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MEETING DOCUMENT

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Working Party on Research

Subject: R&I priorities for 2026
Towards a European Research and Innovation Union
- PowerPoint presentation

Delegations will find attached a PowerPoint presentation on the above-mentioned subject made by the Commission at the Research Working Party Meeting held on 4 February 2026.

R&I priorities for 2026

Towards a European Research and Innovation Union

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Political context

THE TREATY ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPE'S CHOICE

POLITICAL GUIDELINES
FOR THE NEXT EUROPEAN COMMISSION
2024–2029

Ursula von der Leyen



DG R&I Strategic Orientation 2025-2029

Research and innovation are powerful catalysts to address Europe's most pressing challenges while creating opportunities for a **sustainable and prosperous future**.

In line with President von der Leyen's Political Guidelines 2024-2029, DG R&I aims at :

- Put research and innovation at the heart of our economy,
- Tackling the skills,
- supporting the transition to “a more circular and resilient economy”.

DG RTD activities will substantially contribute to all political priorities.



DG RTD Primary Objective: « A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness »

Political baseline: Implementation of President von der Leyen's Political Priorities 2024-2029 and the Competitive Compass

Three necessities for a more competitive EU:

1. **Closing the innovation gap:** EU start-up and scale-up strategy; Apply AI strategy; new technologies (e.g. advanced materials)
2. **Decarbonising our economy:** Clean Industrial Deal, action plans for energy intensive sectors (e.g chemicals, steel and metals)
3. **Reducing dependencies:** new range of clean trade and investment partnerships



2026 Strategic Roadmap

About 20 Strategic Actions

~ 16 DG R&I lead

~ 3 DG R&I co-lead

Key Legislative Initiatives

European Innovation Act

European Research Area Act

Advanced Materials Act



European Innovation Act (Q1 2026)

Address obstacles that are preventing bringing innovative ideas to markets

Focus areas

- Academia- industry collaboration
- Access to national, European and private instruments
- Markets and technology
- Research infrastructures
- Access to talent
- Intellectual property rights

European Research Area Act (Q3 2026)

- Establish the EU's 'fifth freedom': the free circulation of knowledge
- Strengthen research and development investment

ERA Policy Agenda (2026-2027)



Advanced Materials Act (Q4 2026)

Establish a comprehensive framework aligning research, innovation, scale-up and manufacturing within a unified European value chain

- Reduce fragmentation, accelerate market uptake, and set clear standards for investment, circularity and supply-chain resilience, ensuring Europe not only invents breakthrough materials but also commercialises and scales them within the Union.
- Address simplification barriers to business creation and investment.

R&I priorities in 2026

A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness	A new era for European defence and security	Sustaining our quality of life: Food security, water and nature	A global Europe: Leveraging our power and partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Innovation Act• European Research Area Act• Advanced Materials Act• EU Action Plan for Women in Research, Innovation and Startups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dual-use pilot call in the 2026 WP of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS).• EIC 2026 WP amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop approaches for R&I Food Systems, Water Resilience and Oceans• Assessment of EU missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Framework for Science Diplomacy• [Redacted]• [Redacted]

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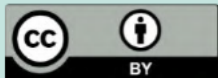
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https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/stay-connected_en



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Thank you



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