



Shaping the future landscape for research careers

22 August 2022 - Advanced Talents Days 2022 in Aachen
Mattias Björnmalm (Deputy Secretary General of CESAER)

CESAER

About me

- Mattias Björnmalm
- Deputy Secretary General of CESAER
- BSc from Lund University
- MSc from KTH Royal Institute of Technology
- PhD from University of Melbourne with [Prof Frank Caruso](#)
- Marie Curie post-doc at Imperial College London with [Prof Molly Stevens](#)
- My research primarily [nanomaterials and bioengineering](#)
- Moved to full-time science advocacy in 2019 at [CESAER](#)
- More [details](#)

Association at a glance



Our Members at a glance



57 Members from 27 countries



Israel Institute
of Technology



Norwegian University of
Science and Technology



RIGA TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY



TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DRESDEN



kaunas
university of
technology



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow



Aalto University



Karlsruhe Institute of Technology



UNIVERSITAT
POLITÈCNICA
DE VALÈNCIA



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK



TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DARMSTADT



UNIVERSITY OF
BELGRADE



POZNAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



The University
Of Sheffield.



UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA
DE CATALUNYA
BARCELONATECH



Warsaw University
of Technology



University of Stuttgart
Germany



KU LEUVEN



Leibniz
Universität
Hannover





A changing landscape

Where we come from: Roles and responsibilities of universities

- [Magna Charta Universitatum](#)
- [Lima Declaration](#)
 - 'Future of mankind depends largely on cultural, scientific and technical development, and that this is built up in centres of culture, knowledge and research as [represented by true universities](#)' as
 - 'Trustees of the European humanist tradition'
 - Foundational principles: Academic freedom and institutional autonomy
- This enables universities to expand upon their tradition in [releasing transformative forces and act as autonomous agents of change](#)

MAGNA CHARTA UNIVERSITATUM

Preamble

The undersigned Rectors of European Universities, gathered in Bologna for the ninth centenary of the oldest University in Europe, four years before the definitive abolition of boundaries between the countries of the European Community; looking forward to far-reaching co-operation between all European nations and believing that people and States should become more than ever aware of the part that universities will be called upon to play in a changing and increasingly international society,

Consider

1. that at the approaching end of this millennium the future of mankind depends largely on cultural, scientific and technical development ; and that this is built up in centres of culture, knowledge and research as represented by true universities ;

THE LIMA DECLARATION

**ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY
OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

Where we come from: New public management

- 1980s-1990s re-organisation of public service organizations to be more 'businesslike' with intention to improve efficiency using key concepts from private sector, including:
 - Set measurable targets
 - Monitor performance
 - Foster competitiveness
- **Car factory**: targets for success can include reducing amount of raw material needed (e.g. steel) and increasing number of cars produced
- **University**: how to measure success?

A PUBLIC MANAGEMENT FOR ALL SEASONS?

CHRISTOPHER HOOD

This article discusses: the doctrinal content of the group of ideas known as 'new public management' (NPM); the intellectual provenance of those ideas; explanations for their apparent persuasiveness in the 1980s; and criticisms which have been made of the new doctrines. Particular attention is paid to the claim that NPM offers an all-purpose key to better provision of public services. This article argues that NPM has been most commonly criticized in terms of a claimed contradiction between 'equity' and 'efficiency' values, but that any critique which is to survive NPM's claim to 'infinite reprogrammability' must be couched in terms of possible conflicts between *administrative* values. The conclusion is that the ESRC's 'Management in Government' research initiative has been more valuable in helping to identify rather than to definitively answer, the key conceptual questions raised by NPM.

THE RISE OF NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (NPM)

The rise of 'new public management' (hereafter NPM) over the past 15 years is one of the most striking international trends in public administration. Though the

[Hood \(1991\)](#)

Promises and perils of measuring ‘success’

Examples include:

- Global ranking tables
- Excellence labels and initiatives
- Journal impact factor
- H-index

Benchmarking indicators have many shortcomings, but can be valuable when deployed [judiciously as part of broader efforts](#) for organisational learning and institutional development.

