Academies have a wider area of influence than just one country – witness the clustering of neighbouring academies to focus on projects in one or another geographical area, on infrastructures, on research management, on science publishing, etc. The potential of academies as generators of „knowledge regions”

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must also be harnessed within the wider context of the ERHEA, just as the better integration of the neighbourhood regions into the ERHEA needs further support.

In line with the principles outlined in the text on the ALLEA Strategic Plan discussed in Stockholm (April, 2010), ALLEA aims to fulfil a triple role: to engage with the scientific communities, across all fields and borders, on European processes of science policy; to strengthen the role of Academies in European science policy debates, also by facilitating the mutual sharing of best practice among its members; to interact with European intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations as the independent voice of science. In this way ALLEA supports and generates the synergy between science policy issues as seen from the viewpoint of scientists.

Academies are knowledge institutions with old traditions, which can be traced back to Plato in the ancient Greece and were developed over the renaissance period to contemporary academies. Lincei celebrated its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary some years ago, Royal Society celebrated its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010, Bavarian Academy of Sciences had a 250<sup>th</sup> jubilee in 2009 – just to name some of the round dates.

Research is Ariadne's thread for humanity in its long road to knowledge. It connects not only researchers but all the mankind, it reflects what happens in nature, society, technology and individual. Experience feeds confidence and academies are very experienced because they unite best brains. But is it enough? Especially nowadays when scientists do not walk in olive groves and enjoy arguing on philosophical issues, but work hard in their laboratories and feel themselves responsible for what they are doing. Scientists enlarge our knowledge but often the border between what we know today and what we shall know tomorrow is fuzzy. The world is a complex structure and just now it has been shattered by internal stresses and incompetent behaviour. Academies have an enormous potential to analyse complexity and predictability/unpredictability of the world, a potential to understand the hidden mechanisms of nature and society, a potential to create new knowledge, and last but not least – academies have the courage (and responsibility) to inform society also about unpleasant things.

The European Federation of National Academies of Sciences and Humanities, shortly ALLEA – All European Academies – was launched in 1994 as an independent non-profit organisation and in 2010 ALLEA has 53 members – academies from 40 countries. ALLEA assembles the institutions in Europe that bring together the best researchers across all disciplines in all nations. The membership of ALLEA is diverse: from learned societies to research-performing organisations; from grant-givers to think-tanks; from leading G 8 nations to emerging economies. This reflects also the diversity of Europe. In short, ALLEA activities address the framework conditions that enable European research to perform at its best: exchange experiences and develop best practice: changing regulatory and educational and publication cultures; address issues of (science) policy advice at European and trans-regional level; foster excellence in science and scholarship and high ethical standards in the conduct of science; support efforts ensuring the freedom of sci-

ence and enhancing access to good science education; interact with policy makers, the media, and others for the benefit of science at large.

The ambitions of the European Research and Higher Education Area (ERHEA), with its emphasis on the free movement of knowledge, call for reflections and recommendations which can no longer be based solely on the consideration of issues at a national level. What is more, the ERHEA is likely to introduce measures that will cut across the rich landscape of the many well-known national structures that have brought about advanced science in Europe and not only within the EU.

National Academies have a long tradition as vibrant institutions, able to touch the nerve of their societies either by leading the way to new knowledge or by bringing in knowledge to solve the acute problems of society. It is the role of ALLEA to harness for Europe the enormous potential of Academies for analysing the complexity and predictability/unpredictability of the world. EASAC was created by Academies with the specific task of providing science advice to political decision-makers; ALLEA, on the other hand, deals with the framework conditions under which research and higher education operate: here, academies also have the responsibility to pronounce even sometimes uncomfortable truths. The changing value of scientific disciplines, and hence the challenges for university curricula and assessment methods, must be defined; the different levels of competitiveness and performance of national research systems must be analysed, propitious and detrimental constellations of public-private partnerships must be identified, to name but a few challenges. With the current urgency to align research funding to tackle the „grand challenges” facing society, ALLEA is also called upon to ensure that society understands the necessary balance between strengthening both basic and more readily applicable research: in science, the „grand challenges” include questions about the origins and patterns of organisation of the universe, life and humanity.

Currently, ALLEA streamlines its activities functions on the basis of its two Standing Committees (on IPR and on Science & Ethics) and two Working Groups (on Science Education and on Evaluation), but more needs to be done.

ALLEA has participated in the discussions about restructuring the ESF/Euro-HORCs by stressing the interests of researchers in addition to the interests of research funders. ALLEA is establishing a new Task Force on monitoring science policy in Europe in order to activate Academies to contribute critically and constructively to the process of building the ERHEA: topics to be treated will include such questions as the restructuring of the research landscape in Europe, the meeting of „grand challenges”, the launching of the next FPs, the funding format of the European Research Council, the optimizing of partnerships between science organisations in Europe and worldwide, the analysis of EC and ERAB strategy documents, and of the role of Academies, the various dimensions of the project „innovation union” etc. The role of young scientists and scholars in the shaping of future science policy must be enhanced – here the concept of Young Academies, supported by ALLEA, is vital. Many activities of National Academies have a wider area of influence than just one country – witness the clustering of neighbouring academies to focus on projects in one or another geographical area, on infrastructures, on re-

search management, on science publishing, etc. The potential of academies as generators of „knowledge regions” must also be harnessed within the wider context of the ERHEA, just as the better integration of the neighbourhood regions into the ERHEA needs further support.

All these are also areas for which, in the course of the past year, ALLEA has been called upon by the European Commission and others for its input, be it on research integrity, IPR, research infrastructures, science education, joint programming, or support for young researchers.

In line with the principles outlined in the text on the Strategic Plan discussed in Stockholm (2010), and approved by now, ALLEA aims to fulfil a triple role: to engage with the scientific communities, across all fields and borders, on European processes of science policy; to strengthen the role of Academies in European science policy debates, also by facilitating the mutual sharing of best practice among its members; to interact with European intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations as the independent voice of science. Given the new emphasis on building an „innovation union” in Europe and the stronger focus on measures to accelerate the transition from research to product, from idea to market, it is vital that ALLEA raise its voice on behalf of science and of the responsibility of scientists towards society. In this way ALLEA supports and generates the synergy between science policy issues as seen from the viewpoint of scientists.