

Press Release Evaluation Survey 2025

ERA Hubs Initiative Receives Strong Endorsement from Stakeholders Across Europe

Brussels, May 2025 – The ERA_FABRIC project is proud to present the findings of its latest stakeholder consultation. The 2025 Evaluation Survey, distributed across 13 European countries and 20 regions, validates the ERA Hubs concept as a pivotal development in advancing the European Research Area (ERA). Stakeholders confirm that ERA Hubs have the potential to significantly enhance the integration and valorisation of research and innovation (R&I) across Europe, while boosting regional innovation capacity and cohesion.

Pan-European Reach and Sectoral Diversity

A total of 126 respondents participated in the survey, representing a wide array of regional ecosystems. The respondents were based in regions such as Trøndelag and Rogaland (Norway), Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Jihomoravský kraj (Czech Republic), Mazowieckie (Poland), Nord Vest (Romania), Catalonia (Spain), and others.

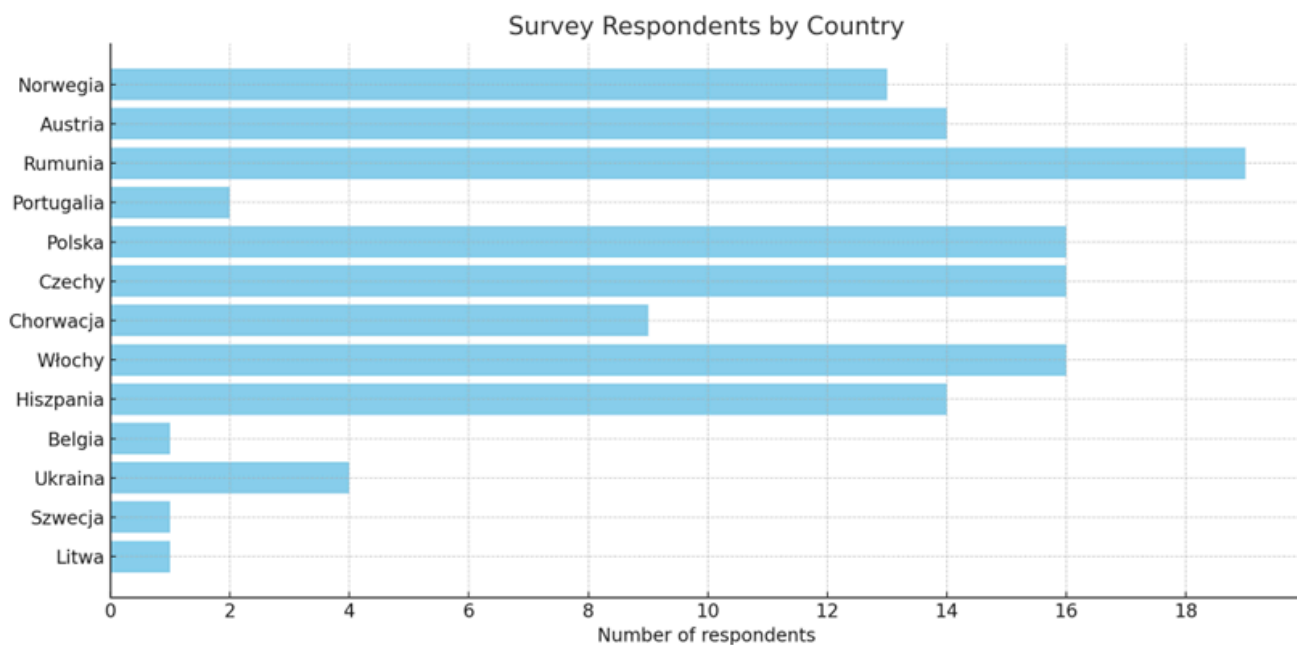


Figure 1: Survey Respondents by Country



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The most common respondent profiles were representatives of:

- Universities, research centres and higher education institutions
- Regional development or innovation agencies
- Professional clusters and associations innovation systems, allowing ERA FABRIC to extract valuable insights applicable across different socio-economic and political landscapes.

This cross-sectoral representation provides a rich, multi-perspective view of how ERA Hubs might function across diverse regional realities.

A Strong Demand for Strategic Reform

The survey sought feedback on three fundamental policy gaps within the EU's current R&I landscape that the ERA Hubs aim to address:

1. Lack of mechanisms for multiregional integration
2. Limited capacity for valorisation of research outcomes into policy and market
3. Fragmented and poorly coordinated innovation support tools

Respondents ranked these gaps as critical and agreed that ERA Hubs are well-positioned to bridge them, signalling the need for new institutional infrastructures that support coordinated, cross-border innovation strategies.