Recommended resources to learn more:

- [Next generation metrics](#)
- [The Metric Tide](#)
- [‘Excellence R Us’](#)
- [Mis-Measuring Our Universities: Why Global University Rankings Don’t Add Up](#)



Towards culture change

“A culture change is needed within universities. As a community, **we have been seduced by simple but stifling interpretations of what an excellent researcher is** and what they should do. This has been driven largely by assessment and reward structures that put undue focus on narrow, simple-to-measure indicators and criteria.

“**Action is overdue, and it must happen at several levels.**”

- Rik Van de Walle (President of CESAER and Rector of Ghent University) in [op-ed in Research Europe](#)

“Let’s shift to a culture built around quality, risk-taking and trust, replacing the focus on individual competitiveness with open, collaborative and team-based approaches.”





Responding to changing landscape

CESAER

Growing acknowledgement of the need for change

- [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#) (DORA; 2012)
 - *“Do not use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist’s contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions.”*
 - CESAER endorsed DORA in 2020 and the [encouraged all Members to sign it](#)
- [Leiden Manifesto](#) (2015)
- [Hong Kong Principles](#) (2020)
- [European Agreement of Reforming Research Assessment](#) (2022)
 - *“While acknowledging that this Agreement does not have any legally binding effect, it represents a public commitment to contribute actively and constructively to reforming research assessment.”*

Co-creating the Agreement

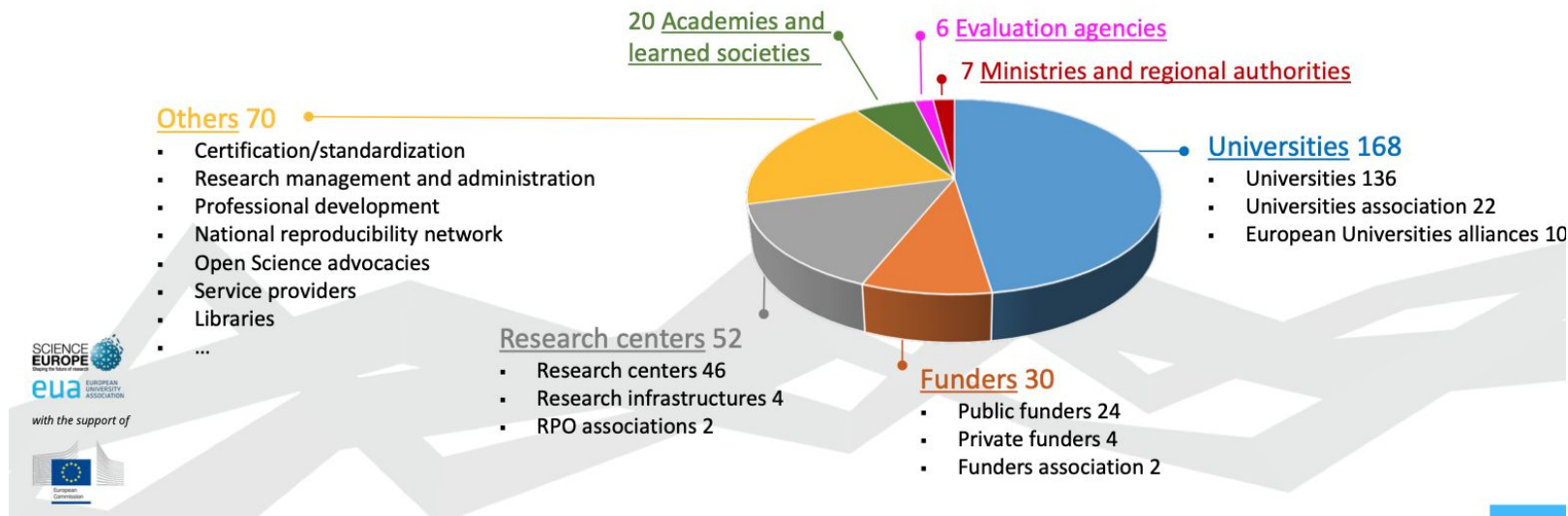


- Core Group providing opinions and feedback on evolving drafts
- Feedback also through the European Research Area (ERA) Forum and the ERA Committee

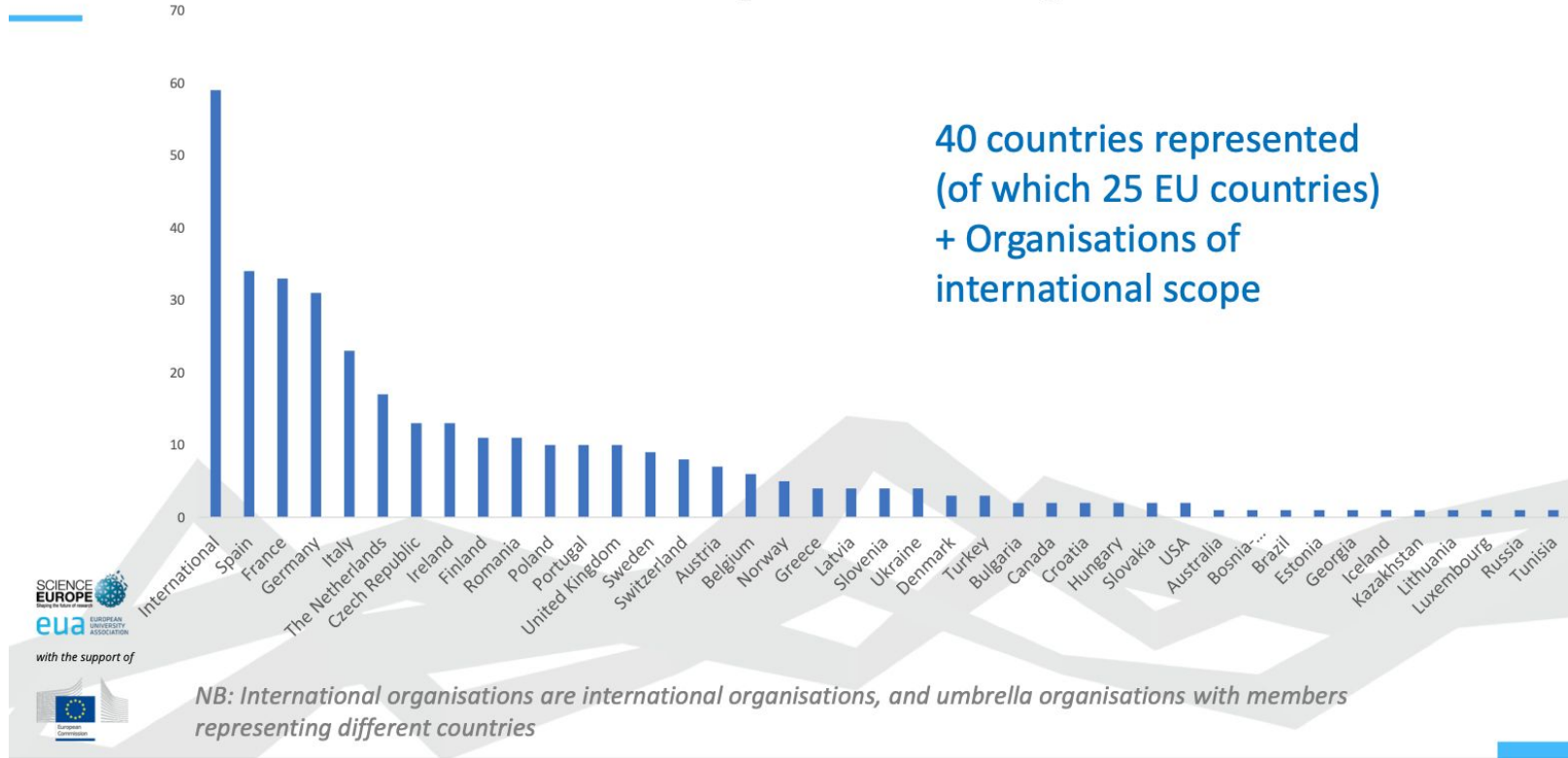
3RD STAKEHOLDER ASSEMBLY ON REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT – 8 JULY 2022

Agreement reflects perspective of diversity of organisations ...