Validation of Core ERA Hub Policy Functions

The survey tested three proposed ERA Hub functions developed by the ERA_FABRIC project. All were rated highly in terms of usefulness and potential benefit to EU policy objectives:

- Policy Co-Creation Toolbox: Transformation-oriented models and instruments for simultaneously implementing new R&I policies in multiple local contexts.
- Multi-Stakeholder Platform: A forum for quadruple helix stakeholders (academia, industry, public authorities, civil society) to engage in collaborative strategy-setting and results evaluation.
- Knowledge Ecosystem: A framework to foster continuous interaction among knowledge producers and users to generate innovation with tangible societal and market value.



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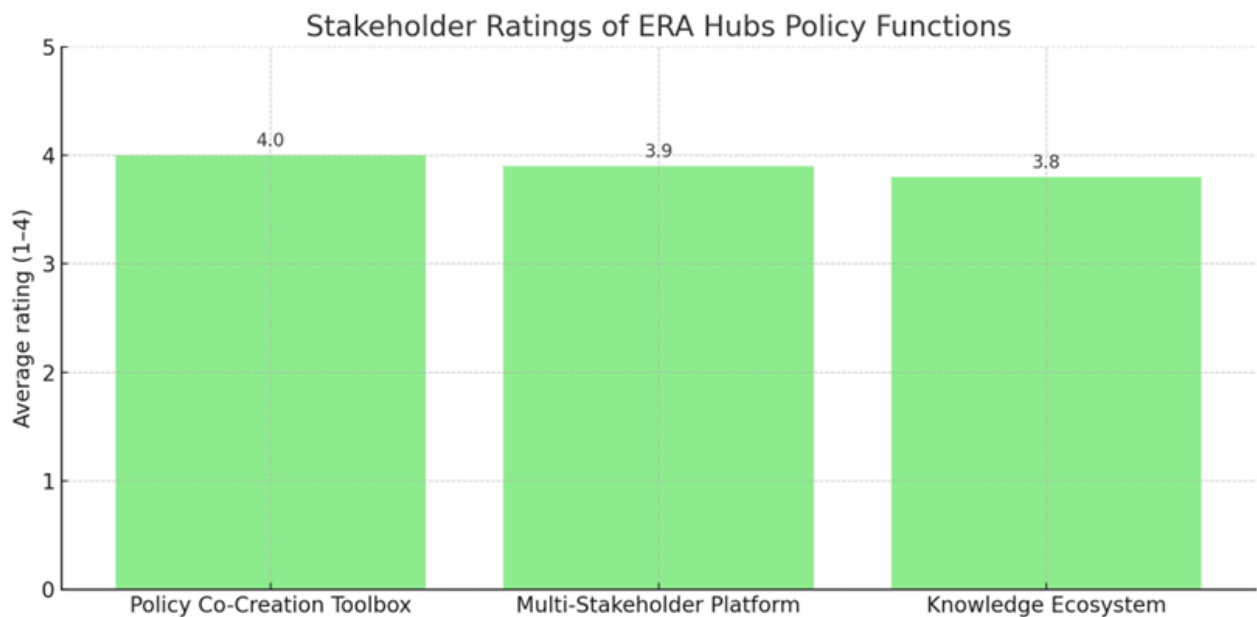


Figure 2: Stakeholder Ratings of ERA Hubs Policy Functions

Each function received overwhelmingly positive ratings, with most respondents selecting the highest level of agreement (☆☆☆☆). Moreover, when asked about the capacity of these functions to improve the EU's R&I landscape, the vast majority indicated they could bring the “greatest” level of benefit.

From Concept to Implementation

This feedback comes at a pivotal time as ERA_FABRIC transitions from design to piloting. The stakeholder validation helps to solidify operational directions and confirms that there is broad-based demand for place-based, interconnected, and policy-driven innovation infrastructures.

According to ERA_FABRIC's strategic vision, ERA Hubs should operate at multicountry and multiregional scales—mobilising local innovation strengths while embedding them into broader EU frameworks. The survey reinforces this ambition, offering guidance on how to prioritise and sequence the deployment of tools and governance mechanisms.

Policy Implications and Future Outlook

These findings serve as both a mandate and a roadmap for next steps. They suggest that:

- There is readiness among stakeholders for systemic change in how innovation policies are developed and implemented.



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- ERA Hubs can become the backbone of future R&I policy coordination, particularly in enabling integrated approaches to sustainability, circular economy, and advanced manufacturing.
- Multiregional R&I infrastructures will be essential for achieving the EU's twin green and digital transitions.

ERA_FABRIC will incorporate this survey analysis into its upcoming pilot initiatives and continue building alliances across regions to co-develop effective, scalable ERA Hub models.

About ERA_FABRIC

ERA_FABRIC is a Horizon Europe-funded initiative that seeks to reinforce the European Research Area through place-based and mission-oriented innovation ecosystems. The project focuses on developing operational models for ERA Hubs—dedicated infrastructures that foster integration, cooperation, and policy alignment across national and regional borders.

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