- Over 350 organisations have declared they are committed to the principles in the Scoping Report and expressed interest in joining the drafting process



... from across Europe and beyond



Final Agreement

Introduction
I Principles
II Commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core (1-4)• Supporting (5-10)
III Principles for the coalition
IV Timeframe
Annexes (non-prescriptive) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rationale and Context• Reform journey• Toolbox

Signature box



Core commitments

- *Two commitments to enable **better recognition of the diverse practices and activities** that maximise the quality of research*
 - *Two commitments to **enable a move away from the inappropriate uses of metrics***
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 rankings of research organisations in research assessment*

Final Agreement

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Signature box

- Annexes (non-prescriptive)
 - Rationale and Context
 - Reform journey
 - Toolbox



Supporting 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*

Final Agreement

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	<div>Signature box</div>
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Key observations

- *Flexible and evolutive: assessment practices can vary according to the context, type and purpose of the evaluation.*
- *Respectful of the autonomy of organisations and of their respective missions*
- *Quantitative indicators: responsible use, not abandoning them.*
- *Timeframe: Touch-base points in years 1 and 5 after signature to communicate progress, based on self-assessment.*
- *Special attention to and involvement of young researchers*
- *The agreement is only the starting point: changes to be developed and implemented by the Coalition.*



Shaping the landscape

Why now?

- **Rare shared focus** among political level, funders, universities and researchers
- Problem elaboration > awareness raising > **decision phase** (> implementation)
- Choice is to **act today to help shape the future, or follow the path laid down by those who do**

Michael Murphy, President of the European University Association, EUA, said:

It is now time to go beyond existing declarations and define clearly what we want for the future of research assessment. Universities, researchers and all stakeholders need to choose how they want to be assessed and need to choose now.

Marc Schiltz, President of Science Europe, said:

'Publish or perish' and metrics have led us into a blind alley. Let's start recognising the full breadth of value created by researchers.

[News article with quotes](#)

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European Council
Council of the European Union

Council conclusions adopted
by all EU member states

[Home](#) > [Press](#) > [Press releases](#)

● Council of the EU Press release 28 May 2021 11:50

Improving conditions for research careers in Europe: Council adopts conclusions

The Council today adopted conclusions that mark a turning point in the objective to enhance the attractiveness of research careers and brain circulation within the European Research Area (ERA). The conclusions call for the development of an internal market for research that offers improved framework conditions for research careers, both in the academia and beyond.



European Commission

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Reforming research assessment: The Agreement is now final

NEWS ARTICLE | 20 July 2022 | Directorate-General for Research and Innovation

Reforming research assessment: The Agreement is now final

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As a (junior or senior) researcher

- Seek to [empower early-career researchers](#)
- [Be the change you want to see](#), including with your colleagues and in your team
- Help [nurture healthy labs and lab cultures](#)
- Be aware of the [important role of Europe](#) for research (in addition to local, national and global levels)
- Be aware that boosting careers of (young) researchers is high on the [\(political\) agenda](#)
- [Know that you can make a difference](#):
 - Follow the discussion
 - Contribute
 - Get involved
- Science communication: [building trust through transparency and engagement](#) - career planning!



As an (aspiring) group leader

- Lead by example
- Resources
 - [Toolkits to enable managers to support early career researchers](#)
 - Also valuable for early-career researchers to look through!
 - Nature collection [How to grow a healthy lab](#)
- Engage with management of department and university to help guide updates of [policies and frameworks](#), and ensure right [resources](#) are available for you and your group members!



As a HR professional

- White paper [Boost careers of early-stage researchers](#)
- White paper [Sharing experiences with Human Resources Strategy for Researchers](#)

“Early-stage researchers need to be better supported by the academic surrounding, government and funders ... This support will play a key part in [redefining culture and human knowledge for the better.](#)”

- Vered Behar (Chief HR & Operations at Technion R&D Foundation - Israel Institute of Technology)



As a university leader

- [Sign DORA](#)
- [Sign European Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#)
- And follow-up
 - DORA [resources](#), [case studies](#) and [institutional development rubric](#)
 - Actively engage with the coalition which will be launched to follow-up on the Agreement - [details](#)
 - Engage the whole university community, including researchers, group leaders and HR professionals



More information:

- [CESAER website](#)
- [Contact details](#)
- [Annual reports](#)

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